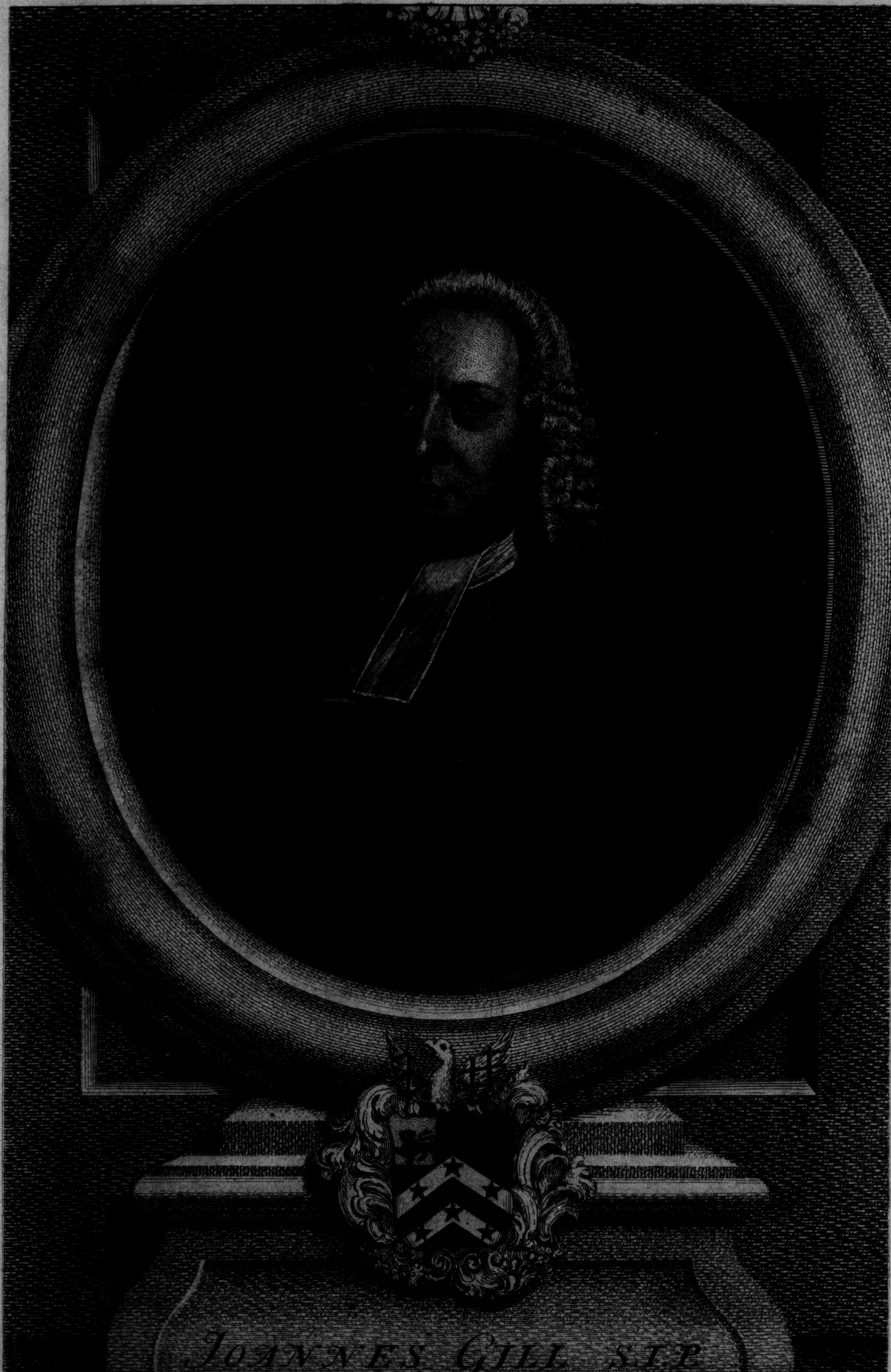

JOANNES GILL S.T.P.

AN
# EXPOSITION
OF THE
# New Teſtament,
IN THREE VOLUMES:

IN WHICH
The Senſe of the SACRED TEXT is given;
Doctrinal and Practical TRUTHS are ſet in a plain and eaſy Light,
DIFFICULT PLACES EXPLAINED,
SEEMING CONTRADICTIONS RECONCILED;
AND
Whatever is Material in the VARIOUS READINGS, and the ſeveral
ORIENTAL VERSIONS, is obſerved.
THE
Whole illuſtrated with NOTES taken from the moſt ancient JEWISH WRITINGS.

VOL. I.

By *JOHN GILL.*

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# THE
# PREFACE.

THE ſacred books, of which the following work is an expoſition, are of equal authority with the oracles of God, the writings of the Old Teſtament; being as they, divinely inſpired; and are profitable to the ſame ends and purpoſes, of doctrine, reproof, correction, and inſtruction in righteouſneſs: they contain things of the greateſt moment and importance, to the ſpiritual and eternal welfare of men, to the honour and intereſt of the great Redeemer, and to the glory of God; and therefore ſhould be moſt carefully peruſed, moſt diligently ſearched into, and as much as in us lies, ſhould be ſtudiouſly, diſtinctly, and rightly explained, and which is attempted in this performance.

The *four Evangeliſts*, have recorded every thing material, relating to the great author and inſtitutor of the Chriſtian religion, the ſum and ſubſtance of the Goſpel, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt: they give us an account of his harbinger and forerunner, *John* the Baptiſt; of his parents, his wonderful conception and birth, with ſeveral amazing circumſtances belonging thereunto; they deſcribe his qualifications for his important office, his mien and deportment, his dreſs and diet, his conduct and converſation, his preaching and baptiſm, his ſucceſs and his followers, his impriſonment and death; and point at ſeveral prophecies as fulfilled in him: but above all, they are chiefly concerned with Chriſt himſelf; they declare him to be the Son of God, and the Son of man; they ſhew his deſcent as man, to be from the kings of *Judah*, and from the ancient patriarchs *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*; yea, they trace it to the firſt man *Adam*; they tell us who his real mother, and ſuppoſed father were; of what family they were, and where they lived; what their characters, worldly circumſtances, and buſineſs of life; they ſpeak of his miraculous conception, through the power of the Holy Ghoſt, and of the time and place of his birth; and of what went before, or followed after, neceſſary to be known; they record ſome things done in his infancy, and childhood; they give us an account of his baptiſm, and of his entrance on his publick miniſtry; they have written down his ſermons to his diſciples, and the multitude; his ſeveral diſcourſes with the *Jews*, chief prieſts, *Scribes*, *Phariſees*, and *Sadducees*; his parables, proverbial ſayings, and pithy ſentences; they make mention of various ſurprizing miracles wrought by him, which were proofs of his deity, divine miſſion, and Meſſiahſhip; they inform us of the names and number of his apoſtles, whom he ſent forth to preach in his name; and they relate his fatiguing journeys which he took, to do good to the bodies and ſouls of men, by healing diſeaſes, and preaching the Goſpel; as alſo the temptations of ſatan he was exerciſed with, in the wilderneſs; the reproaches and inſults of men, he endured; his ſufferings and death, with all the circumſtances attending it; and likewiſe his reſurrection from the dead, and aſcenſion to heaven: and the whole is a compleat hiſtory of the life of Chriſt, for what one Evangeliſt omits, another relates; and all is done with the utmoſt impartiality, ſimplicity, and truth; and there is an entire harmony and agreement between the ſacred hiſtorians; for though there are ſome things, in which at firſt ſight they may ſeem to contradict each other, theſe will admit of a fair reconciliation, and which is obſerved in the following expoſition.

That divine hiſtory called, *the Acts of the Apoſtles*, is a narrative of what was done by them, after our Lord's aſcenſion to heaven, in purſuance of the commiſſion and inſtructions which he had given them. This book informs us, how that the Apoſtles, by the orders of Chriſt, waited at *Jeruſalem* until the day of *Pentecoſt*, when they were filled with the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit; particularly with the gift of ſpeaking with divers tongues, whereby they were qualified to preach the Goſpel to people of all languages,

guages, for which they had received a commiſſion from Chriſt: here we are told what ſucceſs they met with at *Jeruſalem*, where, according to the expreſs command of Chriſt, they began to preach; what numbers of converts were made, and what a famous church was there raiſed; and how, that after the death of *Stephen* a perſecution aroſe, by which havock was made of the church, and many that had miniſterial gifts, were ſcattered abroad, and went every where preaching the word; but at firſt to the *Jews* only, by which means churches were alſo raiſed in other parts of *Judea*, and in *Samaria*, and *Galilee*, and likewiſe in *Syria* and *Phœnicia*, and in other places. Particularly this book gives an account of the travels of the Apoſtle *Paul* in the *Gentile* world; of his miniſtry, and the ſucceſs of it among them; of the miracles wrought by him; of his ſermons, diſcourſes, and diſputations; of the ſpeeches he made before kings and councils, before the *Jewiſh Sanhedrim*, and the *Roman* governours; of the many hardſhips he endured, and the many dangers he was expoſed unto; and of his great ſervice and uſefulneſs, in promoting the Goſpel and intereſt of Chriſt: in ſhort, this book acquaints us with the progreſs of the Goſpel, both in *Judea*, and among the *Gentiles*; with the firſt planting of Goſpel churches, and the eſtabliſhment of Chriſtianity in the world; with the time when, the manner in which, the means whereby, all this was done; and is a wonderful diſplay of the wiſdom, power, and goodneſs of God; and muſt be read with pleaſure and profit, by all thoſe that love the Lord Jeſus Chriſt in ſincerity and truth.

The *Epiſtles*, written by ſeveral Apoſtles to the churches, which were planted by them, or to particular perſons they were concerned with, are of the utmoſt conſequence: theſe contain all things in them, relating to faith and practice; here the doctrines of the Goſpel, are ſet in a clear and diſtinct light; the ſeveral duties of religion to be performed, whether perſonal or relative, whether to be done in publick or in private, in the world or in the church, in the cloſet or in the family, are exhorted to, and preſſed upon the beſt of motives, with the ſtrongeſt arguments, from right principles, and to right ends and purpoſes; every thing belonging to the nature and conſtitution of a Goſpel church, to the rule and government of it, to its officers, its order and diſcipline, is to be collected from hence: for whatever is written in them, was written, not only for the uſe of the then churches, and the miniſters and members of them, but for the uſe of the churches of Chriſt, in all ages of time; in them are milk for babes, and meat for ſtrong men; and rules are laid down, inſtructive to ſocieties, and particular perſons; and which are uſeful in moral and civil, as well as in chriſtian life; or which ſerve to regulate and influence the outward life and converſation, as well as direct and encourage to the exerciſe of ſpiritual graces, and to an obſervance of evangelical ordinances.

The book of the *Revelation* of the Apoſtle *John*, with which the canon of ſcripture is cloſed, is a prophetic hiſtory of what ſhould befal the churches of Chriſt; and of the moſt remarkable things that ſhould come to paſs in the world, eſpecially in the *Roman* empire, from the reſurrection of Chriſt, unto the end of the world; ſo that theſe ſacred books, put them all together, are an account of things from the firſt, to the ſecond coming of Chriſt; and ſhew, what has been, and will be done in the world; and what the followers of Chriſt are to believe and do, and what they muſt expect will be accompliſhed in the world, in the churches, and in them; until he ſhall appear, who is the author of their religion, the object of their faith, hope, and love; and whoſe coming they ſincerely deſire, and heartily wiſh and pray for.

Now to have a true knowledge, and right underſtanding of books of ſo much concern as theſe are, muſt be deſirable to all, who have a juſt value for them, and eſteem of them; but who is ſufficient for theſe things? It is certain, that the Holy Spirit, who has dictated the ſacred ſcriptures, and inſpired holy men of God to write them, is the beſt interpreter of them; and he does lead and guide his people, more or leſs, into the truths contained in them; his aſſiſtance is therefore in the firſt place to be implored, and without it, nothing of this kind is to be attempted: to compare ſpiritual things with ſpiritual, or in other words, to compare ſcripture with itſelf; the more obſcure and difficult parts of it, with thoſe that are more plain and clear, muſt be of conſiderable ſervice, for the better underſtanding them: and to obſerve the analogy of faith, the agreement of truth with itſelf, and of one truth with another; the form of ſound words, the ſummary of Goſpel truths, to be collected out of the ſacred writings, with which the ſenſe of every paſſage muſt agree, is of exceeding great uſe in this affair; to which may be added, the gracious experience that the man of God has in himſelf, of the truth, power, influence, and weight of the word of God upon his own ſoul; for next to the ſcriptures themſelves, in general, it ſhould be conſidered, whether ſuch an interpretation of a particular paſſage, is agreeable to the common experience of the ſaints, and to a man's own: a competent knowledge of the languages, in which the ſcriptures are written, cannot fail of being very helpful in the ſtudy of them, in many inſtances; and indeed, all arts and ſciences, liberal or mechanical, yea, every thing within the compaſs of knowledge, natural, moral, and civil, contribute more or leſs unto, and aſſiſt in the underſtanding of the books of the New Teſtament; and among the many helps, and ſeveral means which ſhould be, and are made uſe of for ſuch a purpoſe, knowledge of the affairs of the *Jews*, of their rites and ceremonies, of their laws, uſages, cuſtoms, and traditions, as they were in and about the times of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, is not the moſt inconſiderable; which will appear, if it be obſerved,

That our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, whoſe life is written by the four Evangeliſts, was a *Jew* himſelf; he was born of *Jewiſh* parents, in the land of *Judea*; he was brought up in the *Jewiſh* religion; he conformed to their laws, rites, and cuſtoms, throughout the whole of his life, which were lawful to conform unto; he was ſent to the people of the *Jews*, as a prophet, and to them only; to them he delivered his ſermons, with them he frequently diſcourſed, and among them he wrought his miracles; in ſhort, among them he lived and died: now it can't be thought, but that he ſhould ſpeak in the dialect of that nation, ſhould expreſs himſelf in words and phraſes, which were in common uſe; and refer to various things, and allude to rites and cuſtoms in practice among them; wherefore the knowledge of their phraſeology, or way of ſpeaking, of their uſages and cuſtoms, muſt be of ſingular uſe, for the underſtanding of many things ſaid by Chriſt, which are recorded in the four Evangeliſts: let it alſo be further obſerved,

That all the Apoſtles of Chriſt, and all the writers of the New Teſtament, were *Jews*; they were educated in the *Jewiſh* religion; they preached to the *Jews* only, in the times of Chriſt; and firſt to them, after their commiſſion was enlarged, to preach to the *Gentiles*; and the firſt churches even among the *Gentiles*, greatly conſiſted of *Jews*, to whom the Epiſtles were written, as the Epiſtles themſelves ſhew: now can it be imagined, but that notwithſtanding divine inſpiration, and though they wrote in the *Greek* language, they would retain the idioms and forms of ſpeech, to which they had been uſed; and that they would allude to rites and cuſtoms, they had been obſervant of, and the people alſo to whom they wrote? had the books of the New Teſtament been written by *Engliſhmen*, though inſpired by the Holy Ghoſt, doubtleſs there would have appeared many *Angliciſms* in them, as it is notorious enough there are in them abundance of *Hebraiſms*; and that they would have referred to the rites and cuſtoms of their own nation, as theſe have done: wherefore the knowledge of the *Jewiſh* language and cuſtoms, muſt be of ſervice for the better underſtanding of various things, to be met with in the writings of theſe men: to which may be added,

That *Judaiſm* properly ſo called, as it was a peculiar religion, and diſtinct from Chriſtianity, though not contrary to it, was in being, and in full force, in Chriſt's time, though near its end, and was aboliſhed in the times of the Apoſtles, and Chriſtianity was eſtabliſhed by them: now it is not reaſonable to believe, that an affair of this nature ſhould be tranſacted, that there ſhould be an abrogation of *Jewiſh* rites and ceremonies, and a ſetting up of Goſpel ordinances, which were to continue to the end of time, that in the diſputes with the *Jews* upon this ſubject, and the account that is given of this matter, there ſhould be no references and expreſſions, which the knowledge of *Jewiſh* affairs can give us light into.

Being convinced by theſe conſiderations many years ago, I ſet about the reading of the moſt ancient writings of the *Jews*, I could come at, in order to ſatisfy myſelf of the truth of theſe things, and the better to underſtand the New Teſtament; and though this has been attended with great difficulty, fatigue, and labour, and may have hindered the purſuit of other uſeful ſtudies, I cannot ſay I repent of it. The method I took at firſt, and which I all along followed, was to write down in an *Adverſaria*, or note-book, what occurred in reading, which I thought might be of any ſervice, to give light to any paſſage in the New Teſtament, and which I put againſt that paſſage: in a courſe of time this book began to ſwell, which put me on thoughts of making theſe notes publick; which I ſometimes inclined to do in one way, and ſometimes in another; but at length determined to do with them I have done, in the following work: the writings I have chiefly read with this view, are the *Targums*, or *Chaldee* paraphraſes of the Old Teſtament; the *Miſnah*, or the *Jews* oral law; the two *Talmuds*, *Jeruſalem* and *Babylonian*; the *Rabbot*, or myſtical expoſitions of the ancient doctors of the *Jewiſh* ſynagogue; the book of

*Zohar*, with others of a later date, and leſs note; and ſince I have made ſo much uſe of theſe writings in the following expoſition, eſpecially in the firſt volume, I think myſelf obliged to give my readers ſome account of them, ſhewing their antiquity and uſefulneſs, and ſhall begin with,

The TARGUMS, or *Chaldee* paraphraſes, theſe being the moſt ancient writings the *Jews* have: it is certain there were *Targums*, before the compoſition of the *Talmud*, and even of the *Miſnah*, ſince there is expreſs mention made of them in both [a]; and it is no leſs certain, that they were in being and uſe, in the times of Chriſt and his Apoſtles. The text in *Iſa.* lxi. 1. as read by our Lord in the ſynagogue of *Nazareth*, *Luke* iv. 18. better agrees with the *Chaldee* paraphraſe of it, than with the *Hebrew* text, or the *Septuagint* verſion; and it is a clear caſe, and which was doing great honour to the *Targum* on *Pſal.* xxii. 1. that Chriſt expreſſed himſelf when he hung upon the croſs, not in the *Hebrew* words of the text, but in the *Chaldee* paraphraſe of it; ſaying, *Eli, Eli, lama Sabachthani*; not *Azabthani*, as in the *Hebrew* text, but *Sabachthani*, which is the word uſed in the *Targum* we now have; and it is very likely the Apoſtle *Paul* had the names of the *Egyptian* magicians *Jannes* and *Jambres*, out of the ancient paraphraſes; ſince theſe are mentioned in the *Targum* of *Jonathan*, on *Exod.* i. 15. and vii. 11. and on *Numb.* xxii. 21. The word *Targum* ſignifies an interpretation, or expoſition of any book, or the tranſlation of one language into another; and the *Targums* are tranſlations of the *Hebrew* text, into the *Chaldee* language, with an explanation of it; for they are not bare literal verſions, though that of *Onkelos* is pretty much ſo; but they alſo expound the text, and explain the ſenſe: the riſe and original of theſe paraphraſes, is generally thought to have been the corruption of the *Hebrew* language, in the *Babyloniſh* captivity; where the *Jews* having diſuſed, greatly forgot their mother tongue; wherefore upon their return to their own land, it became neceſſary, that men ſkilful both in the *Hebrew* and *Chaldee* languages, ſhould explain to the common people in the *Chaldee* tongue, the ſcriptures, which were read to them every ſabbath-day in *Hebrew*, in order to their underſtanding them with profit; and this practice, both of reading the ſcriptures every ſabbath-day, and which *James* ſays was of old time, *Acts* xv. 21. and of interpreting them in the *Chaldee* language, is ſaid by *Maimonides* [b], to be from the times of *Ezra*: and ſo the *Jews* in the *Talmuds* [c], explain thoſe words in *Neh.* viii. 8. *So they read in the book, in the law of God*, this is the ſcripture; *diſtinctly*, this is the *Targum*; *and gave the ſenſe*, theſe are the verſes; in the *Jeruſalem Talmud*, it is, theſe are the accents; *and cauſed them to underſtand the reading*, this is the diſtinction of the accents; in the above *Talmud* it is, this is the *Maſoreth*; though it may be this practice might not obtain quite ſo ſoon, but rather ſome time before the coming of Chriſt; for the *Syrians* being mixed with the *Jews* after the times of *Antiochus Epiphanes*, their language began to be corrupted, and the *Syriac* dialect prevailed; and ſtill more ſo, when *Judea* came to be reduced into the form of a *Roman* province, and was reckoned to *Syria*, and was ſubject to the governours of *Syria*; by which means the *Syro-chaldean* language became the common dialect of the *Jews*, and was ſo in Chriſt's time; which made thoſe *Targums*, or *Chaldee* paraphraſes neceſſary: and by all accounts it appears, to have been the cuſtom in the ſynagogue, for the reader to read a verſe in the *Hebrew* tongue, and then for the interpreter to render it in *Chaldee*; and this he did from his own judgment, *viva voce*, and without book [d]: for though he might write for his own uſe, and for the private uſe of others, which might be the original of written paraphraſes; yet it does not appear that there were any committed to writing for publick uſe, until thoſe of *Jonathan ben Uzziel*, and *Onkelos* were compoſed, of which it will be neceſſary to give a particular account.

JONATHAN BEN UZZIEL, was a ſcholar of *Hillell* the elder; *Hillell* 'tis ſaid [e], had fourſcore ſcholars, and the greateſt of them was *Jonathan ben Uzziel*: this *Hillell* was prince, or preſident of the *Sanhedrim*, a *hundred* years before the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem* [f], and ſo thirty years before the birth of Chriſt; it was at the beginning of the reign of *Herod* [g], about three years after he began to reign, that he entered upon his preſidentſhip [h], and he governed *Iſrael* forty years [i]. This his ſcholar wrote a paraphraſe upon the prophets, as is agreed on all hands. The *Jews* extol it as a divine work, and ſay that the ſubſtance and doctrine of it, were handed down to him from the inſpired prophets *Zechariah*, *Haggai*, and *Malachi*; they ſpeak even of miraculous operations performed, whilſt it was compoſing [k], and that even angels themſelves pay a regard to it: now though theſe are extravagant flights of theirs, yet by how much the greater is the authority of this work with them, by ſo much the greater is its uſe to refute them, when it can be made uſe of for that purpoſe, and in favour of Chriſtianity, as it often may.

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[a] Miſn. Megilla, c. 4. §. 10. T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 115. 1. Megilla, fol. 3. 1. & Kidduſhin, fol. 13. 1. & 49. 1. Sanhedrin, fol. 94. 2.
[b] Hilchot Tephilla, c. 12. §. 10.
[c] T. Bab. Nedarim, fol. 37. 2. Megilla, fol. 3. 1. & T. Hieroſ. Megilla, fol. 74. 4.
[d] Maimon. Hilchot Tephilla, c. 12. §. 10, 11.
[e] T. Bab. Succa, fol. 28. 1. & Bava Bathra, fol. 134. 1.
[f] Juchaſin, fol. 19. 2. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 24. 2.
[g] Juchaſin ib.
[h] Shalſhelet Hakabala, fol. 18. 1.
[i] Juchaſin, fol. 19. 1.
[k] T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 3. 1. Bava Bathra, fol. 134. 1.

This is the only paraphraſe which is generally allowed to be written by him. The *Jews* ſay [l], that he attempted to write one upon the *Hagiographa*, but was forbidden by a voice from heaven, becauſe therein was the end of the Meſſiah, or the time of his coming. There is a paraphraſe upon the law which bears his name, but it is generally thought to be falſly aſcribed to him, becauſe of its ſtile, the traditional ſenſes of ſcripture which are in it, and other things which it is obſerved, ſhew it to be of a later date than the true *Jonathan*. Yet there are ſome, both *Jewiſh* [m] and Chriſtian [n] writers, that do affirm that he did write a *Targum* upon the law: and indeed it ſeems ſtrange, as *Elias Levita* [o] obſerves, might be objected, that he ſhould write a paraphraſe upon the prophets, and not begin with the law; and it is certain, that the traditional ſenſe of ſcripture obtained in his time; and the *Talmudiſts* may as well be thought to borrow from him, as that paraphraſt from them; and as to the main thing objected to, that there is mention made in it of the ſix orders of the *Miſnah*, and therefore muſt be of a later date than that, it may be obſerved, that *Hillell*, the maſter of *Jonathan*, firſt reduced the ſubſtance of the traditions of the elders into ſuch an order, as will be ſeen hereafter; and as for exotic words, and names of places of a more modern date, they may be interpolations ſince: the ſtile, I confeſs, is with me the greateſt objection; however, ſeeing it is not agreed upon, I ſhall not inſiſt upon its being his. I go on to conſider the paraphraſe of

ONKELOS, its antiquity and authority. This writer ſeems to be cotemporary with *Jonathan ben Uzziel:* it is affirmed, that they ſaw each other [p]. *Onkelos*, according to what is ſaid of him, was a diſciple of *Hillell*, as well as *Jonathan*; for it is aſſerted [q], that *Hillell* and *Shammai* would not teach him one word of the law until he was circumciſed; and he is frequently called *Onkelos* the proſelyte, and is ſaid to be proſelyted in their days [r]; and, by what is reported of him, he lived to the times of *R. Gamaliel*, the maſter of the Apoſtle *Paul*, who died about eighteen years before the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem:* for it is ſaid [s], that when *R. Gamaliel* died, *Onkelos* the proſelyte burned as much goods at his funeral, for the honour of him, as amounted to ſeventy *Tyrian* pounds of ſilver. His paraphraſe, which is only upon the five books of *Moſes*, is, for the moſt part, a ſtrict verſion of the *Pentateuch* into *Chaldee*, and is rather a mere tranſlation than a paraphraſe. It is written in a very clean ſtile, and neareſt to the Bible, which have made ſome think, that it is the oldeſt paraphraſe extant: and even Dr. *Owen* [t], who expreſſes himſelf with a great deal of warmth againſt ſome other paraphraſes, yet ſays of this, that "it keeps cloſe "to the text, for the moſt part, rendering the words in the ſenſe of the Holy Ghoſt; nor "does he purpoſely wander into old wives fables, as is uſual with all the reſt: led by "which reaſon alone, adds he, I conjecture, that this paraphraſt lived before the de"ſtruction of the city." His *Targum* is in great eſteem with the *Jews*, as appears from its being inſerted after the text of *Moſes*, verſe for verſe, in the ancient manuſcripts of the *Pentateuch*, and is in continual uſe with them. *Elias Levita* ſays [u], we are obliged, every week, to read a ſection (of the law) twice, once in the ſcripture, and once in the *Targum* of *Onkelos*. Indeed, they too much magnify this verſion, and make it equal with the ſacred ſcripture; the ſenſe of it they repreſent as traditionally handed down from mount *Sinai*, which being delivered from one to another, he received it from the mouth of *R. Eliezer* and *R. Jeſhua* [w]; and they ſay, that when he added any thing, it was not from his own judgment, but was given him from *Sinai* [x]; and, as before obſerved concerning *Jonathan*'s paraphraſe, the greater the authority of this verſion is with them, the more preſſing it is upon them, when it is uſed with advantage againſt them.

There are other paraphraſes of leſs authority, and of an uncertain age, which notwithſtanding have their uſefulneſs. The *Jeruſalem Targum* contains only fragments upon the *Pentateuch*, upon here and there a verſe, written in a very coarſe and different ſtile. The paraphraſes of the five books, *Eſther*, *Eccleſiaſtes*, *Solomon's Song*, *Ruth*, and the *Lamentations*, and of the *Hagiographa*, the books of the *Pſalms*, *Job*, and *Proverbs*, commonly aſcribed to *R. Joſe* the blind, it is not known by the *Jews*, *Elias Levita* ſays [y], who are the authors of them. Until of late years there were no *Targums* upon the two books of *Chronicles* made public: theſe were firſt publiſhed by *Beckius* in the years 1680, 1683, with notes upon them; and in the year 1715, *David Wilkins* publiſhed another edition of them from a *Cambridge* manuſcript. Some have thought that the author of theſe was *Jonathan ben Uzziel* [z]. The general uſe of theſe *paraphraſes* is to aſſiſt in the explication of words of difficult interpretation, and eſpecially ſuch as are but once uſed in the Bible; and for the confirming the ſenſe of many paſſages reſpecting the Meſſiah, and are uſeful in many controverſies, eſpecially with the *Jews*, *Papiſts*, and *Socinians*. That worthy and learned prelate, biſhop *Kidder* [a], expreſſes his ſenſe and judgment of them in the following manner: "I muſt own, that I have from my youth had a mighty veneration for "the *Chaldee* paraphraſts, and think them, next to the ſacred text, one of the choiceſt "treaſures the learned Chriſtians do enjoy: they are of marvellous uſe to us in our diſ-"putes againſt the *Jews*, not to ſay *Socinians* alſo. It is no hard matter to ſhew the "various and vaſt uſefulneſs and advantages, which we may receive by them; but this "would require a treatiſe by itſelf. I have always thought that we were obliged to bleſs "God for ſuch a treaſure." I proceed

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[l] T. Bab. ib. [m] R. Menachem apud Eliam Levitam in Prefat. Methurgeman. & Shalſhalet Hakabala, fol. 20. 1. Aſarias in Meor Enaim, c. 9. fol. 50. 2. [n] Galatin. de Arcan. Cathol. ver. l. 1. c. 3. Helvicus de Paraphr. Chald. c. 2. Schickard. Jus Regium, c. 1. p. 20. [o] Prefat. Methurgeman. [p] Shalſhalet Hakabala, fol. 19. 2. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 28. 2. [q] Zohar in Lev. fol. 30. 2. [r] Zohar in Gen. fol. 28. 4. Tzemach David ib. [s] T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 11. 1. [t] Theologoumena, p. 425. [u] Prefat. Methurg. [w] T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 3. 1. [x] Gloſſ. in T. Bab. Kidduſhin, fol. 49. 1. [y] Prefat. Methurgeman.

To give an account of the *Talmuds*, both *Jeruſalem* and *Babylonian*. The word *Talmud* ſignifies *doctrine*; and the work, ſo called, contains in it the ſum and ſubſtance of the doctrine of the law, according to the *Jews*: it conſiſts of two parts, the *Miſnah* and *Gemara*; the former is the text, the latter is made up of the diſputations and deciſions of the doctors upon it. I begin with

The MISNAH, which may be rendered *Deuteroſis*, or *Deuteronomy*, a ſecondary or repeated law; for the *Jews* ſuppoſe, that the law was repeated to *Moſes*, and an explanation of it given, which they call the oral law. The book that bears this name was compoſed by *R. Judah*, called the ſaint, who lived in the times of *Antoninus* the *Roman* emperor: he flouriſhed, according to *Buxtorf* [b], *Anno Chriſti* 150. It is ſaid, by the *Jews* [c], to be compiled one hundred and twenty years after the deſtruction of the temple: the occaſion of it was this; *R. Judah* obſerving that the *Jews* were in a ſtate of exile, and were ſcattered among the nations, and fearing leſt the traditional law, which had been handed down from their fathers, ſhould be entirely loſt in proceſs of time, collected together as much of it as he could himſelf; and wrote to the *Jews*, in all parts, to ſend to him what they could recollect they had received from their anceſtors; or had by them in papers and ſchedules; which being communicated to him, he put together, and being finiſhed, it was at once received by the *Jews*, as the *pandect*, or body of their civil and canon law. But now, though this body of laws was compiled, and put together in this form and order, it muſt not be thought that this was the riſe and date of the traditions, or laws themſelves, any more than the body of laws collected in *Juſtinian*'s time out of writers that were three hundred years before, can be imagined to be of no earlier date than his times. It is a clear caſe, that the materials of the *Miſnah* were in being before the compilation of it by this *Rabbin*; yea, that many of the traditions were *written* before for private uſe, and which was allowed. *Maimonides* [d] ſays, that "from the days "of *Moſes* our maſter, unto *R. Judah*, there was nothing compoſed which was taught "publickly, concerning the oral law; but in every age the head of the *Sanhedrim*, or "a prophet that was in that generation, might write for himſelf a memorial of the things "he heard from his maſter; and he taught them publickly by word of mouth, and "ſo every one wrote for himſelf." To which agrees what another writer ſays [e], "before *R. Judah*, no book was written concerning the oral law; but this before was the "law and cuſtom in *Iſrael*, the wiſe men received one from another, and taught the "*Miſnah* by word of mouth, as it was delivered; but the ſcholars made marks to their "traditions, and wrote them, leſt they ſhould forget them; but they hid them, and "called them, מגלת סתרים, *the volume of ſecrets*." And it is eaſy to trace theſe traditions of which the *Miſnah* conſiſts, from the times of the compiler of it, up to the times of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, and beyond them. *Egeſippus*, a writer of the ſecond century, and who was a converted *Jew*, is ſaid, by *Euſebius* [f], to make mention of ſeveral things which he had from the unwritten traditions of the *Jews*: and the ſame [g] writer obſerves of *Joſephus*, who lived in the firſt century, before and after the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, that being an *Hebrew* of the *Hebrews*, he very accurately related ſome things out of the *Jewiſh Deuteroſis*, or *Miſnah*, or rather their *Miſnic Baraita*, or exotic doctrine.

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[z] S. Clark apud Caſtell. Lex. Polyglott. col. 2613. Vid. Beckii Not. in Targ. 1 Chron. ii. 54.

[a] Preface to the 3d Part of his Demonſtration of the Meſſiah, p. 12. Ed. fol.

[b] Recenſio Oper. Talmud, p. 229.

[c] Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 30. 2. Shalſhalet Hakabala, fol. 23. 2

[d] Prefat. ad Yad Chazaka.

[e] R. Joſhua Hallevi Halichot Olam, c. 1. p. 12, 13.

[f] Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 4. c. 22.

[g] Demonſtrat. Evang. l. 6. p. 291.

trine. And ſome learned men[h], as *Bochartus*, *Van Dale*, and *Hudſon*, have been of opinion, that the *Hebrew* books *Joſephus* ſpeaks of, not only deſign the ſacred ſcriptures, but *Rabbinical* writings extant in his time. At the time *Veſpaſian* deſtroyed *Jeruſalem*, and burnt the houſes of it, there were in it, 'tis ſaid, four hundred and eighty ſynagogues, and in every one were a library and a ſchool; the library was for reading, or for the ſcripture, and the ſchool for the *Miſnah*[i]; and in one of theſe ſchools the Apoſtle *Paul* was brought up at the feet of *Gamaliel*; where he was taught the *Miſnah*, the law of the fathers, and became exceedingly zealous of their traditions, *Acts* xxii. 3. *Gal.* i. 14. and ſome have thought, that the *parchments* he left at *Troas*, 2 *Tim.* iv. 13. were of the ſame kind with the ſchedules, or volumes of ſecrets, in which the ſcholars of the wiſe men wrote the traditions they received from their maſters: and certain it is, that the traditions of the elders were in being in the times of Chriſt, which were riſen to a conſiderable bulk, which he takes notice of, and of which the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* were very tenacious, *Matt.* xv. 2—6. *Mark* vii. 3—13. Before the times of Chriſt lived *Hillell* and *Shammai*, the heads of the *Miſnic* ſchools, and who oppoſed each other in the ſenſe of the traditions, and added new ones. *Jerom*[k] ſays of them, “ *Sammai* and *Hillell* aroſe in *Judea* not “ long before the Lord was born; the firſt of which may be interpreted *a deſtroyer*, and “ the other *prophane*; becauſe by their traditions, and δευτερωσεις, *Miſnic* doctrines, they “ deſtroyed and defiled the precepts of the law.” And though theſe traditions were not committed to writing, ſo as to be publickly read, yet they were reduced into a compendium, and ranged into an order under certain heads, *viva voce*. Before the days of *Hillell*, 'tis ſaid[l], “ they read ſix hundred orders of the *Miſnah*, from the times of *Moſes*, “ on whom be peace, unto the ſons of *Bethira*; but *Hillell* put them into ſix orders by “ word of mouth, which comprehended the law henceforwards, that ſo it might not be “ forgotten; and this was done at the beginning of the reign of *Herod*.” And in ſuch a diviſion, and order, is the written *Miſnah* compiled. Long before theſe men were the ſects of the *Phariſees* and *Sadducees* in being; the latter had their name from *Sadock*, a diſciple of *Antigonus*, a man of *Socho*; which *Antigonus* was the ſucceſſor of *Simeon* the juſt, the laſt of *Ezra*'s great ſynagogue, who lived in the times of *Alexander* the great: theſe, among other things, denied the oral law, or *Miſnah*, rejected the traditions, and profeſſed to adhere to the ſcripture only, and therefore were called *Karaites*, or *Scripturarians*.[m] This diviſion was made in the times of the *Maccabees*, or *Haſmoneans*; ſo that it ſeems manifeſt, that before this ſect aroſe the traditionary ſenſe of ſcripture, and the law, generally obtained. And it may well be concluded, that the foundation of traditions was laid quickly after the times of *Ezra*, and the return of the *Jews* from the *Babyloniſh* captivity, which, by degrees, came to a conſiderable bulk before the times of Chriſt. The *Jews* indeed date their oral law from mount *Sinai*, and even prefer it to the written law, and ſay very extravagant things in favour of it; and even a very grave writer[n] of theirs obſerves, concerning the *Miſnah*, that “ the brevity of its words, the elegance of its compoſition, its beautiful order, the manner of handling things, with the diviſion of it, if a “ man looks upon them in a true light, muſt own, that fleſh and blood could never compoſe any thing like it, but by divine aſſiſtance.” However, this muſt be ſaid, that it is a work of ſingular advantage and uſefulneſs; by which we learn what were the ancient uſages and cuſtoms of that people, what the traditions of the elders the ſcriptures ſpeak of, what are agreeable to the word of God, and what not: and, as the learned *Wagenſeil*[o] obſerves, “ in the whole of it no blaſphemy is to be found, nothing in oppoſition to Chriſtians, even no fable, yea, nor any thing that is very foreign from reaſon: it contains only “ the mere traditions of the fathers, and is the body of the *Jewiſh* law, which formerly was “ not written:” and, for my own part, I am obliged to ſay, that no one book in the world, excepting the holy ſcriptures, has been of that uſe and ſervice to me, as this has been, together with the following.

The TALMUD, or *Gemara*, is the commentary on the *Miſnic* text, and conſiſts of the diſputations and decrees of the doctors concerning the ſenſe of the traditions, and is two-fold; the one is called the *Jeruſalem Talmud*, and the other the *Babylonian Talmud*.

The *Jeruſalem Talmud* is ſo called, either from the place where, or from the dialect in which it was written, or from the *Jews* in the land of *Iſrael*, for the ſake of whom it was compoſed. The author of it was *R. Jochanan*, preſident of a ſchool in the land of *Iſrael*, with the help of two of the diſciples of *R. Judah*, *Raf* and *Samuel*; and it was finiſhed about the year 230[p]: but being written in a coarſe ſtile, and nothing near ſo pure and clean as the *Miſnah*, and abounding with exotic words, was not had in great eſteem by the *Jews*. *Jerom*[q] ſeems to have reſpect to this when he ſays, "how many are the traditions "of the *Phariſees*, which to this day they call *Deuteroſies*, or *Miſnic* laws? and how many "doting fables I cannot turn over? neither will the bulk of the book admit of it;" ſince there is nothing of the fabulous kind in the *Miſnah*, nor is the bulk of that book large; not ſo large as a Bible, and is ſometimes publiſhed in almoſt as ſmall a compaſs as one of our Teſtaments; tho' indeed there is not much that can be called fable in the *Jeruſalem Talmud*.

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[h] Vid. Hudſoni Notas in Joſeph. Antiqu. l. 9. c. 10. §. 2.
[i] T. Hieroſ. Megilla, fol. 73. 4. & Cetubot, fol. 35. 3.
[k] Comment. in Iſaiam, l. 3. Tom. V. fol. 17. I.
[l] Juchaſin, fol. 19. 2. Shalſhelet Hakabala, fol. 18. 1.
[m] Maimon. in Miſn. Abot, c. 1. §. 3. Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 20. 2.
[n] R. Sangari, Sepher Coſri, par. 3. §. 67. p. 247, 248. Ed. Buxtorf.
[o] Prefat. ad Tela Ignea, p. 57.

The *Babylonian Talmud* was written for the ſake of the *Jews* in *Babylon*, and other parts, the former not meeting with general acceptance; this was not the work of a ſingle man, but of many ſucceſſively, who were employed for the ſpace of two or three hundred years in collecting the diſputations, deciſions, and ſenſe of the ancient doctors, about the civil and canon laws of the *Jews*: this was begun by *R. Aſe*, purſued by *Maremar*, and at length finiſhed by *R. Avina*, about the year of Chriſt 500[r]. There were 311 years between the *Miſnah*, and this, according to the computation of ſome[s]. This work does not contain the ſenſe of the compilers of it, or of the *Rabbins* in their age, but the deciſions of the ancient doctors, even of *Hillell* and *Shammai*, and others who were before the times of Chriſt. For, as the learned *Buxtorf*[t] well obſerves, tho' the *Talmudic* work was collected into one body ſome hundreds of years after Chriſt; yet the matter of it was diſputed in the famous ſchools of *Babylon*, *Sora*, *Nahardea*, and *Pombeditha*, and written down in books, partly before Chriſt, and partly in the time of Chriſt, and a little after. It is generally received by the *Jews*, and is of wonderful uſe in various reſpects. Says the learned *Braunius*[u], "tho' it is a work merely human, and not delivered by God, as "the *Jews* raſhly imagine; yet nevertheleſs, if ever any book was written beſides the ſacred ſcriptures, of great uſe, not only for the better underſtanding of tongues, eſpecially "the *Hebrew* and *Chaldee*, by which God has manifeſted ſalvation to us in his word, but "in order to ſearch out the antiquity, and the more hidden learning of the *Chaldeans*, *Syrians*, "*Egyptians*, and other people, their manners, rites, and cuſtoms, and all the myſteries both "of the *Jewiſh* religion and polity, and eſpecially thoſe things which make for a *clearer ex-* "*poſition of the Old and New Teſtament*, that, beyond all doubt, is the *Talmudic* work." And a little after he adds, "what ſlothfulneſs is that? what perverſeneſs? what ignorance? "to neglect, contemn, and even ſend to hell the *Talmudic* work; a work *moſt ancient*, which "is compoſed for this end only, that poſterity might have an expoſition of the law and "prophets? what is the *Miſnah* elſe but a continued expoſition of the law of *Moſes*, di-"geſted into certain books? what is the whole *Talmudic* work, but a moſt rich treaſure of "*Jewiſh* antiquities, rites, manners, and all myſteries, both of polity and religion, from the "times of *Alexander* the great, at leaſt, to the ſixth century, after the birth of Chriſt?" Of the ſame opinion was the learned *Wagenſeil*[w]; "we are are not afraid, ſays he, likewiſe to "defend this, that in the *Gemara*, as well as in the *Miſnah*, are many profitable things; nor can "any kind of learning be mentioned, which out of that may not be helped and adorned.— "Eſpecially the *Talmud* ſerves to illuſtrate the holy ſcriptures, and is of ſo great uſe truly "to underſtand the words, laws, manners, and inſtitutions of the *Jews* mentioned in them, "that there is no book in the world which can be of more ſervice that way."

MAIMONIDES, as he is commonly called, or *R. Moſes ben Maimon*, has abridged the whole *Talmud*, *Miſnah*, and *Gemara*, in a work of his which is called *Yad Chazaka*; which is written in pure *Hebrew*, in a clean, neat, and eaſy language, clear of that crabbed and rugged ſtile, in which the *Gemara* eſpecially is written; and free of all the knotty queſtions, and objections, and intricate diſputes of the doctors, and of every thing which has the appearance of fable: the whole contains nothing but the traditions of the *Jews*, their rites, cuſtoms, and uſages, civil and religious, digeſted in the beſt order and manner; and is the beſt ſyſtem of their civil and canon law that is extant: it is juſtly an admired work, and of excellent uſe. The *Jews* have a common ſaying concerning him, "from *Moſes* to *Moſes* "there is none like this *Moſes*." Of what ſervice this performance of his is for the better underſtanding the laws of *Moſes*, may be ſeen in thoſe extracts which our learned countryman, Mr. *Ainſworth*, has made out of it in his excellent commentaries upon the *Pentateuch*. And now, tho' this work was compiled about the beginning of the *thirteenth century*, yet inaſmuch as it is only a compendium of the *Miſnah* and *Talmud*, and a collection of the various traditions of the elders, and of the civil and canon law of the *Jews* in ages paſt, it is to be conſidered, as to the matter and ſubſtance of it, as of equal antiquity with the *Miſnic* and *Talmudic* writings; and he is as good a voucher for the ancient rites and uſages of the *Jews*, as can well be deſired, and whoſe fidelity is to be depended upon, as well as his judgment. In the laſt edition of the *Talmud*, his work is referred to in almoſt every page.

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[p] Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 31. 2.

[q] Epiſt. Algaſiæ, qu. 10. fol. 55. I. tom. III.

[r] Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 33. 1, 2. & 34. 1. Buxtorf. Rab. Biblioth. p. 425.

[s] Kabala R. Abraham ben David apud Ganz. ib. fol. 34. 1.

[t] Gram. Chald. & Syr. p. 402, 403.

[u] Selecta Sacra, l. 5. Exercitat. 2. §. 26, 27. p. 611, 612.

[w] Prefat. ad Tela Ignea, p. 63, 64, 65, 68. Vid. Confutat. Carmin. Lipman. p. 581.

The **RABBOT**, are ancient commentaries on the five books of *Moſes*, and upon five others, *viz. Solomon's Song*, *Ruth*, *Lamentations*, *Eccleſiaſtes*, and *Eſther*; and are written, partly in an hiſtorical, and partly in an allegorical and myſtical way. The author of them was *Rabba bar Nachmoni*, who lived about the year of Chriſt 300 [x]; or rather he may be ſaid to be a compiler of them, for he does not give his own ſenſe and interpretation of ſcripture, but collects together the explanations of the doctors, that had lived in preceding ages: for as a *Jewiſh* [y] chronologer obſerves, “though he was the head of “the univerſity at *Pombeditha* in *Babylon*, yet he gathered and collected together, all the “myſtical explications of the land of *Iſrael*, (*i. e.* of the doctors that had lived there) “and wrote them in order.” And ſo *Jarchi* [z] calls the firſt part of this work, an hiſtorical and myſtical interpretation of the land of *Iſrael*, *i. e.* of the *Rabbins* in it; ſo that this work, as to the antiquity of it, anſwers at leaſt to the three firſt ages of Chriſtianity.

The book of **ZOHAR**, is a *Cabaliſtic* commentary upon the *Pentateuch*; it is generally aſcribed to *R. Simeon ben Jochai*, as the author of it, who was a diſciple of *R. Akiba*, who died about fifty years after the deſtruction of the temple, and about the year of Chriſt 120 [a]; though ſome ſay he only began it, and his diſciples finiſhed it [b], which will make no very conſiderable difference in the antiquity of it; others affirm [c], that he wrote nothing of it, nor his ſon, but their diſciples diſciples wrote it, about ſixty years after his death; but then, as another writer who obſerves the ſame ſays [d], they compoſed it as they received it from him; ſo that the ſubſtance of it was his, being communicated by him, or his ſon, unto them; but by the ſtile of it, which is even and uniform, it does not ſeem to be the work of different perſons; and be it wrote by whomſoever, it is a collection, not only of the diſcourſes of *R. Simeon*, and his ſon *Eleazar*, and of their cotemporaries, but of the *Jewiſh* doctors, that lived in *Paleſtine*, both before and after the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*; it is of great fame and authority with the *Jews*, and is agreed on by them, that whatever in it does not diſagree with the *Talmud*, and what is not explained in the *Talmud*, and is explained there, ſhould be received as authentic [e]: and it is worthy of notice what the *Jews* remark, that there is no mention made of the *Talmud* throughout the book; from whence they conclude, that it muſt be written before it; and certain it is, that the ſtile of it does not at all ſavour of novelty, but ſeems to be as near to the ſtile uſed in the times of Chriſt, as any thing extant; but whether it is ſo ancient as they ſuppoſe, I will not ſay; yet evident it is, that in abundance of inſtances, there is a very great likeneſs in it, with the phraſeology of the New Teſtament. The editors of the *Sultzbach* edition of it, gave their readers reaſon to expect, there would be publiſhed by them in a ſhort time, *Zohariſtic Paralleliſms*, on the New Teſtament; whether ever ſuch a work was publiſhed, I know not; if it has been, I have not had the happineſs to have ſeen it, which might have been helpful to me in this work: to which may be added, that there are interſperſed in it ſeveral ancient treatiſes, or extracts out of them, or fragments of them; particularly the ancient book of *Bahir*, ſaid to be the moſt ancient of all the *Rabbinical* books; the author of it was *R. Nechunia ben Kanah*, who lived under the ſecond temple, before the deſtruction of it, 30 or 40 years before Chriſt, and was cotemporary with *Jonathan* the paraphraſt [f]: this ſame *Rabbi*, whom *Grotius* [g] calls *Nehumias*, is ſaid by him to be fifty years before Chriſt; and who reports that he ſhould ſay, that the time of the Meſſiah ſignified by *Daniel*, could not be deferred longer than thoſe fifty years. There are other writers of a later date, which are made uſe of by me, though ſparingly; as, *Jarchi*, *Aben Ezra*, *Kimchi*, *R. Abraham Seba*, and others; ſome learned men affect to ſmile, when ſuch are referred to, with reſpect to the uſe of a phraſe or a cuſtom, for the illuſtration of any part of ſcripture; but there will be no reaſon to indulge the ſneer, when it is conſidered, that there is very little difference in the cuſtoms and uſages of the *Jews*, in one age from another; they are a people tenacious of their rites and ceremonies; and beſides, the ſame book of traditions is the rule of their conduct now, which was in ages paſt; and it may be obſerved, that ſuch of their writers who are moſt converſant with their ancient books, frequently uſe words and phraſes peculiar to them.

The general objection to *Talmudic* and *Rabbinical* writings is, that they are ſtuffed with fables, idle tales, impertinencies, and fooleries; and nothing is more common, than to

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[x] Buxtorf. Rab. Biblioth: p. 326. [y] Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 32. 2. [z] Comment. in Gen. xlvii. 2. [a] Buxtorf. de Abbreviat. p. 190. [b] Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 30 1. [c] Shalſhelet Hakabala, fol. 23. 1. [d] Juchaſin, fol. 42. 1. [e] Ib. [f] Buxtorf. Rab. Biblioth. p. 319, 320. Juchaſin, fol. 63. 2. [g] De Veritat. Relig. Chriſt. l. 5. §. 14.

repreſent the *Rabbins* as a ſett of romantic and fabulous writers, as fooliſh, ſtupid, and dotards; and this is plentifully done for the moſt part, by ſuch who have never read them. That there are no fables in the *Talmud*, and other *Jewiſh* writings, I will not ſay; there were *Jewiſh* fables in the Apoſtle's time, *Tit*. i. 14. and if they can be thought to be the ſame as in the *Talmud*, it is a proof of the antiquity of it, as to that part of the things contained in it: however, I will venture to ſay, that many, if not moſt of the things that are reckoned fables, are not ſtrictly ſuch; but have ſomething ſignificantly ſolid and inſtructive in them. Mythology, or delivering things divine, moral, philoſophical, and hiſtorical, by way of fable, was much in uſe in the *Eaſtern* nations, and very early obtained, and particularly among the *Jews*; *Jotham*'s fable of the trees, of the olive-tree, fig-tree, vine, and bramble, diſcourſing together, is a very known one, and a flagrant inſtance of what is ſuggeſted; and from them, the *Greeks* and *Romans* received their *Mythic* way of ſpeaking and writing; *Pythagoras*, and other philoſophers, learnt from them, or the *Egyptians*, or both, the way of communicating their ſecrets by ſymbols, and enigma's. The fables of *Æſop*, which introduce birds and beaſts ſpeaking, are notorious to every one, and whom I greatly ſuſpect to be a *Jew* [h], and his fables *Jewiſh* ones; or if not, his way of writing ſeems to be taken from them: theſe, if conſidered only in their literal ſenſe, muſt be ridiculous and abſurd; and ſome have been ſo ſimple and fooliſh, as to underſtand them in no other way; and have fancied there was a time, when beaſts and birds could ſpeak; and have been confirmed in it, by the ſcriptural inſtance of *Balaam*'s aſs: but when a man is maſter of the morals of them, he perceives there's ſomething ſolid and inſtructive in them, and that they are the fruit and produce of a fine invention, and an ingenious mind. Many things, hiſtorical, moral, and civil, and others in natural philoſophy, and even as ſome think in chymiſtry, are delivered in fables by *Ovid*, in his *Metamorphoſes*; and why ſhould not the *Jewiſh* writers, be thought to take ſuch a method; partly by theſe pleaſant and artificial ſtories, to allure the more ſimple to reading, and partly to exerciſe the ingenious, in the ſearch of the hidden things of wiſdom and knowledge, as well as to relieve and recreate their minds, in hard and difficult ſtudies? And this is not my own private ſenſe, but the ſenſe, as of *Jewiſh* writers of the beſt note [i], ſo of many Chriſtian writers, as *Galatinus* [k], *Fagius* [l], *Dilherrus* [m], *Selden* [n], *Wulferus* [o], *Muhlius* [p], *Vorſtius* [q], *Gaffarellus* [r], *Buxtorf* [s], and others. I will not undertake to be an *Oedipus*, to unriddle the mythology of the *Jews*; but I'll ſingle out one or two inſtances, which appear, at firſt ſight, to be moſt monſtrous and abſurd, and attempt their explanation. They tell us [t] of the firſt man *Adam*, that when he was created, his ſtature was ſo high, that he reached from heaven to earth; that his body was ſo large, that it extended from one end of the earth to the other; or, as elſewhere ſaid [u], he looked from one end of the world to the other; and that when he rebelled againſt God, he laid his hand upon him, and leſſened him, and ſo reduced him to the bulk and ſize that men are generally of: but now, who are moſt to be laughed at, the authors of this fable, or thoſe who take it in the literal ſenſe, and laugh at them? Can any man in his ſenſes think, that any man, or ſett of men, could deviſe and tell ſuch a ſtory as this, in hopes of meeting with credit among any rational creatures? The ſenſe of the fable is, that the power of man at his firſt creation reached to all things under the heavens, and upon the earth; that he had dominion over the fowls of the air, the beaſts of the field, and the fiſhes in the ſea; and that his knowledge was extended to all creatures and things in the univerſe; but that when he ſinned againſt God, his authority over the creatures was weakened, and his knowledge leſſened: and ſo, in a few words, it repreſents the ſtate of man in innocence, his fall, and the ſad effects of it. Again, it is a very common thing with them to ſpeak of a feaſt that God will make for the righteous in the world to come; againſt which time the *Leviathan* is ſalted, and when a large ox, the *Behemoth* of *Job* will be ſerved up, and a fowl of an incredible ſize will be a part of the entertainment, and a deſart of the moſt delightful fruits of the garden of *Eden* will be ſet, and wine will be drank, which has been kept in the grape from the ſix days of the creation [w]. Now, tho' there might be ſome perſons who took all this in the groſs and literal ſenſe, as I have obſerved in the note on *Luke* xiv. 15. yet they ſadly miſtook the ſenſe of the authors of it; for as *Gaffarellus* obſerves [x], “ what madneſs is it to imagine, that God ſhould ſalt up this dragon, or whale, called *Leviathan*, and that it ſhould “ afterwards be kept till the laſt day, to make a feaſt for thoſe that ſhall then have no

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[h] Vid. Wolf. Heb. Biblioth. Vol. I. p. 135.

[i] R. Iſaac Sangari in Sepher Coſri, par. 3. p. 253, 254. Maimon. in Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 11. §. 1.

[k] De Arcan. Cath. ver. l. 1. c. 7.

[l] In Pirke Abot, c. 3. §. 16.

[m] In Atrio Ling. S. p. 89. apud Wagenſeil. Prefat. ad Tela Ignea, p. 61.

[n] Prolegomena de Succeſſ. ad Leg. Ebr.

[o] Theriaca Judaica, p. 369, &c.

[p] Prefat. ad Coccei Sanhedrin.

[q] Prefat. ad Pirke Eliezer.

[r] Unheard of Curioſities, par. 1. c. 2.

[s] Epiſt. Dedicat. ad Lex. Talmud.

[t] T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 12. 1. & Sanhedrin, fol. 38. 2.

[u] Shirhaſhirim Rabba, fol. 28. 3.

[w] See my notes on the *Targum* on Cant. viii. 2.

[x] Curioſities, ib. [illegible]

“ more need to eat? And what excellent entertainment ſhould God beſtow upon his “ children, when their chear ſhould only be the fleſh of a poudered dragon? This were “ one of the groſſeſt fooleries that could be, were there no other doctrine couched under “ this tradition, than what the bare letter affords; and who can poſſibly imagine the “ *Jews* to be a people ſo void of ſenſe, as ſimply to believe this, without looking after “ any other meaning of the thing?” However, they muſt be very ſtupid that ſo did believe. *Fagius*[y] directs to another ſenſe of this fable; “ by the feaſt, ſays he, under- “ ſtand, that chief and everlaſting happineſs, which the righteous ſhall enjoy in the world “ to come; then truly they ſhall eat and devour that *Leviathan*, that is, *ſatan*, when they “ ſhall ſee him with all his miniſters, thruſt into hell.” And to this agrees the ſenſe which *Menaſſeb ben Iſrael*[z] gives of the ſame: “ by theſe and the like, ſays he, are ſig- “ nified the ſpiritual delight, pleaſure, and joy of ſouls, which they ſhall be poſſeſſed of “ in that ſtate; for as here, wine uſually delights and exhilarates the minds of men, “ ſo likewiſe that ſpiritual ſtate ſhall fill the raiſed ones, with all joy everlaſting; but of “ theſe allegories of the *Rabbins*, and of the *Talmud*, adds he, my purpoſe is to treat elſe- “ where and ſeparately, in a ſingular tract;” but whether he ever publiſhed any thing of that kind, I do not know: and *Maimonides*[a] ſome hundred years before him declared, that he ſhould compoſe a treatiſe to explain every thing of this kind in the *Talmud*, and other writings; ſhewing, what were to be taken literally, and what parabolically; but this work, I ſuppoſe, was never finiſhed; or however, never ſaw the light: and who alſo obſerves[b], that the readers of ſuch writings, may be divided into three claſſes; the one ſort conſiſts of ſuch, who underſtand all things in a literal ſenſe, and believe them, though ever ſo abſurd, irrational, and impoſſible; which ſect he repreſents as miſerable and fooliſh, and to be pitied; the other is, of ſuch who alſo take things in the literal ſenſe, but reproach the wiſe men, and laugh at them for them; this claſs he makes to be more ſtupid than the former; and the third ſort is of them, and who are few, that conſider the internal ſenſe of things, and underſtand them in an enigmatical and parabolical way: and ſince therefore the *Jews* themſelves affirm, that theſe things which have the appearance of fable, are not to be underſtood in a literal, but in an allegorical ſenſe, it is an abuſe of them, and doing them a real injury, to interpret them otherwiſe: and as it would not be adviſeable for any man to repeat one of *Æſop*'s fables, unleſs he is maſter of the moral of it, that ſo he may inſtruct by it; and eſpecially to do it for the ſake of diverſion and laughter, unleſs he has a child upon his knee to amuſe; ſo neither is it adviſeable to relate a *Jewiſh* fable, merely to laugh at it; let ſuch conſider, at whoſe expence the laugh is; it would be much more becoming them, to endeavour to ſearch out the hiſtory, divinity, morality, or philoſophy of them, if they can, of themſelves; or read thoſe books directed to in the margin[c], with others which are written for that purpoſe; out of the laſt of which, the learned *David Millius* has produced an explication of two or three very remarkable fables, in the *Talmud*[d].

The *Jewiſh* writers are commonly ſet in a very odious light, as a parcel of ignorant and ſenſeleſs men, as devoid of common judgment and underſtanding: it is certain, their anceſtors were not ſuch, they excelled all other people in wiſdom and knowledge, as it is reaſonable to conclude they ſhould; ſince they had a peculiar revelation from God, and were directed by him in things natural, civil, and religious; and as they had the advantage above all mankind in the knowledge and worſhip of God, ſo in polity, morality, and natural philoſophy; all the wiſdom of the heathens, was derived from them; letters, hiſtory, arts and ſciences, literal and mechanic, owe their riſe or improvement to them. *Pythagoras*, *Plato*, and *Ariſtotle*, borrowed their beſt things from them; of which learned men may be convinced, by what *Joſephus*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Juſtin Martyr*, *Euſebius Cæſarienſis*, and others, who were maſters both of *Hebrew* and heathen philoſophy, have obſerved; and the *Engliſh* reader may be ſatisfied of the truth of this, by reading *Gale*'s *court of the Gentiles*: what men were there ever in any nation under the ſun, to be compared with *Abraham*, *Moſes*, *Solomon*, and *Daniel*? and even after the *Babyloniſh* captivity, and when they were greatly ſunk and degenerated, between that and the times of Chriſt, there were writers of conſiderable note among them, in divinity, morality, and hiſtory; as the books of *the Wiſdom of Solomon*, *Eccleſiaſticus*, the *Maccabees* ſhew; which though *apocryphal*, and not of divine inſpiration, have many things very valuable and uſeful in them, and are thought proper to be bound up with our bibles, and read by the common people. *Joſephus* and *Philo* the *Jew*, who wrote about the time of the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, are in great credit with learned men; though the former has his miſtakes, and many things of the mythic or fabulous kind; and the other, is a writer in the allegorical way; it may be the reaſon why theſe are had in eſteem, and not the *Miſnic* and *Talmudic* writers is, becauſe they wrote in *Greek*, and are more eaſily underſtood than the latter, whoſe language is difficult, and their ſtile crabbed and rugged: and ſince I have mentioned theſe two writers, I cannot but declare my opinion, that ſuch who make it their ſtudy to illuſtrate the New Teſtament with *Greek* authors, would do well to compare the *Greek* of theſe two writers, and alſo that of the *Septuagint*, with the New Teſtament; ſince their writings were neareſt the times of the New Teſtament writers, and they were *Jews*, as they were: but to proceed, though ſince the rejection of the Meſſiah and his Goſpel, the *Jews* are given up to a judicial blindneſs and hardneſs, yet it is only in thoſe things which relate thereunto; they are not deprived of their common ſenſe and reaſon; and many of them ſince, have been famous for their knowledge and learning, particularly in *phyſic* and *aſtronomy*; and ſome of them have made a very great figure in the courts of princes, and have been made uſe of in forming and executing political ſchemes. *Menaſſeh ben Iſrael*, who lived in the laſt century, was a man of conſiderable reading and learning, and held a correſpondence with many learned men among the Chriſtians of his day; and by his writings, appears to be well verſed in divinity, and in ancient and modern philoſophy: and though learning in all its parts, and even *Talmudic* learning itſelf, is now much neglected by that people, as one of their *Rabbins* here in *London*, complained to me ſome years ago, yet do we find that they want capacity? that they are men void of common ſenſe and underſtanding? do we not find them acute enough in their trade and commerce among us? what reaſon is there for this general calumny? are not they able to give an account of their own nation, their rites, cuſtoms, and uſages?

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[y] In loco ſupra citato.

[z] De Reſurrectione Mortuorum, l. 2. c. 19. p. 225.

[a] In Miſn. Sanhedrin ut ſupra. Vid. Pocock. Porta Moſis, p. 162.

[b] Ib. p. 144—147.

[c] Caphtor Uperah, Beer Haggolah, Deraſh Moſeh, Leb haarjeh, Ammudeah Shibgnah, Ollelot Ephraim.

[d] Prefat. ad Catalecta Rabbinica.

But be they as fabulous and as fooliſh, as unfaithful and wicked, as they can be ſaid, or thought to be, do they exceed the heathen writers, poets, hiſtorians, and philoſophers in ſuch a character? who were not only all of them idolaters, but many of them very profane perſons; whoſe writings are ſtuffed with lies, lewdneſs, and all manner of wickedneſs; yet many learned men have employed their time in the ſtudy of them, and have taken many things from them, for the illuſtration of the ſacred text; and how have they rejoiced, as if they had found a great ſpoil, when they have lighted upon any thing, that has ſerved to explain a word or phraſe in the New Teſtament, or ſettle and eſtabliſh the ſenſe of one; or could obſerve any uſage, rite, or ceremony among the heathens, to which it has been thought there might be an alluſion in it; though it has been, as *Braunius* obſerves[e], in a *Gentile Ariſtotle* or *Epicurus*; in an impure *Ariſtophanes*, *Martial*, *Lucian*, *Catullus*, *Petronius*, thoſe miniſters of wickedneſs; or in a lying *Homer*, *Heſiod*, and *Ovid*, thoſe makers of fables, and others of the ſame ſtamp: for my part, I do not object to ſuch a method of illuſtrating ſcripture; I am of opinion, that all kind of learning contributes to the knowledge of the ſcripture, and all ſhould be employed that way, and be ſubſervient to it: *Eraſmus* and *Beza* formerly, and of late *Elſner*, *Bos*, *Wolfius*, and *Raphelius*, have done much this way, to great profit and advantage. I don't diſlike the illuſtration of the paſſage in *Rev.* ii. 17. concerning the white ſtone, and new name in it, by thoſe lines of *Ovid*,

*Mos erat antiquis niveis atriſque lapillis*
*His damnare reos, illis abſolvere culpa.*

Though they are taken out of the *Fables* of his *Metamorphoſes*: all that I inſiſt upon is, that *Jewiſh* writers ſhould ſtand at leaſt upon an equal foot with Heathen ones, in things relating to their own language, rites, and cuſtoms; and this is no unreaſonable demand; and in it I have a very learned [f] ancient writer on my ſide: "The things of the *Hebrews* are to be taken from themſelves, and not elſewhere; as we learn the things of the *Phœnicians* from the *Phœnicians*; and the things of the *Egyptians* from the *Egyptians*; as alſo the things of the *Grecians* from thoſe that are moſt famous among them; and the things of Philoſophers from the Philoſophers, and not from thoſe who are unſkilful in philoſophy: ſo I reckon it muſt follow, ſays he, that the things of the *Hebrews* muſt be taken from their writings, and not elſewhere." And indeed it ſhould ſeem as if theſe ought to have the preference to Heathen writers; ſince they profeſs the worſhip of the one, true, and living God, believe a divine revelation, receive the books of the Old Teſtament, which many of their commentators have wrote, in many things, well upon; who when they write well, as it is confeſſed, none do better. And eſpecially, they ought ſurely to be regarded and credited, when what they ſay agrees with the New Teſtament, and ſerves to illuſtrate and confirm it; of which kind are the things produced in the following Expoſition.

Theſe men are indeed enemies to the Goſpel of Chriſt, but *fas eſt & ab hoſte doceri*; and the conceſſions of an enemy may be made uſe of to great advantage againſt him, and for the confirmation of truth: beſides, the people of the *Jews* are to be converted in the latter

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[e] Selecta Sacra, l. 5. Exerc. 2. §. 27. p. 611, 612.

[f] Euſeb. Evangel. prepar. l. 7. c. 8. p. 306.

latter day, and it is worth our while to be at pains to convince them of their errors, to urge their ancient writings againſt them, and in favour of Chriſtianity, to retort their own arguments upon them, to recommend the reading of the New Teſtament unto them, by ſhewing the argreement of its ſtile with their writings, and by proving facts in it out of them, and ſo remove their prejudices againſt it; but if nothing of this kind can be hoped for from ſuch a method of proceeding, ſurely it muſt be of uſe to us Chriſtians. Is it of no moment and importance to the cauſe of Chriſtianity, that the *Jews* themſelves allow that there was ſuch a perſon as Jeſus of *Nazareth*, about the time he is ſaid to live; that the names of his parents were *Joſeph* and *Mary*; that he was born in *Bethlehem* of *Judah*; that he was for ſome time in *Egypt*; that he preached very much in *Galilee*; that he wrote miracles, cleanſed lepers, *&c.* that he rode to *Jeruſalem* on an aſs, and was put to death by the *Jews* at the time of the paſſover? All which, with other things related by them, agree with the evangelic hiſtory, and confirm it: they own there was ſuch a perſon as *John* the *Baptiſt*, who adminiſtered baptiſm in thoſe times; they give us the names of ſeveral of the diſciples of Chriſt, whom they allow to have had the gift of healing diſeaſes. Is it of no uſe to us, nor any ſatisfaction to our minds, to obſerve from the *Jews* themſelves, that there were ſuch traditions among them the New Teſtament ſpeaks of, and condemns? and that we are able, not only to ſhew in the groſs that there were ſuch things as the traditions of the elders, but that we can produce the particular ones our Lord mentions, and ſuch cuſtoms and uſages as are referred to by him and his Apoſtles? beſides, are there not many, not only words and phraſes, but things, which would have been morally impoſſible to underſtand in an ordinary way, without the aſſiſtance of *Jewiſh* learning? What could we have known of their ſynagogues, and ſynagogue-worſhip? of the ſeveral ſects of religion among them? of their *Sanhedrim*, and other courts of judicature? of their ſcourging with forty ſtripes ſave one? of their phylacteries? of being uncircumciſed after circumciſion? of a ſabbath-day's journey, with a multitude of other things, as will appear by the following expoſition? Upon ſuch conſiderations as theſe many great men have declared their ſenſe of the great uſefulneſs of *Jewiſh* writings for the underſtanding of the New Teſtament: and that it may appear I am not alone in my ſentiments on this head, I ſhall produce the teſtimonies of ſeveral of them.

Our countryman Mr. *Hugh Broughton*, a man of great knowledge in the languages, and eſpecially in the *Eaſtern* languages, thus expreſſes himſelf: "The ſpeech of the New
" Teſtament, in every part, doth ſhew clearly that God is the author of it, inſomuch that
" the *Jews* might know by the ſtile that it came from heaven: in it we ſhall find the
" phraſe, firſt, of the common *Greek* writers, ſecondly, of the *ſeventy-two* interpreters,
" thirdly, of the *Talmudicks*, and fourthly, words made by the Apoſtles.——There is
" no other way to make Chriſtians ready in the Bible, but by handling the Goſpel by
" *Talmudicks*, to whoſe tenor of ſtudy all the New Teſtament's ſtile is bent.———The
" New Teſtament, ſpeaking to *Jews*, is applied to their manner of ſpeech, and plain,
" to a *Talmudic*, where it is hardeſt to us. The holy Spirit uſeth the unlearned *Jews*—
" in Scribes learning, in writing for Scribes, to paſs them in their *Talmudical* ſcience;
" every part of the New Teſtament ſheweth this to *Talmudicks*; and St. *Paul*, in ſchool-
" education, heard *Gamaliel* their doctor, and frameth all that Epiſtle which he wrote to
" them to meet with their *Talmudicks* [g]." And the Evangeliſt *Matthew*, he calls the *Talmudick* of *Talmudiſts*.

The learned *Buxtorf* [h] ſays of the *Talmud*, that there are in it many things of great moment, to illuſtrate in a very remarkable manner, an infinite number of places in the New Teſtament, as to words, phraſes, and hiſtory.

*Cocceius* [i], ſpeaking of the traditions of the *Jews*, has theſe words: "theſe are of uſe
" either to the fuller underſtanding of the law of *Moſes*, as ritual, judicial, and moral; or
" for the illuſtration of foreign laws; or to give light into the hiſtories of *Jewiſh* affairs;
" or which is greateſt of all, for the confirmation of the evangelic hiſtory; where much
" mention is made of *Jewiſh* cuſtoms, laws, and traditions.——the knowledge of the
" *Talmud*, and of *Talmudic* writings, affords very remarkable light for the illuſtration of the
" New Teſtament.——Seeing that language was in uſe in the age of Chriſt, and his
" Apoſtles, which is with the *Talmudiſts*; and they ſpoke in no other, as is evident by
" clear arguments and teſtimonies of learned men: the comparing of that language with
" the phraſeology of the New Teſtament, muſt needs contribute much for the illuſtration
" of it. Verily, if any one would but try to tranſlate places into *Hebrew*, he will find
" that in many, *Talmudic* words and phraſes are nearer than Bible ones."

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[g] Works, Tom. II. p. 416, 422, 693, 707.

[h] Epiſt. Dedicat. ad Lex. Talmud.

[i] Prefat. ad Sanhedrin & Maccot.

*Rhenferdius*[k] begins a very learned diſſertation of his after this manner: "Seeing all they deſerve praiſe among Chriſtians, who being furniſhed with various ſorts of learning, employ their thoughts and cares for the illuſtration of the ſacred ſcripture, I know none that better deſerve it than thoſe, who being ſkilled in the *Hebrew* language and laws, from thence, as from its proper ſeat, borrow and hold forth light to the hiſtory and phraſeology of the New Teſtament. *Greece* has much, *Rome* alſo, formerly miſtreſs of the nations, has much; which being neglected, or not rightly enough underſtood, in vain you labour to underſtand the New Teſtament; yet as much as that is, which indeed is great, it is but as a drop from the ocean, in compariſon of thoſe things which the monuments of the *Hebrews* pour in for the ſame uſe, not by buſhels, and meaſures of three buſhels, but by whole barns full."

*Muhlius*[l], in an apology of his for the ſtudy of the *Talmud*, delivers himſelf in the following manner: "The *Talmudic* writings are of great moment for the underſtanding of the ſacred ſcripture; for in the verſions of the holy Bible, how many faults and errors are there ariſing from ignorance of things in the *Talmud?* Such an ignorant interpreter eaſily ſlips, and alſo leads others by the ſame precipices. What will he do in the Old Teſtament, where all things are full of *Talmudic* argument? What in the New? where indeed the context is *Greek*, the words, I confeſs, are *Greek*, and the types are *Greek*, but the ſtile is plainly *Jewiſh*, and full of *Talmudic* ſavour; ſo that the *Talmudic* volumes may ſeem like a verbal commentary upon the New Teſtament, which no one will deny but he that is determined to maintain an hypotheſis." And after giving many inſtances in the New Teſtament, ſhewing and proving what he had aſſerted, he further adds; without the reſolution and ſolid explanation of the *Talmudiſts*, theſe things would remain entirely inexplicable, and be only known to ſuch who have learned them from the *Miſnic* and *Talmudic* fountains: and hence it is, that the moſt learned men who know this full well, have employed their chief ſtudies this way, that from *Talmudic* and *Rabbinical* writings they might moſt happily illuſtrate the books of the New Teſtament; and then particularly mentions *Druſius*, *Grotius*, *Capellus*, *Cartwright*, and *Lightfoot*.

*Surenhuſius*[m] relates, what by experience he had found to be true, how that in his younger days he applied himſelf to the reading of *Greek* authors for the better underſtanding of the New Teſtament; but did not receive that advantage from them he expected, the ſtile and language not agreeing, by reaſon of the diſtance between the writers of the New Teſtament, and them: and he goes on to inform his readers, how when he came to engage in *Hebrew* ſtudies, they not only led him in a right way to the underſtanding of the Old Teſtament, but beyond his expectation gave him no ſmall light into the more difficult paſſages of the New Teſtament; and for which, when he rightly conſidered the thing, he found there was good reaſon, ſince the writers of it were *Hebrews*, who had had an *Hebrew* maſter, whoſe doctrine they had heard both in the ancient *Hebrew* language uſed in Bible exercitations among the doctors, and in the *Syriac* dialect, then common in converſation, and in ſermons to the unlearned.

*Wagenſeil*[n], I have before obſerved, affirms, that there is no book in the world, that can be of that ſervice for the illuſtration of the holy ſcriptures, as the *Talmud*; and adds, "that the inſtitutions (or traditions) which are mentioned in the *Talmud*, did certainly of old obtain among the *Jews*, the authority of the New Teſtament openly convinces us; in which many of them are found, in the moſt expreſs words; wherefore *John Lightfoot* an *Engliſhman*, a man well verſed in *Hebrew* literature, performed a laudable work, in explaining the four Evangeliſts; when out of the *Talmud* chiefly, he ſtudied to bring light to the ſacred writers, and to illuſtrate ſome of the more obſcure ſayings in them: that laborious work I highly value, for the whole is filled with deep learning, and furniſhes out many things, of which no interpreter ever thought, nor could think of, without ſkill in the *Talmud:* would to God he had lived, to handle all the ſacred books in the ſame manner; but ſeeing death has prevented it, it would be a deſireable thing, if another, by the way ſhowed him, would endeavour to go on with it to the end; who would certainly gain great favour and thanks, among all thoſe that have a juſt value for ſuch things." More teſtimonies of this kind might have been produced, but theſe may ſuffice; nor ſhould I have mentioned theſe, but to ſhow that I am not ſingular in my opinion and ſentiments, concerning the manner of explaining paſſages in the New Teſtament, out of *Jewiſh* writings; and that this is not a raſh ſtart and ſally of mine, which ſome, who are utter ſtrangers to theſe things, might have imagined, but is what has been thought of,

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[k] Diſſert. 1. de decem otioſis Synagog. Theſ. 1. p. 1, 2.

[l] Prefat. Apologet. pro ſtudio Thalmudico ad Coccei Titul. Sanhedrin & Maccot.

[m] Prefat. ad Miſnam.

[n] Prefat. ad Tela Ignea, p. 65, 66.

well weighed, conſidered, and approved of by men of the greateſt figure, and with whom I am not be named.

What ſome learned men on the other ſide of the queſtion have affirmed, is monſtrous and ſhocking, that whatever the *Jews* have delivered in their *Miſnah* and *Gemara*, all the wiſdom of the ancient *Hebrews*, the traditions of the elders, whatever they have in them concerning their antiquities, rites, and cuſtoms, eſpecially thoſe which give any light to the New Teſtament, are taken from the New Teſtament itſelf, from the ſayings of Chriſt, and his Apoſtles, from the fathers, and from chriſtian apoſtates; and that Chriſt, and his Apoſtles, have no reſpect to the rites, manners, and cuſtoms of the *Jews*, in uſe before their time; and therefore nothing can be learned out of the *Talmud* to expound places in the New Teſtament. *Braunius*[p] has given a full anſwer to all this with a great deal of ſpirit and juſt reaſoning. I fret at my heart, ſays he, to ſee men, meaning particularly *Voſſius* and *Owen*, otherwiſe well verſed in *Greek* and *Latin* authors, teach things ſo abſurd and manifeſtly falſe, with ſo much boldneſs; and they muſt pardon me, if I ſay with ſo much ignorance, for I ſay the truth: whoever has but juſt dipped into the *Miſnah* and *Gemara*, and other ancient books, will at once obſerve, that they that aſſert ſuch things, are moſt ignorant of *Jewiſh* antiquity, and have never read the above writings; and have only took ſome things, and theſe often both bad and falſe, out of the obſervations of others. He rightly takes notice of the *Jews* implacable hatred of Chriſt, his apoſtles, and the fathers of the Chriſtian church, who had their writings in the utmoſt abhorrence and deteſtation, and would never borrow any thing from them. He obſerves, that this is as ridiculous as to ſuggeſt, that the *Greek* and *Roman* writers, took out of the New Teſtament, what they ſay concerning *Cæſar Auguſtus*, *Cyrenius*, *Pontius Pilate*, and other things which relate to the *Roman* hiſtory; that it is equally as great a piece of madneſs, to imagine that the *Jews* took what they have written concerning the rites and cuſtoms of their own nation, out of the New Teſtament, as it would be to ſuppoſe that the Heathen writers have taken from thence what they ſay concerning the *Olympic* games, and other cuſtoms alluded to by the Apoſtles. He expoſes, in a very juſt manner, the folly of ſuch an aſſertion, by obſerving that the *Jews*, according to it, would have known nothing of ſynagogues in *Judea*; nor ever thought of phylacteries, and the enlarging the borders of their garments; of paying tithes of mint, aniſe, cummin, and other herbs; of a ſabbath-day's journey; of drawing on the foreſkin after circumciſion; and of the law of ſcourging with forty ſtripes, ſave one; nor perhaps would they have ſworn by heaven and earth, by *Jeruſalem*, by the temple, and by their head, or have made uſe of pipers and mourners at funerals, or forbid the plucking ears of corn on the ſabbath-day, except they had met with theſe things in our New Teſtament; all which would be monſtrouſly ridiculous to ſuppoſe; and yet no more ſo than what theſe writers ſuggeſt.

Some may think I have made too much uſe of *Jewiſh* authorities in the following expoſition; my concern is, that I have made no more uſe of them; and that my reading and obſervations have not furniſhed me with more materials of this kind, which I am very well ſatisfied, might be obtained from them; for which reaſon I ſhould have choſe to have deferred the publication of it, hoping I might be able, by ſuch means, to give further light to ſome paſſages of ſcripture; and only the importunity of my friends, and the conſideration of the uncertainty of life, have prevailed upon me to let it go into the world as it is. I have uſed all diligence, both from my own reading, and from the obſervations of others, to make it as perfect in this way as I could; and from none have I had ſo much help and aſſiſtance as from the great Dr. *Lightfoot*, who has broke the ice for me, and pointed out the way in which I ſhould proceed, as *Wagenſeil* obſerves. On conſulting my *Adverſaria*, and comparing my notes with what the doctor has obſerved, I found ſome things taken notice of which he has publiſhed: and indeed, it can hardly be thought it ſhould be otherwiſe in reading the ſame writings, and with the ſame view; but I have not thought proper to drop them on that account, but have rather choſe to make uſe of others produced by him, unobſerved by me, in order to make this work as complete as I could, and which lovers of *Hebrew* learning will thank me for; tho' the reader will not be able to obſerve ſcarce any thing but what is either corrected, improved, or confirmed. And as for thoſe who may not have a taſte for theſe things, I hope they will find without them a ſatisfactory expoſition of the ſacred text; and I may further obſerve, that citations of this ſort will not appear ſo frequently and largely in the other parts of the work, as in the firſt volume. It is very poſſible, that my fondneſs for this kind of literature may have betrayed me into ſome weakneſſes, which I hope will be overlooked. And no doubt but there are miſtakes made by me in this ſort of learning itſelf, which men of candour and ingenuity, eſpecially ſuch who know the difficulty and intricacy of ſuch ſtudies, will not bear hard upon me for, but gently correct. Some of my readers may be offended with ſome things they may meet with in the citations out of *Jewiſh* writings, not being uſed to ſuch reading; and this is an infelicity that attends teſtimonies produced out of both Heatheniſh and *Jewiſh* authors, that there is often ſomething not pleaſing and grateful to Chriſtian ears; I have, as much as I could, pared off what might not be ſo agreeable; but ſometimes it has been neceſſary to recite more than is eligible, in order to finiſh the ſentence, and complete the ſenſe; and the reader ſhould obſerve, that he is no further to regard the citation, than as it concerns that for which it is made, the phraſeology, hiſtory, rite, or cuſtom referred unto.

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[p] Selecta ſacra, l. 5. Exercitat. 2. p. 617, 621---626.

As for the *Oriental* verſions I have chiefly made uſe of in this work, they are thoſe that are publiſhed in the *London Polyglott* Bible; and I have, for the moſt part, followed the tranſlations of them in it, chuſing rather that my readers ſhould truſt to the labours of thoſe learned men concerned in that work, than to that little knowledge and ſkill I have in thoſe languages. The various readings of the text I have not entered into a critical examination of; I have only ſelected ſome of the moſt material ones, which differ moſt from the commonly received reading, or agree with the *Vulgate Latin* and *Eaſtern* verſions, or furniſh out an uſeful obſervation. Nor need the reader be uneaſy, leſt the authority of the ſcripture ſhould be weakened, and become doubtful by theſe different readings: for as a learned man of our own nation has obſerved[a], "it is an invincible "reaſon for the ſcriptures part, that other eſcapes ſhould be ſo purpoſely and infinitely let "paſs, and yet no ſaving or ſubſtantial part at all ſcarce moved out of its place. To ſay "the truth, theſe varieties of readings in a few bye-places do the ſame office to the main "ſcripture, as the variations of the compaſs to the whole magnet of the earth; the mari-"ner knows ſo much the better for theſe how to ſteer his courſe."

I have nothing more to obſerve, only that I have here and there taken notice of the more material objections of the *Jews* to the writings of the New Teſtament, and have given a ſhort anſwer to them; and the rather, as they may partly ſerve to remove their prejudices againſt them, and partly to confirm Chriſtians in them; ſo likewiſe to obviate the exceptions of deiſts, who join with them in them, and make uſe of the ſame, and improve them to the ſame purpoſe.

As to my religious principles from which I am denominated by men, they are pretty much known in the world by the writings I have already publiſhed, and my notes on the ſeveral parts of ſcripture will be found to correſpond with them. I have ſtudied conſiſtency with truth, and with myſelf; and I hope nothing will appear contradictory to the form of ſound words, and the analogy of faith, or be yea and nay, but harmonious, uniform, and all of a-piece.

And now I do, in the moſt ſincere and grateful manner, give thanks to God for that meaſure of health and ſtrength of body, and for all the gifts and graces of his Spirit afforded me, by which I have been enabled to go through this arduous work thus far, and would be depending upon him for freſh ſupplies of grace and ſtrength for the publication of the whole. I moſt freely acknowledge, that all I have of nature, literature, and grace, I have from him, from whom every good and perfect gift comes; I have nothing but what I have received; nor would I glory as though I had received it not: and if I have wrote any thing contrary to the divine perfections, or what may reflect any diſhonour on the dear name of Jeſus, or be any way injurious to the truth, as it is in him, or be detrimental to the intereſt of pure and undefiled religion, I do moſt humbly intreat forgiveneſs at the hands of God: I am ſure I have not wrote any thing of this kind knowingly, and on purpoſe. To conclude, I do moſt earneſtly deſire and implore the bleſſing of God upon theſe labours of mine, that they might be uſeful to many in reading them, that their minds may be enlightened, their faith may be eſtabliſhed, their knowledge of divine things may be increaſed, and God may be glorified.

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[a] J. Gregory's Preface to his Works.

## A

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*Mr.* Clay, *Bookſeller of* Daventry
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*The Rev. Mr.* John Conder, *of* Cambridge
*The Rev. Mr.* Edward Cook, *of* Perſhore
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*Mrs.* Cook, *of* Northampton
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*Mr.* Thomas Croazdell, *of* Chatham
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*Mr.* James Davies, *of* Pontpool
*The Rev. Mr.* Henry Davis, *of* Northampton
*The Rev. Mr.* Thomas Davis, *of* Fairford
*Mr.* Thomas Davis, *of* Northampton
*Mr.* Lewis Davis
*Mr.* Job Davis
*Mr.* Matthew Davis
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*Mr.* Thomas Day, *of* Northampton
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Robert Turner, *Eſq;*
*The Rev. Mr.* Daniel Turner, *of* Reading
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## Y

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*Mr.* Thomas Yeoman, *of* Northampton

* * *

# AN
# EXPOSITION
# OF THE
# New Teſtament.

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## The Goſpel according to St. MATTHEW.

THE ſubject of this book, and indeed of all the writings of the New Teſtament, is *The Goſpel.* The *Greek* word Ευαγγελιον ſignifies a joyful meſſage, good news, glad tidings of good things; ſuch as Chriſt was anointed to preach, the Angels brought to the ſhepherds, and the Evangeliſts, Apoſtles, and Miniſters of Chriſt publiſhed to the world. *Iſa.* lxi. 1. and lii. 7. *Luke* ii. 10. And ſuch is the account given by this inſpired writer, of the incarnation, life, actions, miniſtry, miracles, ſufferings and death of Jeſus Chriſt; whereby peace and reconciliation, pardon and righteouſneſs, atonement and redemption, life and ſalvation are obtained for loſt, periſhing ſinners. The *Jews*, to whom the meſſage of grace was firſt ſent, and among whom the Goſpel was firſt preached, having deſpiſed and rejected it; they and their poſterity, in alluſion to the word *Evangelion*, moſt wickedly and blaſphemouſly call the whole New Teſtament, און גליון or עון גליון *Aven Gilion* [a], a *revelation* or *volume of iniquity* and *vanity*; but *bleſſed are the people that know the joyful ſound*, Pſal. lxxxix. 15.

The writer of this Goſpel, *Matthew*, who alſo was called *Levi* in *Luke* v. 27. was by occupation a publican, or tax-gatherer, and was in his employ when Chriſt called him by his grace. He was one of the twelve Apoſtles ſent forth by Chriſt to preach the Goſpel of the kingdom, *Matth.* x. 3. and was honoured to be the firſt of the writers of the New Teſtament, and to be the firſt publiſher therein of the good news of the incarnate Saviour; and was a wonderful inſtance of the rich and ſovereign grace of God. Though he was employed in collecting the *Roman* tax, yet he was of *Jewiſh* extract; as appears from his being called the ſon of *Alpheus*, Mark ii. 14. and from his name *Matthew Levi*; for as the latter, ſo the former is an *Hebrew* name. The *Jews* ſay [b] one of the diſciples of *Jeſus* was called מתאי, *Matthai* or *Matthew*: his name ſignifies a *gift* or *given*; he was one of thoſe the Father had given to Chriſt, and was kept by him, when the ſon of perdition was loſt, *John* xvii. 6, 9, 11, 12.

It may not be improper to enquire in what language this Goſpel was written. The ancient Chriſtian writers were generally of opinion, that *Matthew* wrote it in *Hebrew*; *Papias* and [c] *Pantænus* were of this mind, as alſo *Irenæus* [d], *Origen* [e], *Euſebius* [f], *Athanaſius* [g], *Epiphanius* [h], and *Jerom* [i]; and it is aſſerted in the titles of the *Arabic* and *Perſic* verſions, and at the end of the *Syriac* verſion of this Goſpel, that it was written in that language; and this opinion is eſpouſed by *Grotius* and *Hammond*, though juſtly exploded by others; for what has been publiſhed by *Munſter*, *Mercer*, *Hutter* and *Robertſon*, are tranſlations, made by themſelves or others, and of no antiquity: and ſince *Hebrew* and *Syriac* words are interpreted in this Goſpel, ſee chap. i. 23. and xxvii. 33, 46. which would not have been done, had it been written in either language; and ſince *Matthew* generally follows the *Septuagint* verſion in the paſſages cited by him out of the Old Teſtament; and ſince the *Hebrew* language was not generally known at that time to the common people, only to the learned; for the law and the prophets, when read in the ſynagogues in that language, required an interpreter; and ſince the *Greek* tongue was the language more commonly ſpoken, and the reſt of the Evangeliſts wrote in *Greek*, and the Goſpel was deſigned for the *Gentiles* as well as the *Jews*; it is moſt reaſonable to conclude that this Goſpel alſo was wrote in *Greek*; whereby that ancient prophecy was fulfilled, at leaſt in part, *God ſhall enlarge* or *perſuade Japheth, and he ſhall dwell in the tents of Shem*, Gen. ix. 27. the Goſpel being publiſhed in the language of *Japheth*, the *Greek* language, which the *Jews*, the poſterity of *Shem*, now underſtood; agreeable to which the *Talmudic* writers interpret the prophecy; ſays [k] *Bar Kaphra*, mentioning the above words, “They ſhall ſpeak בלשונו של יפת *in the language of Japheth*, in the tents of *Shem*;” or, “the words of the law ſhall be ſpoken in the language of *Japheth*, in the midſt of the tents of *Shem* [l].” *R. Jochanan* [m] explains them thus: “דבריו של יפת *the words of Japheth* ſhall be in the tents of *Shem*; and ſays *R. Chiya ben Aba*, the ſenſe of it is, The beauty of *Japheth* ſhall be in the tents of *Shem*.” Which the gloſs interprets thus: “The beauty of *Japheth* is the language of *Javan*, or the *Greek* language, which language is more beautiful than that of any other of the ſons of *Japheth*.” The time when this Goſpel was written is ſaid [n] by ſome to be in the *eighth* or *ninth*, by others, in the *fifteenth* year after the aſcenſion of Chriſt, when the Evangeliſt had received the extraordinary gifts of the ſpirit, among which was the gift of tongues; and when the promiſe of Chriſt had been made good to him, *John* xiv. 26.

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[a] T. Bab Sabbat. fol. 116. 1. Vet. Nizzachon. p. 15, 39, 87, 94, 137, 186. Ed. Wagenſeil.

[b] T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 43. 1.

[c] Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccl. l. 3. c. 39. p. 113. Vid. ib. l. 5. c. 8. p. 172. c. 10. p. 175. & l. 6. c. 25. p. 226.

[d] Adv. Hæreſ. l. 3. c. 1.

[e] In Matt. Tom. 1. p. 203. Ed. Huet.

[f] Eccl. Hiſt. l. 3. cap. 24. p. 95.

[g] Synopſ. ſacr. Script. p. 154. Vol. 2.

[h] Contra Hæreſ. l. 1. Hær. 29 & 30.

[i] Catalog. Script. Eccleſ. fol. 90. Tom. 1. ad Hedib. fol. 46. Tom. 3.

## CHAP. I.

Ver. 1. THE *book of the generation of Jeſus Chriſt*, &c.] This is the genuine title of the book, which was put to it by the Evangeliſt himſelf; for the former ſeems to be done by another hand. This book is an account, not of the divine, but human generation of Chriſt; and not merely of his birth, which lies in a very little compaſs; nor of his genealogy, which is contained in this chapter; but alſo of his whole life and actions, of what was ſaid, done, and ſuffer'd by him. It is an *Hebrew* way of ſpeaking, much like that in *Gen.* v. 1. and which the *Septuagint* render by the ſame phraſe as here; and as that was the book of the generation of the firſt *Adam*, this is the book of the generation of the ſecond *Adam*. The *Jews* call their blaſphemous hiſtory of the life of Jeſus, ספר תולדות ישו, *The book of the generations of Jeſus* [o].

This account of Chriſt begins with the name of the Meſſiah, well known to the *Jews*, *the ſon of David*; not only to the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, the more learned part of the nation, but to the common people, even to perſons of the meaneſt rank and figure among them. See *Matt.* ix. 27. and xii. 23. and xxii. 42. Nothing is more common in the *Jewiſh* writings, than for בן דוד *the ſon of David* to ſtand alone for the Meſſiah; it would be endleſs to cite or refer to all the teſtimonies of this kind; only take the following [p], “*R. Jochanan* ſays, in the generation in which בן דוד *the ſon of David* comes, the diſciples of the wiſe-men ſhall be leſſened, and the reſt, their eyes ſhall fail with grief and ſorrow, and many calamities and ſevere decrees ſhall be renewed; when the firſt viſitation is gone, a ſecond will haſten to come. It is a tradition of the *Rabbins* (about) the week (of years) in which בן דוד *the ſon of David* comes, that in the firſt year this ſcripture will be fulfilled, *Amos* iv. 5. *I will rain upon one city*, &c. in the ſecond, arrows of famine will be ſent forth; in the third there will be a great famine, and men, women and children, holy men and men of buſineſs will die, and the law will be forgotten by thoſe who learn it; in the fourth there will be plenty and not plenty; in the fifth there will be great plenty, and they ſhall eat and drink and rejoice, and the law ſhall return to them that learn it; in the ſixth there will be voices (or thunders;) in the ſeventh there will be wars; and in the going out of the ſeventh בן דוד *the ſon of David* comes. The tradition of *R. Judah* ſays, In the generation in which בן דוד *the ſon of David* comes, the houſe of the congregation (the ſchool or ſynagogue) ſhall become a brothel-houſe, *Galilee* ſhall be deſtroyed, and *Gabalene* ſhall become deſolate; and the men of *Gabul* (or the border) ſhall go about from city to city, and ſhall find no mercy; and the wiſdom of the ſcribes ſhall ſtink; and they that are afraid to ſin ſhall be deſpiſed; and the face of that generation ſhall be as the face of a dog, and truth ſhall fail, as it is ſaid, *Iſa.* lix. 15.—The tradition of *R. Neborai* ſays, In the generation in which בן דוד *the ſon of David* comes, young men ſhall make aſhamed the faces of old men, and old men ſhall ſtand before young men, the daughter ſhall riſe up againſt her mother, and the daughter-in-law againſt her mother-in-law; nor will a ſon reverence his father. The tradition of *R. Nehemiah* ſays, In the generation in which בן דוד *the ſon of David* comes, impudence will increaſe, and the honourable will deal wickedly, and the whole kingdom will return to the opinion of the *Sadducees*, and there will be no reproof.——'Tis a tradition of the *Rabbins*, that בן דוד *the ſon of David* will not come, until traiterous practices are increaſed, or the diſciples are leſſened, or until the ſmalleſt piece of money fails from the purſe, or until redemption is deſpaired of.” In which paſſage, beſides the proof for which it is cited, may be obſerved, how exactly the deſcription of the age of the Meſſiah, as given by the *Jews* themſelves, agrees with the generation in which Jeſus the true Meſſiah came; who as he was promiſed to *David*, and it was expected he ſhould deſcend from him, ſo he did according to the fleſh; God raiſed him up of his ſeed, *Rom.* i. 3. *Acts* xiii. 23. it follows, *The ſon of Abraham*. *Abraham* was the firſt to whom a particular promiſe was made, that the Meſſiah ſhould ſpring from, *Gen.* xxii. 18. The firſt promiſe in *Gen.* iii. 15. only ſignified that he ſhould be the ſeed of the woman; and it would have been ſufficient for the fulfilment of it, if he had been born of any woman, in whatſoever nation, tribe, or family; but by the promiſe made to *Abraham* he was to deſcend from him, as Jeſus did; who took upon him the ſeed of *Abraham*, Heb. ii. 16. or aſſumed an human nature which ſprung from him, and is therefore truly the ſon of *Abraham*. The reaſon why Chriſt is firſt called the ſon of *David*, and then the ſon of *Abraham*, is partly becauſe the former was a more known name of the Meſſiah; and partly that the tranſition to the genealogy of Chriſt might be more eaſy and natural, beginning with *Abraham*, whom the *Jews* call [q] ראש היחס the *head of the genealogy*, and the root and foundation of it, as *Matthew* here makes him to be; wherefore a *Jew* can't be diſpleaſed with the Evangeliſt for beginning the genealogy of our Lord at *Abraham*.

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[k] T. Hieroſ. Megilla, fol. 71. 2.

[l] Bereſhit. Rabba, §. 36. fol. 32. 1.

[m] T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 9. 2.

[n] Vid. Fabricii Biblioth. Græc. l. 4. c. 5. §. 2. p. 127. & Valeſ. not. in Euſeb. Eccl. Hiſt. p. 52.

[o] Apud Wagenſeil. Tela Ignea.

[p] T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 97. 1. Shir Haſhirim Rabba, fol. 11. 4.

Ver. 2. *Abraham begat Iſaac*, &c.] The deſcent of Chriſt from *Abraham* is in the line of *Iſaac*; *Abraham* begat *Iſhmael* before *Iſaac*, and others after him, but they are not mentioned; becauſe the Meſſiah was not to ſpring from any of them, but from *Iſaac*, of whom it is ſaid, *in* Iſaac *ſhall thy ſeed be called*, Gen. xxi. 12. and who, as he was a progenitor, ſo an eminent type of Chriſt; being *Abraham*'s only beloved ſon; and particularly in the binding, ſacrifice and deliverance of him. *Iſaac begat Jacob*. The genealogy of Chriſt proceeds from *Iſaac*, in the line of *Jacob*. *Iſaac* begat *Eſau* as well as *Jacob*, and they two were twins, but one was loved, and the other hated; wherefore no mention is made of *Eſau*, he had no concern in the Meſſiah, nor was he to ſpring from him, but from *Jacob*, or *Iſrael*, by whoſe name he is ſometimes called, *Iſ*. xlix. 3. *Jacob begat Judas and his brethren*. The lineage of Chriſt is carried on from *Jacob* in the line of *Judah*; the reaſon of which is, becauſe it was particularly propheſied that the Meſſiah, *Shiloh*, the prince and chief ruler, ſhould be of him, *Gen*. xlix. 10. 1 *Chron*. v. 2. And it is evident beyond all contradiction, that our Lord ſprung from his tribe, *Heb*. vii. 14. The reaſon why the brethren of *Judah*, who were eleven in number, are mentioned, when the brethren of *Iſaac* and *Jacob* are not, is, becauſe tho' the Meſſiah did not ſpring from them, yet the promiſe of him was made to the twelve tribes, who all expected him, and to whom he was ſent, and came. Theſe made but one body of men, and therefore, though the Meſſiah came from the tribe of *Judah*, yet he is ſaid to be of them all, *Rom*. ix. 4, 5.

Ver. 3. *And Judas begat Phares and Zara of Thamar*, &c.] The genealogical account of Chriſt goes on from *Judah* in the line of *Phares*, with whom *Zara* is mentioned; not becauſe they were twins, for ſo were *Jacob* and *Eſau*, and yet the latter is taken no notice of; but it may be becauſe of what happened at their birth, ſee *Gen*. xxxviii. 28, 29, 30. But the line of the Meſſiah was in *Phares*, and very rightly is he put in the genealogy of Chriſt, the *Jews* themſelves being witneſſes; who expreſsly ſay, that "the Meſſiah comes from him." Theſe two are ſaid to be begotten of *Thamar*, daughter-in-law to *Judah*; who, though ſhe was a *Canaanitiſh* woman, has the honour to be named in the genealogy of Chriſt, who came to ſave Gentiles as well as *Jews*: nor can the *Jews* reproach our Evangeliſt for putting her into the account; ſince they themſelves frequently acknowledge that the Meſſiah was to ſpring from her: they ſay, [r] "there "are two women from whom come *David* the king, "and *Solomon*, and the king Meſſiah; and theſe "two are *Thamar* and *Ruth*." *Jonathan Ben Uzziel* on *Gen*. xxxviii. 6. ſays, that *Thamar* was the daughter of *Shem* the great. *And Phares begat Eſrom*; called *Hezron*, *Ruth* iv. 18. where the ſame phraſe is uſed as here. He had another ſon called *Hamul*, 1 *Chron*. ii. 5. but the account proceeds from *Phares*, in the line of *Eſrom*. *And Eſrom begat Aram*; called *Ram* in *Ruth* iv. 18. where the ſame way of ſpeaking is uſed as here. *Eſrom* alſo beſides him begat *Jerahmeel*, *Chelubai*, or *Caleb*, and *Segub*, 1 *Chron*. ii. 9, 21. but theſe are not in the line. *Elihu*, who converſed with *Job*, is ſaid to be of the kindred of *Ram*, *Job* xxxii. 2. whether the ſame with *Ram* or *Aram*, may be enquired.

Ver. 4. *And Aram begat Aminadab*, &c.] Which, with what follows in this verſe, exactly agrees with the genealogical account in *Ruth* iv. 19, 20.

Ver. 5. *And Salmon begat Booz of Rachab*, &c.] That *Salmon* begat *Booz*, is affirmed in *Ruth* iv. 21. but it is not there ſaid, nor any where elſe in the Old Teſtament, as here, that he begat him of *Rahab*, that is, of *Rahab* the harlot. This the Evangeliſt had from tradition, or from the *Jewiſh* records. That the Meſſiah was to ſpring from *Boaz* is aſſerted by the *Jewiſh* writers [s]; and they alſo own that *Rahab* was married to a prince in *Iſrael*, which ſome ſay [t] was *Joſhua*: they pretend that ſhe was ten years of age when the *Iſraelites* came out of *Egypt*; that ſhe played the harlot all the forty years they were in the wilderneſs, and was married to *Joſhua* upon the deſtruction of *Jericho*. To excuſe this marriage with a *Canaanitiſh* woman, they tell us, ſhe was not of the ſeven nations with whom marriage was forbid; and moreover, that ſhe became a proſelyte when the ſpies were received by her: they own that ſome very great perſons of their nation ſprung from her, as *Jeremiah*, *Maaſeiah*, *Hanameel*, *Shallum*, *Baruch*, *Ezekiel*, *Neriah*, *Seraiah*, and *Huldah* the propheteſs. The truth of the matter is, ſhe became the wife of *Salmon*, or *Salma*, as he is called, 1 *Chron*. ii. 11. And in the *Targum* on *Ruth* iv. 20. is ſaid to be of *Bethlehem*; he was the ſon of *Nahſhon* or *Naaſſon*, a famous prince in *Judah*, and the head and captain of the tribe, *Numb*. i. 7. and ii. 3. and vii. 12, 17. and x. 14. And from *Rahab* ſprung the Meſſiah, another inſtance of a Gentile in the genealogy of Chriſt; and a third follows. *And Booz begat Obed of Ruth*; who was a *Moabiteſs*. It is a notion that generally obtains among the *Jews* [u], that ſhe was the daughter of *Eglon*, grandſon of *Balak*, king of *Moab*; and it is often taken notice of by them [w], that the king Meſſiah ſhould deſcend from her; and alſo other perſons of note, as *David*, *Hezekiah*, *Joſiah*, *Hananiah*, *Miſhael*, *Azariah*, and *Daniel*; wherefore the mentioning of her in this genealogy, can't be ſaid by them to be impertinent. *And Obed begat Jeſſe*. *Jeſſe* is thought to be, not the immediate ſon of *Obed*, but to be of the fourth generation from him; though no others are mentioned between them in *Ruth*, any more than here. A *Jewiſh* writer obſerves [x], that "the wiſe men of the Gentiles ſay, "that there were other generations between them; "perhaps, ſays he, they have taken this from the "wiſe men of *Iſrael*, and ſo it is thought." Now notwithſtanding this, *Jeſſe* may be ſaid to be begotten by *Obed*, as *Hezekiah*'s poſterity, who were carried captive into *Babylon*, are ſaid to be begotten by him, *Iſ*. xxxix. 7. though they were a remove of ſeveral generations from him. However, *Jeſſe* is rightly put among the progenitors of Chriſt, ſince the Meſſiah was to be a rod of his ſtem, and the branch of his roots, and is called the root of *Jeſſe*, *Iſ.* xi. 1, 10. which words are interpreted of the Meſſiah by many of the *Jewiſh* writers[y]; and to this day the *Jews* pray for him in their ſynagogues under the name of בן ישי, *the ſon of Jeſſe*[z].

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[q] Juchaſin, fol. 8. 1, Tzeror-Hammor, fol. 29. 3. and 154. 4. [r] Shemot Rabba, §. 30. fol. 131. 4. Caphtor, fol. 122. 1. [s] Zohar. in Gen. fol. 105. 4. Gloſſ. in T. Bab. Maccot. fol. 23. 2. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 49. 2. Zohar in Gen. fol. 63. 3. [t] T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 14. 2. Juchaſin, fol. 10. 1. Shalſhelet Hakabala, fol. 7. 2. Abarb. Kimchi & Laniado in Joſh. 6. 25. & Moſes Kotſenſis Mitzvot Torah. pr. neg. 112. [u] Targ. in Ruth i. 4. T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 105. 2. Horayot, fol. 10. 2. Nazir. fol. 23. 2. Sota, fol. 47. 1. Zohar in Deut. fol. 109. 2. Shalſhelet Hakabala, fol. 8. 1. [w] Targ. in Ruth iii. 15. T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol 93. 7. Midraſh Ruth, fol 34. 4. Zohar in Gen. fol. 72. 1. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 20. 4. & 123. 4. & 132. 4. [x] Juchaſin, fol. 10. 2.

Ver. 6. *And Jeſſe begat David the king*, &c.] The deſcent of the Meſſiah runs in the line of *David*, the youngeſt of *Jeſſe*'s ſons, who was deſpiſed by his brethren, and over-looked and neglected by his father; but God choſe him, and anointed him to be king, and ſet him on the throne of *Iſrael*; hence he is called *David the king*; as alſo becauſe he was the firſt king that was of the tribe of *Judah*, and in the genealogy of Chriſt, and was an eminent type of the king Meſſiah, who is ſometimes called by the ſame name, *Ezek.* xxxiv. 24. and xxxvii. 24, 25. *Hoſ.* iii. 5. and who was to be his ſon, as *Jeſus* is, and alſo right heir to his throne and kingdom. *And David the king begat Solomon of her* that had been the wife *of Urias*; which was *Bathſhebah*, though not named; either becauſe ſhe was well known, or becauſe of the ſin ſhe had been guilty of, which would eaſily be revived by mentioning her name: our tranſlators have rightly ſupplied, *that had been*, and not as the *Vulgate Latin*, which ſupplies it, *that was the wife of Urias*; for *Solomon* was begotten of her, not while ſhe was the wife of *Uriah*, but when ſhe was the wife of *David*.

Ver. 7. *And Solomon begat Roboam*, &c.] Called *Rehoboam*, 1 *Kings* xi. 43. of *Naamah* an *Ammoniteſs*, 1 *Kings* xiv. 21, 31. *And Roboam begat Abia*, ſometimes called *Abijam*, 1 *Kings* xiv. 31. ſometimes *Abijah*, 2 *Chron.* xii. 16. and ſometimes, as here, *Abia*, 1 *Chron.* iii. 10. Him *Rehoboam* begat of *Maachah*, the daughter of *Abiſhalom*, 1 *Kings* xv. 2. called *Michaiah*, the daughter of *Uriel*, 2 *Chron.* xiii. 2. *Maachah* and *Michaiah* being the ſame name; or elſe ſhe went by two names, as her father did. *And Abia begat Aſa*, who was a good king; his mother's name is the ſame with the name of his father's mother; and perhaps it is not his proper mother, but his grandmother who is meant in 1 *Kings* xv. 10. He is wrongly called *Aſaph* in the *Perſic* and *Ethiopic* verſions, and in one copy.

Ver. 8. *And Aſa begat Joſaphat*, &c.] Called *Jehoſhaphat*, 1 *Kings* xv. 24. whom *Aſa* begat of *Azubah*, the daughter of *Shilhi*, 1 *Kings* xxii. 42. He alſo was a very good prince. *And Joſaphat begat Joram*; called *Jehoram*, 1 *Kings* xxii. 50. to whom his father gave the kingdom, becauſe he was the firſt-born, 2 *Chron.* xxi. 3. *And Joram begat Ozias*; called *Uzziah*, 2 *Chron.* xxvi. 1. and *Azariah*, 2 *Kings* xv. 1. He was not the immediate ſon of *Joram*; there were three kings between them, *Ahaziah*, *Joaſh*, and *Amaziah*, which are here omitted; either becauſe of the curſe denounced on *Ahab*'s family, into which *Joram* married, whoſe idolatry was puniſhed to the third or four generation; or becauſe theſe were princes of no good character; or becauſe their names were not in the *Jewiſh* regiſters. Nor does this omiſſion at all affect the deſign of the Evangeliſt, which is to ſhew that *Jeſus*, the true Meſſiah, is of the houſe of *David*; nor ought the *Jews* to complain of it, as they do[a]; ſince ſuch omiſſions are to be met with in the Old Teſtament, particularly in *Ezra* vii. 2. where ſix generations are omitted at once; and which is taken notice of by one of their own genealogical writers, whoſe words are theſe[b]; "we ſee in the genealogy of *Ezra* that he hath ſkipped over ſeven generations (perhaps it ſhould be ו *ſix* and not ז *ſeven*, ſince ſix are only omitted) from *Ahitub* to *Ahitub*." Nor is it any objection that *Joram* is ſaid to beget *Ozias*, which he may be ſaid to do in the like ſenſe, as has been before obſerved of *Hezekiah*, *Iſ.* xxxix. 7.

Ver. 9. *And Ozias begat Joatham*, &c.] Called *Jotham*, 2 *Kings* xv. 7. him *Ozias* begat of *Jeruſhah*, the daughter of *Zadok*, 2 *Kings* xv. 33. *And Joatham begat Achaz*, or *Ahaz*, 2 *Kings* xv. 38. to him the ſign was given, and the famous prophecy of the Meſſiah, *Iſ.* vii. 14. *And Achaz begat Ezekias*, or *Hezekiah*, 2 *Kings* xvi. 20. him *Ahaz* begat of *Abi*, the daughter of *Zachariah*, 2 *Kings* xviii. 2. He was a very religious king, and had that ſingular favour from God to have fifteen years added to his days, *Iſ.* xxxviii. 5.

Ver. 10. *And Ezekias begat Manaſſes*, &c.] Or *Manaſſeh*, 2 *Kings* xx. 21. him *Hezekiah* begat of *Hephzibah*, 2 *Kings* xxi. 1. He was very remarkable both for his ſins, and for his humiliation on account of them. *And Manaſſes begat Amon*, of *Meſhullameth*, the daughter of *Haruz* of *Jotbah*, 2 *Kings* xxi. 19. He was a very wicked prince. *And Amon begat Joſias*, or *Joſiah* of *Jedidah*, the daughter of *Adaiah* of *Boſcath*, 2 *Kings* xxii. 1. He was a very pious king, and was propheſied of by name ſome hundreds of years before he was born, 1 *Kings* xiii. 2.

Ver. 11. *And Joſias begat Jechonias*, &c.] This *Jechonias* is the ſame with *Jehoiakim*, the ſon of *Joſias*, called ſo by *Pharoah-necho*, when he made him king, whoſe name before was *Eliakim*, 2 *Kings* xxiii. 34. him *Joſias* begat of *Zebudah*, the daughter of *Pedaiah* of *Rumah*, ver. 36. *and his brethren*. Theſe were *Johanan*, *Zedekiah*, and *Shallum*. Two of them were kings, one reigned before him, *viz.* *Shallum*, who is called *Jehoahaz*, 2 *Kings* xxiii. 30. compared with *Jer.* xxii. 11, 12. the other, *viz.* *Zedekiah*, called before *Mattaniah*, reigned after his ſon *Jehoiakim*: theſe being both kings, is the reaſon why his brethren are mentioned; as well as to diſtinguiſh him from *Jechonias* in the next verſe; who does not appear to have had any brethren: theſe were *about the time they were carried away to Babylon*, which is not to be connected with the word *begat*; for *Joſiah* did not beget *Jechoniah* and his brethren at that time, for he had been dead ſome years before; nor with *Jechonias*, for he never was carried away into *Babylon*, but died in *Judea*, and ſlept with his fathers, 2 *Kings* xxiv. 6. but with the phraſe *his brethren*; and may be rendered thus, ſuppoſing τοὺς underſtood, *which were at*, or *about the carrying away to Babylon*, or the *Babyloniſh* captivity.

Ver. 12. *And after they were brought to Babylon*, &c.] Not *Jechonias*, but the father of *Jechonias*, and the *Jews*. *Jechonias begat Salathiel*. Not *Jechonias* mentioned in the former verſe, but his ſon, called *Jehoiachim*, 2 *Kings* xxiv. 6, 8. and *Coniah*, *Jer.* xxii. 24, 28. both which are rendered *Jechonias* by the *Septuagint* in 2 *Chron.* xxxvi. 8. *Jer.* xxii. 24. and he is ſo called, 1 *Chron.* iii. 16. *Abulpharagius*[c] calls him *Junachir*, and ſays he is the ſame who in *Matthew* is called *Juchonia*; and he aſſerts him to be the father of *Daniel* the Prophet. But here a conſiderable difficulty ariſes, how he can be ſaid to beget *Salathiel*, called *Shealtiel*, *Hagg.* i. 1. when he was pronounced *childleſs*, *Jer.* xxii. 30. To remove which, it may be obſerved, that the ſentence pronounced may be conſidered with this tacit condition or proviſo, if he repented not. Now the *Jews* have a tradition [d], that he did repent in priſon, upon which the ſentence was revoked; but there is no need to ſuppoſe this, though it is not an unreaſonable ſuppoſition; for the ſentence does not imply that he ſhould have no children, but rather that he ſhould, as will appear upon reading the whole; *thus ſaith the Lord, write ye this man childleſs, a man that ſhall not proſper in his days; for* no man of his ſeed *ſhall proſper*, ſitting *on the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah*. Beſides, the *Hebrew* word ערירי, rendered *childleſs*, comes from ערה, which ſignifies *to make naked* or *bare*; and ſo denotes not only ſuch as have no children, or are bereft of them, but ſuch as are by any providence ſtripp'd of the bleſſings of life, and are left bare, deſtitute, and unhappy, as *Jechonias* and his poſterity were: however, the *Jews* have no reaſon to find fault with our Evangeliſt, ſince *Salathiel* is expreſsly called *Jechonias*'s ſon, 1 *Chron*. iii. 17. either he was his proper natural ſon, or, to uſe their way of ſpeaking, בן מלכות, *the ſon of the kingdom* [e]; that is, his heir and ſucceſſor in the kingdom, as ſome have thought; ſince it looks as if he was the ſon of *Neri*, *Luke* iii. 37. though the chronicle of *Jedidæus* of *Alexandria* [f], or *Philo* the *Jew*, ſays, that *Jechonias* was called *Neri*, becauſe *Ner*, or the lamp of *David* ſhined in him, which had been almoſt extinguiſhed. *And Salathiel begat Zorobabel*. This account perfectly agrees with many paſſages in the Old Teſtament, where *Zorobabel* is called the ſon of *Shealtiel* or *Salathiel*, *Ezra* iii. 2. and v. 2. *Neh*. xii. 1. *Hagg*. i. 1, 12, 14. and ii. 2, 23. which is ſufficient to juſtify the Evangeliſt in this aſſertion. There is indeed a difficulty which as much preſſes the *Jews* as the Chriſtians; and that is, that *Zorobabel* is reckoned as the ſon of *Pedaiah*, 1 *Chron*. iii. 19. for the ſolution of which a noted *Jewiſh* commentator [g] obſerves, that "in *Haggai*, *Zachariah* and *Ezra*, *Zorobabel* is called the ſon of *Shealtiel*, becauſe he was his ſon's ſon; for *Pedaiah* was the ſon of *Shealtiel*, and *Zorobabel* the ſon of *Pedaiah*; and don't you obſerve, adds he, that in many places childrens children are mentioned as children." No doubt there are many inſtances of this; but to me it ſeems that *Pedaiah* was not the ſon of *Shealtiel*, but his brother, 1 *Chron*. iii. 17, 18. And I greatly ſuſpect that *Shealtiel* had no children of his own, ſince none are mentioned; and that he adopted his brother *Pedaiah*'s ſon *Zorobabel*, and made him his heir and ſucceſſor in the government of *Judah*. However, it is certain, as a genealogical writer [h] among the *Jews* obſerves, that he was of the ſon's ſons of *Jechonias*, king of *Judah*, from whom our Evangeliſt makes him to deſcend.

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[y] Targum, Aben Ezra & Kimchi in loc. & Zohar in Exod. fol. 71. 1.

[z] Seder Tephillot, fol. 278. 1. & 285. 2. Ed. Baſil. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 29. 1.

[a] R. Iſaac Chizzuk Emunah, par. 2. p. 390.

[b] Juchaſin, fol. 10. 2.

[c] Hiſt. Dynaſt. p. 45. Vid. Hieron. Comment. in Dan. i. fol. 264. B.

Ver. 13. *And Zorobabel begat Abiud*, &c.] The children of *Zorobabel* are ſaid in 1 *Chron*. iii. 19, 20. to be *Meſhullam*, and *Hananiah*, and *Shelomith* their ſiſter, but no mention is made of *Abiud*: he ſeems to be the ſame with *Meſhullam* the eldeſt ſon, who might have two names; nor is this unlikely, ſince it was uſual, eſpecially about the time of the *Babyloniſh* captivity, for men to have more names than one, as may be obſerved in *Daniel* and others, *Dan*. i. 7. where they went by one, and in *Judea* by another. *And Abiud begat Eliakim*, &c. From hence to the 16th verſe the genealogy is carried down to *Joſeph*, the huſband of *Mary*; which account muſt be taken from the genealogical tables of the *Jews*, to which recourſe might be had, and with which it agrees; or otherwiſe the *Jews* would have cavilled at it; but I don't find any objections made by them to it. That there were genealogical books or tables kept by the *Jews* is certain, from the following inſtances [i]; "*Simeon ben Azzai* ſays, I found in *Jeruſalem*, מגלת יוחסין, *a volume of genealogies*, and there was written in it, *&c*." Again [k], ſays *R. Levi*, "they found a *volume of genealogies* in *Jeruſalem*, and there was written in it that *Hillell* came from *David*; *Ben Jatzaph* from *Aſaph*; *Ben Tzitzith Hacceſeth* from *Abner*; *Ben Cobeſin* from *Ahab*; *Ben Calba Shebuah* from *Caleb*; *R. Jannai* from *Eli*; *R. Chayah Rabba* from the children of *Shephatiah*, the ſon of *Abital*; *R. Joſe be Rabbi Chelphetha* from the children of *Jonadab*, the ſon of *Rechab*; and *R. Nehemiah* from *Nehemiah* the *Tirſhathite*." Once more [l], ſays *R. Chana bar Chanina*, "when the holy bleſſed God cauſes his *Shechinah* to dwell, he does not cauſe it to dwell but upon families, מיוחסות, *which are genealogized* in *Iſrael*." Now if *Matthew*'s account had not been true, it might eaſily have been refuted by theſe records. The author of the old [m] *Nizzachon* takes notice of the cloſe of this genealogy, but finds no fault with it; only that it is carried down to *Joſeph*, and not to *Mary*; which may be accounted for by a rule of their own [n], משפחת אם אינה קרויה משפחת, *the mother's family is not called a family*, whereas the father's is. It is very remarkable that the *Jewiſh Targum* [o] traces the deſcent of the Meſſiah from the family of *David* in the line of *Zorobabel*, as *Matthew* does; and reckons the ſame number of generations, wanting one, from *Zorobabel* to the Meſſiah, as the Evangeliſt does, from *Zorobabel* to *Jeſus*: according to *Matthew*, the genealogy ſtands thus, *Zorobabel*, *Abiud*, *Eliakim*, *Azor*, *Sadoc*, *Achim*, *Eliud*, *Eleazar*, *Matthan*, *Jacob*, *Joſeph*, *Jeſus*; and according to the *Targum* the order is this, "*Zorobabel*, *Hananiah*, *Jeſaiah*, *Rephaiah*, *Arnon*, *Obadiah*, *Shecaniah*, *Shemaiah*, *Neariah*, *Elioenai*, *Anani*; this is the king Meſſiah, who is to be revealed." The difference of names may be accounted for by their having two names, as before obſerved. This is a full proof, that, according to the *Jews* own account, and expectation, the Meſſiah muſt be come many years and ages ago.

Ver. 16. *And Jacob begat Joſeph*, &c.] According to an old tradition mentioned by [p] *Epiphanius*, this *Jacob*, the father of *Joſeph*, was named *Panther*, and which name perhaps is originally *Jewiſh*; and it may be obſerved, that *Joſeph* is ſometimes called by the *Jewiſh* writers *Pandera* [q], and Jeſus בן פנדירא, *the ſon of Pandira* [r]. It has created ſome difficulty with interpreters, that *Jacob* ſhould be here ſaid to beget *Joſeph*, when *Joſeph* in *Luke* is ſaid to be the ſon of *Eli*. Some have thought *Joſeph*'s father had two names, one was *Jacob*, and the other *Eli*; others take them to be two different perſons, and ſuppoſe that *Joſeph* was the natural ſon of the one, and the legal ſon of the other, either by marriage, or by adoption, or by the law of the brother's wife, *Deut*. xxv. 5, 6. But the truth of the matter is, that not *Joſeph*, but Jeſus, is by *Luke* called the ſon of *Eli*, as will be made to appear in its proper place. *Joſeph*, who is here called the huſband of *Mary*, becauſe he not only eſpouſed her, but upon the advice and encouragement of the Angel, took her to be his wife, was, as is evident by this genealogy, of the houſe and lineage of *David*; though a mean and obſcure perſon, and by trade a carpenter. *Mary*, which is the ſame name with *Miriam* in *Hebrew*, was a poor virgin that dwelt at *Nazareth*, a city of *Galilee*; yet alſo of the family of *David*, and belonged to the city of *Bethlehem*; *of whom was born Jeſus who is called Chriſt*, or Meſſiah; being that illuſtrious perſon, who was ſpoken of by the Prophets of the Old Teſtament under that name, and whom the *Jews* expected. We may learn from hence, what a low condition the family of *David* was in, when the true Meſſiah came; according to ancient prophecy, it was like a ſtump of a tree, or like to a tree cut down to the root, *Iſa.* xi. 1. and Chriſt who ſprung from it was like a root out of a dry ground, *Iſa.* liii. 2. From the whole of this genealogy it appears, that *Jeſus* was of the ſeed of *Abraham*, of the tribe of *Judah*, and of the family of *David*; whereby ſeveral ancient prophecies have their accompliſhment, and therefore he ought to be acknowledged as the true Meſſiah: and alſo that he was of the blood royal, and had his deſcent from the kings of *Judah*, and was heir apparent to the throne and kingdom of his father *David*. The *Talmudic Jews* own that *Jeſus*, or *Jeſu*, as they call him, was put to death becauſe he [s] קרוב למלכות היה *was nigh to the kingdom*, or nearly related to it. Yea, even in that malicious book [t] they have written of his life, they repreſent him as akin to queen *Helena*, who they ſay, on that account, would have ſaved his life. And this was ſo clear a point, and their fore-fathers were ſo thoroughly convinced of this matter, that they would have took him by force and made him a king, *John* vi. 15. but his kingdom was to be of another kind, a ſpiritual, and not a temporal one.

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[d] Kimchi in 1 Chron. iii. 17. & in Jer. xxii. 30.
[e] Ib. in 1 Chron. iii. 15.
[f] Apud Vorſt. Obſerv. in Ganz. Chronolog. p. 310.
[g] Kimchi in 1 Chron. iii. 19. & in Hagg. i. 1.
[h] Juchaſin, fol. 13. 1.
[i] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 49. 2.
[k] T. Hieroſ. Taanith, fol. 68. 1. B. Rabba, §. 98. fol. 85. 3.
[l] T. Bab. Kidduſhin, fol. 70. 2.
[m] P. 186.
[n] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 54. 2. Bava Bathra, fol. 109. 2 & 110. 2. Bereſhit Rabba, fol. 6. 1. Juchaſin, fol. 55. 2.
[o] In 1 Chron. iii. 24. Vid. Beckii Not. in ib. p. 56, 57.
[p] Contra Hæreſ. l. 3. Hæreſ. 78.
[q] Toldos Jeſu, p. 3.
[r] T. Hieroſ. Avoda Zara, fol. 40. 4. T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 14. 2. & Midraſh Kohelet, fol. 81. 1.

Ver. 17. *So all the generations from Abraham*, &c.] The Evangeliſt having traced the genealogy of Chriſt from *Abraham*, which he divides into *three* parts, becauſe of the threefold ſtate of the *Jews*, *firſt* under Patriarchs, Prophets and Judges, *next* under Kings, and *then* under Princes and Prieſts, gives the ſum of each part under its diſtinct head: *ſo all the generations*, that is, the degrees of generation, or the perſons generated from *Abraham* to *David*, both being included, *are fourteen generations*; as there were, and no more, and are as follow, *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, *Jacob*, *Judah*, *Phares*, *Eſrom*, *Aram*, *Amminadab*, *Naaſſon*, *Salmon*, *Boaz*, *Obed*, *Jeſſe*, *David*. *And from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations.* Here *David* who cloſed the the firſt diviſion muſt be excluded this, and it muſt be obſerved, that the Evangeliſt does not ſay as before, that *all* the generations from *David* to the captivity were *fourteen*, for there were *ſeventeen*, three kings being omitted by him at once; but, the generations he thought fit to mention, in order to reduce them to a like number as before, and which were ſufficient for his purpoſe, were fourteen; and may be reckoned in this order, *Solomon*, *Roboam*, *Abia*, *Aſa*, *Joſaphat*, *Joram*, *Ozias*, *Joatham*, *Achaz*, *Ezekias*, *Manaſſes*, *Amon*, *Joſias*, *Jechonias*, or *Jeboiachim*. *And from the carrying away into Babylon unto Chriſt are fourteen generations.* This muſt be underſtood as before; for there might be more generations in this interval, but theſe were enough to anſwer the deſign of the Evangeliſt; and which he thought proper to mention, and may be numbered in this manner; *Jechonias*, or *Jeboiachim*, *Salathiel*, *Zorobabel*, *Abiud*, *Eliakim*, *Azor*, *Sadoc*, *Achim*, *Eliud*, *Eleazar*, *Matthan*, *Jacob*, *Joſeph*, *Chriſt*. This way of reckoning by generations was uſed by other nations as well as the *Jews* [u], particularly the *Grecians*; ſo [w] *Pauſanias* ſays, "from *Tharypus* to *Pyrrhus* the ſon of *Achilles*, "ϖεντε ανδρων ϗ δεκα εισι γενεαι, *were fifteen generations of men.*" And *Herodotus* [x] ſpeaking of thoſe who had reigned in *Babylon*, ſays, among them were two women, one whoſe name was *Semiramis*, who reigned before the other γενεῃσι ϖεντε, *five generations*; many other inſtances of the like kind might be given.

Ver. 18. *Now the birth of Jeſus Chriſt*, &c.] The Evangeliſt having finiſhed the genealogy of Chriſt, proceeds to give an account of his *birth*, which includes both his conception and bringing forth; and which he ſays *was on this wiſe*, οὕτως, *ſo*, *after this manner*, and which was very wonderful and aſtoniſhing; *when as*, γαρ, *for his mother Mary was found with child*, not of man, no, not of *Joſeph* her huſband; for Chriſt had no real father as man, *Joſeph* was only, as was ſuppoſed, his father; but *of the Holy Ghoſt*, according to *Luke* i. 35. *The Holy Ghoſt ſhall come upon thee*, &c. and this was done that the human nature of Chriſt might be clear of original pollution; that ſo being the immediate produce of the Holy Ghoſt and without ſin, it might be fit for union with the Son of God, and for the office of Mediator he had undertook: When *Mary* is ſaid to be *found with child*, the meaning is, it appeared by evident ſigns, it was obſerved by *Joſeph* particularly, who might know not only that ſhe was with child, but with child of the Holy Ghoſt, by converſation with her, who might relate to him what paſſed between the Angel and her, *Luke* i. 28, 36. though it looks as if as yet he did not know this, or at leaſt was not fully ſatisfied about it; ſince he had a mind to have put her away, before he was aſſured of the truth of it, by the appearance of an Angel to him. Now *Mary*'s being with child, and its being known, were facts, at the time when ſhe was *eſpouſed to Joſeph*, and thereby the outward credit both of *Mary* and *Jeſus* were ſecured; for had this appeared before the eſpouſals, the *Jews* would have fixed a brand of infamy on them both; and both the eſpouſals and her being found with child, were *before they came together*; that is, before they cohabited together as man and wife, before he brought her home to his own houſe and bed. The eſpouſals were before they thus came together. It was uſual with the *Jews* firſt to eſpouſe or betroth, and then to marry, or rather conſummate the marriage, by bringing the woman home to her huſband's houſe, between which there was ſome ſpace of time. The account and manner of betrothing is given by *Maimonides* [y] in the following words. "Before the "giving of the law, if a man met a woman in the "ſtreet, if he would, he might take her, and bring "her into his houſe and marry her between him and "herſelf, and ſhe became his wife; but when the "law was given, the *Iſraelites* were commanded, "that if a man would take a woman he ſhould obtain her before witneſſes, and after that ſhe ſhould "be his wife, according to *Deut.* xxii. 13. and theſe "takings are an affirmative command of the law, "and are called קידושין או אירוסין *eſpouſals* or *betrothings* in every place; and a woman who is "obtained in ſuch a way is called מקודשת או מאורסת "*eſpouſed* or *betrothed*; and when a woman is obtained, and becomes מקודשת *eſpouſed*, although "ſhe is not yet נבעלה *married*, *nor has entered into* "*her*

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[s] T. Bab. Sanhed. fol. 43. 1.

[t] Toldos Jeſu p. 10.

[u] Vid. Pirke Abot. c. 5. §. 2.

[w] Attica ſive l. 1. c. 10. p. 19.

[x] Clio. l. 1. c. 184. p. 74.

[y] Hilchot. Iſhot. c. 1. §. 1, 2, 3.

“*her huſband's houſe*, yet ſhe is a man's wife.” And ſuch a diſtinction between a married woman and a betrothed virgin, which was *Mary*'s caſe, may be obſerved in *Deut.* xxii. 22, 23. moreover, her being found or appearing to be with child, was *before they came together*; which 'tis likely, as Dr. *Lightfoot*[z] obſerves, was about three months from her conception, when ſhe was returned from her Couſin *Eliſabeth*. 'Tis probable that as ſoon as ſhe was eſpouſed to *Joſeph*, or quickly after, ſhe went and paid her viſit to *Eliſabeth*, with whom ſhe ſtaid about three months, and then returned home, *Luke* i. 56. Upon her return home, ſhe appears to be with child, with which ſhe had gone three months, a proper time for the diſcovery of ſuch a matter, *Gen.* xxxviii. 24. and which is aſſigned by the *Jewiſh* doctors for this purpoſe. In the *Miſna*[a] ſuch a caſe as this is put, “If two men ſhould eſpouſe two women, and “at the time of their entrance into the bride-cham-“ber, the one ſhould be taken for the other —— “they ſeparate them for three months, becauſe they “may prove with child;” that is, as *Bartenora* obſerves upon it, “they ſeparate them that they “may not return to their huſbands; and that if they “ſhould be with child, they may diſtinguiſh between “a legitimate or an illegitimate offspring; and that “the children which they may bring forth may not “be aſcribed to the wrong perſons.” Now *Mary* being gone three months from the time of her eſpouſals to *Joſeph*, and he and ſhe not being yet come together, it was a clear caſe, that the child ſhe was gone three months with, was none of his; hence it follows,

Ver. 19. *Then Joſeph her huſband*, &c.] To whom ſhe had been betrothed, and who was her huſband, and ſhe his wife according to the *Jewiſh* law, *Deut.* xxii. 23, 24. though not yet come together, *being a juſt man*, obſervant of the law of God, particularly that which reſpected adultery, being wholly good and chaſte, like the Patriarch of the ſame name; a character juſt the reverſe of that which the *Jews* give him, in their ſcandalous[b] book of the life of Jeſus; where, in the moſt malicious manner, they repreſent him as an unchaſte and an unrighteous perſon: *and not willing to make her a publick example*, or *to deliver her*, *i. e.* to the civil magiſtrate, according to *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* edition. The *Greek* word ſignifies to puniſh by way of example to others, to deter them from ſinning; and with the antient it[c] denoted the greateſt and ſevereſt puniſhment. Here it means either bringing her before the civil magiſtrate, in order to her being puniſhed according to the law in *Deut.* xxii. 23, 24. which requires the perſon to be brought out to the gate of the city and ſtoned with ſtones, which was making a publick example indeed; or divorcing her in a very publick manner, and thereby expoſe her to open ſhame and diſgrace. To prevent which, he being tender and compaſſionate, though ſtrictly juſt and good, *was minded to put her away privily*; he deliberately conſulted and determined within himſelf to diſmiſs her, or put her away by giving her a bill of divorce, in a very private manner; which was ſometimes done by putting it into the woman's hand or boſom, ſee *Deut.* xxiv. 1. In *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel it is rendered, *it was in his heart to forſake her privately*.

Ver. 20. *But while he thought on theſe things*, &c.] While he was revolving them in his mind, conſidering what was moſt fit and proper to be done, whether to diſmiſs her publickly or privately; while he was conſulting within himſelf the glory of God, the peace of his own conſcience, and the credit of *Mary*, *behold the Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream*; probably the ſame Angel which appeared to *Zacharias*, and brought him tidings that his wife ſhould have a ſon, and who alſo appeared to *Mary*, and acquainted her that ſhe ſhould conceive, and bring forth the Meſſiah, whoſe name was *Gabriel*, *Luke* i. 11, 19, 36. If we'll believe the *Jews*, this Angel muſt be *Gabriel*, ſince he is the Angel who they ſay[d] דממנא על חלמא *is appointed over dreams*; for he appeared to *Joſeph in a dream*, which is one of the ways and methods in which the Lord, or an Angel of his, has appeared to the ſaints formerly, and has anſwered them, ſee *Gen.* xxxi. 11. 1 *King.* iii. 5. 1 *Sam.* xxviii. 6, 15. and is reckoned by the *Jews*[e] one of the degrees or kinds of prophecy: and ſo the Angel here not only encourages *Joſeph* to take to him his wife, *ſaying Joſeph, thou ſon of David*; which is ſaid partly to atteſt his being of the houſe and lineage of *David*; and partly to raiſe his expectations and confirm his faith, that his wife ſhould bring forth the promiſed ſon of *David*; and chiefly to engage his attention to what he was about to ſay, *fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife*; don't be afraid either that thou ſhalt offend the Lord, or bring any reproach or ſcandal upon thyſelf, as if thou didſt connive at an adultreſs; but as ſhe is thine eſpouſed wife, ſolemnly betrothed to thee, take her home to thyſelf, live with her as thy wife, and openly avow her as ſuch. To which he is encouraged by the following reaſon or argument, *for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghoſt*; ſhe has not been guilty of any criminal converſation with men; this conception of her's is of the Holy Ghoſt, and entirely owing to his coming upon her, and overſhadowing her in a wonderful and miraculous manner. I ſay, the Angel not only encourages *Joſeph* after this manner, but delivers ſomething to him by way of prophecy, in the following verſe.

Ver. 21. *And ſhe ſhall bring forth a ſon, and they ſhall call his name Jeſus.*] For though ſhe was with child, it could not be known any otherwiſe than by prediction or divine revelation, that ſhe ſhould have a ſon, whoſe name ſhould be called *Jeſus*; a name of the ſame ſignification with *Joſhua* and *Hoſea*, and may be interpreted a *Saviour*, *Act.* xiii. 23. for the word ישוע *Jeſus*, comes from ישע which ſignifies *to ſave*. And to this agrees the reaſon of the name given by the Angel, *for he ſhall ſave his people from their ſins*. The ſalvation here aſcribed to him, and for which he is every way fit, being God as well as man, and which he is the ſole author of, is to be underſtood, not of a temporal, but of a ſpiritual and everlaſting ſalvation; ſuch as was propheſied of, *Iſa.* xlv. 17. and which old *Jacob* had in his view, when he ſaid, *I have waited for thy ſalvation, O Lord*, *Gen.* xlix. 18. which by the *Jewiſh*[f] *Targumiſt* is paraphraſed thus. “*Jacob* ſaid when he “ſaw *Gideon* the ſon of *Joaſh*, and *Samſon* the ſon of “*Manoah*, that they would riſe up to be ſaviours, “not for the ſalvation of *Gideon* do I wait, nor for “the ſalvation of *Samſon* do I look, for their ſal-“vation is פורקן דשעתא *a temporary ſalvation*; “but for thy ſalvation, O Lord, do I wait and “look, for thy ſalvation is פורקן עלמין *an everlaſting* “*ſalvation*: or (according to another copy) but for “the ſalvation of *Meſſiah* the ſon of *David*, who ſhall “ſave the children of *Iſrael*, and bring them out of “captivity, for thy ſalvation my ſoul waiteth.”

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[z] In loc.

[a] Yebamot c. 3. ſ. 10.

[b] Toldos Jeſu, p. 3.

[c] A. Gellii Noct. Attic. l. 6. c. 14.

[d] Zohar. in Gen. fol. 103. 3.

[e] Ib. & Maimon. Yeſode Hattorah. c. 7. l. 13.

[f] Targum Jon. Ben Uzziel in loc.

By *his people* whom he is ſaid to ſave are meant, not all mankind, though they are his by creation and preſervation, yet they are not, nor will they be all ſaved by him ſpiritually and eternally; nor alſo the people of the *Jews*, for though they were his nation, his kinſmen, and ſo his own people according to the fleſh, yet they were not all ſaved by him; many of them died in their ſins, and in the diſbelief of him as the Meſſiah: but by them are meant all the elect of God, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, who were given to him by his Father, as a peculiar people, and who are made willing in the day of his power upon them, to be ſaved by him in his own way. And theſe he ſaves *from their ſins*, from all their ſins, original and actual; from ſecret and open ſins; from ſins of heart, lip and life; from ſins of omiſſion and commiſſion; from all that is in ſin, and follows upon it; from the guilt, puniſhment, and damning power of it, by his ſufferings and death; and from the tyrannical government of it by his Spirit and grace; and will at laſt ſave them from the being of it, though not in this life, yet hereafter, in the other world, when they ſhall be without ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing.

Ver. 22. *Now all this was done*, &c.] Theſe are not the words of the Angel, but of the Evangeliſt; obſerving that *Mary*'s being with child of the Holy Ghoſt, and her conception in ſuch an extraordinary manner, whilſt a pure virgin, before ſhe and *Joſeph* came together, who though eſpouſed to him, was untouched by him, were all brought about in this way, and with ſuch circumſtances, *that it might be fulfilled which was ſpoken of the Lord by the Prophet*; that is, the Prophet *Iſaiah*, and ſo ſome copies read. The paſſage referred to is in *Iſa*. vii. 14. what is there ſpoken was by divine inſpiration; it was ſpoken of the Lord by the Prophet; the Spirit of the Lord ſpake by him. Prophets and holy men formerly, ſpake as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt; ſo that what they ſaid, is to be looked upon as the word of God. Now between the prophecy of *Iſaiah* referred to, and the fact here recorded by the *Evangeliſt*, is an entire agreement: the prophecy ſhews the will, counſel, and determination of God about this matter; the accompliſhment of it, the faithfulneſs and veracity of God in his word; the prediction declares that the thing would be, and the thing itſelf was done, that what was ſpoken might be fulfilled; not merely by way of accommodation, or in a typical and myſtical, but in a ſtrict, proper and literal ſenſe.

Ver. 23. *Behold, a virgin ſhall be with child*, &c.] Theſe words are rightly applied to the virgin *Mary* and her ſon *Jeſus*, for of no other can they be underſtood; not of *Ahaz*'s wife and his ſon *Hezekiah*, who was already born, and muſt be eleven or twelve years of age when theſe words were ſpoken; nor of any other ſon of *Ahaz* by her or any other perſon, ſince no other was Lord of *Judea*; nor of the wife of *Iſaiah*, and any ſon of his, who never had any that was king of *Judah*. The prophecy is introduced here as in *Iſaiah*, with a *behold!* not only to raiſe and fix the attention, but to denote that it was ſomething wonderful and extraordinary which was about to be related; and is therefore called אות a *ſign*, wonder, or miracle; which lay not, as ſome *Jewiſh* writers [g] affirm in this, that the perſon ſpoken of was unfit for conception at the time of the prophecy, ſince no ſuch thing is intimated; or in this, that it ſhould be a ſon and not a daughter [h], which is foretold; for the wonder lies not in the truth of the prediction, but in the extraordinarineſs of the thing predicted; much leſs in this [i], that the child ſhould eat butter and honey as ſoon as born; ſince nothing is more natural and common with new-born infants, than to take in any ſort of liquids which are ſweet and pleaſant. But the ſign or wonder lay in this, that a *virgin* ſhould *conceive* or *be with child*; for the Evangeliſt is to be juſtified in rendering עלמה by παρθενος, *a virgin*; by the *Septuagint* having ſo rendered it ſome hundreds of years before him, by the ſenſe of the word, which comes from עלם, and which ſignifies to *hide* or *cover*; virgins being ſuch who are unknown to, and not uncovered by men, and in the Eaſtern countries were kept recluſe from the company and converſation of men; and by the uſe of the word in all other places, *Gen*. xxiv. 43. *Exod*. ii. 8. *Pſal*. lxviii. 25. *Cant*. i. 3. and vi. 8. *Prov*. xxx. 19. The laſt of theſe texts the *Jews* triumph in, as making for them, and againſt us, but without any reaſon; ſince it does not appear that the *maid* and the *adulterous woman* are one and the ſame perſon; and if they were, the vitiated woman might be called a maid or virgin, according to her own account of herſelf, or in the eſteem of others who knew her not, or as antecedent to her defilement; ſee *Deut*. xxii. 28. Beſides, could this be underſtood of any young woman married or unmarried, that had known a man, it would be no wonder, no ſurprizing thing that ſhe ſhould *conceive* or *be with child*, and *bring forth a ſon*. 'Tis added, *and they ſhall call his name Emmanuel*. The difference between *Iſaiah* and *Matthew* is very inconſiderable, it being in the one *thou ſhalt call*, that is, thou virgin ſhalt call him by this name; and in the other *they ſhall call*, that is, *Joſeph*, *Mary*, and others; for beſides, that ſome copies read the text in *Matthew* καλεσεις, *thou ſhalt call*, the words both in the one and the other may be rendered impersonally, *and ſhall be called*; and the meaning is, not that he ſhould be commonly known and called by ſuch a name, any more than by any; or all of thoſe mentioned in *Iſa*. ix. 6. but only that he ſhould *be* ſo, which is a frequent uſe of the word; or he ſhould be that, and ſo accounted by others, which anſwers to the ſignification of this name, which the Evangeliſt ſays, *being interpreted is God with us*: for it is a compound word of אל *God* and עמנו *with us*, and well agrees with Jeſus, who is God in our nature, the *word* that was *made fleſh* and *dwelt among us*, *John* i. 14. and is the one and only *Mediator between God* and us, 1 *Tim*. ii. 5 [k]. So the *Septuagint* interpret the word in *Iſa*. viii. 8.

Ver. 24. *Then Joſeph being raiſed from ſleep*, &c.] That is, being awaked out of ſleep, τȣ υπνȣ, *that ſleep*, into which he either naturally fell, whilſt he was meditating on the affair of *Mary*'s being with child; or rather into which he was caſt by the Lord, on purpoſe that he might have a revelation of the will of God to him in a dream; and riſing up from his bed or place where he was, immediately and without any delay, *did as the Angel of the Lord had bidden him*; firmly believing that it was a meſſenger of God that was ſent to him, and that this matter was of the Lord. Wherefore he *took unto him his wife*, that is, he publickly married her, whom he had before eſpouſed, took her to his houſe, or continued her there, lived with her as his wife, and owned her to be ſuch, and henceforwards had no more thoughts of putting her away.

Ver. 25. *And knew her not*, &c.] Or *but he knew her not*, και anſwering to the *Hebrew* ו; that is, had no carnal knowledge of her, or copulation with her, though his wife. The words are an *euphemiſm*, or a modeſt way of expreſſing the conjugal act, and is a very ancient one, ſee *Gen.* iv. 1. and what has been uſed in all nations and languages. And this conduct of his was neceſſary, *till ſhe had brought forth her firſt-born*; that it might be manifeſt not only that ſhe conceived, being a virgin, but alſo that ſhe brought forth being a virgin: for both are ſignified in the prophecy before related, *a virgin ſhall conceive and bring forth a ſon*; which is all one as if it had been ſaid, a *virgin* ſhall conceive, and *a virgin* ſhall bring forth a ſon. The *firſt-born* is that which firſt opens the womb of its mother, whether any follows after or no, *Exod.* xiii. 12, 13. *Numb.* iii. 12. Chriſt is called *Mary*'s firſt-born, becauſe ſhe had none before him, whether ſhe had any after him or not; for her perpetual virginity ſeems to be no neceſſary article of faith: for when 'tis ſaid, *Joſeph knew her not till ſhe had brought forth*, the meaning is certain that he knew her not before. But whether he afterwards did or not, is not ſo manifeſt, nor is it a matter of any great importance; the word *until* may be ſo underſtood as referring to the time preceding, that the contrary cannot be affirmed of the time following, 2 *Sam.* vi. 23. *Matt.* xxiii. 20. and which may be the caſe here, and is indeed generally underſtood ſo; and it alſo may be conſidered as only expreſſive of the intermediate time, as in *Matt.* v. 26. *Acts* xxvii. 33. as *Beza* obſerves. Chriſt was *her firſt-born* as he was man, and the firſt-born of God, or his firſt and only begotten, as the ſon of God. 'Tis further obſerved, that ſhe *called his name Jeſus*, as was foretold to her, or ordered her by the Angel, *Luke* i. 31. and to *Joſeph*, *Matt.* i. 21.

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[g] Jarchi. in Iſa. vii. 14.

[h] Gaon. in Aben Ezra, in ib.

[i] Kimchi & Aben Ezra in ib. R. Iſaac Chizuk, Emun. p. 1. c. 21.

[k] See more of this in a book of mine, called *The prophecies of the Old Teſtament concerning the* Meſſiah, *literally fulfilled in* Jeſus, ch. 5. p. 92, 93. &c.

## CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. NOW *when Jeſus was born*, &c.] Several things are here related reſpecting the birth of Chriſt, as the place where he was born, *in Bethlehem of Judea*; ſo called to diſtinguiſh it from another *Bethlehem* in the tribe of *Zabulon*, *Joſh.* xix. 15. Here Chriſt was to be born according to a prophecy hereafter mentioned, and accordingly the *Jews* expected he would be born here, *Matt.* ii. 4, 5, 6. *Joh.* vii. 41, 42. and ſo Jeſus was born here, *Luke* ii. 4, 5, 6, 7. and this the *Jews* themſelves acknowledge; "Such a year, ſays a noted [l] chronologer of theirs, *Jeſus* of *Nazareth* was born in "*Bethlehem Juda*, which is a *parſa* and an half, *i. e.* "ſix miles from *Jeruſalem*." *Benjamin* [m] *Tudelenſis* ſays it is two *parſa's*, *i. e.* eight miles from it; and according to *Juſtin Martyr* [n] it was thirty-five furlongs diſtant from it. Yea even they own this, that Jeſus was born there, in that vile and blaſphemous book [o] of theirs, written on purpoſe to defame him; nay, even the ancient *Jews* have owned that the Meſſiah is already born, and that he was born at *Bethlehem*; as appears from their *Talmud* [p], where we meet with ſuch a paſſage. "It happened to a certain *Jew*, "that as he was plowing, one of his oxen bellowed, "a certain *Arabian* paſſed by and heard it; who "ſaid, O *Jew*, *Jew*, looſe thy oxen, and looſe "thy plow-ſhare, for lo, the houſe of the ſanctuary is deſtroyed: it bellowed a ſecond time; "he ſaid unto him, O *Jew*, *Jew*, bind thy oxen, "and bind thy plow-ſhare, for lo, יליד מלכא משיחא "*the king Meſſiah is born.* He ſaid to him, what "is his name? *Menachem* (the comforter;) he "aſked again, what is his father's name? *Hezekiah*; once more he ſays, from whence is he? "He replies מן בירת מלכא ביתלחם יהודה *from* "*the palace of the king of Bethlehem Judah*; he "went and ſold his oxen and his plow-ſhares, and "became a ſeller of ſwadling clothes for infants; and "he went from city to city till he came to that city, "(*Bethlehem*), and all the women bought of him, "but the mother of *Menachem* bought nothing." Afterwards they tell you, he was ſnatched away by winds and tempeſts. This ſtory is told in much the ſame manner in another [q] of their writings. *Bethlehem* ſignifies *the houſe of bread*, and in it was born, as an ancient writer [r] obſerves, the bread which comes down from heaven: and it may alſo ſignify *the houſe of fleſh*, and to it the alluſion may be in 2 *Tim.* iii. 16. *God manifeſt in the fleſh.* The time of Chriſt's birth is here expreſſed, *in the days of Herod the king.* This was *Herod* the great, the firſt of that name: the *Jewiſh* chronologer [s] gives an account of him in the following manner. "*Herod* the firſt, called *Herod* the *Aſcalonite*, was the ſon of *Antipater*, a "friend of king *Hyrcanus*, and his deputy; him "the ſenate of *Rome* made king in the room of "*Hyrcanus* his maſter. This *Herod* whilſt he was "a ſervant of king *Hyrcanus* (ſo in the [t] *Talmud* "*Herod* is ſaid to be עבדא דבית חשמונא a ſervant "of the family of the *Aſmonaeans*) king *Hyrcanus* "ſaved from death, to which he was ſentenced by "the ſanhedrim of *Shammai*; that they might not "ſlay him for the murder of one *Hezekiah*, as is "related by *Joſephus*, l. 6. c. 44. and *Herod* took "to him for wife *Miriam*, the daughter of *Alexander* the ſon of *Ariſtobulus*, who was the daughter's "daughter of king *Hyrcanus*." This writer tacitly owns afterwards [u], that Jeſus was born in the days of this king; for he ſays, that in the days of *Hillell* and *Shammai* (who lived in thoſe times) there was one of their diſciples, who was called *R. Joſhua Ben Perachiah*, and he was, adds he, רבו הנוצרי *the maſter of the Nazarene*, or of *Jeſus* of *Nazareth.* *Herod* reigned, as this ſame author obſerves, *thirty-ſeven* years; and according to Dr. *Lightfoot*'s calculation, Chriſt was born in the *thirty-fifth* year of his reign, and in the *thirty-firſt* of *Auguſtus Cæſar*, and in the year of the world *three thouſand nine hundred and twenty-eight*, and in the month *Tiſri*, which anſwers to part of our *September*, about the feaſt of tabernacles; which indeed was typical of Chriſt's incarnation, and then it may reaſonably be thought that *the word was made fleſh*, and ἐσκήνωσεν *tabernacled among us*, *Joh.* i. 14. Another circumſtance relating to the birth of Chriſt is, that *when Jeſus was born——behold, there came wiſe men from the Eaſt to Jeruſalem*; theſe *wiſe men* in the *Greek* text are called Μάγοι *Magi*, a word which is always uſed in a bad ſenſe in the ſacred writings; hence they are thought by ſome to be magicians, ſorcerers, wizards, ſuch as *Simon Magus*, *Acts* viii. 9. and *Elymas*, ch. xiii. 8. and ſo the *Jewiſh* writers [w] interpret the word מגוש a wizard, an enchanter, a blaſphemer of God, and one that entices others to idolatry; and in the

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[l] R. David Ganz. Zemach David, pars 2, fol. 14. 2.
[m] Itinerarium p. 48.
[n] Apolog. 2. p. 75.
[o] Toldos p. 7.
[p] Hieroſ. Beracot. fol. 5. 1.
[q] Echa Rabbati fol. 50. 1.
[r] Hieron, Epitaph. Paulæ. fol. 59. E. Tom. 1.
[s] R. David Ganz. Zemach David, pars 1. fol. 24. 1.
[t] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 3. 2. Juchaſin. fol. 17. 1. & 18. 1. & Seder Olam Zuta, p. 111.
[u] Ib. col. 2.
[w] T. Bab. Sabbat. fol. 75. 1. Gloſſ. in ib. & Sota, fol. 22. 1. & Sanhedrim fol. 39. 1.

*Hebrew* Goſpel of *Munſter* theſe men are called מכשפים *wizards*. Some have thought this to be their national name. *Epiphanius* [x] ſuppoſes that theſe men were of the poſterity of *Abraham* by *Keturah*, who inhabited a country in ſome part of *Arabia*, called *Magodia*: but could this be thought to be the name of their country, one might rather be induced to ſuppoſe that they were of the Μαγοι *Magi*, a nation of the *Medes* mentioned by *Herodotus* [y]; ſince both the name and country better agree with theſe perſons; but the word ſeems to be rather a name of character and office, and to deſign the wiſe men, and Prieſts of the *Perſians*. An *Eaſtern* [z] writer ſays the word is of *Perſic* original, and is compounded of two words *Mije Guſh*, which ſignifies a *man with ſhort ears*; for ſuch was the firſt founder of the ſect, and from whom they were ſo called. But in the *Arabic Perſic Nomenclator* [a] it is rendered *a worſhipper of fire*, and ſuch the *Perſian* prieſts were; and to this agrees what *Apuleius* [b] ſays that *Magus*, in the *Perſian* language is the ſame as *prieſt* with us: and *Xenophon* [c] ſays, that the *Magi* were firſt appointed by *Cyrus*, to ſing hymns to the gods, as ſoon as it was day, and to ſacrifice to them. The account given of them by *Porphiry* [d] is, that "among the *Perſians* they that were wiſe concerning "God, and worſhipped him, were called Μαγοι "*Magi*, for ſo *Magus* ſignifies in their country dia-"lect; and ſo auguſt and venerable were this ſort "of men accounted with the *Perſians*, that *Darius*, "the ſon of *Hyſtaſpis*, ordered this, among other "things, to be inſcribed on his monument, that he "was the maſter of the *Magi*." From whence we may learn in ſome meaſure who theſe men were, and why the word is by our tranſlators rendered *wiſe men*; ſince the *Magi*, as *Cicero* [e] ſays, were reckoned a ſort of wiſe men, and doctors among the *Perſians*; who further obſerves, that no man could be a king of the *Perſians*, before he underſtood the diſcipline and knowledge of the *Magi*: and the wiſdom of the *Perſian Magi*, as *Ælianus* [f] writes, among other things, lay in foretelling things to come. Theſe came *from the eaſt*, not from *Chaldea*, as ſome have thought, led hereunto by the multitude of aſtrologers, magicians, and ſoothſayers, which were among that people; ſee *Dan.* ii. 2, 10, 27. and iv. 7. for *Chaldea* was not eaſt, but north of *Judea*, as appears from *Gen.* i. 14, 15. and iv. 6. and vi. 22. and x. 21. and xxv. 9. Others have thought they came from *Arabia*, and particularly *Sheba*, induced hereunto by *Pſal.* lxxii. 10, 15. But though ſome part of *Arabia* lay eaſt, yet *Sheba* was ſouth of the land of *Iſrael*, as is evident from the queen of that place being called the *queen of the ſouth*, Matt. xii. 42. The more generally received opinion ſeems to be righteſt, that they came from *Perſia*, which, as it lies eaſt of *Judea*, ſo was famous for this ſort of men, and beſides the name, as has been ſeen, is of *Perſic* original. The place whither they came was *Jeruſalem*, the *metropolis* of *Judea*, where they might ſuppoſe the king of the *Jews* was born, or where, at leaſt, they might perſuade themſelves they ſhould hear of him; ſince here *Herod* the king lived, to whom it ſeems they applied themſelves in the firſt place. The time of their coming was, *when Jeſus was born*; not as ſoon as he was born, or on the *thirteenth* day after his birth, the ſixth of *January*, as it ſtands in our *Calendar*; or within the forty days before *Mary*'s Purification; ſince this ſpace of time does not ſeem to be ſufficient for ſo long a journey, and which muſt require a conſiderable preparation for it; nor is it probable if they came ſo ſoon as this, that after ſuch a ſtir at *Jeruſalem*, after *Herod*'s diligent ſearch and enquiry concerning this matter, and his wrath and anger at being diſappointed and deluded by the wiſemen, that *Joſeph* and *Mary* ſhould ſo ſoon bring the child into the temple, where it was declared to be the Meſſiah by *Simeon* and *Anna*. Beſides, immediately after the departure of the wiſe men, *Joſeph* with his wife and child were ordered into *Egypt*, which could not be done before *Mary*'s Purification. But rather this their coming was near upon two years after the birth of Chriſt; ſince it is afterwards obſerved, that *Herod ſent and ſlew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coaſts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wiſe men*, ver. 16. This was the opinion of *Epiphanius* [g] formerly, and is embraced by Dr. *Lightfoot* [h], to whom I refer the reader for further proof of this matter.

Ver. 2. *Saying, where is he that is born king of the Jews?* &c.] Theſe words were ſpoken to the *Jews*, or rather to *Herod* the king, or his miniſters and courtiers, or to each of them, as the wiſe men had the opportunity of ſpeaking to them; who make no ſcruple of his being born, of this they were fully aſſured; nor did they in the leaſt heſitate about his being king of the *Jews*, who was born, but only enquire where he was, in what city, town, village, houſe, or family. The reaſon of their aſking this queſtion is, *for we have ſeen his ſtar in the eaſt*. By, the *ſtar* they ſaw, ſome underſtand an angel, which is not likely. The learned *Lightfoot* [i] is of opinion that it was the light or glory of the Lord, which ſhone about the ſhepherds, when the angel brought them the news of Chriſt's birth, and which at ſo great a diſtance appeared as a ſtar to theſe wiſe men; others, that it was a comet, ſuch as has been thought to portend the birth or death of ſome illuſtrious perſon: but it ſeems to be properly a ſtar, a new and an unuſual one, ſuch as had never been ſeen, nor obſerved before; and is called *his* ſtar, the ſtar of the king born, becauſe it appeared on his account, and was the ſign of his birth, who is *the root and offſpring of* David, *and the bright and morning-ſtar*, *Rev.* xxii. 16. This they ſaw *in the eaſt*; not in the eaſtern part of the heavens, but they ſaw it when they were in the eaſt, that is, in their own country; and according to the beſt obſervations they were able to make, it was in that part of the heavens right over the land of *Judea*; from whence they concluded, that the king of the *Jews* was born: but the queſtion is how they ſhould hereby know and be aſſured that ſuch a perſon was born? to this it may be replied, that there is a prophecy of *Balaam*'s, which is thus expreſſed, *there ſhall come a ſtar out of Jacob, and a ſcepter ſhall riſe out of Iſrael*, Numb. xxiv. 17. which is owned by ſome *Jewiſh* writers [k] to be a prophecy of the Meſſiah; tho' the *ſtar* there mentioned is conſidered by them as one of the Meſſiah's titles; hence one who ſet up himſelf, and for a while was by ſome received as the Meſſiah, was called by them בר כוכבא *the ſon of a ſtar*; but when he was diſcovered to be an impoſtor, they called him בר כוזיבא *the ſon of a lye*: but I rather take it to be a ſign of the Meſſiah's ſiah's coming, and the meaning is, when a ſtar ſhall דרך *walk* or ſteer its courſe from *Jacob*, or above, or over the land of *Iſrael*; then a ſcepter, or ſcepter-bearer, that is, a king, ſhall riſe out of *Iſrael*. Now this prophecy of *Balaam*, who lived in the eaſt, might be traditionally handed down to this time, and be well known by theſe men; and who, obſerving ſuch a ſtar appear over the land of *Judea*, might conclude that now the ſcepter-bearer or king was born [l]. Beſides, *Zerduſht* or *Zoroaſtres*, the author of the ſect of the *Magi* or wiſe men, and who appears to be a *Jew* by birth, and to be acquainted with the writings of the Old Teſtament, and with this prophecy, ſpoke of the birth of Chriſt to his followers; and told them when he ſhould be born, a ſtar would appear, and ſhine in the day, and ordered them to go where that directed, and offer gifts, and worſhip him. An *Eaſtern* writer, who affirms [m] what I have now mentioned, relates [n] the following ſpeech as ſpoke by the wiſe men to *Herod*, when in converſation with him, about this matter; "A certain perſon, ſay they, of "great note with us, in a book which he compoſed, "warned us in it, mentioning theſe things; a child "that ſhall deſcend from heaven, will be born in "*Paleſtine*, whom the greateſt part of the world "ſhall ſerve, and the ſign of his appearance ſhall "be this; ye ſhall ſee a ſtrange ſtar, which ſhall "direct you where he is; when ye ſhall ſee this, "take gold, myrrh and frankincenſe, and go and "offer them to him, and worſhip him, and then "return, leſt a great calamity befall you. Now "the ſtar has appeared unto us, and we are come "to perform what was commanded us." If this be true, we are not at a loſs how they come by their knowledge, nor for a reaſon of their conduct. That the *Jews* have expected that a ſtar ſhould appear at the time of the Meſſiah's coming, is certain, from ſome paſſages in a *Book* of theirs of great value and eſteem among them, in which are the following things; in one place it is ſaid [o] "The king Meſſiah ſhall be re-"vealed in the land of *Galilee*, and lo a ſtar in the eaſt "ſhall ſwallow up ſeven ſtars in the north, and a flame "of red fire ſhall be in the firmament ſix days;" and in another place, [p] "When the Meſſiah ſhall be "revealed, there ſhall riſe up in the eaſt a certain "ſtar, flaming with all ſorts of colours—and all men "ſhall ſee it": once more 'tis affirmed as a tradition [q] that, "The holy bleſſed God hath determined "to build *Jeruſalem*, and to make a certain (fixed) "ſtar appear ſparkling with ſeven blazing tails ſhin-"ing from it in the midſt of the firmament—and "then ſhall the king Meſſiah be revealed in all the "world." Now this expectation of the appearing of ſuch a ſtar at the coming of the Meſſiah takes its riſe from, and is founded upon the above-mentioned prophecy. It is ſaid [r] that *Seth* the ſon of *Adam* gave out a prophecy, that a ſtar ſhould appear at the birth of the Meſſiah; and that a ſtar did appear at the birth of Chriſt is certain from the teſtimony of the Evangeliſt, and ſeems to have ſome confirmation from the writings of the Heathens themſelves. Some have thought that the ſtar which *Virgil* ſpeaks of, and calls [s] *Cæſaris Aſtrum*, *Cæſar's ſtar*, is this very ſtar, which he in complaiſance to that Monarch aſcribes to him. *Pliny* [t] makes mention "of a bright comet with a ſilver beard, "which was ſo refulgent that it could ſcarce be "look'd upon, ſhewing in itſelf the effigies of God in human form." If the teſtimony of *Chalcidius* a *Platonic* philoſopher, taken notice of by many learned men, is genuine, and he not a chriſtian, [u] it is much to the purpoſe, and is as follows; "There is alſo a "more venerable and ſacred hiſtory, which ſpeaks "of the riſing of a certain unuſual ſtar; not fore-"telling diſeaſes and deaths, but the deſcent of a "venerable God, born for the ſake of human con-"verſation, and the affairs of mortals; which ſtar "truly, when the wiſe men of the *Chaldeans* ſaw in "their journey by night, and being very expert in "the conſideration of celeſtial things, are ſaid to en-"quire after the birth of the new deity, and having "found the infant majeſty, to worſhip him, and pay "their vows worthy of ſuch a God." The end propoſed by them in taking ſuch a journey is expreſſed, *and are come to worſhip him*; that is, either to pay adoration to him as God, of which they might be convinced by the extraordinary appearance of the ſtar, or be aſſured of by divine revelation; or rather to give him civil homage and reſpect, as an illuſtrious perſon, as being king of the *Jews*.

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[x] Contr. Hæreſ. l. 3. hæreſ. 30. [y] Clio ſive l. 1. c. 101. [z] Alfiruzabadius in Pocock. Specim. Hiſt. Arab. p. 146. [a] In Ibid. [b] Apolog. p. 204. [c] Cyro Pædia, l. 8. §. 6. [d] De Abſtinentia, l. 4. §. 16. [e] De Divinatione, l. 1. [f] Hiſt. Var. l. 2. c. 17. [g] Contr. Hæreſ. l. 1. Hæreſ. 30. and l. 2. Hæreſ. 51. [h] Harmony, Vol. I. p. 205, 432, &c. [i] Harmony, p. 205, 437, 438, Vol. I. Hor. Heb. p. 109. Vol. II. [k] Targum Onk. Jon. & Aben Ezra in loc. Zohar, in Exod. fol. 4. 1. Abarbinel Maſhmia Jeſhua, fol. 4. 3. Tzeror Hamor, fol. 126. 3.

Ver. 3. *When Herod the king had heard theſe things*, &c.] That is, the report made by the wiſe men of the appearance of an unuſual ſtar, and of the birth of the king of the *Jews*, which they affirmed with all certainty, without any heſitation, *he was troubled, and all Jeruſalem with him*. *Herod* was *troubled*, his mind was diſturbed and made uneaſy, fearing he ſhould be depoſed, and loſe his kingdom, to which he knew he had no juſt right and claim, being a foreigner; and *all Jeruſalem*, i. e. all the inhabitants of *Jeruſalem*, who heard of this, were alſo troubled, and ſhewed a concern at it with him; either feignedly, as knowing his jealouſy, ſuſpicion and cruelty; or in reality, becauſe of tumults, commotions and wars, they might fear would ariſe upon this, having loſt the true notion of the Meſſiah, as a ſpiritual king, ſaviour and redeemer. And hereby was fulfilled, in part, the famous prophecy in *Gen.* xlix. 10. according to the ſenſe of *one* [w] of the *Targumiſts* on it, who paraphraſes it after this manner; "Kings and go-"vernors ſhall not ceaſe from the houſe of *Judah*, "nor ſcribes, who teach the law, from his ſeed, "until the time that the king *Meſſiah*, the leaſt of "his ſons, comes, *and becauſe of him*, יתימסון עממיא, "*the people ſhall melt*;" that is, they ſhall be diſtreſſed and troubled, their hearts ſhall melt like wax within them; which was their preſent caſe, though perhaps the *paraphraſt* may deſign the Gentiles.

Ver. 4. *And when he had gathered all the chief prieſts*, &c.] Here we have an account of *Herod*'s conduct at this juncture; he calls a council, aſſembles the *ſanhedrim*, gathers together the more learned perſons in the city to conſult with them upon this matter, *the chief prieſts*; *all* of which he gathered together, and which ſeem to be many; and were not only the then preſent high-prieſt and his ſubſtitutes, but all the principal perſons of the prieſthood, who were choſen from the reſt, into the great *ſanhedrim*, or council: and by *the ſcribes of the people* are meant a ſort of letter learned men, whoſe buſineſs it was to keep and write out copies of the law, and other things, *for the people*; they were the fathers of the traditions, and interpreters of the law to them; and therefore are called *the ſcribes of the people*; as well alſo, becauſe they were choſen from among the people, from any other tribe, and not from the tribe of *Levi*, from whom the prieſts were; ſo that one ſeems to deſign the *clergy*, and the other the *laity*, in this aſſembly. The *Septuagint* render שוטרים, *the officers of the people*, by this ſame word *the ſcribes*, and ſcribes of the people, in *Numb.* xi. 16. *Deut.* xx. 5, 8, 9. *Joſh.* i. 10. and iii. 2. and viii. 33. and xxiii. 2. and xxiv. 1. The learned Dr. *Lightfoot* [x] conjectures, that the perſons of note, who were preſent at this time, were *Hillell* the preſident of the council, *Shammai* the vice-preſident, the ſons of *Betira*, *Judah* and *Joſhua*, *Bava ben Buta*, *Jonathan ben Uzziel*, the *Chaldee* paraphraſt, and *Simeon* the ſon of *Hillell*. *He demanded of them*, or aſked them with authority, as the chief captain did, *Acts* xxi. 33. *where Chriſt*, ὁ Χριςος, the Chriſt, the Meſſiah *ſhould be born*; that is, where was the place of his birth as fixed in their prophecies, where, accordingly they believed and expected he would be born. *Herod*'s pretence, no doubt, in putting this queſtion was, that he might be able to ſatisfy the wiſe men of the Eaſt about this matter; tho' the true reaſon within himſelf was, that he might know where this new-born king was, in order to deſtroy him.

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[l] See my book of the Prophecies of the Meſſiah, c. 7. p. 119, &c.
[m] Abulpharag. Hiſt. Dynaſt. p. 54.
[n] Ib. p. 70.
[o] Zohar. in Gen. fol. 74. 3.
[p] Ib. in Exod. fol. 3, 3, 4.
[q] Ib. in Numb. fol. 85. 4. and 86. 1.
[r] Vid. Wolf. Bibl. Heb. p. 1156.
[s] Eclog. 9. v. 47.
[t] Nat. Hiſt. l. 2. c. 25.
[u] Vid. Fabricii Bibliothec. Latin. p. 142—146.
[w] Jonathan ben Uzziel in loc.

Ver. 5. *And they ſaid unto him*, &c.] They anſwer without any heſitation, it being a generally received notion, and a thing well known among them, *in Bethlehem of Judea*; and give their reaſon for it; *for thus it is written by the prophet*, that is, the prophet *Micah*, in whoſe prophecy, ch. v. 2. it ſtands, and is as follows:

Ver. 6. *And thou Bethlehem in the land of Juda*, &c.] This prophecy, which the chief prieſts and ſcribes produced, as pointing at the place of Chriſt's birth, is owned by both ancient and later *Jews* [y] to be a prophecy of the Meſſiah. The difference between *Micah* and *Matthew* are eaſily reconciled. *Bethlehem* is called by *Micah*, *Bethlehem Ephratah*, and by *Matthew*, *Bethlehem* in the land of *Juda*, and both were one and the ſame place. *Bethlehem Ephratah* was in the land of *Juda*, as appears from the prophecy of *Micah* itſelf, from *Ruth* i. 2. and the *Septuagint* verſion of *Joſh.* xv. 60. and is deſcribed in this manner by *Matthew*, partly to diſtinguiſh it from another *Bethlehem* in the land of *Zabulun*, *Joſh.* xix. 15. and partly becauſe its other name *Ephratah* was now diſuſed, and ſo unknown to *Herod*, who was unacquainted with the books and propheſies of the Old Teſtament. *Micah* ſays this place was *little among the thouſands of Judah*. *Matthew* ſays, *not the leaſt*. But in this is no apparent contradiction, it might be *little* and yet *not the leaſt*; beſides, it might be *little* and *not little*, or *not the leaſt* in different reſpects, and at different times; it might be little, mean, and contemptible as to worldly ſplendor, riches, number of inhabitants, pompous buildings, *&c.* and yet not be little or mean, when conſidered as the place of the birth of many great perſons, ſuch as *Booz*, *Jeſſe*, *David*, &c. and eſpecially Chriſt. It might be little in *Micah*'s time, and yet not in *Matthew*'s; eſpecially ſince it had received a conſiderable additional honour by Chriſt's being born there. Moreover, the words in *Micah* may be rendered, by way of interrogation, *art thou little*, or *the leaſt?* To which the anſwer in *Matthew* is, no, *thou art not the leaſt*, &c. or elſe the word דבר may be underſtood, and the text be tranſlated thus; *it is a ſmall thing that thou art among the thouſands of Judah*, *for out of thee*, &c. a great honour ſhall be conferr'd on thee, the Meſſiah ſhall ſpring from thee. Again, what *Micah* calls *thouſands*, are in *Matthew* called *princes*; the reaſon of this is, becauſe the tribes of *Iſrael* were divided into thouſands, and every thouſand had its prince; ſo that tho' here is a difference in words, yet none in ſenſe. What *Micah* ſtiles *a ruler in Iſrael*, *Matthew* expreſſes by *a governor that ſhall rule* or *feed my people Iſrael*; but in this there is no contradiction. Add to all this, that it ſhould be obſerved, that the Evangeliſt is not giving a verſion of his own, but of the chief prieſts and ſcribes; and therefore was it ever ſo faulty, they, and not he, muſt be chargeable with it; for he has acted the part of a faithful hiſtorian in giving it in the words in which they cited it [z].

Ver. 7. *Then Herod, when he had privately called the wiſe men*, &c.] As ſoon as he had got the intelligence of the place of the Meſſiah's birth, he called, or ordered the wiſe men to be brought into his preſence, and that in a very private manner; leſt the *Jews*, who knew his hypocriſy and deceit, ſhould perceive his views, and enter into his deſigns, and ſo give the wiſe men ſome inſtructions, which would be prejudicial to the ſcheme he was forming in his own mind to deſtroy the young king; and having called them to him, he *enquired of them diligently what time the ſtar appeared*. He took a good deal of pains in examining them, he ſifted them, and enquired of them with much accuracy, and exactneſs, the preciſe time of the ſtar's appearing to them, how long ago it was when it was firſt obſerved by them; that hereby he might exactly know the age of Chriſt, and the better execute the bloody deſign he had formed, ſhould the wiſe men diſappoint him; and the better detect an impoſtor, ſhould another afterwards ariſe, and ſet up himſelf for the king of the *Jews*.

Ver. 8. *And he ſent them to Bethlehem*, &c.] Having got out of them all that he could, and was for his purpoſe, he informs them of the place where they might find the perſon they came to enquire after, according to the account of it which the chief prieſts and ſcribes had given him; and then ſends them away to *Bethlehem*, where Chriſt, according to prophecy, was to be born, and now was born. It may ſeem ſtrange that neither any of the *Jews*, nor *Herod*, or any of his miniſters and courtiers, ſhould go along with theſe men to *Bethlehem*; ſince it was but a little way off, not above *five* or *ſix* miles from *Jeruſalem*; and ſince the birth of ſuch a perſon was no trivial thing, but an affair of great concern and importance. The *Jews* might not care to go, leſt *Herod* ſhould ſuſpect that they were going to revolt from him, and ſet up this new-born king againſt him; and it might be a piece of policy in *Herod* and his courtiers not to accompany them, for they might imagine, that the parents of the child would be jealous and afraid of them, and would therefore conceal it, when they would be in no fear of ſtrangers: and no doubt but the wiſe providence of God overruled and directed this matter, that ſo the young child Jeſus might be preſerved from the bloody deſigns of this tyrant; who often takes the wiſe in their own craftineſs, and carries the counſel of the froward headlong. When he diſmiſſed them, he gave them this charge and theſe orders, *go and ſearch diligently for the young child*; go to *Bethlehem* the place of his birth, I have told you of, and there enquire and ſearch in every houſe and family, omit none till you have found him; *and when ye have found him bring me word again*; give me a particular account of him, who are his parents, and where he dwells, *that I may come and worſhip him alſo*; for they had declared, that the reaſon of their coming was to worſhip

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[x] Vol. II. p. 111. [y] Targum Jon. Jarchi, Aben Ezra, Kimchi & Abendana in loc. Abarbinel Maſhmia Jeſhua, fol. 62 2. R. Iſaac Chizuk Emuna, p. 279. [z] See my book of the prophecies of the Meſſiah, &c. ch. 6. p. 104—116.

ſhip him; this he ſaid hypocritically, in order to hide and cover his bloody intentions.

Ver. 9. *When they had heard the king*, &c.] With great care and attention, what he had told them of the birth-place of the young child; the ſtrict charge he had given them to ſearch diligently for him, and then return to him with an account of the whole affair; and his expreſſions of reſpect to the new-born prince, which they took to be ſaid in great ſincerity, *they departed*; took their leave of *Herod* and his court, and ſet forward on their journey from *Jeruſalem* to *Bethlehem: and lo*, to their great ſurprize and joy, *the ſtar, which they ſaw in the eaſt*, then appeared; for, it ſeems, it had for ſome time diſappeared: It looks as if it had been only ſeen at the time of Chriſt's birth, and when they were in their own country; for both here, and in ver. 2. they are only ſaid to have ſeen it *in the eaſt*, that is, when they were in the eaſt country; ſo that it ſeems from that time they had had no ſight of it, not while they were on their journey, nor at *Jeruſalem*; nor was it neceſſary they ſhould. When they ſaw it in their own country, according to their beſt obſervation, it was over the land of *Judea*, and they were perſuaded of it, that it was a certain ſign that the king of the *Jews* was born: they therefore determine upon and prepare for a journey to *Jeruſalem*, the metropolis of the nation, and where the king kept his court, to enquire for him; nor needed they the guidance of the ſtar to direct them to a place ſo well known; but being in queſt of him in an obſcure place, and without any guide, this ſtar appears to them; and, which is ſomething very extraordinary, *went before them, till it came, and ſtood over, where the young child was*. This ſtar had a motion, kept pace with them, and was a guide unto them, till it and they came to the place where Chriſt was; and then it ſtood directly over the houſe, ſo that they had no need to enquire of any perſon for him. It is certain from hence, that this ſtar was indeed a very unuſual one; its being ſeen in the day-time, its motion and ſtanding ſtill, its ſituation, which muſt be very low, and its uſe to point out the very houſe where Chriſt was, ſhew it to be ſo; but though it was an unuſual appearance, it ſhould not be thought incredible. [a] *Varro* relates, that "from the time *Æneas* went from *Troy*, " he ſaw the ſtar *Venus* in the day-time, day after " day, till he came to the field of *Laurentum*, where " he ſaw it no more, by which he knew that thoſe " lands were fatal." The appearing of this ſtar, and then its diſappearing for a time, agree, in ſome meaſure, with the account the *Jews* give of the ſtar which they expect will be ſeen at the coming of the *Meſſiah*; for they [b] ſay, "after ſeven days *that* ſtar " ſhall be hid, and the Meſſiah ſhall be hid for " twelve months—when he ſhall deſcend, the pillar " of fire ſhall be ſeen as before, in ſight, and after- " wards the Meſſiah ſhall be revealed, and many " people ſhall be gathered to him."

Ver. 10. *When they ſaw the ſtar*, &c.] Which by its appearance, ſize, brightneſs, *&c.* they knew to be the ſame with that which they had ſeen, when in their own country; *they rejoiced with exceeding great joy*; a *pleonaſm* or a redundancy of expreſſion frequently uſed by the *Hebrews*, ſee *Jon.* iv. 6. and the *Septuagint* there; ſetting forth the rapture, the exceſs of joy they were in upon the ſight of the ſtar. Very probably before this, their hearts were ſad, their countenances dejected, and they greatly diſcouraged, having taken ſo great a journey, and as yet to ſo little purpoſe. They had been at *Jeruſalem*, where they expected to have found him that was born king of the *Jews*; they had been at court, and converſed with men of the greateſt figure and intelligence, and could get no tidings of him; people of all ranks and degrees ſeemed to be troubled at the account they brought; no body cared to go along with them to *Bethlehem*: all theſe circumſtances no doubt were diſcouraging to them; but as ſoon as they ſaw the ſtar their ſpirits revived, joy filled their hearts, chearfulneſs appeared in their countenances; and they purſued their journey with inexpreſſible delight, till they came to the place, where the illuſtrious perſon was, they were ſeeking after.

Ver. 11. *And when they were come into the houſe*, &c.] Which they entered without making any enquiry, being fully aſſured by the ſtar's ſtanding right over it, that this was the houſe, and here was the king of the *Jews*, whom they were come to worſhip; and having entered in *they ſaw*; ſome copies read ευρον, *they found the young child, with Mary his mother*; in her lap, or arms, or in the houſe with her, for by this time he might go alone. *Joſeph* perhaps was not at home, but about his buſineſs; and which might be ſo ordered by the providence of God, that ſo theſe men might only ſee the mother of Chriſt, who had no real father as man; who, had they ſeen *Joſeph*, might have took him to be his proper father. Upon the ſight of the young child, they *fell down* on their knees or faces to the ground, agreeable to the cuſtom of their country, *and worſhipped him* as a king; giving him the ſame civil honour and reſpect, as they were wont to do to their own kings and princes; which cuſtom began with *Cyrus*: for ſo *Xenophon* [c] ſays, that "when the people ſaw " him, παντες προσεκυνησαν, *they all worſhipped* him; " either becauſe ſome were ordered to begin this " cuſtom; or elſe being amazed at the apparatus; " or becauſe he ſeemed to appear ſo great and beau- " tiful; for before that time none of the *Perſians* " worſhipped *Cyrus*." *And when they had opened their treaſures*, that is, their purſes, bags or boxes, in which they put thoſe things they brought with them neceſſary for their journey; *they preſented*, or offered *to him gifts, gold, frankincenſe* and *myrrh*; ſuch things as they had; it being uſual, not only with the *Perſians*, but other eaſtern nations, to make preſents to kings and great perſons, when they made any addreſſes to them; which generally, among other things, conſiſted of gold, ſpices, myrrh, and the like, ſee *Gen.* xliii. 11. 1 *Kings* x. 2. *Pſ.* lxxii. 10—15. Which laſt paſſage referred to, being a prophecy of the Meſſiah, has been thought by ſome now to have had its accompliſhment, together with *Iſ.* lx. 6. where frankincenſe as well as gold is mentioned, *they ſhall bring gold and incenſe*, or frankincenſe; upon which a noted *Jewiſh* writer [d] obſerves, that gold and frankincenſe ſhall be brought privately as a preſent to the king *Meſſiah*. According to the *Ethiopians*, theſe wiſe men were three, whoſe names they give us; the name of him that offered the gold, was *Annoſon*; he that offered the frankincenſe, was *Allytar*; and he that offered the myrrh, *Kyſſad* [e]. The *Papiſts* call them the three kings of *Colen*, and ſay they lie buried in that place.

Ver. 12. *Being warned of God in a dream*, &c.] It is likely they made a ſhort ſtay at *Bethlehem*, might lodge there a night; at leaſt laid themſelves down a while to take ſome refreſhment in ſleep, after they had paid their reſpects to him that was born king of the *Jews*, and performed the whole buſineſs they came about; when in a dream they received a divine oracle, were admoniſhed and counſelled by God, *that they ſhould not return to Herod*; which would have been going back again, and out of their way; there being a nearer one from *Bethlehem* to their own country, than to go by *Jeruſalem*, tho' *Herod* had charged them to return to him. Whether they had promiſed him they would, is not certain; it is probable they might; however, they thought it moſt adviſeable to hearken to the divine oracle; wherefore, *they departed into their own country another way.* What became of theſe perſons afterwards, and whether they were ſpiritually and ſavingly enlightened into the knowledge of Chriſt; what a report they made of him when they came into their own country, and the ſucceſs thereof, we have no account of, either in ſacred or profane hiſtory.

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[a] Apud Servium in Virgil. Æneid. l. 1. p. 471. Ed. Baſil. 1586.

[b] Zohar in Exod. fol. 3, 4. & 71. 1.

[c] Cyropædeia, l. 8. § 23.

[d] R. David Kimchi.

[e] Ludolph. Lex. Ethiop. p. 539, 542, 543.

Ver. 13. *And when they were departed*, &c.] That is immediately, or as ſoon as they were gone, or in a very little time after, probably the ſame night, *behold, the Angel of the Lord appeareth to Joſeph in a dream*; it is very likely the ſame angel who appeared to him in ſuch ſort, ch. i. 20. *ſaying ariſe*, awake out of ſleep, and riſe from thy bed directly, *and take the young child and his mother*. The angel does not ſay take thy wife and ſon; for though *Mary* was properly his wife, yet Chriſt was not properly his ſon. The child is alſo mentioned before the mother, not only becauſe of his divine nature and office, in reſpect to which he was her God and Saviour; but becauſe it was the preſervation of the child that was chiefly regarded, and for which the providence of God was particularly concerned: wherefore *Joſeph* is ordered to take them in proper carriages, and *flee into Egypt*, which was near to *Judea*, and ſo a fit place to flee to; for a long and tedious journey would not have been ſuitable to the mother and her young child. Moreover, *Egypt* was out of *Herod*'s juriſdiction; here he could not come at them, or have any power over them; beſides, hereby a prophecy after mentioned was to have its accompliſhment. Hence it appears to be lawful to flee from danger, from tyrants and perſecutors, when the providence of God opens a way for eſcape. The angel goes on with his charge, *and be thou there until I bring thee word*; continue there, don't remove elſewhere, or return back, till I ſpeak with thee, or order and command thee otherwiſe; and gives the reaſon for his appearing to him in ſuch a manner, and giving ſuch a charge; *for Herod will ſeek the young child to deſtroy him*: no leſs a perſon than *Herod* the king, a bloody-minded man, revengeful, deſperate, and reſolute in whatſoever he undertakes, *will ſeek*, diligently ſearch and enquire for, not his parents, *Joſeph* and *Mary*, who might have been ſafe, but *the young child*, who was born king of the *Jews*, and which gave him a great deal of uneaſineſs; and that not to worſhip him, as he told the wiſe men, but *to deſtroy him*, to take away his life; to prevent which the angel was ſent with this charge to *Joſeph*: for tho' he was born to die for the ſins of his people, his time was not yet come; he was to grow up to years of maturity, he was to be a preacher of the Goſpel, to do many miracles, and at laſt to lay down his life of himſelf, voluntarily, and not to be taken away from him without his knowledge and will.

Ver. 14. *When he aroſe, he took the young child and his mother*, &c.] That is, as ſoon as he awoke out of ſleep, and roſe from his bed, he did as he was commanded, he prepared for his journey; and very opportunely had the wiſe men preſented their gifts; the gold they brought ſerved to defray the expence of this journey, and which no doubt was ſo ordered by divine providence for this purpoſe. *Joſeph* was very punctual and expeditious in obeying the command of God; he took the young child and his mother, *by night*, the very ſelf-ſame night in which he had this notice; and which ſeaſon was the moſt fitting to depart in for ſecrecy, and moſt commodious and agreeable to travel in, in thoſe hot countries: hence it appears very manifeſt, that the coming of the wiſe men, and the departure of *Joſeph* with *Mary* and *Jeſus* into *Egypt*, could not be within a fortnight after the birth of Chriſt, nor any time before *Mary*'s purification; ſince ſuch a journey muſt have been very improper and unſuitable, at any time within that period; but rather Jeſus muſt be about two years of age, whether ſomething under, or over, it matters not, when *Joſeph* with him *departed into Egypt*: what part of *Egypt* he went into is not certain. The *Jews* ſay that *Jeſus* went to *Alexandria* in *Egypt*, and which is probable enough; ſince this was a place greatly reſorted to at this time by *Jews*, and where proviſion was made for their ſuſtenance; tho' they greatly miſtake the perſon with whom he went; for they ſay [f] that *R. Joſhua ben Perachiah*, whom they pretend was his maſter, went to *Alexandria* in *Egypt*, and *Jeſus* with him. However, this is an acknowledgment of the truth of this part of Chriſt's hiſtory, that he was in *Egypt*; as alſo when they blaſphemouſly and maliciouſly ſay [g], did not *Ben Stada*, by whom they mean *Jeſus*, bring enchantments or magic, כשפים ממצרים, *out of Egypt*, in a cutting in the fleſh? To which wicked accuſation *Arnobius* ſeems to refer [h], when he ſays, "perhaps we may meet with many other of theſe "reproachful and childiſh ſayings; as that he was a "magician, that he performed all theſe things by "ſecret arts, and that he ſtole ſtrange ſciences, and "the names of mighty angels, out of the temples "of the *Egyptians*."

Ver. 15. *And was there until the death of Herod*, &c.] Which was in a very ſhort time; for *Euſebius* [i] ſays, that immediately, in a very little time after the ſlaughter of the children at *Bethlehem*, the divine vengeance inflicted diſeaſes on him, which quickly brought him to his end; ſo that, according to the learned Dr. *Lightfoot* [k], Jeſus was not above three or four months in *Egypt*. Now all this was brought about, *that it might be fulfilled*; not by way of accommodation of phraſes to a like event; or by way of type, which has a freſh completion in the antitype; or as a proverbial ſentence which might be adapted to any remarkable deliverance out of hardſhip, miſery and deſtruction; but literally, properly, and in the obvious ſenſe thereof; *which was ſpoken of the Lord by the prophet*, not Balaam, in *Numb.* xxiii. 22. or xxiv. 8. but *Hoſea*, in ch. xi. 1. *when Iſrael was a child, then I loved him, and called my ſon out of Egypt*: the meaning of which paſſage is, either in connexion with the laſt clauſe of the foregoing *chapter* thus; *in a morning ſhall the king of Iſrael be cut off*, כי נער, *becauſe Iſrael is a child*, a rebellious and diſobedient one, acting a very weak and wicked part; *yet I have loved him*, or *do love him*, and *have called*, or *will call*, (the paſt *tenſe* for the future, frequent in the *Hebrew* language, eſpecially in the prophetic writings) *my ſon out of Egypt*; who will be obliged to retire there for ſome time; I'll make him king, ſet him upon the throne, who ſhall execute juſtice, and reign for ever and ever; or thus, *becauſe Iſrael is a child*,

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[f] T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 107. 2. Cabala R. Abraham. Juchaſin, fol. 16. 2.

[g] T. Hieroſ. Sabbat, fol. 13. 1. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 104. 2.

[h] Adv. Gentes, l. 1. p. 36.

[i] Hiſt. Eccl. l. 1. c. 8. p. 25, 26.

[k] Harmony of the New Teſtament, p. 6.

*child*, helpleſs and imprudent, and *I love him*, tho' he is ſo, *therefore I will call*, or I have determined to call *my ſon out of Egypt*; who thro' a tyrant's rage and malice will be obliged to abide there a while; yet I'll bring him from thence into the land of *Judea*, where he ſhall live and *help* my *ſervant*, παιδὸς, [l] *child Iſrael*; ſhall inſtruct him in his duty, teach him the doctrines of the Goſpel; and at laſt, by his ſufferings and death, procure for him the pardon of all his tranſgreſſions; of which there is a particular enumeration in ver. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. This is the natural and unconſtrained ſenſe of theſe words, which juſtifies the Evangeliſt in his citation and application of them to Chriſt's going to *Egypt*, and his return from thence, as I have elſewhere [m] ſhewn.

Ver. 16. *Then Herod, when he ſaw that he was mocked*, &c.] *Herod*, having waited a proper time for the return of the wiſe men, and they not coming, concluded he was tricked by them; though, no doubt, when they promiſed to return, and bring him word how things were, they ſeriouſly meant and deſigned a performance; but having met with a divine oracle, which ordered them another way, they thought it moſt adviſeable to obey God rather than man. Upon this, *Herod was exceeding wroth*; partly at the uſage he met with from the wiſe men, who, according to his apprehenſion, had put a trick upon him; and chiefly becauſe his ſcheme was broke, which was by them to come at the knowledge and ſight of the young child, and privately diſpatch him: and now he might fear, which increaſed his wrath, that the child would eſcape his hands, and in time be ſet up for king, to the prejudice of him and his family; wherefore, to prevent this, if poſſible, he *ſent forth* his officers and ſoldiers, of his own will, without any ſhew of law or juſtice, acting herein as an abſolute and tyrannical prince, *and ſlew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coaſts thereof, from two years old and under*. A moſt cruel and barbarous action, and agrees with the character given of him, that he was in the beginning of his reign, and it ſeems too in the latter end of it, איש דמים ומרמה, *a bloody and deceitful man* [n]: he ſlew, or ordered to be ſlain, *children*, infants who had done him no injury, nor were capable of doing any, and whoſe parents alſo had not diſobliged him; he ſlew the infants at *Bethlehem*, becauſe this was the place of the *Meſſiah*'s birth, the knowledge of which he had got from the chief prieſts and ſcribes; he ſlew *all* of them, that there might be no poſſibility of the young child's eſcaping; and leſt it ſhould by any means eſcape to a neighbouring town or village, he ſlew all the children *in all the coaſts thereof*, in all the territories of *Bethlehem*, in all the towns and villages around it, as many as were *from two years old and under*: for of ſuch an age he ſuppoſed the new-born king to be; he knew he muſt be near that age, but could not exceed it, *according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wiſe men*; of the appearing of the ſtar to them, and when they concluded this great and famous prince was born. This cruel murder of the infants ſeems to be hinted at by *Joſephus* [o], where he ſays, that *many ſlaughters followed the prediction of a new king*; and is more manifeſtly referr'd to by *Macrobius*, a *Heathen* author, tho' the ſtory is mixed and confounded with other things; who reports [p], that "when *Auguſtus* heard, "that among the children under two years of age, "whom *Herod* king of the *Jews* ordered to be ſlain "in *Syria*, that his ſon was alſo killed, ſaid, it was "better to be *Herod*'s hog than his ſon." Killing of infants as ſoon as born, or while in their cradles, is by the *Jews* aſcribed to one *Lilith*, which, *R. Elias* [q] ſays, is the name of a devil, which kills children; and indeed ſuch an action is truly a diabolical one.

Ver. 17, 18. *Then was fulfilled that which was ſpoken*, &c.] By the ſlaughter of the infants at *Bethlehem*, was literally accompliſhed, what had been predicted by *Jeremy the prophet*, in ch. xxxi. 15. *in Rama was there a voice heard*, &c. That this prophecy belongs not to the *Babyloniſh* captivity, but the times of the Meſſiah, appears from the whole context; which manifeſtly ſpeaks of the miraculous conception of Chriſt, of the bleſſings of his kingdom to be enjoyed by his people, and of the new covenant to be made with them, as I have ſhewn in another place [r]. *Rama* was not in *Arabia*, as *Juſtin Martyr* ſays [s], but a town in the tribe of *Benjamin*, *Joſh.* xviii. 25. and very near to *Bethlehem* in the tribe of *Juda*: between theſe two places, and near to both of them, was the grave of *Rachel*, *Gen.* xxxiv. 19. for which reaſon, and alſo, becauſe *Rama* belonged to *Benjamin*, a ſon of hers, and where, no doubt, many children were deſtroyed in this maſſacre, as well as at *Bethlehem*, *Rachel* is introduced in the prophecy perſonating the ſorrowful mothers of thoſe parts, *weeping for their children*; whoſe diſtreſs and grief are ſignified by ſeveral words, *lamentation, weeping, and great mourning*, to expreſs the exceſſiveneſs thereof, for they *would not be comforted*; they refuſed to hear any thing that might be ſuggeſted to them for their relief, *becauſe* their children *were not*, i. e. were dead, were not in the land of the living, and no more to be enjoyed by them in this world. I can't forbear tranſcribing a remark made by a noted *Jew* [t] upon that paſſage in *Gen.* xxxv. 20. *And Jacob ſet a pillar upon her grave*; to ſhew, ſays he, that *Jacob* ſaw that this thing was of the Lord, and that it would be an help to her children, as it is written, *a voice was heard in Rama*, &c. wherefore he ſet a pillar upon her; and to ſhew that the affair of her grave, that this היתה לעתיד, *belonged to the time to come*, he ſays, *that is the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day*; he means, יום הגאולה, *the day of redemption*. And *Rachel*, in the paſſage of *Jeremy*, the *Jews* [u] themſelves own, means the congregation of *Iſrael*.

Ver. 19. *But when Herod was dead*, &c.] Who died, as before obſerved, a few months after this tragedy was acted; and, according to the [w] *Jewiſh* writers, on the *ſeventh* day of the month *Ciſleu*, and which anſwers to the *twenty-fifth* of our *November*; and was afterwards obſerved as a day of rejoicing by the *Jews*. The account which *Joſephus* [x], and from him *Euſebius* [y], give of his miſerable death, is as follows; a burning fever ſeized him, with an intolerable itching all over his body, and continual pains of the cholick; his feet ſwelled with a dropſy; he had an inflamation in the lower part of his belly; a putrefaction in his privy parts, which bred worms; a frequency and difficulty of breathing, and convulſions in all his members; he had a voracious appetite, a ſtinking breath, and his inteſtines abounded with ulcers; when he found that all means made uſe of were ineffectual, and that he muſt die, he attempted to lay violent hands upon himſelf, but was prevented, and ſoon after expired in a very miſerable manner.

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[l] Luke i. 54. [m] Prophecies of the Meſſiah, &c. p. 123, &c. [n] Ganz. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 25. 1. [o] Antiq. l. 17. c 3. [p] Saturnal, l. 2. c 4. [q] Methurgeman in voce לילית. Vid. Buxtorf. Lexicon Rab. in eadem voce & Synagog. Jud. c. 4. p. 80. [r] Prophecies of the Meſſiah, &c. p. 126, &c. [s] Dialog. cum Tryph. p. 304. [t] R. Abraham Seba Tzeror Hammor, fol. 47. 1. [u] Zohar in Exod. fol 13. 1. & in Lev. fol. 8. 4. [w] Megillah Taanith apud Van Till. de anno, &c. Chriſt. Nat. p. 122. [x] De Bello Judaic. l. 1. c. 33. § 5. 7. & Antiq. l. 17. c. 9. [y] Eccl. Hiſt. l. 1. c. 8. p. 25, 26.

Now ſome time after his death, *behold an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joſeph in Egypt.* It may be the ſame angel who appeared in the ſame manner, and ordered him to go into *Egypt*, with the young child and his mother; and who now brings him news of the death of *Herod*, and bids him return to the land of *Iſrael*; which ſhews the watchful providence of God, and the uſeful miniſtry of angels, concerned in the preſervation of the infant *Jeſus*.

Ver. 20. *Saying, ariſe, and take the young child and his mother*, &c.] *Joſeph* ſtrictly obſerved and obeyed the divine command of the angel, who had ordered him to continue in *Egypt*, till he brought him word what he ſhould do, and where he ſhould go: here he was with *Mary* and *Jeſus*, when the angel bid him ariſe, and take them with him, *and go into the land of Iſrael.* He does not bid him go to *Bethlehem*, or *Nazareth*, or any particular place, but the land of *Iſrael*, where he might go even into any part of it, without fear; and gives this reaſon for it, *for they are dead which ſought the young child's life*; meaning either *Herod* only, the plural number being put for the ſingular; or including *Antipater* his ſon with him, who might be equally concerned in ſeeking the life of Chriſt; ſince he was next heir, and whom *Herod* [z] ordered to be ſlain about *five* days before his death; or elſe deſigning with him many of the executioners of the infants at *Bethlehem*, and thereabout; who might have been, as well as he, miſerable inſtances of divine vengeance, for their concern in that barbarous tragedy.

Ver. 21. *And he aroſe and took the young child and his mother*, &c.] He exactly conformed in every circumſtance to the orders given him, with reſpect to the perſons he took, the place he went to, and the expeditiouſneſs of doing it; and is an example of ready and chearful obedience to the commands of God, worthy of imitation. We may learn from hence, as well as from ſome other inſtances already met with, a reaſon among others, why, though *Mary* was a virgin, and even if ſhe was to continue ſo, yet ſhe muſt be eſpouſed to *Joſeph* as her huſband; that ſhe might have one to take care of her and her young child, and be a means, under God, of preſerving, protecting, and providing for them.

Ver. 22. *But when he heard that Archelaus*, &c.] This *Archelaus* was a ſon of *Herod* the great by *Malthace* a *Samaritan*, and was appointed by him for his ſucceſſor a little before his death, and was upon it declared king by the populace, the ſoldiers, and thoſe that were in power; all which is affirmed by *Joſephus* [a], and confirms the account given by the Evangeliſt; with whoſe account agrees what the *Jewiſh* chronologer ſays [b], that “*Archelaus* the ſecond king of the family of *Herod*, reigned after his father's death: and a little after he ſays, *Cæſar Auguſtus* cauſed *Archelaus* to reign תחת אביו הורדוס *in the room of Herod his father*;” which is the very phraſe uſed by *Matthew*. Now this man was like his father, a very cruel wicked man; and, as the above chronologer ſays [c], he ordered his troops, and ſlew at the feaſt of the paſſover, in the temple of the Lord, *nine thouſand* perſons: though perhaps *Joſephus*'s account is trueſt, who ſays [d], that he ſent in his whole army upon the people, who had raiſed a ſedition, and ſlew, whilſt they were ſacrificing, about *three thouſand*; and this happened at the beginning of his reign, and indeed before he had ſcarce mounted the throne. And now the news of this might have reached the ears of *Joſeph*, and be the reaſon why he *was afraid to go thither*, into *Judea*, where *Archelaus* reigned. *Notwithſtanding being warned of God in a dream*, who never failed to adviſe him when in difficulty and diſtreſs, he did not go back again to *Egypt*, but *turned aſide into the parts of Galilee*; where *Herod Antipas*, another of *Herod*'s ſons, was *tetrarch* or governor; who was a milder perſon, and not ſo cruel and tyrannical as *Archelaus*: beſides, *Galilee* was an obſcure place, where, *Joſeph* might reaſonably think, he ſhould live with *Mary* and *Jeſus* unobſerved, and free from danger.

Ver. 23. *And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth*, &c.] Which was a city of *Galilee*, and where *Joſeph* and *Mary* had both dwelt before, *Luke* i. 26. and ii. 4. here they came and fixed their habitation, *that it might be fulfilled which was ſpoken by the prophet.* This affair of going into *Galilee*, and ſettling at *Nazareth*, was brought about with this view, to accompliſh what had been foretold by the *prophets*, or *prophet*, the plural number being uſed for the ſingular, as in *John* vi. 45. *Acts* xiii. 40. And indeed it is ſo rendered here in the *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions; and deſigns the prophet *Iſaiah*, and reſpects that prophecy of his in ch. xi. 1. *and there ſhall come forth a rod out of the ſtem of Jeſſe*, and נצר, *a branch ſhall grow out of his roots*; a prophecy owned by the *Jews* [e] themſelves to belong to the Meſſiah, and which was now fulfilled in *Jeſus*; who as he was deſcended from *Jeſſe*'s family, ſo by dwelling at *Nazareth*, he would appear to be, and would be *called a Nazarene*, or *Netzer*, *the branch*; being an inhabitant of *Natzareth*, or *Netzer*, ſo called from the multitude of plants and trees that grew there. “A *Nazarene*, as *David de Pomis* ſays [f], “is one that is born in the city *Netzer*, which is ſaid to be in the land of *Galilee*, three days journey diſtant from *Jeruſalem*.” Now tho' Chriſt was not born, yet becauſe he dwelt at *Nazareth*, and was educated there; hence the *Jews* frequently call him ישוע הנוצרי, *Jeſus the Nazarene* [g]; and ſometimes only הנוצרי, *the Nazarene* [h]. They alſo deſign him by בן נצר, *Ben Netzer* [i], of whom they ſay a great many evil things: and that Chriſt is often called *Jeſus* of *Nazareth*, or the *Nazarene*, and his followers *Nazarenes*, from the place of his habitation, is known to every one. One of Chriſt's diſciples is called *Netzer* in the *Talmud* [k], and made to plead for his life, becauſe his name ſignified a *branch*, according to *Iſ.* xi. 1. *Surenhuſius* obſerves [l], that the form לקיום מה שנאמר, *to fulfil what is ſaid*, uſed by the *Talmudiſts*, and which he takes to be the ſame with this here, is uſed by them, when they alledge not the very words of *Moſes*, or the prophets, but their ſenſe, which is deduced as a certain axiom from them; and thinks it is applicable to the preſent caſe.

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[z] Joſeph. de Bello Judaico, l. 1. c. 33. §. 8, 9.
[a] Ib. c. 28. §. 7. & c. 33. §. 1. & l. 2. c. 1. §. 1.
[b] Ganz. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 25. 1.
[c] Ib.
[d] De Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 1. §. 5.
[e] Targum, Jarchi, Aben Ezra & Kimchi in loc.
[f] Lexic. Heb. fol. 141. 2.
[g] T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 17. 1. Ganz. par. 2. fol. 14. 2. Abarbinel in Dan. fol. 44. 1.
[h] Ganz. par. 1. fol. 24. 2.
[i] T. Bab. Cetuboth, fol. 51. 2. & Gloſſ. in ib. Bereſhith Rabba, fol. 67. 2. Abarbinel in Dan. fol. 44. 1.
[k] T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 43. 1.
[l] Biblos Katallages, p. 2, 3, 4, 197, &c.

CHAP.

## CHAP. III.

Ver. 1. I*N thoſe days came John the Baptiſt*, &c.] The Evangeliſt having given an account of the genealogy and birth of Chriſt; of the coming of the wiſe men from the eaſt to him; of his preſervation from *Herod*'s bloody deſign againſt him, when all the infants at *Bethlehem* were ſlain; of the flight of *Joſeph* with *Mary* and *Jeſus* into *Egypt*, and of their return from thence, and ſettlement in *Nazareth*, where Chriſt continued till near the time of his baptiſm, and entrance on his public miniſtry; proceeds to give a brief relation of *John*, the harbinger and forerunner of Chriſt, and the adminiſtrator of baptiſm to him: and he deſcribes him by his name *John*, in *Hebrew* יוחנן, *Jochanan*, which ſignifies *gracious*, or *the grace of the Lord*, or *the Lord has given grace*; which agrees with him, both as a good man, on whom the Lord had beſtowed much grace, and as a preacher, whoſe buſineſs it was to publiſh the grace of God in Chriſt, *Luke* xvi. 16. This name was given him by an angel before his conception, and by his parents at his birth, contrary to the mind of their relations and neighbours, *Luke* i. 13—60, 63. He is called by ſome of the Jewiſh writers [m], *John the high-prieſt*; his father *Zacharias* was a prieſt of the courſe of *Abia*, and he might ſucceed him therein, and be the head of that courſe, and for that reaſon be called a *high* or *chief prieſt*; as we find ſuch were called, who were the principal among the prieſts, as were thoſe who were choſen into the *ſanhedrim*, or were the heads of theſe courſes; and therefore we read of many chief prieſts, *Matt.* ii. 4. From his being the firſt adminiſtrator of the ordinance of baptiſm, he is called *John* the *Baptiſt*; and this was a well-known title and character of him. *Joſephus* [n] calls him *John*, who is ſurnamed ὁ Βαπτιστὴς, *the Baptiſt*; and *Ben Gorion* having ſpoken of him, ſays [o], this is that *John* who עשה טבילה, *made*, inſtituted, or practiſed *baptiſm*; and which, by the way, ſhews that this was not in uſe among the *Jews* before, but that *John* was the firſt practiſer this way. He is deſcribed by his work and office as a preacher, he *came* or *was preaching* the doctrines of repentance and baptiſm; he publiſhed and declared that the kingdom of the Meſſiah was at hand, that he would quickly be revealed; and exhorted the people to believe on him, which ſhould come after him. The place where he preached, is mentioned, *in the Wilderneſs of Judea*; not that he preached to trees and to the wild beaſts of the deſert; for the wilderneſs of *Judea* was an habitable place, and had in it many cities, towns, and villages, in which we muſt ſuppoſe *John* came preaching, at leaſt to perſons which came out from thence. There were in *Joſhua*'s time ſix cities in this wilderneſs, namely *Betharabah*, *Middin*, and *Secacab*, and *Nibſhan*, and the city of *Salt*, and *Engedi*, *Joſh.* xv. 61, 62. Mention is made in the *Talmud* [p] of this wilderneſs of *Judea*, as diſtinct from the land of *Iſrael*, when the doctors ſay, that “ they don't bring up ſmall “ cattle in the land of *Iſrael*, but they bring them “ up במדבר שביהודה, *in the wilderneſs which in* “ *Judea*.” The *Jews* have an obſervation [q] of many things coming from the wilderneſs; “ the “ law, they ſay, came from the wilderneſs; the ta“ bernacle from the wilderneſs; the *ſanhedrim* from “ the wilderneſs; the prieſthood from the wilder“ neſs; the office of the *Levites* from the wilder“ neſs; the kingdom from the wilderneſs; and all “ the good gifts which God gave to *Iſrael* were “ from the wilderneſs.” So *John* came preaching here, and Chriſt was tempted here. The time of his appearance and preaching was *in thoſe days*; not when Chriſt was newly born; or when the wiſe men paid their adoration to him; or when *Herod* ſlew the infants; or when he was juſt dead, and *Archelaus* reigned in his room; or when Chriſt firſt went to *Nazareth*; though it was whilſt he dwelt there as a private perſon; but when *John* was about *thirty* years of age, and Chriſt was near unto it, *Luke* iii. 23. an age in which eccleſiaſtical perſons entered into ſervice, *Numb.* iv. 3. It was indeed, as *Luke* ſays, ch. iii. 1. in the *fifteenth* year of the reign of *Tiberius Cæſar*; *Pontius Pilate* being governor of *Judea*; and *Herod* being tetrarch of *Galilee*; and his brother *Philip* tetrarch of *Iturea*, and of the region of *Trachonitis*; and *Lyſanias*, the tetrarch of *Abilene*; *Annas* and *Caiaphas* being the high-prieſts.

Ver. 2. *And ſaying, repent ye*, &c.] The Doctrine which *John* preached was the doctrine of repentance; which may be underſtood either of amendment of life and manners; for the ſtate of the *Jews* was then very corrupt, all ſorts of men were grown very wicked; and though there was a generation among them, who were righteous in their own eyes, and needed no repentance; yet *John* calls upon them all, without any diſtinction, to repent; and hereby tacitly ſtrikes at the doctrine of juſtification by works, which they had embraced, to which the doctrine of repentance is directly oppoſite: or rather, this is meant, as the word here uſed ſignifies, of a change of mind, and principles. The *Jews* had imbibed many bad notions. The *Phariſees* held the traditions of the elders, and the doctrine of juſtification by the works of the law; and the *Sadducees* denied the reſurrection of the dead; and it was a prevailing opinion among them all, and ſeems to be what is particularly ſtruck at by *John*, that the Meſſiah would be a temporal king, and ſet up an earthly kingdom in this world. Wherefore he exhorts them to change their minds, to relinquiſh this notion; aſſuring them, that though he would be a king, and would have a kingdom, which was near at hand, yet it would be an heavenly, and not an earthly one. Hence the manner in which *John* enforces his doctrine, or the reaſon and argument he uſes to prevail upon them to regard it, is by ſaying, *for the kingdom of heaven is at hand*: by which is meant not the kingdom of glory to be expected in another world; or the kingdom of grace, that is, internal grace, which only believers are partakers of in this; but the kingdom of the *Meſſiah*, which was *at hand*, juſt ready to appear, when he would be made manifeſt in *Iſrael*, and enter upon his work and office: 'tis the goſpel diſpenſation which was about to take place, and is ſo called; becauſe of the wiſe and orderly management of it under Chriſt, the king and head of his church, by the miniſtration of the word, and adminiſtration of ordinances; whereby, as means, ſpiritual and internal grace would be communicated to many, in whoſe hearts it would reign and make them meet for the kingdom of glory; and becauſe the whole œconomy of the goſpel, the doctrines and ordinances of it are from heaven. This phraſe, *the kingdom of heaven*, is often to be met with in *Jewiſh* writings; and ſometimes it ſtands oppoſed to the *kingdom of the earth* [r]; by it is often meant the worſhip, ſervice, fear, and love of God, and faith in him: thus in one of their books [s] having mentioned thoſe words, *ſerve the Lord with fear*; it is aſked, what means this phraſe, *with fear?* 'Tis anſwered, the ſame as it is written, *the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wiſdom*; and this is מלכות שמים *the kingdom of heaven*. And elſewhere they [t] aſk, *what is the kingdom of heaven?* To which is anſwered, *the Lord our God is one Lord*. Yea, the Lord God himſelf is ſo called [u], and ſometimes the ſanctuary; and ſometimes they intend by it the times of the *Meſſiah*, as the *Baptiſt* here does; for ſo they paraphraſe [w] thoſe words, "*the time of the* "*ſinging of birds*, or of pruning *is come*; the time "for *Iſrael* to be redeemed is come; the time for "the uncircumciſion to be cut off is come; the "time that the kingdom of the *Cuthites (Samari-* "*tans* or *Heathens)* ſhall be conſumed is come; "and the time של מלכות שמים שתגלה that *the* "*kingdom of heaven ſhall be revealed* is come, as it "is written, *and the Lord ſhall be king over all the* "*earth*." Very pertinently does *John* make uſe of this argument to engage to repentance; ſince there can't be a greater motive to it, whether it regards ſorrow for ſin, and confeſſion of it, or a change of principles and practice, than the grace of God through Chriſt, which is exhibited in the Goſpel diſpenſation: and very appoſitely does he urge repentance previous to the kingdom of heaven; becauſe without that, there can be no true and cordial embracing or entering into the Goſpel diſpenſation, or kingdom of heaven; that is, no real and hearty receiving the doctrines, and ſubmitting to the ordinances of it. Nor ought the *Jews* above all people to object to *John*'s method of preaching; ſince they make repentance abſolutely neceſſary to the revelation of the *Meſſiah* and his kingdom, and redemption by him; for they ſay [x] in ſo many words, that "if *Iſrael* do not repent, they will "never be redeemed; but as ſoon as they repent, "they will be redeemed; yea, if they repent but "one day, immediately the ſon of *David* will "come."

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[m] Ganz. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 25. 2. Chronicon Regum, fol. 54. 4. [n] Antiq. l. 18. c. 7. [o] L. 5. c. 45.
[p] T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 79. 2. [q] Shirhaſhirim Rabba, fol. 13. 3.

Ver. 3. *For this is he that was ſpoken of*, &c.] Theſe are not the words of the *Baptiſt* himſelf, as in *John* i. 23. but of the Evangeliſt, who cites and applies to *John* a paſſage in the *Prophet Iſaiah*, in ch. xl. 3. and that very pertinently, ſince that *chapter* is a prophecy of the *Meſſiah*. The conſolations ſpoken of in ver. 1, 2. were to be in the days of the king *Meſſiah*, as a writer of note [y] among the *Jews* obſerves. The *Meſſiah* is more expreſly propheſied of in ver. 9, 10, 11. as one that ſhould appear to the joy of his people, and *come with a ſtrong hand*, vigorouſly proſecute his deſigns, faithfully perform his work, and then receive his reward; he is ſpoken of under the *character* of a *ſhepherd*, who would tenderly diſcharge the ſeveral parts of his office as ſuch, which character is frequently given to the *Meſſiah* in the Old Teſtament: now the perſon ſpoken of in ver. 3. was to be his harbinger to go before him, proclaim and make ready for his coming; and what is ſaid of him agrees entirely with *John* the *Baptiſt*, as the character given of him, *the voice of one crying*, βοῶντος, lowing like an ox; which expreſſes the auſterity of the man, the roughneſs of his voice, the ſeverity of his language; that he called aloud and ſpoke out, openly, publickly, and freely; and that he delivered himſelf in preaching with a great deal of zeal and fervency. The place, where he preached was, *in the wilderneſs*, that is, of *Judea*, where he is ſaid before, in ver. 1. to come preaching. The doctrine he preached was, *prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths ſtraight*, which is beſt explained by what is ſaid before, in ver. 2. *repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand*. The Lord whom ye have ſought, the *Meſſiah* whom you have expected, is juſt coming, he will quickly appear; prepare to meet him by repentance, and receive him by faith, relinquiſh your former notions and principles, correct your errors, and amend your lives, remove all out of the way which may be offenſive to him. The alluſion is to a great perſonage being about to make his publick appearance or entrance; when a harbinger goes before him, orders the way to be cleared, all impediments to be removed, and every thing got ready for the reception of him.

Ver. 4. *The ſame John had his raiment*, &c.] The Evangeliſt goes on to deſcribe this excellent perſon, the forerunner of our Lord, by his raiment; *the ſame John* of whom *Iſaiah* propheſied, and who came preaching the doctrine in the place and manner before expreſſed, *had his raiment of camel's hair*; not of camel's hair ſoftened and dreſſed, which the *Talmudiſts* [z] call צמר גמלים *camel's wool*; of which wool of camels and of hares, the *Jews* ſay [a] the coats were made, with which God cloathed *Adam* and *Eve*; and which being ſpun to a thread, and wove, and made a garment of, they call [b] חמילה, and we *camblet*; for this would have been too fine and ſoft for *John* to wear, which is denied of him, *Matt.* xi. 8. but either of a camel's ſkin with the hair on it, ſuch was the *rough garment*, or *garment of hair*, the Prophets uſed to wear, *Zech.* xiii. 4. or of camel's hair not ſoftened but undreſſed; and ſo was very coarſe and rough, and which was ſuitable to the auſterity of his life, and the roughneſs of his miniſtry. And it is to be obſerved he appeared in the ſame dreſs as *Elijah* or *Elias* did, 2 *Kings* i. 8. in whoſe ſpirit and power he came, and whoſe name he bore, *Luke* i. 17. *Matt.* xi. 14. *And a leathern girdle about his loins*; and ſuch an one alſo *Elijah* was girt with, 2 *Kings* i. 8. and which added to the roughneſs of his garment, though it ſhews he was prepared and in a readineſs to do the work he was ſent about. *And his meat was locuſts and wild honey*; by the *locuſts* ſome have thought are meant a ſort of fiſh called *crabs*, which *John* found upon the banks of *Jordan*, and lived upon; others, that a ſort of wild fruit, or the tops of trees and plants he found in the wilderneſs and fed on, are deſigned; but the truth is, theſe were a ſort of creatures called *locuſts*, and which by the ceremonial law were lawful to be eaten, ſee *Lev.* xi. 22. The *Miſnic* doctors [c] deſcribe ſuch as are fit to be eaten after this manner; "all that have "four feet and four wings, and whoſe thighs and "wings cover the greateſt part of their body, and "whoſe name is חגב *a locuſt*." For it ſeems they muſt not only have theſe marks and ſigns, but muſt be ſo called, or by a word in any other language which anſwers to it, as the commentators [d] on this paſſage obſerve; and very frequently do theſe writers ſpeak [e] of locuſts that are clean, and may be eaten. *Maimonides* [f] reckons up *eight* ſorts of them, which might be eaten according to the law. Beſides, theſe were eaten by people of other nations, particularly the *Ethiopians* [g], *Parthians* [h], and *Lybians* [i]. *And wild honey:* this was honey of bees, which were not kept at home, but ſuch as were in the woods and fields; of this ſort was that which *Jonathan* found, and eat of, 1 *Sam.* xiv. 25, 26, 27. now the honey of bees might be eat, according to the *Jewiſh* laws [k], though bees themſelves might not.

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[r] Bereſhit Rabba, fol. 7. 4.
[s] Zohar in Exod. fol. 39. 2.
[t] Debarim Rabba, fol. 237. 2.
[u] Zohar in Gen. fol. 112. 3.
[w] Shirhaſhirim Rabba, fol. 11. 4.
[x] T. Hieroſ. Taanith, fol. 63. 4. & 64. 1. & Bab. Sanhed. fol. 97. 2.
[y] R. David Kimchi in Iſa. xl. 1.
[z] Miſn. Negaim c. 11. §. 2. & Kilaim, c. 9. §. 1. Talmud. Bab. Menachot, fol. 39. 2.
[a] Bereſhit Rabba, fol. 18. 2.
[b] T. Hieroſ. Nedarim, fol. 40. 3.
[c] Miſn. Cholin. c. 3. §. 7.
[d] Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.
[e] Miſn. Beracot, c. 6. §. 3. Terumot. c. 10. §. 9. & Ediot. c. 7. §. 2. & 8. 4.
[f] Maacolot Aſurot, c. 1. §. 21.

Ver. 5. *Then went out to him Jeruſalem*, &c.] The uncommon appearance of this perſon, the oddneſs of his dreſs, the auſterity of his life, together with the awfulneſs and importance of his doctrine, and the novelty of the ordinance of baptiſm he adminiſtered, and the *Jews* having had no prophet for ſome hundreds of years, and imagining he might be the Meſſiah, quickly drew large numbers of people to him. Some copies read *all Jeruſalem*; that is, the inhabitants of that city, a very large number of them; and *all Judea*, a great number of peopſe from all parts of that country. *All* is here put for *many*. And *all the region round about Jordan*; multitudes from thence, which ſeems to be the ſame country with that which is called *beyond Jordan*, *Matt.* iv. 25. and is diſtinguiſhed from *Judea*, as here. The *Septuagint* in 2 *Chron.* iv. 17. uſe the ſame phraſe the Evangeliſt does here, and likewiſe in *Gen.* xiii. 10, 11.

Ver. 6. *And were baptized of him*, &c.] The place where they were baptized of him was, *in Jordan*; ſome copies read, *in the river Jordan*, as in *Mark* i. 5. As to the name of this river, and the etymology of it, the *Jews* ſay [l] it was ſo called, שיורד מדן *becauſe it deſcended from Dan, i. e. Leſhem Dan*, or *Pamias*, which they ſay is a cave at the head of it. It was in *John*'s time and long after a conſiderable river, a river to ſwim in; we [m] read that "*Reſh Lakiſh* הוה סחי בירדנא *was ſwimming* "*in Jordan.*" And elſewhere [n], that one day "*R. Jochanan* was *ſwimming in Jordan.*" Alſo it was a river for boats and ſhips to paſs in, ſo that it was a navigable river; hence we read [o] of עריבת הירדן *the boat of Jordan*, and of ſhips in it, and of ſuch and ſuch things being forbidden to be carried over *Jordan* in a ſhip [p]; particularly, "a man might not "take the water of the ſin-offering, and the aſhes "of the ſin-offering, and carry them over *Jordan* "in a ſhip." *Pliny* [q], *Pauſanias* [r], *Solinus* [s], and others, ſpeak of it as a very conſiderable and delightful river; ſee *Joſhua* iii. 15, 16, 17. The Chriſtians of Chriſt's time, are called by the *Jews*, in a way of contempt, apoſtates, that received the doctrine of baptiſm, and were טבכוים בירדן *dipped in Jordan* [t]. The manner in which they were baptized by him, was by immerſion or plunging them in the water: this may be concluded from the ſignification of the word βαπτιζω here uſed, which in the primary ſenſe of it ſignifies to dip or plunge; from the place in which they were baptized, *the river Jordan*; and from *John*'s conſtant manner of baptizing elſewhere, who choſe places for this purpoſe, where and becauſe there was there much water; ſee *John* i. 28. and iii. 23. The character of the perſons baptized by him is this, they were ſuch as were *confeſſing their ſins*. They were called to repentance by *John*'s miniſtry, and had the grace of it beſtowed upon them; being thoroughly convinced of ſin, and truly ſorry for it, they were ready to acknowledge and confeſs it to God and men; and ſuch an abiding ſenſe they had of it upon their minds, that they continued doing it: they were not only confeſſing their ſins before baptiſm, which engaged *John* to adminiſter it to them; ſince we find afterwards he refuſed to admit others, becauſe of their want of repentance and fruits meet for it; but alſo whilſt they were going into the water, and when they came up out of it, ſo full were they of a ſenſe of ſin, and ſo ready to own it. Even in baptiſm itſelf there is a tacit confeſſion and acknowledgment of ſin, for it repreſents the ſufferings and death of Chriſt which were for ſin, into which perſons are baptized, and profeſs to be dead to ſin thereby; and alſo the reſurrection of Chriſt for juſtification from ſin, which obliges the baptized perſon to walk in newneſs of life, ſee *Rom.* vi. 3, 4, 5. beſides, in this ordinance believers are led to the blood of Chriſt, both for the cleanſing and remiſſion of their ſins, which ſuppoſe filth and guilt, *Acts* xxii. 16. and ii. 38. Now this is the character given of the very firſt perſons, that were baptized by *John*, and ought ſurely to be attended to by us; and as much care as poſſible ſhould be taken, that none but ſuch as have a true ſenſe of ſin, and are brought to an humble and hearty acknowledgment of it, be admitted to this ordinance.

Ver. 7. *But when he ſaw many of the Phariſees*, &c.] This being the firſt place in which mention is made of the *Phariſees* and *Sadducees*, it may not be amiſs to give ſome account of them once for all, and to begin with the *Phariſees*, and firſt with their name. Some derive this word from פרץ pharatz to *divide*, to *make a breach*, from whence *Phares* had his name, *Gen.* xxxviii. 29. ſo *Jerom*; [u] who obſerves, that "the *Phariſees*, who ſeparated them-"ſelves from the people as righteous perſons, were "called *diviſi, the divided.*" And in [w] another place, "becauſe the *Phariſees* were *divided* from "the *Jews* on account of ſome ſuperfluous obſer-"vations, they alſo took their name from their "diſagreement." *Origen* [x] ſeems to refer to this etymology of the word, when he ſays, "the *Pha*-"*riſees*, according to their name, were διηρημενοι τινες "ϗ ϛασιωδεις, *certain divided and ſeditious perſons.*" And true it is, that this ſect often meddled with the affairs of the government, and were very ambitious of being concerned therein. *Joſephus* [y] obſerves of queen *Alexandra*, that ſhe governed others, and the *Phariſees* governed her: hence though they were in great eſteem with the people, they were rather dreaded, than loved by the government. Others derive this name from פרש *Pharas* to *expand*, or *ſtretch out*; either becauſe they made broad their phylacteries, and enlarged the borders of their garments; or becauſe they expoſed themſelves to publick notice, did all they could to be ſeen of men, prayed in the corners of the ſtreets, had a trumpet blown before them when they gave alms, choſe the uppermoſt rooms at feaſts, and the chief ſeats in the ſynagogues, greetings in the markets, and to be called of men *Rabbi*; all which to be ſure are their juſt characters. Others derive it from the ſame word, as ſignifying to *explain* or *expound*; becauſe it was one part of their work, and in which they excelled, to expound the law: but this can't be the reaſon of their general name, becauſe there were women *Phariſees* as well as men, who can't be thought to be employed in that work. The more generally received opinion is, that this name is taken from the above word, as ſignifying to *ſeparate*; becauſe they ſeparated themſelves from the men and manners of the world, to the ſtudy of the law, and to a greater degree of holineſs, at leaſt in pretence, than other perſons. They were ſtrict obſervers of the traditions of the elders; are ſaid to hold both fate and free-will; they owned the reſurrection of the dead, and that there were angels and ſpirits, in which they differed from the *Sadducees*. Or rather they have their name from פרס which ſignifies a *reward*; they being ſtiff defenders of the doctrine of rewards and puniſhments in a future ſtate, which the *Sadducees* denied. The *Talmudic* writers [z] ſay, there were *ſeven* ſorts of them, and if it would not be too tedious to the reader, I would give the names of them; and the rather, becauſe ſome of them ſeem to tally with the complexion and conduct of the *Phariſees* mentioned in the ſcriptures. There were then, 1. פרוש שיכמי the *Shechemite Phariſee*, who does as *Shechem* did; is circumciſed, not on God's account, or for his glory, or becauſe circumciſion is a command of his, but for his own profit and advantage, and that he may get honour from men. 2. פרוש ניקפי *the daſhing Phariſee*; who walks gently, the heel of one foot touching the great toe of the other; and ſcarce lifts up his feet from the earth, ſo that he daſhes them againſt the ſtones, and would be thought hereby to be in deep meditation. 3. פרוש קיזאי the *Phariſee letting blood*; who makes as if he ſhut his eyes, that he mayn't look upon women, and ſo runs and daſhes his head againſt the wall, till the blood guſhes out, as though a vein was opened. 4. פרוש מדוכיא the *depreſſed Phariſee*; who went double, or bowed down, or as others render the phraſe, *the mortar Phariſee*; either becauſe he wore a garment like a mortar, with the mouth turned downwards; or a hat reſembling ſuch a veſſel; ſo that he could not look upward, nor on either ſide, only downward, or right forward. 5. פרוש מה חובתי ואעשנה the *Phariſee*, that ſaid, what is my duty and I will do it; the gloſs upon it is, teach me what is my duty, and I will do it: lo! this is his excellency, if he is not expert in the prohibitions and niceties of the commands, and comes to learn; or thus, what is more to be done and I have not done it; ſo that he ſhews himſelf, or would appear as if he had performed all. 6. פרוש יראה *the Phariſee of fear*; who does what he does from fear of puniſhment. 7. פרוש אהבה *the Phariſee of love*; who does what he does from love; which the gloſs explains thus; for the love of the reward of the commandment, and not for the love of the commandment of his creator; though they ſay of all theſe there is none to be beloved, but the *Phariſee* of love. When this ſect firſt began, and who was the firſt author of it, is not eaſy to ſay; 'tis certain there were great numbers of them in the times of *John* the *Baptiſt*, and of Chriſt, and for ſome time after. The *Jews* ſay [a], that when the temple was deſtroyed the ſecond time, the *Phariſees* increaſed in *Iſrael*. Next let us conſider the *Sadducees*, who they were, and from whence they ſprung. Theſe have their name not from צדיק *Saddik righteous* [b], or צדק *Sedek righteouſneſs*, being ſelf juſtitiaries; for though they were, yet this would not have diſtinguiſhed them from the *Phariſees*, who were likewiſe ſuch; but from צדוק *Sadok* or *Saduk*, a diſciple of *Antigonus*, a man of *Socho* [c]. The occaſion of this new ſect was this; *Antigonus*, among the inſtructions he gave to his ſcholars, had this ſaying; " be not as ſervants who ſerve their maſter for the " ſake of reward; but be ye as ſervants that ſerve " their maſter not for the ſake of reward, and let " the fear of God be upon you." Which, when *Sadok*, and a fellow ſcholar, whoſe name was *Baithos*, or *Baithus* heard, not rightly underſtanding him, concluded that there was no future ſtate of rewards and puniſhments; which notion they broached and had their followers, who from the one were called *Sadducees*, and ſometimes from the other *Baithuſeans*: theſe men held the Scriptures only, rejecting the traditions of the elders; they denied fate, and aſcribed all to free-will; they affirmed that there is no reſurrection of the dead; that the ſoul dies with the body; that there is no future ſtate after this life, and that there are neither angels nor ſpirits. Now when *John ſaw* or obſerved *many* of both theſe ſects *come to his baptiſm*; not merely to ſee it adminiſtered, led thither by the novelty of the thing; but to ſubmit to it, to which they might be induced by that very great character of a very holy good man, which *John* had got among the people; and they were deſirous of being thought ſo too, and therefore deſired to be baptized by him; but he knowing the men and their manners, *ſaid unto them*; addreſſed them in a very ſevere ſtile, quite contrary to their expectation, and the opinion the people had of them, *O generation of vipers!* It ſeems their parents before them were vipers, and they their offspring were like them, in hypocriſy and malice. The viper appears very beautiful outwardly, but is full of poiſon; it looks harmleſs and innocent, as if it neither could nor would do any hurt, its teeth being hid, but is a moſt deadly and hurtful creature: ſo theſe men, though they made ſpecious pretences to religion and holineſs, yet were full of the deadly poiſon of hypocriſy, malice and error. A very diſagreeable ſalutation this muſt be to men, who were deſirous of being reckoned very religious, and who boaſted of and truſted in their being the ſeed of *Abraham*; when they were the children of the devil, the ſeed of the old ſerpent, and the offspring of the worſt of men, and in whom was verified the proverb, like father like ſon. *John* proceeds and aſks ſaying, *who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?* who has ſuggeſted this to you? from whom have ye received this hint? who has pointed out the way to you to eſcape divine vengeance, or the ruin which will quickly come upon you? for by *wrath to come*, is not meant hell-fire, everlaſting deſtruction, from which baptiſm could not ſave them; but temporal calamity and deſtruction, the wrath which in a little time came upon that nation to the uttermoſt, for rejecting the Meſſiah, and the Goſpel diſpenſation; from which they might have been ſaved, had they given credit to Jeſus as the Meſſiah, though only with a bare aſſent; and had they entered into the kingdom of heaven, or Meſſiah, the Goſpel diſpenſation, by receiving its doctrines, and ſubmitting to its ordinances, though only externally.

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[g] Plin. Nat. Hiſt. l. 6. c. 30. Alex. ab Alex. l. 3. c. 11. Ludolph. Hiſt. Ethiop. l. 1. c. 13.

[h] Plin. Nat. Hiſt. l. 11. c. 29.

[i] Hieron. adv. Jovinian. fol. 26. tom. 2.

[k] Moſes Kotzenſis Mitzvot Tora precept. neg. 132.

[l] T. Bab. Becorot. fol. 55. 1. Kimchi in Joſh. xix. 47.

[m] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 9. 2.

[n] T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 84. 1.

[o] T. Hieroſ. Sabbat. fol. 7. 1. Midraſh Kohelet, fol. 64. 2.

[p] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 116. 2. Chagiga fol. 23. 1. Sabbat. fol. 60. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Parah Adumah, c. 10. §. 2. & Bartenora in Miſn. Parah, c. 9. §. 6.

[q] Nat. Hiſt. l. 5. c. 15.

[r] l. 5. p. 29.

[s] Polyhiſt. c. 48.

[t] Coſri p. 3. §. 65. p. 241. Ed. Buxtorf.

[u] Trad. Heb. in Gen. fol. 72. D. Tom. 3.

[w] Adv. Luciferian. fol. 49. K. Tom. 2. ſo Tertullian. præſcript. Hæret. c. 45.

[x] Comment. in Joan. p. 115. Ed. Huet.

[y] De Bello Jud. l. 1. c. 5. §. 2.

Ver. 8. *Bring forth therefore fruits*, &c.] That is, if you are truly penitent, if you have a proper ſenſe of ſin, and true repentance for it, do ſuch works as are ſuitable to it, and will ſhew the genuineſs of it; for *fruits meet for repentance*, are the ſame as *works meet for repentance*, *Acts* xxvi. 20.

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[z] T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 14. 2. & Sota fol. 20. 3. Bab. Sota, fol. 22. 2. eight ſorts are reckoned in Abot R. Nathan, c. 37. fol. 8. 4.

[a] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 60. 2.

[b] So Epiphanius contr. Hæreſ. l. 1. Hæreſ. 14. Hieron. Comment. in Matth. c. 22. l. 3. fol. 30. M. Tom. 9.

[c] Abot R. Nathan c. 5. fol. 3. 1. Sepher Coſri orat. 3. fol. 187. 2. & R. Juda Muſcatus in ib. Maimon. in Pirk. Abot. c. 1. §. 3. Juchaſin fol. 15. 2. Gantz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 20. 2. & Bartenora in Miſn. Judaim, c. 4. §. 6.

and as a tree is known by its fruit, ſo repentance is known by good works; theſe are the fruits and effects of repentance, and which are proofs with men of the ſincerity of it. Thoſe which follow upon evangelical repentance, are ſuch as are mentioned in 2 *Cor*. vii. 11. Now let it be obſerved, that *John* inſiſted upon repentance, and a good converſation, atteſting the truth of it, as neceſſary prerequiſites to the ordinance of baptiſm; and ſo *Peter* firſt urged repentance, and then propoſed baptiſm, *Acts* ii. 38. from whence one ſhould think it may be rationaly and ſtrongly concluded, that none but truly repenting ſinners, and ſuch who have given proofs that they are ſo, are to be admitted to this ordinance.

Ver. 9. *And think not to ſay within yourſelves*, &c.] *John* knew the ſentiments of their minds, and the prevailing opinion they had given into, againſt which he cautions them; as, that becauſe they were *Abraham*'s ſeed, they were in a ſtate of ſalvation, in the favour of God, and had a right to all privileges and ordinances: this they truſted in, and boaſted of, and would often think of it within themſelves, pleaſing themſelves with the thoughts of it, and ſpeak of it to others; *we have Abraham for our father*. The *Baptiſt* was aware how ready they would be to object this to him; and therefore prevents their plea from hence in favour of their admiſſion to baptiſm, by aſſuring them, that this would have no weight with him, nor give them any right to the ordinance he adminiſtered: hence it appears that it is not a perſon's being born of believing parents, that can entitle him to water baptiſm; or be a reaſon why it ought to be adminiſtered to him: if nothing more than this can be ſaid in his favour, its a plain caſe from hence, he ought to be debarred from it. The reaſon, *John* gives why ſuch a plea as this would be inſufficient, is, *for I ſay unto you*; I aſſure you of it; you may depend on it as a certain truth, *that God is able of theſe ſtones to raiſe up children unto Abraham*. To *raiſe up children* is an *Hebrew* way of ſpeaking, and the ſame with שם or להקים ורע to *raiſe up ſeed*, or a *name* to another, *Gen*. xxxviii. 8. *Deut*. xxv. 7. *Ruth* iv. 10. and ſignifies to beget children for another, who are to be called by his name. Some by *the ſtones*, underſtand the *Gentiles*, comparable to ſtones, both for the hardneſs of their hearts, and their idolatry in worſhipping ſtocks and ſtones; of, and among whom God was able to raiſe, and has raiſed up a ſpiritual ſeed to *Abraham*; who are of the ſame faith with him, who walk in his ſteps, and whoſe father he is: but then it muſt be ſuppoſed, according to this ſenſe, that there were ſome *Gentiles* preſent, ſince *John* calls them *theſe* ſtones, pointing to ſome perſons or things, that were before him; wherefore I rather think that this phraſe is to be taken literaly, and that *John* pointed to ſome certain ſtones that were near him, within ſight, and which lay upon the banks of *Jordan*, where he was baptizing; for what is it that the omnipotent God cannot do? He could as eaſily of ſtones make men, as make *Adam* out of the duſt of the earth, and then make theſe men, in a ſpiritual ſenſe, children of *Abraham*; that is, believers in Chriſt, and partakers of his grace; *for if ye be Chriſt's, then are ye Abraham's ſeed, and heirs according to the promiſe*, *Gal*. iii. 29. So that God ſtood in no need of theſe perſons, nor had they any reaſon to boaſt of their natural deſcent from *Abraham*; ſince this in ſpiritual matters, and in things relating to the Goſpel diſpenſation, would ſtand them in no ſtead, or be of any advantage to them.

Ver. 10. *And now alſo the ax is laid*, &c.] Theſe words may be rendered, *for now alſo*, and contain in them a reaſon why they might expect future wrath; why they ſhould bring forth good fruit; and why they ſhould not truſt to, nor plead their deſcent from *Abraham*, becauſe *the ax is now laid*: by which is meant, not the Goſpel which now began to be preached by *John*; though this was like an ax laid to the root of, and which cut down, their pride and vanity, their ſelf-confidence and glorying in their righteouſneſs, holineſs, carnal wiſdom, and fleſhly privileges: but rather, the ax of God's judgment and vengeance is here deſigned, which becauſe of the certainty and near approach of it, is ſaid to be *now laid*; and that not to ſome of the branches only, to lop them off, to take away from the *Jews* ſome particular privileges, but *to the root* of all their privileges, civil and eccleſiaſtical; even the covenant which God had made with that people as a nation, who was now about to write, *Lo Ammi* upon them; ſo that henceforward they would have nothing to expect from their being the ſeed of *Abraham*, *Iſraelites*, or circumciſed perſons. The time was juſt at hand, when the Lord would take his *ſtaff beauty and cut it aſunder*, *that he might break the covenant* he *had made with all the people*, *Zech*. xi. 10. in a ſhort time their civil polity and church ſtate would be both at an end. The *Romans*, who were already among them and over them, would very quickly come upon them, and cut them off root and branch; and utterly deſtroy their temple, city and nation: and this ruin and deſtruction was levelled not at a ſingle tree, a ſingle perſon, or family only, as *Jeſſe*'s, or any others, but at the root *of the trees*; of all the trees of the whole body of the people: for the covenant which was made with them all being broke, and which was their hedge and fence, they were all expoſed to the wild boar of the foreſt. *Therefore every tree*, every individual perſon, though one of *Abraham*'s children, and made never ſuch a fair ſhew in the fleſh, *which bringeth not forth good fruit*; does not perform good works from a right principle, to a right end, ſuch as are meet for repentance; particularly, does not believe in the Meſſiah now ready to be revealed, which is the main and principal work; and does not continue ſo doing, and thus believing, *is hewn down and caſt into the fire*. Temporal ruin and deſtruction ſhall come upon him; he ſhall not eſcape divine vengeance here, and ſhall be caſt into everlaſting burnings hereafter; which is quite contrary to a notion of theirs, that בוכותי דאברהם *by the merits of Abraham*, the *Iſraelites* ſhall be delivered from the fire of hell[d].

Ver. 11. *I indeed baptize you with water*, &c.] Theſe words, at firſt view, look as if they were a continuation of *John*'s diſcourſe with the *Phariſees* and *Sadducees*, and as though he had baptized them; whereas by comparing them with what the other Evangeliſts relate, ſee *Mark* i. 5, 8. *Luke* iii. 10, 15, 16. they are ſpoken to the people, who, confeſſing their ſins, had been baptized by him; to whom he gives an account of the ordinance of water baptiſm, of which he was the adminiſtrator, in what manner, and on what account he performed it: *I indeed baptize you*; or, as *Mark* ſays, *I have baptized you*; I have authority from God ſo to do;

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[d] Zohar in Exod. fol. 34. 4.

my commiſſion reaches thus far, and no farther; I can adminiſter, and have adminiſtered the outward ordinance to you; but the inward grace and increaſe of it, together with the ordinary and extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, I can't confer. I can, and do baptize, upon a profeſſion of repentance, and I can threaten impenitent ſinners with divine vengeance; but I can't beſtow the grace of repentance on any, nor puniſh for impenitence, either here or hereafter; theſe things are out of my power, and belong to another perſon hereafter named: all that I do, and pretend to do, is to baptize *with water*, or rather *in water*, as εν υδατι ſhould be rendered. Our verſion ſeems to be calculated in favour of pouring, or ſprinkling water upon, or application of it to the perſon baptized, in oppoſition to immerſion in it; whereas the *prepoſition* is not inſtrumental, but local, and denotes the place, the river *Jordan*, and the element of water there, in which *John* was baptizing: and this he did *unto repentance*, or *at*, or upon *repentance*; for ſo εις may be rendered, as it is in *Matt.* xii. 41. for the meaning is not that *John* baptized them in order to bring them to repentance; ſince he required repentance and fruits meet for it, previous to baptiſm; but that he had baptized them upon the foot of their repentance: and ſo the learned *Grotius* obſerves, that the phraſe may be very aptly explained thus; "I baptize you upon the profeſſion of " repentance which ye make." *John* gives an hint of the perſon whoſe forerunner he was, and of his ſuperior excellency to him: he indeed firſt ſpeaks of him as one behind him, not in nature or dignity, but in order of time as man; *but he that comes after me*. *John* was born before Jeſus, and began his miniſtry before he did; he was his harbinger; *Jeſus* was now coming after him to *Jordan* from *Galilee*, to be baptized by him, and then enter on his publick miniſtry: but though he came after him in this ſenſe, he was not beneath, but above him in character; which he freely declares, ſaying, *is mightier than I*; not only as he is the mighty God, and ſo infinitely mightier than he; but in his office and miniſtry, which was exerciſed with greater power and authority, and attended with mighty works and miracles, and was followed with the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit. Not to mention the mighty work of redemption performed by him; the reſurrection of his own body from the dead; and his exaltation in human nature, above all power, might and dominion. The *Baptiſt* was ſo ſenſible of the inequality between them, and of his unworthineſs to be mentioned with him, that he ſeems at a loſs almoſt to expreſs his diſtance from him; and therefore ſignifies it by his being unfit to perform one of the moſt ſervile offices to him, *whoſe ſhoes I am not worthy to bear*; or as the other Evangeliſts relate it, *whoſe ſhoe latchet I am not worthy to unlooſe*; which amounts to the ſame ſenſe, ſince ſhoes are unlooſed in order to be taken from, or carried before, or after a perſon; which to do was the work of ſervants among the *Jews*. In the *Talmud* [e] 'tis aſked, " What is the manner of poſſeſ- " ing of ſervants? or what is their ſervice? He " buckles his (maſter's) ſhoes; he *unlooſes his ſhoes*, " *and carries them before him* to the bath." Or, as is elſewhere [f] ſaid, " *he unlooſes his ſhoes*, or *carries* " *after him* his veſſels (whatever he wants) to the " bath; he unclothes him, he waſhes him, he " anoints him, he rubs him, he clothes him, he " buckles his ſhoes, and lifts him up." This was ſuch a ſervile work, that it was thought too mean for a ſcholar or a diſciple to do; for this [g] ſaid, " all ſervices which a ſervant does for his maſter, " a diſciple does for his maſter, חוץ מהתרת לו מנעל " *except unlooſing his ſhoes*." The *Gloſs* on it ſays, " he that ſees it, will ſay, he's a *Canaanitiſh* ſervant:" for only a *Canaanitiſh*, not an *Hebrew* ſervant [h], might be employed in, or obliged to ſuch work; for it was reckoned not only mean and ſervile, but even baſe and reproachful. 'Tis one of their [i] cannons; " if thy brother is become poor, and is ſold unto " thee, thou ſhalt not make him do the work of " a ſervant; that is, עבודת של גנאי *any reproach-* " *ful work*; ſuch as to buckle his ſhoes, or unlooſe " them, or carry his inſtruments (or neceſſaries) " after him to the bath." Now *John* thought himſelf unworthy; it was too great an honour for him to do that for Chriſt, which was thought too mean for a diſciple to do for a wiſe man, and too ſcandalous for an *Hebrew* ſervant, to do for his maſter, to whom he was ſold; which ſhews the great humility of *John*, and the high opinion he had of Chriſt. It has been controverted whether Chriſt wore ſhoes or not; *Jerom* affirmed that he did not: but it ſeems from hence that he did; nor were the *Jews* uſed to walk bare-foot, but on certain occaſions. The *Baptiſt* points at the peculiar work of this great perſon, in which he greatly exceeds any thing done by him; *he ſhall baptize you with the Holy Ghoſt, and with fire*; referring, either to the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, to be beſtowed on the diſciples on the day of *Pentecoſt*, of which the cloven tongues like as of fire, which appeared unto them, and ſat upon them, were the ſymbols; which was an inſtance of the great power and grace of Chriſt, and of his exaltation at the Father's right-hand. Or rather, this phraſe is expreſſive of the awful judgments, which ſhould be inflicted by him on the *Jewiſh* nation; when he by his *Spirit* ſhould *reprove* them for the ſin of rejecting him; and when he ſhould appear as a *refiner's fire*, and *as fuller's ſoap*; when *the day of the Lord* ſhould *burn as an oven*; when he ſhould *purge the blood of Jeruſalem*, his own blood, and the blood of the Apoſtles and Prophets ſhed in it, *from the midſt thereof, by the ſpirit of judgment, and by the ſpirit of burning*; the ſame with *the Holy Ghoſt and fire* here, or the fire of the Holy Ghoſt, or the holy Spirit of fire; and is the ſame with *the wrath to come*, and with what is threatened in the context: the unfruitful trees ſhall be *cut down, and caſt into the fire*, and the *chaff* ſhall be *burnt with unquenchable fire*. And as this ſenſe beſt agrees with the context, it may the rather be thought to be genuine; ſince *John* is ſpeaking not to the diſciples of Chriſt, who were not yet called, and who only on the day of *Pentecoſt* were baptized with the Holy Ghoſt and fire, in the other ſenſe of this phraſe; but to the people of the *Jews*, ſome of whom had been baptized by him; and others were aſking him queſtions, others gazing upon him, and wondering what manner of perſon he was; and multitudes of them continued obdurate and impenitent under his miniſtry, whom he threatens ſeverely in the context. Add to all this, that the phraſe of dipping or baptizing in fire, ſeems to be uſed in this ſenſe by the *Jewiſh* writers. In the *Talmud* [k] one puts the queſtion, In what does he, (God,) dip? You'll ſay in water, as it is written, *who hath meaſured the waters in the hollow of his hand?* Another replies, בנורא טביל *he dips in fire*; as it is written, *for behold the Lord will come with fire.* What is the meaning of טבילותא בנורא *baptiſm in fire?* He anſwers, according to the mind of *Rabbah*, the root of *dipping in the fire*, is what is written; *all that abideth not the fire, ye ſhall make go* through the water. Dipping in the fire of the law, is a phraſe uſed by the *Jews*[l]. The phraſes of *dipping, and waſhing in fire*, are alſo uſed by *Greek*[m] authors.

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[e] T. Hieroſ. Kidduſhin, fol. 59. 4. Maimon. & T. Bartenora in Miſn. Kidduſhin, c. 1. §. 3. [f] T. Bab. Kidduſhin fol. 22. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Mechirah, c. 2. §. 2. [g] T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 96. 1. Maimon. Talmud Tora, c. 5. §. 8. [h] Maimon. Hilch. Abadim, c. 1. §. 7. [i] Moſes Kotzenſis Mitzvot Torah, precept. neg. 176. [k] T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 39. 1.

Ver. 12. *Whoſe fan is in his hand*, &c.] The Jews had their hand-fans, and which were like a man's hand; their names were מעבר מורה מגוב; which, as *Maimonides* ſays[n], were three ſorts of inſtruments uſed in the floor, in form of a man's hand; with which they cleanſed the wheat and barley from the ſtraw; and their names differ according to their form: ſome have many teeth, and with them they cleanſe the wheat, at the end of the work; and there are others that have few teeth, no more than three, and with theſe they purge the wheat at firſt, from the thick ſtraw. By the *fan*, here is meant, either the Goſpel which Chriſt was juſt ready to publiſh; by which he would effectually call his choſen people among the *Jews*, and ſo diſtinguiſh and ſeparate them from others, as well as purify and cleanſe them; or rather the awful judgment of God, which Chriſt was ready to execute, and in a ſhort time would execute on the unbelieving and impenitent *Jews*: hence it is ſaid to be *in his hand*; being put there by his father, who *hath committed all judgment to the ſon*. That this is the meaning of the *Baptiſt*, ſeems evident, ſince *fanning* is always, when figuratively taken, uſed for judgments, *Iſ.* xli. 6. *Jer.* xv. 17. and li. 2. By *his floor*, is meant the land of *Iſrael*, where he was born, brought up and lived; of which the Lord ſays, *O my threſhing, and the corn of my floor! Iſ.* xxi. 10. This he ſays, *he will thoroughly purge*, of all its refuſe and chaff, that is, by fanning: ſo fanning and cleanſing, or purging, are joined together, *Jer.* iv. 11. ſo ברר is uſed for purging by fanning, in the *Miſnic* writings[o]. By *his wheat*, are meant his elect among the *Jews*, the choſen of God and precious; ſo called becauſe of their excellency, purity, uſefulneſs, ſolidity, and conſtancy: theſe he *will gather into his garner*; meaning either ſome place of protection, where he would direct his people to for ſafety from that wrath, ruin, and deſtruction, which ſhould fall upon the *Jewiſh* nation; or elſe the kingdom of heaven, into which he would bring them, by taking them out of the world from the evil to come. By *the chaff*, are meant wicked and ungodly perſons, ſuch as are deſtitute of the grace of God, whether profeſſors, or profane; being empty, barren, and unfruitful; and ſo good for nothing but the fire, which therefore *he will burn with unquenchable fire*, of divine wrath and vengeance: an alluſion to a cuſtom among the *Jews*, who, when they purified the increaſe of their unclean fields, gathered it together in an *area*, or floor, in the midſt of them, and then ſifted it with ſieves; one ſort with two ſieves, another with three, that they might thoroughly purge it, and burnt the chaff and ſtalks[p]; ſee *Iſ.* v. 24.

Ver. 13. *Then cometh Jeſus*, &c.] That is, when *John* had been ſome time preaching the doctrine of repentance, and adminiſtring the ordinance of baptiſm; for which, time muſt be allowed, ſince he went into all the country about *Jordan*, and preached unto them, and baptized ſuch large numbers: very probably it might be ſix months from his firſt entrance on his miniſtry; ſince there was this difference in their age, and ſo might be in their baptiſm and preaching. Now when *John* had given notice of the *Meſſiah*'s coming, and ſo had prepared his way; had declared the excellency of his perſon, the nature of his work, and office, and had raiſed in the people an expectation of him, *then cometh Jeſus from Galilee*; from *Nazareth* of *Galilee*, *Mark* i. 9. where he had lived for many years, as the Jews[q] themſelves own, in great obſcurity, in all obedience to God, in ſubjection to his parents, exerciſing a conſcience void of offence towards God and man, and employing his time in devotion and buſineſs: from hence he came to *Jordan* to *John*, who was baptizing there; which ſhews the great humility of Chriſt, who comes to *John*, and does not ſend for him, though *John* was his ſervant, and he was his Lord and Maſter; and alſo his chearful and voluntary ſubjection to the ordinance of baptiſm, ſince of himſelf, of his own accord, he took this long and fatiguing journey; for *Nazareth*, according to *David de Pomis*[r], was three days journey from *Jeruſalem*, though ſomewhat nearer *Jordan*; the end and deſign of his coming was *to be baptized of him*. It may reaſonably be enquired what ſhould be Chriſt's view in deſiring to be baptized; it could not be to take away original or actual ſin, ſince he had neither; nor has baptiſm any ſuch efficacy to do this, in thoſe who have either or both: but, it was to ſhew his approbation of *John*'s baptiſm, and to bear a teſtimony of it, that it was from heaven; and alſo that he himſelf might receive a teſtimony both from heaven, and from *John*, that he was the ſon of God and true Meſſiah, before he entered upon his publick miniſtry, into which he was in ſome meaſure initiated and inſtalled hereby; and moreover, to ſet an example to his followers, and thereby engage their attention and ſubjection to this ordinance; and, in a word, as he himſelf ſays, to fulfil all righteouſneſs.

Ver. 14. *But John forbad him, ſaying*, &c.] It appears from hence, that *John* knew Chriſt before he baptized him, and before he ſaw the ſpirit deſcending and abiding on him, *John* i. 33. wherefore that was not a ſignal, whereby he ſhould firſt know him, but whereby his knowledge of him ſhould be confirmed; which knowledge of him he had, not thro' his kindred to him, or by any converſation he had with him before, but by immediate, divine revelation: upon which account he *forbad him*; refuſed to adminiſter the ordinance to him; earneſtly entreated that he would not inſiſt upon it; deſired to be excuſed being concerned herein: and this he did, partly leſt the people ſhould think, Chriſt was not ſo great a perſon, he had repreſented him to be; yea, that he was one of the penitent ſinners, *John* had admitted to his baptiſm; and chiefly becauſe of the majeſty and dignity of Chriſt's perſon, who he knew ſtood in no need of ſuch an outward ordinance; and becauſe of his own unworthineſs to adminiſter it to him, as is evident from what follows, *I have need to be baptized of thee*; not with water-baptiſm, which Chriſt never adminiſtred, but with the baptiſm of the ſpirit, which was his peculiar office. Hence we learn, that tho' *John* was ſo holy a man, was filled with the Holy Ghoſt from his mother's womb, had ſuch large meaſures of grace, and lived ſuch an exemplary life and converſation; yet was far from thinking, that he was perfect and righteous in himſelf, but ſtood in need of Chriſt, and of more grace from him. He ſeems ſurprized that Chriſt ſhould come to him, and make ſuch a motion to him; when it was his duty and privilege to come to him daily for freſh ſupplies of grace, and always to truſt in him for life and ſalvation; *and comeſt thou to me?* who am of the earth, earthly, when thou art the Lord from heaven; *to me*, a poor ſinful creature, when thou art the holy one of God; *to me*, who am thy ſervant, when thou art Lord of all; *to me*, who always ſtand in need of thy grace, when thou art God all-ſufficient.

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[l] Tzeror Hammor. fol. 104. 4. & 142. 3. & 170. 1.

[m] Moſchi Idyll. 1. Philoſtrat. Vit. Apollon, l. 3. c. 5.

[n] In Miſn. Celim. c. 13. §. 7. Vid. Jarchi & Bartenora in ib. & in Miſn. Tibbul. Yom. c. 4. §. 6.

[o] Miſn. Sabbat. c. 7. §. 2. & Gittin, c. 5. §. 9.

[p] Miſn. Oholot, c. 18. §. 2.

[q] Toldos Jeſu, p. 6.

[r] Tzemach David, fol. 141. 2.

Ver. 15. *And Jeſus anſwering, ſaid unto him*, &c.] This is an *Hebrew* way of ſpeaking, often uſed in the Old Teſtament, and anſwers to ויען ויאמר; ſee *Job* iii. 1. He replied to *John*, who had made uſe of very forbidding words, after this manner, *ſuffer it to be ſo now*; let me have my requeſt; don't go on to object, but comply with my deſire; let it be done *now*, immediately, directly, at this preſent time; don't put me off with any excuſe; it is a proper ſeaſon for it, even *now*, ſince the time is not yet come that I am to baptize with the Holy Ghoſt; and beſides, *thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteouſneſs*. It became *John* to adminiſter the ordinance of *baptiſm* to Chriſt, as he was his forerunner, and the only adminiſtrator of it, and that he might fulfil the miniſtry which he had received; and as it became Chriſt to fulfil all righteouſneſs, moral and ceremonial, and baptiſm being a part of his father's will, which he came to do, it became him to fulfil this alſo. And ſince it became Chriſt, it cannot be unbecoming us, to ſubmit to this ordinance; and ſince he looked upon it as a part of righteouſneſs to be fulfilled by him, it ought to be attended to by all thoſe who would be accounted followers of him. Chriſt having ſtrongly urged the conveniency and equity of the adminiſtration of baptiſm to him, which ſhewed his eager deſire after it, and the lowlineſs of his mind; and *John* being convinced, and overcome by the force of his reaſoning, agrees to his baptiſm; *then he ſuffered him*, i. e. to be baptized in water by him, as he had requeſted, and accordingly did adminiſter it to him.

Ver. 16. *And Jeſus, when he was baptized*, &c.] Chriſt when he was baptized by *John* in the river *Jordan*, the place where he was baptizing, *went up ſtraitway out of the water*. One would be at a loſs at firſt ſight for a reaſon why the Evangeliſt ſhould relate this circumſtance; for after the ordinance was adminiſtred, why ſhould he ſtay in the water? what ſhould he do there? Every one would naturally and reaſonably conclude, without the mention of ſuch a circumſtance, that as ſoon as his baptiſm was over, he would immediately come up out of the water. However, we learn this from it, that ſince it is ſaid, that he came up out of the water, he muſt firſt have gone down into it; muſt have been in it, and was baptized in it; a circumſtance ſtrongly in favour of baptiſm by immerſion: for that Chriſt ſhould go down into the river, more or leſs deep, to the ancles, or up to the knees, in order that *John* ſhould ſprinkle water on his face, or pour it on his head, as is ridiculouſly repreſented in the prints, can hardly obtain any credit with perſons of thought and ſenſe. But the chief view of the Evangeliſt in relating this circumſtance, is with reſpect to what follows; and to ſhew, that as ſoon as Chriſt was baptized, and before he had well got out of the water, *lo the heavens were opened*; and ſome indeed read the word *ſtraitway*, in connexion with this phraſe, and not with the words *went up*: but there is no need of ſuppoſing ſuch a trajection, for the whole may be rendered thus; *and Jeſus, when he was baptized, was ſcarcely come up out of the water, but lo*, immediately, directly, as ſoon as he was out, or rather before, *the heavens were opened to him*; the airy heaven was materially and really opened, parted, rent, or cloven aſunder, as in *Mark* i. 10. which made way for the viſible deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt in a bodily ſhape. A difficulty ariſes here, whether the words, *to him*, are to be referred to Chriſt, or to *John*; no doubt but the opening of the heavens was ſeen by them both: but to me it ſeems that *John* is particularly deſigned, ſince this viſion was upon his account, and for his ſake, and to him the following words belong; *and he*, that is, *John*, *ſaw the ſpirit of God deſcending like a dove, and lighting upon him*: for this is what was promiſed to *John*, as a ſign, which ſhould confirm his faith in Jeſus, as the true Meſſiah, and which he himſelf ſays he ſaw, and upon which he founded the record and teſtimony he bore to Chriſt, as the ſon of God; ſee *John* [illegible] 32, 33, 34. not but that the deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt in this manner might be ſeen by Chriſt, as well as *John*, according to *Mark* i. 10. The *ſpirit of God*, here ſaid to deſcend and light on Chriſt, is the ſame, which in the firſt creation moved upon the face of the waters, and now comes down on Chriſt, juſt as he was coming up out of the waters of *Jordan*, where he had been baptized; and which the *Jews*[r] ſo often call רוח של מלך המשיח *the ſpirit of the king Meſſiah, and the ſpirit of the Meſſiah*. The deſcent of him was in *a bodily ſhape*, as *Luke* ſays, ch. iii. 32. either in the ſhape of a dove, which is a very fit emblem of the ſpirit of God who deſcended, and the fruits thereof, ſuch as ſimplicity, meekneſs, love, *&c.* and alſo of the dove-like innocence, humility, and affection of Chriſt, on whom he lighted; or it was in ſome other viſible form, not expreſſed, which pretty much reſembled the hovering and lighting of a dove upon any thing: for it does not neceſſarily follow from any of the accounts the Evangeliſts give of this matter, that the holy ſpirit aſſumed, or appeared in, the form of a dove; only that his viſible deſcent and lighting on Chriſt was ωσει περιστερα, as a dove deſcends, hovers and lights; which does not neceſſarily deſign the form of the creature, but the manner of its motion. However, who can read this account without thinking of *Noah*'s dove, which brought in its mouth the olive leaf, a token of peace and reconciliation, when the waters were abated from off the earth? Give me leave to tranſcribe a paſſage I have met with in the book of *Zohar*[s]; "a door ſhall be " opened, and out of it ſhall come forth the dove " which *Noah* ſent out in the days of the flood, as " it is written, *and he ſent forth the dove*, that fa- " mous dove; but the ancients ſpeak not of it, for " they knew not what it was, only from whence it " came, and did its meſſage; as it is written, *it* " *returned not again unto him any more*: no man " knows whither it went, but it returned to its " place, and was hid within this door; and it ſhall " take a crown in its mouth, and put it upon the " head of the king Meſſiah." And a little after, the dove is ſaid to abide upon his head, and he to receive glory from it. Whether this is the remains of ſome ancient tradition, theſe men ſtudiouſly conceal, concerning the opening of the heavens, and the deſcent of the ſpirit of God, as a dove, upon the *Meſſiah*; or whether it is hammered out of the evangelic hiſtory, let the reader judge.

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[r] Bereſhit Rabba, fol. 2. 4. & 6. 3. Vajikra Rabba, fol. 156. 4. Zohar in Gen. fol. 107. 3. & 128. 3. Baal Hatturim in Gen. i. 2. Caphtor Uperah, fol. 113. 2.

[s] In Num. fol. 68, 3, 4.

Ver. 17. *And lo, a voice from heaven, ſaying,* &c.] At the ſame time the heavens were opened, and the ſpirit of God deſcended as a dove, and lighted on Chriſt, and whilſt it abode upon him, an extraordinary voice was heard: hence the note of attention and admiration, *lo*, is prefixed unto it, as before, to the opening of the heavens; being what was unuſual and ſurprizing; and as denoting ſomething to be expreſſed of great moment and importance. The *Jews*, in order to render this circumſtance leſs conſiderable, and to have it believed, that theſe voices from heaven heard in the time of Jeſus, and in relation to him, were common things, have invented a great many ſtories concerning בת קול משמים, *the voice*, or *the daughter of the voice from heaven*; which they pretend came in the room of prophecy: their [t] words are, "after the death of the latter prophets, *Haggai*, "*Zechariah* and *Malachi*, the holy ſpirit departed "from *Iſrael*, and thenceforwards they uſed *Bath* "*Kol*, *the voice*. One time they were ſitting in the "chamber of the houſe of *Guria* in *Jericho*, and "there came to them בת קול משמים, *the voice* "*from heaven*, (ſaying;) there is one here, who is fit "to have the *Shekinah* (or divine majeſty) abide on "him, as *Moſes* our maſter; but becauſe his generation was not worthy, therefore the wiſe men "ſet their eyes on *Hillell*, the elder; and when he "died, they ſaid concerning him, this was a holy "man, a meek man, a diſciple of *Ezra*. Again, "another time they were ſitting in a chamber in "*Jabneh*, and there came to them *the voice from* "*heaven*, (ſaying;) there is one here, who is fit to "have the *Shekinah* dwell on him; but becauſe his "generation was not worthy, therefore the wiſe "men ſet their eyes on *Samuel* the little." I have cited this paſſage at large, partly becauſe, according to them, it fixes the date and uſe of *the voice*; and partly, becauſe it affords inſtances of it, wherefore more need not be mentioned; for it would be endleſs to repeat the ſeveral things ſpoken by it; ſuch as encouraging *Herod* to rebel, and ſeize his maſter's kingdom [u]; forbidding *Ben Uzziel* to go on with his paraphraſe on the *Hagiographa*, or holy books, when he had finiſhed his *Targum* on the prophets [v]; declaring the words of *Hillell* and *Shammai* to be the words of the living God [x]; ſignifying the conception, birth, and death of [y] perſons, and the like; all which ſeem to be mere fiction and imagination, diabolical deluſions, or ſatanical imitations of this voice, that was now heard, in order to leſſen the credit of it. But, to proceed; this extraordinary voice from heaven, which was formed in articulate ſounds, for the ſake of *John*; and, according to the other Evangeliſts, was directed to Chriſt, *Mark* i. 11. *Luke* iii. 22. expreſſed the following words, *this is my beloved ſon*. *This* perſon, who had been baptized in water, on whom the holy ſpirit now reſted, is no other than the ſon of God in human nature; which he aſſumed, in order to be obedient to this, and the whole of his father's will: he is his own proper *ſon*, not by creation, as angels, and men; nor by adoption, as ſaints; nor by office, as magiſtrates; but in ſuch a way of filiation as no other is: he is the natural, eſſential, and only-begotten ſon of God; his beloved ſon, whom the father loved from everlaſting, as his own ſon; the image of himſelf, of the ſame nature with him, and poſſeſſed of the ſame perfections; whom he loved, and continued to love in time, tho' clothed with human nature, and the infirmities of it; appearing in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh; being in his ſtate of humiliation, he loved him thro' it, and all ſorrows and ſufferings that attended it. Chriſt always was, and ever will be conſidered, both in his perſon as the ſon of God, and in his office as mediator, the object of his love and delight; wherefore he adds, *in whom I am well pleaſed*. Jehovah the father took infinite delight and pleaſure in him as his own ſon, who lay in his boſom before all worlds; and was well pleaſed with him in his office-relation, and capacity: he was both well pleaſed in him as his ſon, and delighted in him as his ſervant, *Iſ.* xlii. 1. he was pleaſed with his aſſumption of human nature; with his whole obedience to the law; and with his bearing the penalty and curſe of it, in the room and ſtead of his people: he was well pleaſed, with and for his righteouſneſs, ſacrifice and atonement; whereby his law was fulfilled, and his juſtice ſatisfied. God is not only well pleaſed in, and with his ſon, but with all his people, as conſidered in him; in him he loves them, takes delight in them, is pacified towards them, and graciouſly accepts of them. It would be almoſt unpardonable, not to take notice of the teſtimony here given to the doctrine of the Trinity; ſince a voice was heard from the *father* in heaven, bearing witneſs to *the ſon* in human nature on earth, on whom *the Spirit* had deſcended and now abode. The ancients looked upon this ſo clear and full a proof of this truth, that they were wont to ſay; Go to *Jordan*, and there learn the doctrine of the Trinity. Add to all this, that ſince this declaration was immediately upon the baptiſm of Chriſt; it ſhews that his father highly approved of, and was well pleaſed with his ſubmiſſion to that ordinance; and which ſhould be an encouraging motive to all believers to follow him in it.

## CHAP. IV.

Ver. 1. THEN *was Jeſus led up of the ſpirit,* &c.] The Evangeliſt having finiſhed his account of *John* the *Baptiſt*, the forerunner of Chriſt; of his miniſtry and baptiſm; and particularly of the baptiſm of Chriſt; when the Holy Ghoſt came down upon him in a viſible and eminent manner; whereby he was anointed for his publick work, according to *Iſ.* lxi. 1. proceeds to give a narration of his temptations by ſatan, which immediately followed his baptiſm; and of thoſe conflicts he had with the enemy of mankind, before he entered on his publick miniſtry. The occaſion, nature, and ſucceſs of theſe temptations are here related. The occaſion of them, or the opportunity given to the tempter, is ſpoken of in this and the following *verſe*. In this may be obſerved the action of the Spirit in and upon Chriſt; he *was led up of the ſpirit*: by *the ſpirit* is meant the ſame ſpirit of God, which had deſcended and lighted on him in a bodily ſhape, with the gifts and graces of which, he was anointed, in an extraordinary manner, for publick ſervice; of which he was *full*, *Luke* iv. 1. not but that he was endowed with the Holy Ghoſt before, which he received without meaſure from his father; but now this more eminently and manifeſtly appeared, and by this ſpirit was he led; both the *Syriac* and the *Perſic* verſions read, *by the holy ſpirit*. Being *led* by him, denotes an internal impulſe of the ſpirit in him, ſtirring him up, and putting him upon going into the wilderneſs: and this impulſe being very ſtrong and vehement, another Evangeliſt thus expreſſes it; *the ſpirit driveth him*, εκϐαλλει, *thruſts him forth into the wilderneſs*, *Mark* i. 12. though not againſt his will; to which was added an external impulſe, or outward rapture, ſomewhat like that action of the ſpirit on *Philip*, *Acts* viii. 39. When he is ſaid to be led *up*, the meaning is, that he was led up from the low parts of the wilderneſs, where he was, to the higher and mountainous parts thereof, which were deſolate and uninhabited. The place where he was led, was *into the wilderneſs*, i. e. of *Judea*, into the more remote parts of it; for he was before in this wilderneſs, where *John* was preaching and baptizing; but in that part of it which was inhabited. There was another part which was uninhabited, but by *wild beaſts*; and here Chriſt was led, and with theſe he was, *Mark* i. 13. all alone, retired from the company of men; could have no aſſiſtance from any, and wholly deſtitute of any ſupply: ſo that ſatan had a fair opportunity of trying his whole ſtrength upon him; having all advantages on his ſide he could wiſh for. The end of his being led there, was *to be tempted of the devil*: by *the devil* is meant *ſatan*, the prince of devils, the enemy of mankind, the old ſerpent, who has his name here from accuſing and calumniating; ſo the *Syriac* calls him אכל קרצא, *the accuſer*, or publiſher of accuſations. He was the accuſer of God to men, and is the accuſer of men to God; his principal buſineſs is to tempt, and Chriſt was brought here to be tempted by him, that he might be tried before he entered on his publick work; that he might be in all things like unto his brethren; that he might have a heart as man, as well as power, as God, to ſuccour them that are tempted; and that *ſatan*, whoſe works he came to deſtroy, might have a ſpecimen of his power, and expect, in a ſhort time, the ruin of his kingdom by him. The time when this was done was *then*; when Jeſus had been baptized by *John*; when the Holy Ghoſt deſcended on him, and he was full of it; when he had ſuch a teſtimony from his father of his relation to him, affection for him, and delight in him; *then* was he led, *immediately*, as *Mark* ſays, ch. i. 12. As ſoon as all this was done, directly upon this, he was had into the wilderneſs to be tempted by, and to combat with *ſatan*; and ſo it often is, that after ſweet communion with God in his ordinances, after large diſcoveries of his love and intereſt in him, follow ſore temptations, trials, and exerciſes. There is a very great reſemblance and conformity between Chriſt and his people in theſe things.

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[t] T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 11. 1. Sota, fol. 48. 2. Yoma, fol. 9. 2. [u] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 3. 2. [v] Megilla, fol. 3. 1. [x] T. Hieroſ. Beracot. fol. 3. 2. [y] T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 22. 1. T. Hieroſ. Sabbat, fol. 8. 3.

Ver. 2. *And when he had faſted forty days*, &c.] As *Moſes* did, when he was about to deliver the law to the *Iſraelites*, *Exod.* xxxiv. 28. and as *Elijah* did, when he bore his teſtimony for the Lord of hoſts, 1 *Kings* xix. 8. ſo did Chriſt, when he was about to publiſh the Goſpel of his grace, and bear witneſs to the truth. *Forty nights*, as well as days, are mentioned; partly to ſhew that theſe were whole entire days, conſiſting of twenty-four hours; and partly to diſtinguiſh this faſt of Chriſt from the common faſtings of the *Jews*, who uſed to eat in the night, tho' they faſted in the day: for according to their canons[z], they might eat and drink as ſoon as it was dark, and that till cock-crowing; and others ſay, till break of day. *Maimonides*[a] ſays, they might eat and drink at night, in all faſts, except the *ninth* of *Ab*. What is very ſurprizing in this faſting of our Lord, which was made and recorded, not for our imitation, is, that during the whole time he ſhould not be attended with hunger; for 'tis added, *he was afterwards an hungred*; that is, as *Luke* ſays, *when* the *forty* days *were ended*, ch. iv. 2. which ſeized upon him, and is related, both to expreſs the reality of his human nature, which though miraculouſly ſupported for ſo long a time without food, and inſenſible of hunger, yet at length had appetite for food; and alſo that very advantageous opportunity, ſatan had to attack him in the manner he did, with his firſt temptation.

Ver. 3. *And when the tempter came to him*, &c.] By the *tempter*, is meant the devil, ſee 1 *Theſſ.* iii. 5. ſo called, becauſe it is his principal work and buſineſs, in which he employs himſelf, to ſolicit men to ſin; and tempt them either to deny, or call in queſtion the being of God, arraign his perfections, murmur at his providences, and diſbelieve his promiſes. When he is here ſaid to come to Chriſt at the end of forty days and nights, we are not to ſuppoſe, that he now firſt began to tempt him; for the other Evangeliſts expreſsly ſay, that he was tempted of him forty days, *Mark* i. 13. *Luke* iv. 2. but he now appeared openly, and in a viſible ſhape: all the forty days and nights before, he had been tempting him ſecretly and inwardly; ſuggeſting things ſuitable to, and taking the advantage of the ſolitary and deſolate condition he was in. But finding theſe ſuggeſtions and temptations unſucceſsful, and obſerving him to be an hungred, he puts on a viſible form, and with an articulate, audible voice, *he ſaid, if thou be the ſon of God*; either doubting of his divine ſon-ſhip, calling it in queſtion, and putting him upon doing ſo too; wherefore it is no wonder that the children of God ſhould be aſſaulted with the like temptation: or elſe arguing from it, *if*, or *ſeeing thou art the ſon of God*; for he muſt know that he was, by the voice which came from heaven, and declared it: and certain it is, that the devils both knew, and were obliged to confeſs that Jeſus was the ſon of God, *Luke* iv. 41. by which is meant, not a good, or righteous man, or one dear to God, and in an office; but a divine perſon, one poſſeſſed of almighty power; and therefore, as a proof and demonſtration of it, he urges him to *command that theſe ſtones be made bread*, pointing to ſome which lay hard by; ειπε, *ſay* but the word, and it will be done. He did not doubt but he was able to do it, by a word ſpeaking; but he would have had him to have done it at his motion, which would have been enough for his purpoſe; who wanted to have him obedient to him: and he might hope the rather to ſucceed in this temptation, becauſe Chriſt was now an hungry; and becauſe he had carried his point with our firſt parents, by tempting them to eat of the forbidden fruit.

Ver. 4. *But he anſwered and ſaid, it is written*, &c.] The paſſage referred to, and cited, is in *Deut.* viii. 3. the manner of citing it is what was common and uſual with the *Jews*; and is often to be met with in the *Talmudic* writings; who, when they produce any paſſage of ſcripture, ſay דכתיב, *as it is written*. The meaning of this ſcripture is; not that as the body lives by bread, ſo the ſoul lives by the word of God, and doctrines of the Goſpel; tho' this is a certain truth: or that man lives by obedience to the commands of God, as was promiſed

[z] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 12. 1, 2. Miſn. Taanith, c. 1. §. 5.

[a] Hilch. Taanioth, c. 5. §. 5.

miſed to the *Iſraelites* in the wilderneſs, and in the land of *Canaan*; but that God, in ſatisfying man's hunger, and in ſupporting and preſerving his life, is not tied to bread only, but can make uſe of other means, and order whatever he pleaſes to anſwer theſe ends; as, by raining manna from heaven, which is mentioned in the paſſage cited; and therefore there was no occaſion to change the nature of things, to turn ſtones into bread; ſince that was not ſo abſolutely neceſſary to the ſuſtenance of life, as that it could not be maintained without it. Our Lord hereby expreſſes his ſtrong faith and confidence in God, that he was able to ſupport him, and would do it, tho' in a wilderneſs, and deſtitute of ſupply; whereby he overcame this temptation of ſatan. Chriſt, in this, and ſome following citations, bears a teſtimony to, and eſtabliſhes the authority of the ſacred writings; and though he was full of the Holy Ghoſt, makes them the rule of his conduct; which ought to be obſerved againſt thoſe, who, under a pretence of the Spirit, deny the ſcriptures to be the only rule of faith and practice; and, at the ſame time points out to us the ſafeſt and beſt method of oppoſing ſatan's temptations; namely, by applying to, and making uſe of the word of God.

Ver. 5. *Then the devil taketh him up*, &c.] This was done, not in a viſionary way, but really and truly: ſatan, by divine permiſſion, and with the conſent of Chriſt, which ſhews his great humiliation and condeſcenſion, had power over his body, to move it from place to place; in ſome ſuch like manner as the ſpirit of the Lord caught away *Philip*, *Acts* viii. 39. he took him up, raiſed him above ground, and carried him thro' the air, *into the holy city*: this was *Jeruſalem*; for *Luke* expreſſly ſays, *he brought him to Jeruſalem*, ch. iv. 9. called ſo, becauſe of the preſence, worſhip, and ſervice of God, which had been in it, though then in a great meaſure gone; and according to the common notions of the *Jews*, who ſay [b] *Jeruſalem* was more holy than any other cities in the land, and that becauſe of the *ſhecinah*. The inſcription on one ſide of their ſhekels was, ירושלם עיר הקדש, *Jeruſalem, the holy city* [c]. Satan frequents all ſorts of places; men are no where free from his temptations; Chriſt himſelf was not in the holy city, no nor in the holy temple; hither alſo he had him, *and ſetteth him upon a pinnacle*, or *wing of the temple*. In this place [d] the *Jews* ſet *James*, the brother of Chriſt, and from it caſt him down headlong: this was the ακρον, *the ſummit*, or *top* of it; and intends either the roof encompaſſed with battlements, to keep perſons from falling off; or the top of the porch before the temple, which was 120 cubits high; or the top of the royal gallery, built by *Herod*, which was of ſuch an heighth, that if a man looked down from it, he ſoon became dizzy [e]. The view ſatan had in ſetting him here, appears in the next verſe.

Ver. 6. *And ſaith unto him, if thou be the ſon of God*, &c.] He addreſſes him after the ſame manner as before; *if*, or ſeeing, *thou art the ſon of God*, ſhew thyſelf to be ſo; give proof of thy ſon-ſhip before all the prieſts which are in and about the temple, and before all the inhabitants of *Jeruſalem*; *caſt thyſelf down*; that is, from the pinnacle of the temple: for ſince thou art the ſon of God, no hurt will come to thee; thou wilt be in the utmoſt ſafety; and this will at once be a full demonſtration to all the people, that thou art the ſon of God: for hither ſatan brought him, hoping to have got an advantage of him publickly; otherwiſe, had his view only been, to have got him to caſt himſelf down from any place of eminence, and ſo to have deſtroyed himſelf; he might have ſet him upon any other precipice; but he choſe to have it done in the ſight of the people, and in the holy city, and holy place. Let it be obſerved, that ſatan did not offer to caſt him down himſelf; for this was not in his power, nor within his permiſſion, which reached only to tempt; and beſides, would not have anſwered his end; for that would have been his own ſin, and not Chriſt's: accordingly, we may obſerve, that when he ſeeks the lives of men, he does not attempt to deſtroy them himſelf, but always puts them upon doing it. To proceed, ſatan not only argues from his divine power, as the ſon of God, that he would be ſafe in caſting himſelf down; but obſerving the advantageous uſe Chriſt made of the ſcriptures, transforms himſelf into an angel of light, and cites ſcripture too, to encourage him to this action, aſſuring him of the protection of angels. The paſſage cited, is *Pſ.* xci. 11, 12. which expreſſes God's tender care and concern for his people, in charging the angels with the guardianſhip and preſervation of them, in all their ways, that they might be ſecured from ſin and danger. It does not appear that ſatan was wrong in the application of this paſſage to Chriſt; for ſince it reſpects all the righteous in general, why not Chriſt as man? the head, as well as the members? And certain it is, that angels had the charge of him, did watch over him, and were a guard about him; the angels of God aſcended, and deſcended on him; they were employed in preſerving him from *Herod's* malice in his infancy; they miniſtred to him here in the wilderneſs, and attended him in his agony in the garden: but what ſatan failed in, and that wilfully, and wickedly, was, in omitting that part of it, *to keep thee in all thy ways*; which he ſaw was contrary to his purpoſe, and would have ſpoiled his deſign at once; and alſo in urging this paſſage, which only regards godly perſons, in the way of their duty, to countenance actions which are out of the way of a man's calling, or which he is not called unto; and which are contrary to religion, and a tempting God. Satan before tempted Chriſt to diſtruſt the providence of God, and now he tempts him to preſume upon it: in like manner he deals with man, when he argues from the doctrines of predeſtination and providence to the diſuſe of means, for their good, either for this life, or that which is to come; and if he tempted the ſon of God to deſtroy himſelf, 'tis no wonder that the ſaints ſhould be ſometimes haraſſed with this temptation.

Ver. 7. *Jeſus ſaith unto him, it is written again*, &c.] Chriſt takes no notice of the falſe, and wrong citation of ſcripture made by the devil, nor of any miſapplication of it; but mildly replies, by oppoſing another paſſage of ſcripture to him, *Deut.* vi. 16. *ye ſhall not tempt the Lord your God*, thereby tacitly ſhewing, that he had produced ſcripture to a very wrong purpoſe, ſince that could never contradict itſelf; and alſo, that for a perſon to neglect the ordinary means of ſafety, and to expect, that as God can, ſo he will, preſerve without the uſe of ſuch means, is a tempting him. The *Hebrew* word תנסו, *tempt*, as *Manaſſeh ben* [f] *Iſrael* obſerves, is always taken in an ill part, and is to be underſtood of ſuch who would try the power, goodneſs, or will of God. And which, as it is not fitting it ſhould be done by any man, ſo not by himſelf; and perhaps he hereby intimates too, that he himſelf was God; and therefore, as it was not right in

[b] Bemidbar Rabba, fol. 188. 4. & Maimon. Hilch. Beth. Habechirah, c. 7. §. 14. & 6. 16.

[c] Waſerus de Antiq. Numm. Heb. l. 2. c. 5.

[d] Euſeb. Eccl. Hiſt. l. 2. c. 23.

[e] Joſeph. Antiq. Jud. l. 15. c. 14.

[f] Conciliat. in Deut. Quæſt. 3. p. 223.

in him to tempt God the father, by taking ſuch a ſtep ſatan ſolicited him to; nor would it be right in any other; ſo it was iniquitous in the devil to tempt him, who was God over all, bleſſed for ever.

Ver. 8. *Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain*, &c.] That is, he took him off from the pinnacle of the temple, and carried him through the air, to one of the mountains which were round about *Jeruſalem*; or to ſome very high mountain at a greater diſtance; but what mountain is not certain; nor can it be known; nor is it of any moment; it has been ſaid [g] to be mount *Lebanon*: here he *ſheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them.* By *all the kingdoms of the world* are meant, not only the *Roman* empire, as Dr. *Lightfoot* thinks, though that was, to be ſure, the greateſt in the world at that time; but all the kingdoms in the whole world, which ſubſiſted in any form, whether within, or independent of the *Roman* empire; or whether greater or leſſer: andby *the glory of them*, is meant, the riches, pomp, power, and grandeur of them. Now the view which ſatan gave Chriſt of all this, was not by a repreſentation of them in a picture, or in a map, or in any geographical tables, as [h] ſome have thought; ſince to do this, there was no need to take him up into a mountain, and that an exceeding high one; for this might have been done in a valley, as well as in a mountain: and yet it could not be a true and real ſight of theſe things he gave him; for there is no mountain in the world, from whence, can be beheld any one kingdom, much leſs all the kingdoms of the world; and ſtill leſs the riches, glory, pomp, and power of them: but this was a fictitious, deluſive repreſentation, which ſatan was permitted to make; to cover which, and that it might be thought to be real, he took Chriſt into an high mountain; where he propoſed an object externally to his ſight, and internally to his imagination, which repreſented, in appearance, the whole world, and all its glory. *Xiphilinus* [i] reports of *Severus*, that he dreamed, he was had by a certain perſon, to a place where he could look all around him, and from thence he beheld πασαν μεν την γην, πασαν δε την θαλασσαν, *all the earth, and alſo all the ſea*; which was all in imagination. Satan thought to have impoſed on Chriſt this way, but failed in his attempt. *Luke* ſays, this was done *in a moment of time*, in the twinkling of an eye; as theſe two phraſes are joined together, 1 *Cor.* xv. 52. or *in a point of time*. The word ϛιγμη, uſed by *Luke*, ch. iv. 5. ſometimes ſignifies a mathematical point, which *Zeno* ſays [k] is the end of the line, and the leaſt mark; to which the alluſion may be here, and deſigns the ſmalleſt part of time that can be conceived of. *Antoninus* the emperor uſes the word, as here, for a point of time; and ſays [l], that the time of human life, and the whole preſent time, is but ϛιγμη, *a point*. Would you know what a moment, or point of time is, according to the calculation of the *Jewiſh* doctors, take the account as follows; though in it they differ: a moment, ſay they [m], is the fifty-ſix thouſandth, elſewhere [n], the fifty-eight thouſandth, and in another place [o], the fifty-three thouſandth and eight hundredth and forty-eighth, or, according to another account [p], eighty-eighth part of an hour. If this could be thought to be a true and exact account of a moment, or point of time, it was a very ſhort ſpace of time indeed, in which the devil ſhewed to Chriſt the kingdoms of this world, and their glory; but this is not more ſurprizing than his vanity, pride, and impudence, in the following verſe.

Ver. 9. *And ſaith unto him, all theſe things will I give thee*, &c.] This is more fully and ſtrongly expreſſed by the Evangeliſt *Luke*, ch. iv. 6, 7. *And the devil ſaid unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them; for that is delivered unto me, and to whomſoever I will, I give it——all ſhall be thine.* In which words he ſets up himſelf to be the God of this world, and the ſovereign diſpoſer of it: he pretends it was delivered to him by the true God, who had left it to his arbitrary diſpoſal; and that he could inveſt Chriſt with the power and government of it, and put him in poſſeſſion of all its glory, and make good and ſupport his title to it, and intereſt in it. Never was ſuch monſtrous arrogance expreſſed as this; when this poor, proud, wretched creature, has not the diſpoſal, at his pleaſure, of any one ſingle thing; no not the leaſt in the whole univerſe. He could not touch, neither *Job*'s perſon, nor any of his ſubſtance, without divine permiſſion; nor enter into an herd of ſwine without Chriſt's leave; and yet had the front to make an offer of the whole world, as if he had a deſpotic power over it; and that upon this horrid and blaſphemous condition, *if thou wilt fall down and worſhip me.* This was the higheſt degree of effrontery and impudence. The devil is not content to be worſhipped by men, but ſeeks for adoration from the ſon of God: this opens at once his proud, ambitious, and aſpiring views, to be as God himſelf; for with nothing leſs can he be ſatisfied.

Ver. 10. *Then ſaith Jeſus to him, get thee hence, ſatan*, &c.] In *Luke* iv. 8. 'tis *get thee behind me*; and ſo ſome copies read here, and is expreſſive of indignation and abhorrence; ſee *Matt.* xvi. 23. rebuking his impudence, and deteſting his impiety: he had bore his inſults and temptations with great patience; he had anſwered him with mildneſs and gentleneſs; but now his behaviour to him was intolerable, which obliged him to ſhew his reſentment, exert his power, and authority, and rid himſelf at once of ſo vile a creature; giving this reaſon for it; *for it is written, thou ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy God, and him only ſhalt thou ſerve.* The place referred to is in *Deut.* vi. 13. *thou ſhalt fear the Lord thy God, and ſerve him:* to fear the Lord, and to worſhip him, is the ſame thing. Worſhip includes both an internal and external reverence of God: the word *only* is not in the original text, but is added by our Lord; and that very juſtly; partly to expreſs the emphaſis which is on the word *him*; and in perfect agreement with the context, which requires it; ſince it follows, *ye ſhall not go after other Gods.* Moreover, not to take notice of the *Septuagint* verſion, in which the word *only* is alſo added. *Joſephus* [q], the *Jewiſh* hiſtorian, referring to this law, ſays, becauſe God is one, και δει τουτον σεβεσθαι μονον, *therefore he only is to be worſhipped.* And *Aben Ezra* [r], a *Jewiſh* writer, explaining the laſt clauſe in the verſe, *and thou ſhalt ſwear by his name*, uſes the word *only*; and which indeed, of right, belongs to every clauſe in it. The meaning of our Lord in citing it is; that ſince the Lord God is the alone object of worſhip, it was horrid blaſphemy in ſatan to deſire, it might be given to him, and which could not be done without the greateſt impiety.

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[g] Vid. Fabricii Bibliograph. Antiq. c. 5. p. 137. [h] Vid, Fabricium, ibid. & Grotium in loc. [i] Apud Fabricium ib. [k] Vid. Laertium in Vit. Zenou. [l] De ſeipſo, l. 2. c. 17. & l. 6. c. 36. [m] T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 2. 4. [n] T. Bab. Beracot. ſol. 7. 1. [o] Avoda Zara, fol. 4. 1. [p] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 7. 1. [q] Antiq. Jud. l. 3. c. 5. §. 5. [r] In Deut. vi. 13.

Ver. 11. *Then the devil leaveth him*, &c.] *Luke*, in ch. iv. 13. ſays, *when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a ſeaſon*, or *until a ſeaſon*. That is, having tempted him with all ſorts of temptations, and tried him every way to no purpoſe; having gone thro', and finiſhed the whole ſcheme and courſe of temptations he had deviſed, without ſucceſs; and having orders from Chriſt to depart, which he was obliged to obey, leaves him for a while, till another opportunity of tempting him in ſome other way ſhould offer; or till the time came, when he ſhould be ſo far able to get the advantage of him, as to bruiſe his heel, or bring him to the duſt of death; ſee *John* xiv. 30. *Luke* xxii. 53. and when he was gone; better company came in his room; *behold, angels came and miniſtred to him*. They came to him in a viſible, human form, as they were uſed to do under the Old Teſtament diſpenſation, and that after the temptation was over; after ſatan was foiled, and was gone; that it might appear that Chriſt alone had got the victory over him, without any help or aſſiſtance from them. When they were come, they *miniſtred to him*; that is, they brought him food of their own preparing and dreſſing, as they formerly did to *Elijah*, 1 *Kings* xix. 5, 6, 7, 8. to ſatisfy his hunger, and refreſh his animal ſpirits; which had underwent a very great fatigue, during this length of time, in which he faſted, and was tempted by ſatan. Thus, as the angels are miniſtring ſpirits to the heirs of ſalvation, both in a temporal and in a ſpiritual ſenſe, *Heb.* i. 14. ſo they were to Chriſt. Nothing is more frequent with the *Jews* than to call the angels מלאכי השרת, *miniſtring angels*: it would be needleſs and endleſs to refer to particular places.

Ver. 12. *Now, when Jeſus had heard that John was caſt into priſon*, &c.] *John* was caſt into priſon by *Herod*; the reaſon of it may be ſeen in *Matt.* xiv. 3, 4. The priſon into which he was caſt, according to *Joſephus*[s], was the caſtle of *Machærus*: here he continued ſome time before he was put to death; for from hence he ſent two diſciples to Jeſus, to know if he was the Meſſiah, *Matt.* xi. 2. Now when Jeſus heard of this his impriſonment, *he departed into Galilee*; not ſo much on account of ſafety, or for fear of *Herod*, but to call his diſciples, who lived in that country.

Ver. 13. *And leaving Nazareth*, &c.] Where he was educated, and had lived many years together; and where he preached firſt to the good liking of the people, who *wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth*: though afterwards they were ſo much diſpleaſed with him, that they thruſt him out of their city; and intended to have deſtroyed him, by caſting him down headlong from the brow of an hill; and which ſeems to be the reaſon of his leaving this city; ſee *Luke* iv. 16—22—28, 29, 30, 31. *he came and dwelt in Capernaum*, a city of *Galilee*, Luke iv. 31. *which is upon the ſea coaſt*, by the ſea of *Tiberias*, or *Geneſareth*, *in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthali*: it bordered on both theſe tribes; it ſignifies *the village of conſolation*[t]; and ſo it was, whilſt the conſolation of *Iſrael* dwelt there. The *Jews* ſpeak very evilly of it: no doubt becauſe it was the dwelling-place of Chriſt; and becauſe there might be ſome in it who believed in him: they repreſent the inhabitants of it as very great ſinners, hereticks, and dealers in magic art. *Chanina*, the brother's ſon of *R. Joſhua*, they ſay[u], went to *Capernaum*, and the hereticks did ſomething to him; according to the *Gloſs*, they bewitched him: and elſewhere[w] explaining the words in *Eccl.* vii. 26. *who ſo pleaſeth God*, &c; this, they ſay is *Chananiah*, the brother's ſon of *R. Joſhua*; and *the ſinner*; theſe are *the children*, or inhabitants of *Capernaum*. Thus they ſhew their ſpite againſt the very place in which Chriſt dwelt.

Ver. 14, 15. *That it might be fulfilled which was ſpoken*, &c.] Chriſt's dwelling in *Capernaum* accompliſhed a prophecy of the prophet *Eſaias*, ch. ix. 1, 2. and he went and dwelt there, that it might be fulfilled which he had ſpoken: the meaning of which prophecy is[x], that as thoſe parts of the land of *Iſrael*, there mentioned, had ſuffered much by *Tiglath Pilezer*, who had carried them captive, 2 *Kings* xv. 29. and is *the vexation* referr'd to; ſo they ſhould be honoured, and made very glorious, by the preſence and converſation of the Meſſiah among them, and which now had its literal fulfilment: for Chriſt now came and dwelt in *Capernaum*, which lay between the lands, and upon the borders both of *Zabulon* and *Nephthali*; was ſituated by the ſea of *Tiberias*, beyond *Jordan*, and in *Galilee of the nations*; the upper *Galilee*, which had in it people of other nations beſides *Jews*. The ancient *Jews* expected the Meſſiah to make his firſt appearance in *Galilee*; which expectation muſt be grounded on this prophecy; for ſo they ſay[y] expreſsly, "the king *Meſſiah* ſhall be revealed בארעא דגליל, *in the land of Galilee*." And in another place[z] explaining *Iſ.* ii. 19. they paraphraſe it thus, "*for fear of the Lord*; this is the indignation of the whole world: *and for the glory of his majeſty*; this is the *Meſſiah*; *when he ariſeth to ſhake terribly the earth*, when he ſhall ariſe and be revealed בארעא דגליל, *in the land of Galilee*: becauſe that this is the firſt place to be deſtroyed in the holy land; therefore he ſhall be revealed there the firſt of all places." Here Jeſus, the true Meſſiah, made his firſt appearance publickly; here he called his diſciples, and began his miniſtry.

Ver. 16. *The people which ſat in darkneſs*, &c.] The inhabitants of *Galilee*, who ſat or *walked*, as in *Iſaiah*; that is, continued in ſpiritual darkneſs, in ignorance, blindneſs, error and infidelity, *ſaw great light*; Chriſt himſelf, who came a light into the world; he converſed with them, preached unto them, and opened the eyes of their underſtandings to behold his glory, and to know him, and ſalvation by him. *And to them which ſat in the region and ſhadow of death*: the ſame perſons who ſit in darkneſs, ſit alſo in the region of death; for ſuch are dead in treſpaſſes and ſins: where there is no ſpiritual light, there is no ſpiritual life, and ſuch are in danger of the ſecond death; but the happineſs of theſe people was, that to them *light is ſprung up*, like the riſing ſun, and this without their aſking or ſeeking for: Chriſt, the ſun of righteouſneſs, aroſe upon them, without any deſert, deſire, or expectation of theirs, with healing in his wings; and cured them of their darkneſs and deadneſs, turned them from darkneſs to light, and cauſed them to paſs from death to life. *Light* is not only a character under which Chriſt frequently goes in the New Teſtament, ſee *John* i. 4—8, 9. and iii. 19. and viii. 12. and xii. 46. but is one of the names by which the Meſſiah was known under the Old Teſtament; ſee *Dan.* ii. 22. *Pſal.* xliii. 3. and which the *Jews* give unto him: ſays *R. Aba*[a] *Serungia, and the light dwelleth with him*; this is the king *Meſſiah*. The note of *R. Sol. Jarchi* on theſe words, *ſend forth thy light*, is, the king *Meſſiah*; who is compared to light, according to *Pſal.* cxxxii. 17. the days of the *Meſſiah*, are by them ſaid to[b] be ימי אורה *days of light*; and ſo theſe *Galileans* found them to be; as all do, to whom the Goſpel of Chriſt comes with power and demonſtration of the Spirit. And theſe days of light, firſt begun in the land of *Zabulon*; which, according to *Philo* the *Jew*[c], was συμβολον φωτος, "*a ſymbol of light*; "ſince, adds he, its name ſignifies the nature of "night; but the night removing, and departing, "light neceſſarily ariſes." As did, in a ſpiritual ſenſe, here, when Chriſt the light aroſe.

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[s] Antiq. l. 18. c. 7.

[t] Vid. Benjamin Tudelenſ. Itinerar. p. 37. & l'Empereur. not. in ib. & Hieron. in Mar. i. 21, & Origen. Comment. in Matt. p. 317. vol. 1. Ed. Huet.

[u] Midraſh Koheleth, fol. 63. 1.

[w] Ib. fol. 77. 1.

[x] See my treatiſe upon the prophecies of the Meſſiah, &c. p. 147, &c.

[y] Zohar in Gen. fol. 74. 3.

[z] Ib. in Exod. fol. 3. 3. & 88. 3.

Ver. 17. *From that time Jeſus began to preach and to ſay*, &c.] Not from the time he dwelt in *Capernaum*; for he had preached in *Nazareth* before he came there, *Luke* iv. 16, 31. nor from the time of *John*'s being caſt into priſon; for he had preached, and made diſciples, who were baptized by his orders, before *John*'s impriſonment, *John* iii. 22, 24—26. and iv. 1. but from the time that ſatan left tempting him; as ſoon as that combat was over, immediately he went into *Galilee*, began to preach, and called his diſciples. The words with which he began his miniſtry, are the ſame with which *John* begun his; which ſhews the entire agreement between them, in that they not only preached the ſame doctrine, but in the ſame words; ſee the note on *Matt.* iii. 2.

Ver. 18. *And Jeſus walking by the ſea of Galilee*, &c.] Not for his recreation and diverſion, or by accident; but on purpoſe to look out for, and call ſome, whom he had choſen to be his diſciples. And as he was walking about, to and fro, he *ſaw two* perſons; and as ſoon as he ſaw them, he knew them to be thoſe, he had determined to make his apoſtles: and theſe are deſcribed by their relation to each other, *brethren*; not merely, becauſe they were of the ſame nation, or of the ſame religion, or of the ſame employ and buſineſs of life, but becauſe they were of the ſame blood; and by their names, *Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother*. *Simon* is the ſame name with שמעון *Simeon*; and ſo he is called, *Acts* xv. 14. and which, in the *Jeruſalem* dialect, is read סימון *Simon*. His ſurname *Peter*, which was afterwards given him by Chriſt, *Matt.* xvi. 18. *John* i. 42. is *Greek*, and anſwers to *Cephas*, ſignifying a *rock*; though this name is to be met with in the *Talmudic*[d] writings, where we read of *R. Joſe*, בר פיטרס *bar Petros*. This his ſurname is added here, to diſtinguiſh him from *Simon*, the *Canaanite*. The name of his brother *Andrew*, is generally thought to be *Greek*; though ſome have derived it from נדר *to vow*, and is alſo to be obſerved in the writings of the *Jews*[e]; where mention is made of *R. Chanina* בר אנדריי *bar Andrei*. They are further deſcribed by the work they were at, or buſineſs they were employed in, *caſting a net into the ſea*; either in order to catch fiſh in it, or to waſh it, *Luke* v. 2. and the reaſon of their ſo doing is added; *for they were fiſhers*. Of this mean employment, were the very firſt perſons Chriſt was pleaſed to call to the work of the miniſtry; men of no education, who made no figure in life, but were deſpicable and contemptible: this he did, to make it appear, that they were not qualified for ſuch ſervice of themſelves; that all their gifts and qualifications were from him; to ſhew his own power; to confound the wiſdom of the wiſe; and to let men ſee, that none ought to glory in themſelves, but in him. The *Jews* have a notion of the word of God and prophecy, being received and embraced only by ſuch ſort of perſons: ſays *R. Iſaac Arama*[f], "his word came to heal all, "but ſome particular perſons only receive it; and "who of all men are of a dull underſtanding, "דייגים עברי הים *fiſhermen, who do buſineſs in* "*the ſea*: this is what is written; *they that go down* "*to the ſea in ſhips, that do buſineſs in great waters,* "*theſe ſee the works of the Lord*: theſe ſeem not "indeed fit to receive any thing that belongs to the "underſtanding, becauſe of their dulneſs; and yet "theſe receive the truth of prophecy and viſion, "becauſe they believe his word." I can't but think, that ſome reſpect is had to theſe fiſhers, in *Ezek.* xlvii. 10. *And it ſhall come to paſs that fiſhers ſhall ſtand upon it*; that is, upon, or by the river of waters, ſaid ver. 8. to *iſſue out toward the eaſt country, and go down into the deſert*: which both *R. Jarchi* and *Kimchi*, underſtand of the ſea of *Tiberias*; the ſame with the ſea of *Galilee*, by which Chriſt walked; and where he found theſe fiſhers at work, and called them. See alſo *Jer.* xvi. 16.

Ver. 19. *And he ſaith unto them follow me*, &c.] Theſe two brethren had been the diſciples of *John*, as *Theophylact* thinks, and which ſeems agreeable to *John* i. 35—40. and though through *John*'s pointing out Chriſt unto them, they had ſome knowledge of him, and converſation with him, yet they abode with him but for that day, ver. 37, 38, 39. and afterwards returned to their maſter; and upon his impriſonment, betook themſelves to their former employment: from whence Chriſt now calls them to be his diſciples, ſaying *follow me*, or *come after me*; that is, be a diſciple of mine; ſee *Luke* xiv. 27. And to encourage them to it, makes uſe of this argument; *and*, or *for*, *I will make you fiſhers of men*: you ſhall be fiſhers ſtill, but in a higher ſenſe; and in a far more noble employment, and to much better purpoſe. The net they were to ſpread and caſt was the Goſpel, ſee *Matt.* xiii. 47. for Chriſt made them not דייגי תורה *fiſhers of the law*, to uſe the words of *Maimonides*[g], but fiſhers of the Goſpel. The ſea into which they were to caſt the net, was firſt *Judea*, and then the whole world; the fiſh they were to catch, were the ſouls of men, both among *Jews* and *Gentiles*; of whoſe converſion and faith, they were to be the happy inſtruments: now none could make them fiſhers in this ſenſe, or fit them for ſuch ſervice, and ſucceed them in it, but Chriſt; and who here promiſes it unto them.

Ver. 20. *And they ſtraightway left their nets*, &c.] That is, as ſoon as he had called them, they left their worldly employment, and followed him; they gave up themſelves to his ſervice, and became his diſciples; they not only left their *nets*, but their fiſhing boats, and fiſhing trade, and all that belonged to it, even all their ſubſtance; and alſo their relations, friends and acquaintance, ſee *Matt.* xix. 27. which ſhews what a mighty power went along with the words and call of Chriſt; and what a ready, chearful, and voluntary ſubjection this produces, wherever it takes place.

Ver. 21. *And going on from thence, he ſaw other two*, &c.] When he had gone but a little way further, *Mark* i. 19. he ſpied two other perſons he was looking for, and had deſigned to call to the office of Apoſtleſhip; and theſe are alſo deſcribed as *brethren*, and by name, *James, the ſon of Zebedee, and John his brother.* The *Jews* make mention in their writings [h], of one ר׳ יעקב בר זבדי *R. James the ſon of Zebedee*; which *Capellus* [i] conjectures is the very ſame perſon here mentioned: but the *James* they ſpeak of as a diſciple of *Jeſus*, they call יעקב מינאה *James the heretick* [k]; who they ſay, was of the village of *Secaniah*, and ſometimes of the village of *Sama.* His brother's name was *John*, who was the Evangeliſt, as well as Apoſtle; theſe were *in a ſhip with their father Zebedee.* Men of this name, and ſons of men of this name, were very common among the *Jewiſh Rabbins*; but neither this man, nor his ſons, were maſters or doctors in *Iſrael*; for ſuch Chriſt choſe not for his Apoſtles. It ſeems to be the ſame name with *Zebadiah*, 1 *Chron.* xxvii. 7. theſe with him, were *mending their nets*, which were broken, and needed repairing; and perhaps being poor, could not afford to buy new ones: this ſhews their induſtry and diligence; and may be a pattern and example to perſons, cloſely to attend the buſineſs of their calling, whilſt the providence of God continues them in it. *And he called them*; from their employment, to follow him, and become his diſciples; and no doubt gave them the ſame promiſe and encouragement, he had given the two former.

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[a] Bereſhith Rabba, fol. 1. 3. & Echa Rabbati, fol. 50 2.
[b] Baal Hatturim in Gen. fol. 2. 2.
[c] De Somniis, p. 1113.
[d] T. Hieroſ. Moed Katon, fol. 82. 4. Avoda Zara fol. 42. 3.
[e] T. Hieroſ. Megilla, fol. 75. 2. & Beracot. fol. 2. 3.
[f] Apud Galatin. de Arcan. Cathol. ver. l. 3. c. 5. p. 119. & Crocium de Meſſia Theſ. 213. p. 62, 63.
[g] Hilchot. Talmud. Torah, c. 1. §. 12. ſo Dr. Lightfoot cites the phraſe, but in Ed. Amſterd. 'tis דיני תורה *the judgments of the law*.

Ver. 22. *And they immediately left the ſhip*, &c.] More is expreſſed here than before, for they not only left their nets, but their ſhip too; which was of much more value; nay, even *their father* alſo, *with the hired ſervants*, *Mark* i. 20. and ſo complied with the call of Chriſt to his people, *Pſal.* xlv. 10. and thereby proved, that they were ſincerely his followers, *Luke* xiv. 26. and might expect the gracious promiſe of Chriſt to be made good unto them, *Matt.* xix. 28, 29.

Ver. 23. *And Jeſus went about all Galilee*, &c.] Having called four of his diſciples, he took a tour throughout *Galilee*; a country mean and deſpicable, inhabited by perſons poor, illiterate, vile, and wicked: ſuch had the firſt fruits of Chriſt's miniſtry, and meſſages of his grace; which ſhews the freeneſs, ſovereignty, and riches, of his abounding goodneſs. He went about *all* this country, both upper and nether *Galilee*, which was very populous: *Joſephus* ſays [l], there were two hundred and four cities and towns in it; he means, which were places of note, beſides villages. He went about, not like ſatan, ſeeking the deſtruction of men; but as one that went along with him ſays, *doing good*, *Acts* x. 38, both to the bodies and ſouls of men; for he was *teaching in their ſynagogues, and preaching the goſpel of the kingdom.* The places where he taught were *their ſynagogues*: he did not creep into private houſes, as the *Phariſees* then, and falſe apoſtles afterwards did; but he appeared openly, and declared his doctrine in places of publick worſhip; where the *Jews* met together for divine ſervice, to pray, read the Scriptures, and give a word of exhortation to the people; for though they had but one temple, which was at *Jeruſalem*, they had many ſynagogues, or meeting places, all over the land: here Chriſt not only prayed and read, but *preached*; and the ſubject matter of his miniſtry was, *the goſpel of the kingdom*: that is, the good news of the kingdom of the Meſſiah being come, and which now took place; wherefore he exhorted them to repent of, and relinquiſh their former principles; to receive the doctrines, and ſubmit to the ordinances of the goſpel diſpenſation: he alſo preached to them the things concerning the kingdom of heaven; as that except a man be born again, he cannot ſee it; and unleſs he has a better righteouſneſs than his own, he cannot enter into it: he was alſo *healing all manner of ſickneſs, and all manner of diſeaſe among the people.* 'Tis in the *Greek* text, *every ſickneſs, and every diſeaſe*; that is, all ſorts of maladies, diſorders and diſtempers, which attend the bodies of men; and is another inſtance beſides, *Matt.* iii. 5. in which the word *all*, or *every*, is to be taken in a limited and reſtrained ſenſe, for *ſome*, or *ſome of all ſorts*; which teaches us how to underſtand thoſe phraſes, when uſed in the doctrine of redemption by Chriſt.

Ver. 24. *And his fame went throughout all Syria*, &c.] For his miniſtry and miracles, eſpecially the latter; wherefore *they brought to him*, that is, out of *Syria*, the ſick. *Syria* was in ſome reſpects reckoned as the land of *Iſrael*, though in others not. "The [m] *Rabbins* teach, that in three reſpects *Syria* was like to "the land of *Iſrael*, and in three to the countries "without the land: the duſt defiled, as without "the land; he that ſold his ſervant to (one in) *Syria*, was as if he ſold him to one without the "land; and he that brought a bill of divorce from "*Syria*, as if he brought it from without the land: "and in three things it was like to the land of *Iſrael*; "it was bound to tithes, and to the obſervance of "the ſeventh year; and he that would go into it, "might go into it with purity; and he that purchaſed a field in *Syria*, was as if he had purchaſed "one in the ſuburbs of *Jeruſalem*." *All ſick people, that were taken with divers diſeaſes and torments.* This expreſſes in general, the grievous and tormenting diſeaſes with which the perſons were afflicted, who were brought to Chriſt for healing: ſome particular ones follow; *and thoſe which were poſſeſſed with devils*; in body as well as in mind; of which there were many inſtances, permitted by God on purpoſe, that Chriſt might have an opportunity of ſhewing his power over thoſe evil ſpirits. *And thoſe which were lunatick*; either melancholy perſons, or mad and diſtracted men; that retired from the converſation of men, into fields or deſert places: or ſuch, whoſe diſorders were influenced by the change of the moon; ſuch as thoſe who are troubled with the falling ſickneſs; ſo the *Greeks* [n] call ſuch perſons σεληνιαζομενους, the word here uſed by the Evangeliſt. *And thoſe that had the palſy.* Theſe were each of them ſuch diſorders, as were incurable by the art of medicine; or for which rarely, and with great difficulty, any manner of relief could be obtained; and *he healed them*; without any means, by a word ſpeaking; which ſhewed him more than a man, and truly and properly God.

Ver. 25. *And there followed him great multitudes of people*, &c.] Some on one account, and ſome on another; ſome out of good will, others out of ill will; ſome for the healing of their bodies, others for the good of their ſouls; ſome to ſee his miracles, others to hear his doctrine; and what with one and another, the concourſe of people that followed him, was greater than that which followed *John.* The *Greek* word for *multitude*, is adopted into the *Talmudic* language, and is often uſed by the doctors; who have a tradition to this purpoſe, that רבוא

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[h] T. Hieroſ. Yebamot, fol. 9. 4. & Maaſer Sheni, fol. 55. 2. Trumot. fol. 45. 2. Sheviith fol. 35. 1. Bereſhith Rab. fol. 31. 4. & 36. 2. [i] Spicilegium in loc. [k] T. Bab. Megilla 23. 1. Avoda Zara, fol. 17. 1. & 27. 2. & 28. 1. Cholin. fol. 84. 1. T. Hieroſ. Sabbat fol. 14. 4. & Avoda Zara, fol. 40. 4. Midraſh Kohelet, fol. 62. 4. & 77. 1. Juchaſin, fol. 41. 1. [l] In vita ejus. [m] T. Bab. Gittin. fol. 8. 1. 2. vid. Maimon. Hilch. Tumath Meth. c. 11. §. 6. [n] Vid. Fabricii Bibl. Græc. vol. 2. l. 3. c. 26. p. 656—658.

אין אוכלוסא פחותה מששים רבוא, *there is no multitude leſs than ſixty myriads*[o]; but we are not to imagine, that when here, and elſewhere, a multitude is ſaid to follow, or attend on Chriſt, that he had ſuch a number of people after him as this; only that the number was very large. The places from whence they came are particularly mentioned, as *from Galilee*; where he had called his diſciples, had been preaching the Goſpel, and healing all manner of diſeaſes; and therefore it is not to be wondered at, that he ſhould have a large number of followers from hence. This country was divided into[p] three parts: "There was upper *Galilee*, and nether *Galilee*, and the valley from *Capharbananiah* and upwards: all that part which did not bring forth ſycamine trees, was upper *Galilee*, and from *Capharbananiah* downwards: all that part which did bring forth ſycamine trees, was nether *Galilee*; and the coaſt of *Tiberias* was the valley." Frequent mention is made in the *Talmudic*[q] writings, of *upper Galilee*, as diſtinct from the other. *And from Decapolis*; a tract of land ſo called, from the *ten cities* that were in it; and which, according to *Pliny*[r], were theſe following; *Damaſcus*, *Opoton*, *Philadelphia*, *Raphana*, *Scythopolis*, *Gadara*, *Hippondion*, *Pella*, *Galaſa*, and *Canatha*; ſee *Mark* v. 20. and vii. 31. *And from Jeruſalem*; the metropolis of the whole land; for his fame had reached that great city, and there were ſome there, curious and deſirous to ſee him, and hear him; though he was got into thoſe diſtant and obſcure parts. *And from Judea*; from the other parts of it: *and from beyond Jordan*; which was a diſtinct country of itſelf, known by the name of *Peræa*; ſo called, perhaps, from ϖεραν, the word here tranſlated, *from beyond*. It is to be obſerved, that here are three countries diſtinctly mentioned, *Galilee*, *Judea*, and *beyond Jordan*; which was the diviſion of the land of *Iſrael*; of theſe three lands the *Talmudiſts* often ſpeak. "It is a tradition of the *Rabbins*[s], that in three countries they intercalate the year; *Judea*, and *beyond Jordan*, and *Galilee*." Again[t], "There are three lands, that are obliged to the removing of fruits; *Judea*, and *beyond Jordan*, and *Galilee*." Once more[u], "There are three countries for celebration of marriages, *Judea*, and *beyond Jordan*, and *Galilee*." The account which[w] *Maimonides* gives of theſe three countries, is this; "The land of *Judea*, all of it, the mountain, the plain, and the valley, are one country; beyond *Jordan*, all of it, the plain of *Lydda*, and the mountain of the plain of *Lydda*, and from *Bethoron* to the ſea, are one country: *Galilee*, all of it, the upper and nether, and the coaſt of *Tiberias*, are one country." The country beyond *Jordan*, was not ſo much eſteemed, as what was properly the land of *Canaan*, or *Iſrael*; for the *Jews*[x] ſay, "the land of *Iſrael* is holier than all lands; becauſe they bring out of it the ſheaf, the firſt fruits, and the ſhew-bread, which they don't bring from other lands: the land of *Canaan*, is holier than beyond *Jordan*; the land of *Canaan* is fit to be the habitation of the *Shekinah*; beyond *Jordan* is not." This they ſay[y], was not the land flowing with milk and honey.

## CHAP. V.

Ver. 1. AND *ſeeing the multitudes*, &c.] The great concourſe of people that followed him from the places before-mentioned, *he went up into a mountain*; either to pray alone, which was ſometimes his cuſtom to do, or to ſhun the multitude; or rather, becauſe it was a commodious place for teaching the people: *and when he was ſat*; not for reſt, but in order to teach; for ſitting was the poſture of maſters, or teachers, ſee *Matt.* xiii. 2. *Luke* iv. 20. and v. 3. *John* viii. 2. The form in which the maſter and his diſciples ſat, is thus deſcribed by *Maimonides*[z]. "The maſter ſits at the head, or in the chief place, and the diſciples before him in a circuit, like a crown; ſo that they all ſee the maſter, and hear his words; and the maſter may not ſit upon a ſeat, and the ſcholars upon the ground; but either all upon the earth, or upon ſeats: indeed from the beginning, or formerly היה הרב יושב *the maſter uſed to ſit*, and the diſciples ſtand; but before the deſtruction of the ſecond temple, all uſed to teach their diſciples as they were ſitting." With reſpect to this latter cuſtom, the *Talmudiſts* ſay[a], that "from the days of *Moſes*, to *Rabban Gamaliel* (the maſter of the Apoſtle *Paul*) they did not learn the law, unleſs ſtanding; after *Rabban Gamaliel* died, ſickneſs came into the world, and they learnt the law ſitting: hence it is a tradition, that after *Rabban Gamaliel* died, the glory of the law ceaſed." *His diſciples came unto him*; not only the twelve, but the company, or multitude, of his diſciples, *Luke* vi. 17. which he made in the ſeveral places, where he had been preaching; for the number of his diſciples was larger than *John*'s.

Ver. 2. *And he opened his mouth*, &c.] He ſpoke with a clear and ſtrong voice, that all the people might hear him; and with great freedom, utterance, and chearfulneſs, and things of the greateſt moment and importance; *and taught them*; not his diſciples only, but the whole multitude, who heard him with aſtoniſhment; ſee ch. vii. 28, 29. Some things in the following diſcourſe are directed to the diſciples in particular, and others regard the multitude in general.

Ver. 3. *Bleſſed are the poor in ſpirit*, &c.] Not the poor in purſe, or who are ſo with reſpect to things temporal: for though God has choſen and called many, who are in ſuch a condition of life, yet not all; the kingdom of heaven can't be ſaid to belong to them all, or only; but ſuch as are poor in a ſpiritual ſenſe. All mankind are ſpiritually poor; they have nothing to eat that is fit and proper; nor any cloaths to wear, but rags; nor are they able to purchaſe either; they have no money to buy with; they are in debt, owe ten thouſand talents, and have nothing to pay; and in ſuch a condition, that they are not able to help themſelves. The greater part of mankind are inſenſible of this their condition; but think themſelves rich, and increaſed with goods: there are ſome who are ſenſible of it, who ſee their poverty and want, freely acknowledge it, bewail it, and mourn over it; are humbled for it, and are broken under a ſenſe of it; entertain low and mean thoughts of themſelves; ſeek after the true riches, both of grace and glory; and frankly acknowledge, that all they have, or hope to have, is owing to the free grace of God. Now theſe are the perſons intended in this place; who are not only *poor*, but are poor *in ſpirit*; in their own ſpirits, in their own ſenſe, apprehenſion, and judgment: and may even be called *beggars*, as the word may be rendered; for being ſenſible of their poverty, they place themſelves at the door of mercy, and knock there; their language is, *God be merciful*; their poſture is ſtanding, watching, and waiting, at wiſdom's gates, and at the poſts of her door; they are importunate, will have no denial, yet receive the leaſt favour with thankfulneſs. Now theſe are pronounced *bleſſed*, for this reaſon, *for theirs is the kingdom of heaven*; not only the Goſpel, and the miniſtration of it, which belongs to them. *The poor have the Goſpel preached*: it not only reaches their ears, but their hearts; it enters into them, is applied unto them, they receive and embrace it with the utmoſt joy and gladneſs: but eternal glory, this is prepared for them, and given to them; they are born heirs of it, have a right unto it, are making meet for it, and ſhall enjoy it.

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[o] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 58. 1.
[p] Miſn. Sheviith. c. 9. §. 2.
[q] T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 80. 1. Cetubot fol. 67. 2. & Succa fol. 27. 2. & 28. 1. Zohar in Gen. fol. 129. 3.
[r] Nat. Hiſt. l. 5. c. 18.
[s] T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 11. 2.
[t] Miſn. Sheviith, c. 9. §. 2.
[u] Miſn. Cetubot, c. 13. §. 10.
[w] Hilch. Shemittah, c. 7. §. 9.
[x] Bemidbar Rabba, §. 7. fol. 188. 3. Maimon. Beth Habechira, c. 7. §. 12.
[y] Miſn. Biccurim, c. 1. §. 10.
[z] Hilch. Talmud Torah, c. 4. §. 2.
[a] T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 21. 1. Vid. Miſn. Sota, c. 9. §. 15. & Jarchi, Maimon, & Bartenora in ib.

Ver. 4. *Bleſſed are they that mourn*, &c.] For ſin, for their own ſins; the ſin of their nature, indwelling ſin, which is always working in them, and is a continual grief of mind to them; the unbelief of their hearts, notwithſtanding the many inſtances, declarations, promiſes, and diſcoveries of grace made unto them; their daily infirmities, and many ſins of life, becauſe they are committed againſt a God of love, grace and mercy, grieve the Spirit, and diſhonour the Goſpel of Chriſt: who mourn alſo for the ſins of others, for the ſins of the world, the prophaneneſs and wickedneſs that abounds in it; and more eſpecially for the ſins of profeſſors, by reaſon of which, the name of God, and ways of Chriſt, are evil ſpoken of: who likewiſe mourn under afflictions, ſpiritual ones, temptations, deſertions; and declenſions; temporal ones, their own, which they receive, either more immediately from the hand of God, or from men; ſuch as they endure for the ſake of Chriſt, and the profeſſion of his Goſpel; and who ſympathize with others in their afflictions. Theſe, how ſorrowful and diſtreſſed ſoever they may appear, are *bleſſed*; *for they ſhall be comforted*: here, in this life, by the God of all comfort, by Chriſt the comforter; by the Spirit of God, whoſe work and office it is to comfort; by the Scriptures of truth, which are written for their conſolation; by the promiſes of the Goſpel, through which, the heirs of promiſe have ſtrong conſolation; by the ordinances of it, which are breaſts of conſolation; and by the miniſters of the word, who have a commiſſion from the Lord, to ſpeak comfortably to them; and then are they comforted, when they have the diſcoveries of the love of God, manifeſtations of pardoning grace, through the blood of Chriſt, and enjoy the divine preſence: and they ſhall be comforted hereafter; when freed from all the troubles of this life, they ſhall be bleſſed with uninterrupted communion with Father, Son, and Spirit, and with the happy ſociety of angels and glorified ſaints. *Iſaiah* lxi. 1, 2, 3. ſeems to be referred to, both in this, and in the preceding *verſe*.

Ver. 5. *Bleſſed are the meek*, &c.] Who are not eaſily provoked to anger; who patiently bear, and put up with injuries and affronts; carry themſelves courteouſly, and affably to all; have the meaneſt thoughts of themſelves, and the beſt of others; don't envy the gifts and graces of other men; are willing to be inſtructed and admoniſhed, by the meaneſt of the ſaints; quietly ſubmit to the will of God, in adverſe diſpenſations of providence; and aſcribe all they have, and are, to the grace of God. Meekneſs, or humility, is very valuable and commendable. The *Jews*, though a proud, haughty, and wrathful people, cannot but ſpeak in its praiſe: "Wiſdom, fear and meekneſs, ſay [b] they, are of high "eſteem; but ענוה *meekneſs* is greater than them "all." They had two very conſiderable doctors in the time of Chriſt, *Hillell* and *Shammai*; the one was of a meek, the other of an angry diſpoſition: hence ſay they [c], "Let a man be always meek as "*Hillell*, and let him not be angry as *Shammai*." Here meekneſs is to be conſidered, not as a moral virtue, but as a chriſtian grace, a fruit of the Spirit of God; which was eminently in Chriſt, and is very ornamental to believers; and of great advantage and uſe to them, in hearing and receiving the word; in giving an account of the reaſon of the hope that is in them; in inſtructing and reſtoring ſuch, who have backſlidden, either in principle or practice; and in the whole of their lives and converſations; and ſerves greatly to recommend religion to others: ſuch who are poſſeſſed of it, and exerciſe it, are well pleaſing to God; when diſconſolate, he comforts them; when hungry, he ſatisfies them; when they want direction, he gives it to them; when wronged, he'll do them right; he gives them more grace here, and glory hereafter. The bleſſing inſtanced, in which they ſhall partake of, is, *they ſhall inherit the earth*; not the land of *Canaan*, though that may be alluded to; nor this world, at leaſt in its preſent ſituation; for this is not the ſaints reſt and inheritance: but rather, the *new earth*, which will be after this is burnt up; in which, only ſuch perſons as are here deſcribed, ſhall dwell; and who ſhall inherit it, by virtue of their being heirs of God, and joint heirs with Chriſt; whoſe is the earth, and the fulneſs thereof. Though ſome think, heaven is here deſigned; and is ſo called, partly for the ſake of variety of expreſſion, from ver. 3. and partly in alluſion to the land of *Canaan*, a type of it; and may be called an earth, or country, that is an heavenly one, in oppoſition to this earthly one; as the heavenly *Jeruſalem* is oppoſed to the earthly one, and which will be a glorious inheritance. The paſſage referred to, is *Pſal.* xxxvii. 11.

Ver. 6. *Bleſſed are they which do hunger and thirſt*, &c.] Not after the riches, honours, and pleaſures of this world, but *after righteouſneſs*; by which is meant, not juſtice and equity, as perſons oppreſſed and injured; nor a moral, legal righteouſneſs, which the generality of the *Jewiſh* nation, were eagerly purſuing; but the juſtifying righteouſneſs of Chriſt, which is imputed by God the Father, and received by faith. To *hunger and thirſt* after this, ſuppoſes a want of righteouſneſs, which is the caſe of all men; a ſenſe of want of it, which is only perceived by perſons ſpiritually enlightened; a diſcovery of the righteouſneſs of Chriſt to them, which is made in the Goſpel, and by the Spirit of God; a value for it, and a preference of it to all other righteouſneſs; and an earneſt deſire after it, to be poſſeſſed of it, and found in it; and that nothing can be more grateful than that, becauſe of its perfection, purity, ſuitableneſs, and uſe: happy ſouls are theſe, *for they ſhall be filled*; with that righteouſneſs, and with all other good things, in conſequence of it; and particularly, with joy and peace, which are the certain effects of it: or, *they ſhall be ſatisfied*, that they have an intereſt in it; and ſo ſatisfied with it, that they ſhall never ſeek for any other righteouſneſs, as a juſtifying one, in the ſight of God; this being full, perfect, ſufficient, and entirely compleat.

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[b] Piſke Toſaphot Yebamot, art. 196.

[c] T. Bab. Sabbat. fol. 30. 2.

Ver. 7. *Bleſſed are the merciful*, &c.] Who ſhew mercy to the bodies of men, to thoſe that are poor, indigent, and miſerable, in their outward circumſtances; by both ſympathizing with them, and diſtributing unto them; not only making uſe of expreſſions of pity and concern; but communicating with readineſs and chearfulneſs, with affection and tenderneſs, and with a view to the glory of God: who alſo ſhew mercy to the ſouls of men, by inſtructing ſuch as are ignorant, giving them good counſel and advice; reproving them for ſin, praying for them, forgiving injuries done by them, and by comforting thoſe that are caſt down. To ſhew mercy is very delightful to, and deſireable by God; it is what he requires, and is one of the weightier matters of the law; it is very ornamental to a child of God, and what makes him more like to his heavenly father. The happineſs of ſuch perſons is this, that *they ſhall obtain mercy*; from man, whenever they are attended with any uncomfortable circumſtances of life; כל מרחם מרחמין עליו *whoever is merciful, men ſhew mercy to him* [d]: and from God, through Chriſt; which is free, ſovereign, abundant, and eternal. Men are ſaid to obtain this, when they are regenerated, and called by grace; and when they have a diſcovery, and an application, of the forgiveneſs of their ſins: but here, it ſeems to deſign thoſe ſupplies of grace and mercy, which merciful perſons may expect to find and obtain, at the throne of grace, to help them in time of need; and, who ſhall not only obtain mercy of God in this life, but in the world to come, in the great day of the Lord; for which the Apoſtle prayed for *Oneſiphorus*, 2 *Tim.* i. 18.

Ver. 8. *Bleſſed are the pure in heart*, &c.] Not in the head; for men may have pure notions, and impure hearts; not in the hand, or action, or in outward converſation only; ſo the *Phariſees* were outwardly righteous before men, but inwardly full of impurity; but *in heart*. The heart of man, is naturally unclean; nor is it in the power of man to make it clean, or to be pure from his ſin; nor is any man in this life, in ſuch ſenſe, pure in heart, as to be entirely free from ſin. This is only true of Chriſt, angels, and glorified ſaints: but ſuch may be ſaid to be ſo, who, though they have ſin dwelling in them, are juſtified from all ſin, by the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and are *clean through the word*, or ſentence of juſtification pronounced upon them, on the account of that righteouſneſs; whoſe iniquities are all of them forgiven, and whoſe hearts are ſprinkled with the blood of Jeſus, which cleanſes from all ſin; and, who have the grace of God wrought in their hearts, which, though as yet imperfect, it is entirely pure; there is not the leaſt ſpot or ſtain of ſin in it: and ſuch ſouls, as they are in love with, ſo they moſt earneſtly deſire after more purity of heart, lip, life, and converſation. And happy they are, *for they ſhall ſee God*; in this life, enjoying communion with him, both in private and publick, in the ſeveral duties of religion, in the houſe and ordinances of God; where they often behold his beauty, ſee his power and his glory, and taſte, and know, that he is good and gracious: and in the other world, where they ſhall ſee God in Chriſt, with the eyes of their underſtanding; and God incarnate, with the eyes of their bodies, after the reſurrection; which ſight of Chriſt, and God in Chriſt, will be unſpeakably glorious, deſireable, delightful, and ſatisfying; it will be free from all darkneſs and error, and from all interruption; it will be an appropriating and transforming one, and will laſt for ever.

Ver. 9. *Bleſſed are the peace-makers*, &c.] Not between God and man, for no man can make his own peace with God; nor can any mere creature, angels, or men, make it for him; Chriſt, in this ſenſe, is the only peace-maker: but between men and men; and ſuch are they, who are of peaceable diſpoſitions themſelves; live peaceably with all men, and with one another, as their relation obliges to, and their mutual comfort requires; and with the men of the world; and, who are ready, willing, and very ſerviceable, in compoſing differences, and making peace between their fellow creatures, and fellow Chriſtians. The *Jews* ſpeak very highly, and much, in the commendation of peace-making; they reckon this among the things which ſhall be of uſe to a man, both in this, and the other world. "Theſe are the things, ſay they [e], the fruit of "which, a man enjoys in this world, and his lot, "or portion, remains for him in the world to "come; honouring father and mother, liberality, "והבאת שלום בין אדם לחבירו *and making peace* "*between a man and his neighbour.*" This they ſay [f], *Aaron* was much diſpoſed to. "*Moſes* uſed "to ſay, let juſtice break through the mountain; "but *Aaron* loved peace, and purſued it, and *made* "*peace between a man and his neighbour*, as is ſaid, "*Mal.* ii. 6." Hence that ſaying of *Hillell* [g], "be "thou one of the diſciples of *Aaron*, who loved "peace, and followed after it; he loved men, and "brought them to the law." Now of ſuch perſons it is ſaid, that *they ſhall be called the children of God*; that is, they are the children of God by adopting grace, which is made manifeſt in their regeneration; and that is evidenced by the fruits of it, of which this is one; they not only ſhall be, and more manifeſtly appear to be, the ſons of God hereafter; but they are, and are known to be ſo now, by their peaceable diſpoſition, which is wrought in them by the Spirit of God; whereby they become like to the God of peace, and to Chriſt, the great and only peace-maker, and ſo are truly ſons of peace.

Ver. 10. *Bleſſed are they which are perſecuted*, &c.] Not for any crimes they have done, for unrighteouſneſs and iniquity, as murderers, thieves, and evil doers, but *for righteouſneſs ſake*; on account of their righteous and godly converſation, which brings upon them the hatred and enmity, of the men of the world: for ſaints, by living righteouſly, ſeparate themſelves from them, and profeſs themſelves not to belong to them; their religious life ſets a brand upon, and diſtinguiſhes other perſons; yea, it reproves, and condemns, their wicked lives and practices; and this fills them with wrath againſt them, and puts them on perſecuting them: or by *righteouſneſs* may be meant, a righteous cauſe, the cauſe of Chriſt, and his Goſpel; for by making a profeſſion of Chriſt, ſhewing a concern for his intereſt, and by engaging in a vindication of his perſon and truths; ſaints expoſe themſelves to the rage and perſecution of men: and particularly, they are perſecuted for preaching, maintaining, or embracing, the doctrine of juſtification by the righteouſneſs of Chriſt; becauſe it is not of man, nor agreeable to the carnal reaſon of man; it is oppoſite to the way of juſtification, which men naturally receive; it excludes boaſting, and is contrary to their carnal and ſelfiſh principles; perſecution is either verbal with the tongue, by cruel mockings and reproachful language; or real, by deeds, ſuch as confiſcation of goods, baniſhment, impriſonment of body, and innumerable ſorts of death: the latter ſeems here more eſpecially deſigned, and both are expreſſed in the following verſe; and yet the ſaints, tho' thus uſed, or rather abuſed, are happy; *for theirs is the kingdom of heaven:* the ſame bleſſedneſs is predicated of theſe as of the poor in ſpirit, ver. 3.

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[d] Maimon. Hilch. Mattanot Anayim. c. 10. §. 2.

[e] Miſn. Peah. c. 1. §. 1. T. Bab. Sabbat. fol. 127. 1. & Kiddushin. fol. 40. 1.

[f] T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 6. 2. Vid. Abot. R. Nathan, c. 12. fol. 4. 2.

[g] Pirke Abot. c. 1. §. 12.

Ver. 11. *Bleſſed are ye when men ſhall revile you,* &c.] Theſe words are particularly directed to the diſciples of Chriſt, and are deſigned to inform them, that they ſhould not be exempted from reproach and perſecution, and to animate and fortify them againſt it; and are prophetical of what they, and the firſt chriſtians particularly, were to endure for Chriſt's ſake. Men ſhould *revile* them, ſpeak very reproachfully of them, brand them with infamy, and load them with diſgrace; and *perſecute you,* from place to place, by ill uſage of all ſorts; *and ſhall ſay all manner of evil againſt you;* the worſt things they could think, of and invent, and all of them; ſuch, as that they were ſeditious perſons, enemies to the commonwealth, and the publick good, guilty of ſacriledge, inceſt, and murder: but what would ſerve to relieve them under theſe heavy charges, is, that they were *falſely* laid; there was not a word of truth in them; wherefore their own hearts would not reproach them; but all were the malicious lyes of men, invented on purpoſe to bring them and chriſtianity into diſgrace: and that they were brought againſt them *for* Chriſt's *ſake,* for his name ſake, for the ſake of his goſpel and intereſt: the treatment they meet with is on his account, and the ſame that he himſelf met with; the like reproaches fell on him, which will be all wiped off from him and them another day; when they'll appear to be the bleſſed perſons, and their revilers and perſecutors the unhappy ones. The *Jews* have ſome ſayings not unlike theſe, and which may ſerve to illuſtrate them; "תהוא לוטא ולא תהוא לאטא, " *be thou curſed,* or bearing curſes, *but do not* " *curſe*[g]. The gloſs upon it is, it is better to be " one of them that are curſed, than to be of them " that curſe; for, at the end, the curſe cauſeleſs re- " turns to him that curſeth." Again[h], "for ever " let a man be of them that are perſecuted, and " not of them that perſecute; of them that ſuffer " injury, and not of them that do it." Once more[i], "they that ſuffer injury, and do it not; who " hear reproach, and don't return it; who act from " love, and rejoice in chaſtiſements, of them the " ſcripture ſays, *let them that love him,* &c. *Judg.* " v. 31."

Ver. 12. *Rejoice and be exceeding glad,* &c.] Becauſe of the honour put upon them, the glory they bring to Chriſt and his cauſe, by chearfully ſuffering for it; and becauſe of the glory and happineſs that ſhall follow upon their ſufferings: *for great is your reward in heaven;* not of debt, but of grace; for there is no proportion or compariſon between what the ſaints ſuffer for Chriſt, and the glory that ſhall be revealed in them by him; not in earth, but in heaven. Saints muſt not expect their reward here, but hereafter, when God himſelf will be their reward; he will be all in all; Chriſt and all his glory, glory and all the riches of it will be the reward of the inheritance, and which muſt needs be a *great* one. And the more to animate them to ſuffer with joyfulneſs, and to ſupport them under all their reproaches and perſecutions, 'tis added; *for ſo perſecuted they the prophets which were before you;* as *Iſaiah, Jeremiah, Zechariah,* and others; which ſhews, that what ſhould befal them was no new and ſtrange thing, but what had been the lot of the moſt eminent ſervants of God in former ages.

Ver. 13. *Ye are the ſalt of the earth,* &c.] This is to be underſtood of the diſciples and apoſtles of Chriſt; who might be compared to *ſalt,* becauſe of the ſavoury doctrines they preached; as all ſuch are, which are agreeable to the ſcriptures, and are of the Evangelic kind, which are full of Chriſt, ſerve to exalt him, and to magnify the grace of God; and are ſuitable to the experiences of the ſaints, and are according to godlineſs, and tend to promote it: alſo becauſe of their ſavoury lives and converſations; whereby they recommended, and gave ſanction to the doctrines they preached, were examples to the ſaints, and checks upon wicked men. Theſe were the ſalt *of the earth;* that is, of the inhabitants of the earth, not of the land of *Judea* only, where they firſt lived and preached; but of the whole world, into which they were afterwards ſent to preach the Goſpel. *But if the ſalt have loſt its ſavour, wherewith ſhall it be ſalted?* The *ſavour* here ſuppoſed that it may be loſt, cannot mean the ſavour of grace, or true grace itſelf, which cannot be loſt, being an incorruptible ſeed; but either gifts qualifying men for the miniſtry, which may ceaſe; or the ſavoury doctrines of the Goſpel, which may be departed from; or a ſeeming ſavoury converſation, which may be neglected; or that ſeeming ſavour, zeal, and affection, with which the Goſpel is preached, which may be dropped: and particular reſpect ſeems to to be had to *Judas,* whom Chriſt had choſen to the apoſtleſhip, and was a devil; and who he knew would loſe his uſefulneſs and place, and become an unprofitable wretch, and at laſt be rejected of God and men; and this caſe is propoſed to them all, in order to engage them to take heed to themſelves, their doctrine and miniſtry. Moreover, this is but a ſuppoſition; *if the ſalt,* &c. and proves no matter of fact; and the *Jews* have a ſaying[k], that "all that " ſeaſon loſe their ſavour ומלח אינה מפיגה טעמה, " *but ſalt does not loſe its ſavour.*" Should it do ſo, *it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be caſt out and to be trodden under foot.* Salt is good for nothing, but to make things ſavoury, and preſerve from putrefaction; and when it has loſt its ſavour, it is of no uſe, neither to men nor beaſts, as ſome things are when corrupted; nor is it of any uſe to the land, or dungill, for it makes barren, and not fruitful: ſo miniſters of the word, when they have dropped the ſavoury doctrines of the Goſpel, or have quitted their former ſeeming ſavoury and exemplary converſations; as their uſefulneſs is gone, ſo, generally ſpeaking, its never retrieved; they are caſt out of the churches of Chriſt, and are treated with contempt by every one.

Ver. 14. *Ye are the light of the world,* &c.] What the luminaries, the ſun and moon are, in the heavens, with reſpect to corporal light, that the apoſtles were in the world with regard to ſpiritual light; carrying and ſpreading the light of the Goſpel not only in *Judea,* but all over the world, which was in great darkneſs of ignorance and error; and thro' a divine bleſſing attending their miniſtry, many were turned from the darkneſs of *Judaiſm* and *Gentiliſm,* of ſin and infidelity, to the marvellous light of divine grace. The *Jews* were wont to ſay, that of the *Iſraelites* in general, and particularly of their *Sanhedrim,* and of their learned doctors, what Chriſt more truly applies here to his apoſtles; they obſerve,

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[g] T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 49. 1.

[h] T. Bab. Baya Kama, fol. 93. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Deyot. c. 5. §. 13.

[i] T. Bab. Sabbat. fol. 88. 2. Yoma, fol. 23. 1. & Gittin, fol. 36. 2.

[k] T. Bab. Betzah, fol. 14. 1.

ſerve [l], that "on the fourth day it was ſaid, *let* "*there be light*; which was done with reſpect to the "*Iſraelites*, becauſe they are they, מאירים לעולם, "*which give light to the world*, as it is written, "*Dan.* xii. 3." And in another place [m], ſay they, "how beautiful are the great ones of the congregation, and the wiſe men, who ſit in the *Sanhedrim!* for they are they, מנהרין לעלמא, *that en*"*lighten the world*, the people of the houſe of "*Iſrael.*" So *R. Meir*, *R. Akiba* his diſciple, and *R. Judah* the prince, are each of them called [n] אור העולם, *the light of the world*; as *R. Jochanan ben Zaccai* is by his diſciples, נר עולם, *the lamp of the world* [o]: and it was uſual for the head of a ſchool, or of an univerſity, to be ſtiled [p] נהורא דעלמא, *the light of the world*; but this title much better agrees, and ſuits with the perſons, Chriſt gives it to, who, no queſtion, had a view to thoſe exalted characters, the *Jews* gave to their celebrated *Rabbins*. A city that *is ſet on an hill cannot be hid*; alluding either to *Nazareth*, where he was educated, and had lately preached, which was built on an hill, from the brow of which the inhabitants ſought to have caſt him headſong, *Luke* iv. 29. or to *Capernaum*, which, on account of its height, is ſaid to be *exalted unto heaven*, *Matt.* xi. 23. or to the city of *Jeruſalem*, which was ſituated on a very conſiderable eminence. The land of *Iſrael*, the *Jews* ſay [q], was higher than all other lands; and the temple at *Jeruſalem* was higher than any other part of the land of *Iſrael*. And as a city can't be hid, which is built on a high place; ſo neither could, nor ought the doctrines which the apoſtles were commiſſioned to preach, be hid, or concealed from men: they were not to ſhun to declare the whole counſel of God, nor ſtudy to avoid the reproaches and perſecutions of men; for they were to be *made a ſpectacle*; to be ſet as in a publick theatre, to be ſeen by *the world*, *angels*, *and men*.

Ver. 15. *Neither do men light a candle*, &c.] Which may be read imperſonally, *a candle is not lighted*: and by it may be meant the goſpel and gifts qualifying men to preach it; which, like a candle, was lighted in the evening of the *Jewiſh* diſpenſation, tho' not confined to the land of *Judea*; but has ſhone throughout the world, being as a candle to be removed, and has been removed from place to place: wherever it is ſet, it gives light, more or leſs, and diſpels darkneſs; it is uſeful both to work, by and walk with; it does not always burn alike clearly, it needs looking after; it has its thieves, as candles ſometimes have; and will give the greateſt light towards the cloſe of the world, as they uſually do, when ready to go out. Now when a candle is lighted by men, they don't *put it under a buſhel*, or any thing which may hide and cover it, and ſo hinder its light and uſefulneſs. The *Greek* word μοδιος, rendered a *buſhel*, anſwers to the *Hebrew* סאה, *ſeah*, which is the very word uſed in *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel; and this was a dry meaſure that held about a gallon and a half; and accordingly is rendered here by the *Syriack* סאתא. The deſign of the expreſſion is, that Chriſt has lighted the candle of the everlaſting Goſpel, and given gifts to men for the miniſtration of it, not to be concealed and neglected; or to be uſed as the ſervant did his lord's money, wrap it up in a napkin, and hide it in the earth. Miniſters are not, through ſlothfulneſs, to neglect the gift that is in them; nor, thro' fear, to hide their talents, or keep back any part of the Goſpel, or cover any thing out of ſight, which may be profitable to ſouls: *but* men, when they light a candle, put it *on a candleſtick*, *and it giveth light to all that are in the houſe*; as on the candleſtick in the temple, a type of the church; where Chriſt has ſet the light of the Goſpel, where it is held forth particularly by the miniſters of the word, to illuminate the whole houſe and family of God; by the light of which poor ſinners, the loſt pieces of ſilver, are looked up; ſtraggling ſouls are brought home; hypocrites and formaliſts are detected; and ſaints are enlightened, directed, and comforted. Much ſuch a proverbial ſaying is uſed by the *Jews* [r]; "don't leave a veſ"ſel of balſam in a dunghil, but move it from its "place, that its ſmell may ſpread, and men may "receive profit from it."

Ver. 16. *Let your light ſo ſhine before men*, &c.] Here Chriſt applies the foregoing ſimile to his diſciples, and more fully opens the meaning and deſign of it. His ſenſe is this; that the light of the Goſpel, which he had communicated to them, the ſpiritual knowledge of the myſteries of grace, which he had favoured them with, were to be openly declared, and made manifeſt before men. Light was not given merely for their own private uſe, but for the publick good of mankind; and therefore, as they were placed as lights in the world, they were to hold forth, in the moſt open and conſpicuous manner, the word of light and life: *that they may ſee your good works*; meaning their zeal and fervency; their plainneſs and openneſs; their ſincerity, faithfulneſs, and integrity; their courage and intrepidity; their diligence, induſtry, and indefatigableneſs in preaching the Goſpel; their ſtrict regard to truth, the honour of Chriſt, and the good of ſouls; as alſo their very great care and concern to recommend the doctrines of grace, by their example in their lives and converſations: *and glorify your father which is in heaven*; that is, that when the miniſtration of the Goſpel has been bleſſed, for the illumination of the minds of men, to a thorough conviction of their ſtate; and for their regeneration, converſion, ſanctification, and comfort; they may give praiſe to God, and bleſs his name for qualifying and ſending ſuch Goſpel-miniſters to ſhew unto them the way of ſalvation; and that the word has been made uſeful to them for communicating ſpiritual light, life, joy and comfort. אבינו שבשמים: *Our and your father which is in heaven*, is a name, appellation, or *periphraſis* of God, frequently uſed by *Jewiſh* writers [s]; and is often expreſſed by Chriſt in theſe his ſermons on the mount.

Ver. 17. *Think not that I am come to deſtroy the law or the prophets*, &c.] From verſe 3. to the 10th incluſive, our Lord ſeems chiefly to reſpect the whole body of his true diſciples and followers; from thence, to the 16th incluſive, he addreſſes the diſciples, whom he had called to be miniſters of the word; and in this *verſe*, to the end of his diſcourſe, he applies himſelf to the whole multitude in general; many of whom might be ready to imagine, that by the light of the Goſpel, he was giving his diſciples inſtructions to ſpread in the world; he was going to ſet aſide, as uſeleſs, the law of *Moſes*, or the prophets, the interpreters of it, and commentators upon it. Chriſt knew the thoughts of their hearts, that they had taken up ſuch prejudices in their minds againſt him; wherefore he ſays, *think not*; he was ſenſible what objections they were

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[l] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 1. 3.

[m] Targum in Cant. iv. 1.

[n] Juchaſin, fol. 63. 2.

[o] Abot R. Nathan, c. 25. fol. 6. 3.

[p] Juchaſin, fol. 121. 2.

[q] T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 69. 1. Sanhedrim, fol. 87. 1. Zebachim, fol. 54. 2.

[r] Vid. Joh. Iſaac. Præfat. ad Eliæ Levit. Methurgeman.

[s] Vid. Miſn. Sota, c. 9. §. 15. & Yoma, c. 8. §. 9.

forming, and what an improvement they would make of them againſt his being the Meſſiah, and therefore prevents them, ſaying, *I am not come to deſtroy, but to fulfil*. By *the law* is meant the moral law, as appears from the whole diſcourſe following: this he came not to *deſtroy*, or looſe mens obligations to, as a rule of walk and converſation, but to *fulfil* it; which he did doctrinally, by ſetting it forth fully, and giving the true ſenſe and meaning of it; and practically, by yielding perfect obedience to all its commands, whereby he became *the end*, the fulfilling end of it. By *the prophets* are meant the writings of the prophets, in which they illuſtrated and explained the law of *Moſes*; urged the duties of it; encouraged men thereunto by promiſes; and directed the people to the Meſſiah, and to an expectation of the bleſſings of grace by him: all which explanations, promiſes, and prophecies, were ſo far from being made void by Chriſt, that they receive their full accompliſhment in him. The *Jews*[t] pretend, that theſe words of Chriſt are contrary to the religion and faith of his followers, who aſſert, that the law of *Moſes* is aboliſhed; which is eaſily refuted, by obſerving the exact agreement between Chriſt and the apoſtle *Paul*, *Rom.* iii. 31. and x. 4. and whenever he, or any other of the apoſtles, ſpeak of the abrogation of the law, it is to be underſtood of the ceremonial law, which in courſe ceaſed by being fulfilled; or if of the moral law, not of the matter, but of the miniſtry of it. This paſſage of Chriſt is cited in the *Talmud*[u], after this manner; "it is written in it, *i. e.* in the Goſpel, *I Aven*, neither to diminiſh from the law of *Moſes* am I come, *but*, or *nor* (for in the *Amſterdam edition* they have inſerted ולא between two hooks) to add to the law of *Moſes* am I come." Which, with their laſt correction, tho' not a juſt citation, yet tolerably well expreſſes the ſenſe; but a moſt blaſphemous character is affixed to Chriſt, when they call him *Aven*; which ſignifies *iniquity* itſelf, and ſeems to be a wilful corruption of the word *Amen*, which begins the next *verſe*.

Ver. 18. *For verily I ſay unto you*, &c.] Or *I Amen ſay unto you*, which is one of the names of Chriſt; ſee *Rev.* iii. 14. or the word *Amen* is only uſed by Chriſt as an aſſeveration of what he was about to ſay; and which, for greater confirmation, is uſually doubled in the Evangeliſt *John*, *Amen, Amen*, or *verily, verily*. The word is uſed by the *Jews*[w] for an oath; they ſwore by it; and it is a rule with them, that whoever anſwers *Amen* after an oath, it is all one as if he had pronounced the oath itſelf. The thing ſo ſtrongly affirmed in this ſolemn manner is, *till heaven and earth paſs, one jot or one tittle ſhall in no wiſe paſs from the law, till all be fulfilled*. The ιωτα or *jot*, in the *Greek* language, anſwers to *jod* in the *Hebrew*, the leaſt of all the letters in the alphabet; hence a little city is called by this name, and this reaſon is given for it, [x] שיוד קטנה באותיות, *becauſe that Jod is the leaſt among letters*. We read alſo of *Rabbi Jod*[y], perhaps ſo called becauſe היה קטן, *he was little*, as the author of *Juchaſin* obſerves[z]. This ſhews in what language the law was written; not in the *Samaritan* language, for the *jod* in that is a large letter, but in the *Hebrew*, in which it is very ſmall; and particularly is written in a very diminutive character, in *Deut.* xxxii. 18. *by one tittle* ſome think is meant one of thoſe ducts, daſhes, or corners of letters, which diſtinguiſh one letter from another, that is much alike; others have thought that one of the pricks or vowel-points is intended; others, one of thoſe little ſtrokes in the tops of letters, which the *Jews* call[a] *crowns* and *ſpikes*, is here meant, in which they imagined great myſteries were contained; and there were ſome perſons among them, who made it their buſineſs to ſearch into the meaning of every letter, and of every one of theſe little horns, or pricks, that were upon the top of them. So ſays *R. Meir*[b], "in the time of the prophets there were ſuch who very diligently ſearched every letter in the law, and explained every letter by itſelf; and don't wonder at this that they ſhould expound every letter by itſelf, for they commented על כל קוץ וקוץ של כל אות ואות, *upon every one of the tops of each letter*." Such an expounder was *Akiba ben Joſeph*[c]. To which cuſtom Chriſt is here ſuppoſed to have reſpect: however, certain it is that he ſpeaks very much in the language, and agreeable to the mind of the *Jewiſh* doctors; and ſome things in their writings will ſerve to illuſtrate this paſſage. "If, ſay they[d], all the nations of the world were gathered together, *to root one word out of the law*, they could not do it; which you may learn from *Solomon*, who ſought to root *one letter out of the law*, the letter *jod*, in *Deut.* xvii. 16, 17. but the holy bleſſed God ſaid, *Solomon* ſhall ceaſe, and an hundred ſuch as he (in the *Talmud*[e] it is a thouſand ſuch as he) ויוד ממך אינה בטילה לעולם, *but jod ſhan't ceaſe from thee (the law) for ever*." And elſewhere the ſame expreſſion is uſed[f], and 'tis added, "וקוצה ממך איני מבטל, *but a tittle from thee ſhall not periſh*." The deſign of Chriſt, in conformity to the language of the *Jews*, is to declare, that no part of the law, not one of the leaſt commandments in it, as he explains himſelf in the next verſe, ſhould be unaccompliſhed; but all ſhould be fulfilled before *heaven and earth paſs* away, as they will, with a great noiſe and fervent heat, as to their preſent form and condition; or ſooner ſhall they paſs away, than the leaſt part of the law ſhall: which expreſſes the perpetuity of the law, and the impoſſibility of its paſſing away, and the ſuperior excellency of it to the heavens and the earth. It is a ſaying of one of the *Jewiſh* doctors[g], that "the whole world is not equal even to one word out of the law," in which 'tis ſaid, there is not one letter deficient or ſuperfluous.

Ver. 19. *Whoſoever therefore ſhall break one of theſe leaſt commandments*, &c.] Which are to be underſtood not of the beatitudes in the preceding verſes, for theſe were not delivered by Chriſt under the form of commandments; nor of any of the peculiar commands of Chriſt under the Goſpel-diſpenſation; but of the precepts of the law, of which ſome were comparatively leſſer than others; and might be ſaid to be broke, looſed, or diſſolved, as the word here uſed ſignifies, when men acted contrary to them. *And ſhall teach men ſo*; not only teach them by their example, to break the commandments, but by expreſs orders: for however groſs and abſurd this may ſeem to be, that there ſhould be any ſuch teachers, and they ſhould have any hearers, yet ſuch there were among the *Jews*; and our Lord here manifeſtly ſtrikes at them: for notwithſtanding the great and excellent things they ſay of the law, yet they tell us, that the doctors of the *ſanhedrim* had power to root any thing out of the law; to looſe or make void any of its commands, for a time, excepting in the caſe of idolatry; and ſo might any true prophet, or wiſe man; which they pretend is ſometimes neceſſary for the glory of God, and the good of men; and they are to be heard and obeyed, when they ſay, tranſgreſs any one of all the commands which are in the law [h]. *Maimonides* ſays [i], that the *ſanhedrim* had power, when it was convenient, for the time preſent, to make void an affirmative command, and to tranſgreſs a negative one, in order to return many to their religion; or to deliver many of the *Iſraelites* from ſtumbling at other things, they may do whatſoever the preſent time makes neceſſary: for ſo, adds he, the former wiſe men ſay, a man may profane one ſabbath, in order to keep many ſabbaths. And elſewhere [k] he affirms, "if a prophet, whom we know to be a prophet, ſhould order us לעבור על אחת מכל מצות, *to tranſgreſs any one of the commands*, which are mentioned in the law, or many commands, whether light or heavy, for a time, we are ordered to hearken to him; and ſo we learn from the former wiſe men, by tradition, that in every thing a prophet ſhall ſay to thee עבור על דברי תורה, *tranſgreſs the words of the law*, as *Elias* on mount *Carmel*, hear him, except in the caſe of idolatry." And another of their writers ſays [l], "it is lawful ſometimes to make void the law, and to do that which appears to be forbidden." Nay, they even [m] ſay, that if a Gentile ſhould bid an *Iſraelite* tranſgreſs any one of the commands mentioned in the law, excepting idolatry, adultery, and murder, he may tranſgreſs with impunity, provided it is done privately. You ſee what reaſon Chriſt had to expreſs himſelf in the manner he does, and that with reſentment, ſaying, *he ſhall be called*, or be *the leaſt in the kingdom of heaven*; meaning either the church of God, where he ſhall have neither a name, nor place; he ſhall not be in the leaſt eſteemed, but ſhall be caſt out as a worthleſs man; or the ultimate ſtate of happineſs and glory, in the other world, where he ſhall not enter, as is ſaid in the next *verſe*: *but*, on the other hand, *whoſoever ſhall do and teach*; whoſe doctrine and converſation, principles and practices agree together; who both teach obedience to the law, and perform it themſelves: where again he glances at the maſters in *Iſrael*, and tacitly reproves them who ſaid, but did not; taught the people what they themſelves did not practiſe; and ſo were unworthy of the honour, which he that both teaches and does, ſhall have: for *the ſame ſhall be called great in the kingdom of heaven*; he ſhall be highly eſteemed of in the church here, and be honoured hereafter in the world to come. The Jews have a ſaying ſomewhat like this; "he that leſſens himſelf for the words of the law in this world, נעשה גדול, *he ſhall become great* in the world to come [n]," or days of the Meſſiah.

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[t] R. Iſaac Chizuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 10. p. 401.

[u] T. Bab. Sabbat. fol. 116. 2.

[w] T. Hieroſ. Kiddushin, fol. 60. 4. Miſn. Bava Kama, c. 9. §. 7, 8. T. Bab. Shebuot, fol. 36. 1. Debarim Rabba, fol. 242. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Shebuot, c. 2. §. 1.

[x] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 21. 2. & Gloſſ. in ib.

[y] Ib. fol. 22. 2.

[z] Fol. 93. 2.

[a] T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 29. 2.

[b] In Semitis fidei, fol. 104. 4. & 105. 1. apud Capell. in loc.

[c] T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 29. 2.

[d] Vajikra Rabba, fol. 160. 3. Shirhaſhirim Rabba, fol. 20. 2.

[e] T. Hieroſ. Sanhedrim, fol. 20. 3.

[f] Shemot Rabba, fol. 96. 1.

[g] T. Hieroſ. Peah, fol. 15. 4.

Ver. 20. *For I ſay unto you*, &c.] Theſe words are directed, not to the true diſciples of Chriſt in general, or to his apoſtles in particular, but to the whole multitude of the people; who had in great eſteem and admiration the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, for their ſeeming righteouſneſs and holineſs; concerning which Chriſt ſays, *that except your righteouſneſs exceed the righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees, ye ſhall in no wiſe enter into the kingdom of heaven.* He mentions the *Scribes*, becauſe they were the more learned part of the people, who were employed in writing out, and expounding the law; and the *Phariſees*, becauſe they were the ſtricteſt ſect among the *Jews* for outward religion and righteouſneſs: and yet, it ſeems, their righteouſneſs was very defective; it lay only in an external obſervance of the law; did not ariſe from a purified heart, or the principles of grace; nor was it performed ſincerely, and with a view to the glory of God; but for their own applauſe, and in order to obtain eternal life: beſides, they neglected the weightier matters of the law, and contented themſelves with the leſſer ones; and as they were deficient in their practice, ſo they were very lax in their doctrines, as appears from the foregoing *verſe*. Wherefore Chriſt informs his hearers, that they muſt have a better righteouſneſs than theſe men had, if ever they expected to enter into the kingdom of heaven. There will be no admiſſion into heaven without a righteouſneſs: 'twas the loſs of righteouſneſs which removed *Adam* out of his earthly paradiſe; and 'tis not agreeable to the juſtice of God, to admit man into his heavenly paradiſe without one; yea, it is contrary to his nature, and would be deſtructive to the comfort of ſaints, to receive an unrighteous perſon into his kingdom and glory. A *phariſaical* righteouſneſs will never bring a perſon thither; nor will any righteouſneſs of man's, be it what it will, becauſe the beſt is imperfect; it muſt be a righteouſneſs exceeding that of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*; and ſuch is the righteouſneſs of the ſaints: indeed, their inherent righteouſneſs, or the ſanctification of the Spirit, is preferable to any righteouſneſs of a natural man; it exceeds it in its author, nature, effects, and uſefulneſs; yea, even works of righteouſneſs done by believers, are greatly preferable to any done by ſuch men as are here mentioned: but, above all, the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, which is imputed to them, and received by faith, is infinitely more excellent in its author, perfection, purity, and uſe; and which is their only right and title to eternal glory; and without which no man will be admitted into that glorious ſtate.

Ver. 21. *Ye have heard*, &c.] That is, from the ſcriptures being read to them, and the explanations of the ancients, which were called שמעתא, *hearing*, being read in the ſchools, and heard by the ſcholars [o]; ſo that to *hear*, was along with the recital of the text, to receive by tradition, the ſenſe the elders had given of it: of this kind is the inſtance produced by Chriſt. Thus *Onkelos*, and *Jonathan ben Uzziel*, render the phraſe, *him ſhall ye hear*, in *Deut.* xviii. 15. by מניה תקבלין, *from him ſhall ye receive*; ſo thoſe phraſes [p] למדו מפי השמועה, *they learn from hearing*, or by report from others; and אמרו מפי השמועה, *they ſpeak from hearing*, or from what they have heard, are often uſed for receiving and reporting things as they have them by tradition. That *it was ſaid*, or *it hath been ſaid*; this is alſo a *Talmudic* form of expreſſion; often is this phraſe to be met with in the *Talmud* איתמר, *it has been ſaid* [q]; that is, by the ancient doctors, as here, *by them of old time*, or *to the ancients*, לקדמונים, ſo in *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel; not to the *Iſraelites* in the time of *Moſes*, but to the anceſtors of the *Jews*, ſince the times of *Ezra*; by the elders, who were cotemporary with them; and who by their falſe Gloſſes corrupted the law, when they recited any part of it to the people; or *by the ancients*, the ancient doctors and commentators, which preceded the times of Chriſt, whom the *Jews* often call קדמונינו, *our ancients* [r]. Now, upon that law, *thou ſhalt not kill*, they put this Gloſs, or added this by way of interpretation, *and whoſoever ſhall kill, ſhall be in danger of the judgment*; which they underſtood only of actual murder, either committed in their own perſons, or by the means of others. Their rules for the judgment of ſuch perſons were theſe; "every "one that kills his neighbour with his hand; as if "he ſtrikes him with a ſword, or with a ſtone that "kills him; or ſtrangles him till he die; or burns "him in fire; ſeeing he kills him in any manner, "in his own perſon, lo! ſuch an one muſt be put "to death בבית דין, *by the houſe of judgment*, or "the *ſanhedrim* [s]." Not that which conſiſted of three perſons only, but either that which conſiſted of twenty-three, or the ſupreme one, which was made up of ſeventy-one; which two laſt had only power of judging capital offences. Again, "if a "man hires a murderer to kill his neighbour, or "ſends his ſervants, and they kill him, or binds "him, and leaves him before a lion, or the like, "and the beaſt kills him, every one of theſe is a "ſhedder of blood; and the ſin of ſlaughter is in "his hand; and he is guilty of death by the hand "of heaven, *i. e.* God; but he is not to be put "to death by the houſe of judgment, or the *ſanhedrim* [t]." A little after, 'tis ſaid, *their judgment* is delivered to heaven, *i. e.* to God; and this ſeems to be the ſenſe of the word *judgment* here, namely, the judgment of God, or death by the hand of God; ſince it is manifeſtly diſtinguiſhed from the council, or *ſanhedrim*, in the next *verſe*. The phraſe, *in danger of judgment*, is the ſame with [u] חייב דין, *guilty of judgment*, or deſerves condemnation.

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[h] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 79. 1. & 89. 2. & 90. 2.

[i] Hilch. Memarim, c. 2. §. 4.

[k] Hilch. Yeſode Hattorah, c. 9. §. 3.

[l] Bartenora in Miſn. Beracot, c. 9. §. 5.

[m] T. Hieroſ. Sheviith, fol. 35. 1.

[n] T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 85. 2.

[o] Vid. Buxtorf. Lex. Rabbin. col. 2453.

[p] Maimon. Hilch. Iſſure Mizbeach, c. 1. §. 2, 4, 5, 7, 10. & paſſim. & T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 88. 1.

[q] Vid. Edzardi Not. in Avoda Zara, c. 2. p. 284.

Ver. 22. *But I ſay unto you*, &c.] This is a *Rabbinical* way of ſpeaking, uſed when a queſtion is determined, and a falſe notion is refuted; it is a magiſterial form of expreſſion, and well ſuits with Chriſt, the great teacher and maſter in *Iſrael*; who ſpake as one having authority, oppoſing himſelf, not to the law of *Moſes*, *thou ſhalt not kill*; but to the falſe Gloſs the ancient doctors had put upon it, with which their later ones agreed. You ſay, that if one man kills another himſelf, he is to be put to death by the *ſanhedrim*; and if he does it by proxy, he is to be left to the judgment of God, ſo wholly reſtraining the law to actual murder; but I affirm, that *whoſoever is angry with his brother without a cauſe, ſhall be in danger of judgment*. By *brother* is meant, not in a religious ſenſe, one that is of the ſame faith, or in the ſame church-ſtate; nor, in a ſtrict natural ſenſe, one that is ſo in the bonds of conſanguinity; but in a large ſenſe, any man, of whatſoever country or nation: for we are to be angry with no man; that is, as is rightly added, *without a cauſe:* for otherwiſe there is an anger which is not ſinful, is in God, in Chriſt, in the holy Angels; and is commendable in the people of God, when it ariſes from a true zeal for religion, the glory of God, and the intereſt of Chriſt; and is kindled againſt ſin, their own, or others, all manner of vice, falſe doctrine, and falſe worſhip: but it is cauſeleſs anger which is here condemned by Chriſt, as a breach of the law, *thou ſhalt not kill*; and ſuch perſons are *in danger of judgment*; not of any of the courts of judicature among the *Jews*, as the *ſanhedrim* of three, or of twenty-three, or of ſeventy-one, which took no notice of anger, as a paſſion in the mind, only of facts committed; but of the judgment of God, as in the preceding *verſe*, it being diſtinguiſhed from the *ſanhedrim*, or council, in the next clauſe. *And whoſoever ſhall ſay to his brother Raca, ſhall be in danger of the council*, or *ſanhedrim*. The word *Raca* is expreſſive of indignation and contempt; it was uſed as a term of reproach. Some derive it from רקק, to *ſpit upon*; as if the perſon that uſed it, thought the man he ſpoke to, deſerved to be ſpit upon, and treated in the moſt contemptuous manner: but rather the word ſignifies *empty* and *vain*, and denotes a worthleſs, empty-headed man; a man of no brains; a fooliſh, witleſs fellow: ſo it is often uſed in *Jewiſh* writings. Take a few inſtances, as follow; "a certain perſon ſaid "to *R. Jochanan* [w], *Rabbi*, expound, for it be-"comes thee to expound; for as thou haſt ſaid, "ſo have I ſeen: he replied to him ריקא, *Reka*, "if thou hadſt not ſeen, thou wouldſt not have "believed." Again [x], it happened to *R. Simeon ben Eliezer* of *Migdal Edar*, who went from the houſe of *Rabbi*; and he met with a certain man very much deformed; he ſays unto him, "ריקה, *Reka*, "how many are the deformed ſons of *Abraham* "our father?" Many more inſtances might be given [y]. Now I don't find that the uſe of this reproachful word was cognizable by the *Jewiſh ſanhedrim*, or great council; nor is it our Lord's meaning that it was, only that it ought to have been taken notice of in a proper manner, as well as actual murder. He adds, *but whoſoever ſhall ſay thou fool, ſhall be in danger of hell-fire*. The word *fool* does not ſignify a man of weak parts, one that is very ignorant in things natural; this the word *Raca* imports; but a wicked, reprobate man; in which ſenſe *Solomon* often uſes the word. The *Perſic* verſion renders it here *wicked*. There is a manifeſt gradation in the text from cauſeleſs anger in the breaſt, to reproachful words; and from thence to a cenſorious judging of a man's ſpiritual and eternal eſtate, which is what is here condemned. *Thou fool*, is, thou wicked man, thou ungodly wretch, thou graceleſs creature, whoſe portion will be eternal damnation. Calling a man by ſuch names was not allowed of by the *Jews* themſelves, whoſe rules are; "he that calls his neighbour a ſervant, "let him be excommunicated; a baſtard, let him "be beaten with forty ſtripes; רשע, *a wicked* "*man*, let him deſcend with him into his life or "livelihood [z]." The Gloſs upon it is, "as if "he ſhould ſay, to this the *ſanhedrim* is not oblig-"ed, but it is lawful to hate him, yea to leſſen his "ſuſtenance, and exerciſe his trade," which was done to bring him to poverty and diſtreſs. So, it ſeems, the *ſanhedrim* were not obliged to take notice of him. Again, they ſay, "it is forbidden a "man to call his neighbour by a name of re-"proach [a]; every one that calls his neighbour רשע, "*a wicked man*, ſhall be brought down to hell;" which is pretty much what Chriſt here ſays, *ſhall be in danger of hell fire*; or deſerving of hell fire;

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[r] Vid. R. Aben Ezra in Exod. xxi. 17. & in Iſ. lii. 13. & lxvi. 24.
[s] Maimon. Hilch. Rotſeach, c. 2. §. 1.
[t] Ib. §. 2.
[u] In Targ. in 2 Chron. xix 10.
[w] T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 100. 1. T. Bava Bathra, fol. 75. 1.
[x] Maſſechet Derech Eretz, c. 4. fol. 18. 1.
[y] Vid. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 32. 2. Zohar in Exod. fol. 50. 2.
[z] T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 28. 1. Bava Metzia, fol. 71. 1.
[a] Zohar in Exod. fol. 50. 3.

or liable to, and in danger of puniſhment, even *unto hell fire*. An expreſſion much like this may be obſerved in *Jarchi*, on *Iſ.* xxiv. 23. where he ſpeaks of ſome perſons מחוייבי גהנם לגהנם, *who are guilty*, deſerving, or in danger of *hell unto hell*. The word γεεννα, here uſed, and which is often uſed in the New Teſtament for *hell*, is but the *Hebrew* גיא הנם, *Ge-Hinnom*, the valley of *Hinnom*, where the children were cauſed to paſs through the fire to *Moloch*. This place, the *Jewiſh* writers [b] ſay, “ was “ a place well known, near to *Jeruſalem*, a valley, “ whoſe fire was never quenched; and in which “ they burned the bones of any thing that was un-“ clean, and dead carcaſſes, and other pollutions.” Hence the word came to be uſed among them, as might be ſhewn in innumerable inſtances, to expreſs the place and ſtate of the damned; and very fitly deſcribes it.

Ver. 23. *Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar*, &c.] The *Jews* obliged ſuch who had done any damage to their neighbours, by ſtealing from them, to make ſatisfaction before they brought their offering; concerning which they ſay [c], “ he that “ brings what he has ſtolen, before he brings his “ treſpaſs-offering, is right; he that brings his treſ-“ paſs-offering, before he brings that which he has “ ſtolen, is not right.” Again [d], “ they don't “ bring the treſpaſs-offering before the ſum of what “ is ſtolen is returned, either to the owners, or to “ the prieſts.” Some have thought Chriſt refers to this; only what they reſtrained to pecuniary damages, he extends to all ſorts of offences. But not a treſpaſs-offering, but a free-will-offering, ſeems to be deſigned by *the gift*; which, when a man either intended to bring, or was going to bring, or had already brought, as a voluntary ſacrifice to be offered unto God; and it came into his mind, that he had offended any man by ſhewing any undue paſſion, or by any reproachful words, then he was to do what is adviſed in the following *verſe*: *and there*, whilſt going, or when at the altar, *remembreſt that thy brother hath ought againſt thee*; hath any thing to charge thee with; any juſt ground of complaint againſt thee; if thou haſt done him any injury, or given him any offence: particularly, if he had at any time ſaid *Raca* to him, or called him *fool*; for thoſe words have reference to what goes before, and are a corollary, or concluſion from them, as appears from the cauſal particle *therefore*.

Ver. 24. *Leave there thy gift before the altar*, &c.] This might eaſily be done, and the buſineſs ſoon diſpatched, at ſome ſeaſons; particularly, at their publick feaſts, as the paſſover, pentecoſt, and feaſt of tabernacles, when all the *Iſraelites* were together: *and go thy way*; make what haſte thou canſt, *firſt be reconciled to thy brother*; uſe all means to reconcile him; acknowledge the offence; aſk his pardon; aſſure him that thou wiſheſt well to him, and not ill; *and then come and offer thy gift*, by putting it on the altar, before which it was left. This ſhews, that acts of love and friendſhip are preferable to ſacrifices; and that ſacrifices offered up in wrath, and whilſt unreconciled to others, are unacceptable to God, and of no avail: and ſo much the *Jews* themſelves ſeem to acknowledge, when they ſay [e]; “ that “ tranſgreſſions, which are between a man and “ God, the day of atonement expiates; the tranſ-“ greſſions which are between a man and his neigh-“ bour, the day of atonement does not expiate, “ עד שירצה את חבירו, *until he hath reconciled his* “ *neighbour*.” Which is enlarged upon, and explained by *Maimonides* [f], after this manner; “ the “ day of atonement does not expiate any tranſgreſ-“ ſions, but thoſe that are between a man and God, “ as when one eats any thing that is forbidden, and “ lies with any thing that is forbidden, or the like; “ but tranſgreſſions which are between a man and “ his neighbour, as he that hurts his neighbour, or “ curſes his neighbour, or ſteals from him, and the “ like, are never forgiven, until he has given his “ neighbour what he owed him, and has *reconciled* “ him; yea, though he has returned to him the “ money he owed him, he ought to *reconcile* him, “ and deſire him to forgive him; yea, even tho' “ *he has only provoked him by words*, (which is the “ very caſe in the text before us) צריך לפייסו, *he* “ *ought to reconcile him*, and to meet him until he “ forgives him: if his neighbour will not forgive, “ he muſt bring with him three of his friends, and “ meet him, and entreat him; and if he will not “ be reconciled by them, he muſt bring them a ſe-“ cond, and a third time.” So that he was to uſe all means to obtain a reconciliation.

Ver. 25. *Agree with thine adverſary quickly*, &c.] Theſe words are not to be underſtood in an allegorical ſenſe, as if *the adverſary* was the juſtice of God, demanding payment of debts; *the way*, this preſent life; *the judge*, God himſelf; *the officer*, the devil; *the priſon*, the pit of hell; and *the uttermoſt farthing*, the leaſt ſin, which will never be remitted without ſatisfaction: but the deſign of them is to prevent law-ſuits about debts, which may be in diſpute; it being much better for debtor and creditor, eſpecially the former, to compoſe ſuch differences among themſelves, than to litigate the matter in a court of judicature. By *the adverſary* is meant not an enemy, one that bears hatred and ill-will, but a brother that has ought againſt a man; a creditor, who demands and inſiſts upon payment of what is owing to him; and for this purpoſe has took methods towards bringing the debtor before a proper magiſtrate, in order to oblige him to payment: wherefore it's better for him to make up and agree the matter directly, as ſoon as poſſible, *whilſt thou art in the way with him*; that is, whilſt the creditor and debtor are going together to ſome inferior magiſtrate, or leſſer court, as the *ſanhedrim*, which conſiſted of three perſons only, before whom ſuch cauſes might be tried: for דיני ממונות בשלושה, *pecuniary cauſes*, or cauſes relating to money-matters, were tried *by the bench of three* [g]: and the ſelf-ſame advice is given in the *Talmud* [h], as here, where it ſeems to be a common proverb; for it is ſaid, “ there are men that ſay, or men uſually ſay, “ אגב אורחך לבעל דבבך אישתמע, *whilſt thou* “ *art in the way with thine adverſary, be obedient*.” *Leſt at any time the adverſary ſhould deliver thee to the judge*, a ſuperior magiſtrate in a higher court; for if the creditor would, he could oblige the debtor to go with him to the ſupreme court of judicature, and try the cauſe there; for ſo ſay the *Jewiſh* [i] canons; “ if the creditor ſays we will go to the great “ *ſanhedrim*, they compel the debtor, and he goes “ up with them, as it is ſaid, *the borrower is ſervant* “ *to the lender*,” where it might go harder with the poor debtor; and therefore it was adviſeable to prevent it by an agreement, leſt *the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be caſt into priſon*. “ It was “ an affirmative command in the law, ſays *Mai-“ monides*, to appoint *judges* and *officers* in every

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[b] Sepher Coſri, fol. 57. 2. Vid. Kimchi in Pſ. xxvii. 13.

[c] Miſn. Bava Kama, c. 9. §. 12.

[d] Maimon. Hilch. Gezela, c. 8. §. 13.

[e] Miſn. Yoma, c. 8. §. 9.

[f] Hilchot Teſhuba, c. 2, §. 9. Vid. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 87. 1.

[g] Miſn. Sanhedrim, c. 1. §. 1.

[h] T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 95. 2.

[i] Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrim, c. 6. §. 7.

“ country and province, as it is ſaid, *Deut.* xvi. “ 18. שופטים *judges*; they are the judges that are “ fixed in the *Sanhedrim*, and ſuch that engage in “ law-ſuits come before them: שוטרים *officers*; “ theſe are the maſters of the rod and ſcourge, *i. e.* “ who beat and ſcourge delinquents; and theſe ſtand “ before the judges——and all they do, is by the “ order of the judges.” Now it is one of theſe, that is meant by *the officer*: in *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* goſpel, he is called שוטר; who, when he had authority from the judge, could caſt into priſon, and that for debt; of which we have no account in the law of *Moſes*.

Ver. 26. *Verily, I ſay unto thee*, &c] This may be depended upon, you may aſſure yourſelf of it, that *thou ſhalt by no means come out thence*, from priſon, *'till thou haſt paid the uttermoſt farthing*, or *laſt farthing*; or as the *Ethiopic* verſion reads it, *till thou haſt exactly paid all*; which ſeems to expreſs the inexorableneſs of the creditor, and the impoſſibility of the debtor's releaſe.

Ver. 27. *Ye have heard that it was ſaid*, &c.] Theſe forms of ſpeech, as well as what follows, *by them of old time*, have been explained, in ver. 21. The law here mentioned, *thou ſhalt not commit adultery*, is recorded in *Exod.* xx. 14. and the meaning of our Lord is, not that the then preſent *Jews*, had heard that ſuch a law had been delivered *to the ancients*, their fathers, at mount *Sinai*; for that they could read in their bibles: but they had received it by tradition, that the ſenſe of it, which had been given to their anceſtors, by the ancient doctors of the church, was, that this law is to be taken ſtrictly, as it lies, and only regards the ſin of uncleanneſs in married perſons; or, what was ſtrictly adultery, and that actual; ſo that it had no reſpect to fornication, or unchaſt thoughts, words, or actions, but that ſingle act only.

Ver. 28. *But I ſay unto you, that whoſoever looketh on a woman*, &c.] Many and ſevere are the prohibitions of the *Jews*, concerning looking upon a woman, which they aggravate as a very great ſin: they ſay [k], it is not lawful to look upon a beautiful woman, though unmarried; nor upon another man's wife, though deformed; nor upon a woman's coloured garments: they forbid [l] looking on a woman's little finger, and ſay [m], that he that tells money to a woman, out of his hand into her's, that he may look upon her, though he is poſſeſſed of the law and good works, even as *Moſes*, he ſhan't eſcape the damnation of hell: they affirm [n], that he that looks upon a woman's heel, his children ſhall not be virtuous; and that a man may not go after a woman in the way, no, not after his wife: ſhould he meet her on a bridge, he muſt take her to the ſide of him; and whoever goes through a river after a woman, ſhall have no part in the world to [o] come: nay, they forbid [p] a man looking on the beauty of his own wife. Now theſe things were ſaid by them, chiefly to cover themſelves, and becauſe they would be thought to be very chaſt; when they were, as Chriſt calls them, an *adulterous generation* in a literal ſenſe: they uſually did what our Lord obſerves, *ſtrain at a gnat, and ſwallow a camel.* We read in the *Talmud* [q], of חסיד שוטה a *fooliſh ſaint*; and it is aſked, who is he? and it is anſwered, one that ſees a woman drowning in a river, and ſays, it is not lawful for me לאיסתכולי בה *to look* upon her, and deliver her. It was not any looking upon a woman, that is forbid by Chriſt as criminal; but ſo to look, as *to luſt after her*; for ſuch an one *hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.* But theſe men, who forbad external looking upon a woman, generally ſpeaking, had no notion of heart-ſins; and which was the prevailing opinion of the *Phariſees*, in Chriſt's time. “ A good thought they [r] allow, is “ reckoned as if done; as it is ſaid, *Mal.* iii. 16. “ Upon which it is aſked, what is the meaning of “ that, and *that thought upon his name?* Says *R.* “ *Aſe*, if a man thinks to do a good work, and is “ hindered, and does it not, the Scripture reckons “ it to him, as if he did it; but an evil thought, “ the holy bleſſed God does not account of it as if “ done, as is ſaid, *Pſal.* lxvi. 18.” Upon which words, a noted commentator [s] of theirs, has this remark. “ Though I regard iniquity in my heart “ to do it, even in thought, yea, againſt God himſelf, “ as if I had expreſſed it with my lips, he “ does not hear it; that is, לא חשב לי עון *he does* “ *not reckon it to me for ſin*; becauſe the holy bleſſed “ God does not account an evil thought for an “ action, to them that are in the faith of God, or “ of the true religion.” For it ſeems, this is only true of the *Iſraelites*; 'tis juſt the reverſe with the *Gentiles*, in whom God does not reckon of a good thought, as if it was done, but does of an evil one, as if it was in act [t]. It muſt be owned, that this is not the ſenſe of them all; for ſome of them have gone ſo far, as to ſay [u], that “ the thoughts of ſin are “ greater, or harder, than ſin itſelf:” by which they mean, that it is more difficult to ſubdue ſinful luſts, than to refrain from the act of ſin itſelf; and particularly, ſome of them ſay things which agree with, and come very near to what our Lord here ſays; as when they affirm [w], that “ every one that looks upon “ a woman בכוונה *with intention*, it is all one, as if “ he lay with her.” And that נואף בעיניו נקרא נואף *he that committeth adultery with his eyes, is called an adulterer* [x]. Yea, they alſo obſerve [y], that a woman may commit adultery in her heart, as well as a man; but the *Phariſees* of Chriſt's time, were of another mind.

Ver. 29. *And if thy right eye offend thee*, &c.] Or *cauſe thee to offend*, to ſtumble, and fall into ſin. Our Lord has no regard here, to near and dear relations, ſeeking to alienate us from God and Chriſt, and hinder us in the purſuit of divine things; whoſe ſollicitations are to be rejected with the utmoſt indignation, and they themſelves to be parted with, and forſaken, rather than complied with; which is the ſenſe ſome give of the words: for both in this, and the following verſe, reſpect is had only to the law of adultery; and to ſuch members of the body, which often are the means, of leading perſons on to the breach of it; particularly the eye and hand. The eye, is often the inſtrument of enſnaring the heart this way: hence the *Jews* have a [z] ſaying, “ whoever looks upon women, at the end comes “ into the hands of tranſgreſſion.” Mention is only made of the right eye; not but that the left may be an occaſion of ſinning, as well as the right; but that being moſt dear and valuable, is inſtanced in, and ordered to be parted with: *pluck it out, and caſt it from thee*; which is not to be underſtood literally;

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[k] T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 1, 2.

[l] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 24. 1. Sabbat. fol. 64. 2.

[m] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 61. 1. Eruvin, fol. 18. 2.

[n] T. Bab. Nedarim, fol. 20. 1. T. Hieroſ. Challa, fol. 58. 3. Derech Eretz. c. 1. fol. 17. 3.

[o] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 61. 1. Eruvin, fol. 18. 2.

[p] Zohar in Lev. fol. 34. 4.

[q] T. Bab. Sota, fol. 21. 2.

[r] T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 40. 1.

[s] R. David Kimchi, in. Pſ. lxvi. 18.

[t] T. Hieroſ. Peah, fol. 16. 2.

[u] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 29. 1.

[w] T. Hieroſ. Challa, fol. 58. 3. Maſſechet Calah, fol. 16. 4. Vid. Maimon. Iſſure Bia, c. 21. §. 2. & Moſes Kotſenſis Mitzvot Tora precept. neg. 126.

[x] Vajikra Rabba, §. 23. fol. 165. 1.

[y] Bemidbar Rabba, §. 9. fol. 196. 1.

[z] T. Bab. Nedarim, fol. 20. 1.

rally; for no man is obliged to mutilate any part of his body, to prevent ſin, or on account of the commiſſion of it; this is no where required, and if done, would be ſinful, as in the caſe of *Origen:* but figuratively; and the ſenſe is, that perſons ſhould make a covenant with their eyes, as *Job* did; and turn them away, from beholding ſuch objects, which may tend to excite impure thoughts and deſires; deny themſelves the gratification of the ſenſe of ſeeing, or feeding the eyes with ſuch ſights, as are grateful to the fleſh; and with indignation and contempt, reject, and avoid all opportunities and occaſions of ſinning; which the eye may be the inſtrument of, and lead unto: *for it is profitable for thee, that one of thy members ſhould periſh, and not that thy whole body ſhould be caſt into hell.* This is ſtill a continuation of the figure here uſed; and the meaning is, that it will turn to better account, to loſe all the carnal pleaſures of the eye, or all thoſe pleaſing ſights, which are grateful to a carnal heart, than, by enjoying them, to expoſe the whole man, body and ſoul, to everlaſting deſtruction, in the fire of hell.

Ver. 30. *And if thy right hand offend thee,* &c.] Or *cauſe thee to offend*; that is, is the means of enſnaring thine heart; and of drawing thee into either mental, or actual adultery; for, as before, all unchaſte looks, ſo here, all unchaſte touches, embraces, *&c.* are condemned. As adultery may be committed in the heart, and by the eye, ſo with the hand: “ ſays *R. Eliezer*[a], what's the meaning of “ that Scripture, *your hands are full of blood, Iſa.* i. “ 15.? 'Tis replied, אלו המנאפים ביד *theſe are* “ *they, that commit adultery with the hand.* 'Tis a tra“ dition of the houſe of *R. Iſhmael*, that the ſenſe “ of that command, *thou ſhalt not commit adultery*, “ is, there ſhall be none that commits adultery in “ thee, whether *with the hand*, or *with the foot.*” Like orders are given as before, *cut it off, and caſt it from thee*; as a man would chuſe to do, or have it done for him, when ſuch a part of the body is mortified, and endangers all the reſt. The *Jews* enjoined cutting off of the hand, on ſeveral accounts; if in a morning, before a man had waſhed his hands, he put his hand to his eye, noſe, mouth, ear, *&c.* תיקצץ it was to be *cut off*[b]; particularly, the handling of the *membrum virile*, was puniſhable with cutting off of the hand. “ Says *R.*[c] *Tarphon*, “ if the hand is moved to the privy parts, תקצץ ידו “ *let his hand be cut off to his navel.*” That is, that it may reach no farther; for below that part of the body, the hand might not be put[d]; leaſt unclean thoughts, and deſires, ſhould be excited. In the above[e] place it is added, “ what if a thorn ſhould “ be in his belly, muſt he not take it away? 'Tis “ replied, no: 'tis further aſked, muſt not his belly “ be ript up then? 'Tis anſwered, it is better that “ his belly be ript up, ואל ירד לבאר שחת *than* “ *that he ſhould go down to the pit of corruption.*” A way of ſpeaking, much like what our Lord here uſes; and to the above orders and canons, he may be very well thought to allude: but he is not to be underſtood literally, as enjoyning the cutting off of the right hand, as they did; but of men's refraining from all ſuch impure practices, either with themſelves, or women, which are of a defiling nature; and endanger the ſalvation of them, body and ſoul; the ſame reaſon is given as before.

Ver. 31. *It hath been ſaid,* &c.] 'Tis not added here, as in the former inſtances, *by them of old time*; nor prefaced with theſe words, *ye have heard*; becauſe the caſe of divorce, was not any law of *Moſes*, or of God by him; but only a permiſſion, becauſe of the hardneſs of the hearts of the *Jews:* and as to the controverſy, about the cauſes of divorce, this was not debated by them of old time, but was a new thing, juſt ſtarted in the times of Chriſt; and was a controverſy then agitating, between the ſchools of *Hillell* and *Shammai:* the one allowing it upon any frivolous cauſe; the other, only on account of adultery. *Whoſoever ſhall put away his wife*, diſſolve the marriage bond, diſmiſs her from his bed, and ſend her from his houſe, ſee *Deut.* xxiv. 1, 2. *let him give her a writing of divorcement*, ספר כריתת, *a bill of divorcement*, or *a book of cutting off.* For though a wife was obtained by ſeveral ways, there was but one way of diſmiſſing her, as the *Jews* obſerve[f], and that was, by giving her a bill. The form of a writing of divorcement, as given by *Maimonides*[g], is as follows. “ On ſuch a day of “ the week, in ſuch a month, of ſuch a year, ei“ ther from the creation, or the epocha of con“ tracts, according to the uſual way of computa“ tion, which we obſerve in ſuch a place; I ſuch “ an one, the ſon of ſuch an one, of ſuch a place; “ or if I have any other name, or ſurname, or “ my parents, or my place, or the place of my “ parents; by my own will, without any force, I “ put away, diſmiſs, and divorce thee. Thee I “ ſay, who art ſuch an one, the daughter of ſuch “ an one, of ſuch a place; or if thou haſt any other “ name, or ſurname, or thy parents, or thy place, “ or the place of thy parents; who waſt my wife “ heretofore, but now I put thee away, diſmiſs and “ divorce thee; ſo that thou art in thine own hand, “ and haſt power over thyſelf, to go, and marry any “ other man, whom thou pleaſeſt; and let no man “ hinder thee in my name, from this day forward “ and for ever; and lo! thou art free to any man: “ and let this be unto thee, from me, a bill of di“ vorce, an inſtrument of diſmiſſion, and a letter “ of forſaking, according to the law of *Moſes* and “ *Iſrael*.

“ Such an one, the ſon of ſuch an one, witneſs.
“ Such an one, the ſon of ſuch an one, witneſs.”

Would you chuſe to have one of theſe bills, filled up in proper form, take it in manner[h] following. “ On the fourth day of the week, on the eleventh “ day of the month *Ciſleu*, in the year five thou“ ſand four hundred and fifty four, from the crea“ tion of the world; according to the computation “ which we follow here, in the city of *Amſterdam*, “ which is called *Amſtelredam*; ſituated by the ſea“ ſide, called *Taya*, and by the river *Amſtel.* I “ *Abraham*, the ſon of *Benjamin*, ſurnamed *Wol*“ *phius*, the prieſt; and at this time dwelling in “ the city of *Amſterdam*, which is called *Amſtelre*“ *dam*, which is ſituated by the ſea-ſide, called “ *Taya*, and by the river *Amſtel*; or if I have any “ other name, or ſurname, or my parents, or my “ place, or the place of my parents; by my own “ free-will, without any compulſion, I put away, “ diſmiſs, and divorce thee, my wife *Rebecca*, the “ daughter of *Jonas* the *Levite*; who at this time, “ abides in the city of *Amſterdam*, called *Amſtelre*“ *dam*, ſituated by the ſea-ſide, called *Taya*, and “ by the river *Amſtel*; or if thou haſt any other “ name, or ſurname, or thy parents, or thy place, “ or the place of thy parents, who waſt heretofore “ my wife; but now I put thee away, diſmiſs, and

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[a] T. Bab. Nidda, fol. 13. 2. Vid. Maimon. Iſſure Bia, c. 21. §. 18.

[b] T. Bab. Sabbat. fol. 108. 2. Maſſechet Callah, fol. 17. 1.

[c] T. Bab. Nidda, fol. 13. 2.

[d] Maimon. Iſſure Bia, c. 21. §. 23.

[e] T. Bab. Nidda, fol. 13. 2.

[f] Baal Hatturim in Deut. xxiv. 1. Maimon. Hilchot Iſhot, c. 1. §. 2, 3.

[g] Hilchot Geruſhin, c. 4. §. 12.

[h] In Surenhuſii Miſna, vol. III. p. 324. Vid. Moſes Kotſenſis Mitzvot Tora pr. affirm. 50.

" divorce thee; ſo that thou art in thine own hands, " and haſt power over thyſelf, to go and marry any " other man, whom thou pleaſeſt: and let no man " hinder thee in my name, from this day forward, " and for ever; and lo! thou art free to any man. " Let this be to thee, from me, a bill of divorce, " an inſtrument of diſmiſſion, and a letter of for- " ſaking, according to the law of *Moſes*, and " *Iſrael*.

" *Sealtiel*, the ſon of *Paltiel*, witneſs.
" *Calonymus*, the ſon of *Gabriel*, witneſs."

This bill being written in twelve lines, neither more nor leſs, and being ſealed by the huſband, and ſigned by the witneſſes, was delivered, either by him, or by a meſſenger, or deputy of his or hers, into her hand, lap, or boſom, in the preſence of two perſons; after which, ſhe might, if ſhe would, enroll it in the publick records, and marry whom ſhe pleaſed.

Ver. 32. *But I ſay unto you, that whoſoever ſhall put away his wife*, &c.] Chriſt does not infringe, or revoke the original grant, or permiſſion of divorce; only frees it from the falſe interpretations, and ill uſe, the *Phariſees* made of it; and reſtores the ancient ſenſe of it, in which only it was to be underſtood: for a divorce was allowable in no caſe, *ſaving for the cauſe of fornication*; which muſt not be taken ſtrictly for what is called fornication, but as including adultery, inceſt, or any unlawful copulation; and is oppoſed to the ſenſe and practices of the *Phariſees*, who were on the ſide of *Hillell*: who admitted of divorce, upon the moſt fooliſh and frivolous pretences whatever; when *Shammai* and his followers inſiſted on it, that a man ought only to put away his wife for uncleanneſs; in which they agreed with Chriſt. For ſo it is written [i], " The houſe of " *Shammai* ſay, a man may not put away his wife, " unleſs he finds ſome uncleanneſs in her, according " to *Deut*. xxiv. 1. the houſe of *Hillell* ſay, if ſhe " ſhould ſpoil his food, (that is, as *Jarchi* and *Bartenora* explain it, burns it either at the fire, or " with ſalt, *i. e.* over roaſts or over ſalts it) who ap- " peal alſo to *Deut*. xxiv. 1. *R. Akiba* ſays, if he " finds another more beautiful than her, as it is ſaid, " *Deut*. xxiv. 1. *and it come to paſs that ſhe find no* " *favour in his eyes*." The *commentators* [k] on this paſſage ſay, that the determination of the matter is, according to the ſchool of *Hillell*; ſo that according to them, a woman might be put away for a very trivial thing: ſome difference is made by ſome of the *Jewiſh* doctors, between a firſt and ſecond wife; the firſt wife they ſay [l], might not be put away, but for adultery; but the ſecond, might be put away, if her huſband hated her; or ſhe was of ill behaviour, and impudent, and not modeſt, as the daughters of *Iſrael*. Now our Lord ſays, without any exception, that a man ought not to put away his wife, whether firſt or ſecond, for any other other reaſon, than uncleanneſs; and that whoever does, upon any other account, *cauſeth her to commit adultery*; that is, as much as in him lies: ſhould ſhe commit it, he is the cauſe of it, by expoſing her, through a rejection of her, to the ſinful embraces of others; and, indeed, ſhould ſhe marry another man, whilſt he is alive, which her divorce allows her to do, ſhe muſt be guilty of adultery; ſince ſhe is his proper wife, the bond of marriage not being diſſolved by ſuch a divorce: and *whoſoever ſhall marry her that is divorced, committeth adultery*; becauſe the divorced woman he marries, and takes to his bed, is legally the wife of another man; and it may be added, from *Matt*. xix. 9. that her huſband, who has put her away, upon any other account than fornication, ſhould he marry another woman, would be guilty of the ſame crime.

Ver. 33. *Again, ye have heard that it hath been ſaid*, &c.] Beſides what has been obſerved, in ver. 21. 27. you know it has alſo been ſaid, *by*, or *to them of old time*, what is written in *Lev*. xix. 12. *And ye ſhall not ſwear by my name falſely*; which ſeems to be referred to, when it is ſaid, *thou ſhall not forſwear thyſelf*; and is the law forbidding perjury, or falſe ſwearing; and was what the *Jews* were chiefly, if not only concerned about; little regarding the vanity, only the truth of an oath: for they took ſwearing vainly, to be the ſame as ſwearing falſely; wherefore ſo long as what they ſwore was truth, they were not careful whether it was of any importance or no: moreover, theſe men ſinned, in that they ſwore by the creatures, which they thought they might do, and not ſin; and when they had ſo done, were not under obligation to perform; becauſe they made no uſe of the name of God, to whom only vows and oaths were to be performed, *but ſhalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths*, *Numb*. xxx. 2. which they underſtood of vows only made to the Lord, and not to others; and of oaths, when in his name, and not by others; which they did do, and yet thought themſelves not obliged by them.

Ver. 34. *But I ſay unto you, ſwear not at all*, &c.] Which muſt not be underſtood in the ſtricteſt ſenſe, as though it was not lawful to take an oath upon any occaſion, in an affair of moment, in a ſolemn ſerious manner, and in the name of God; which may be ſafely done: but of raſh ſwearing, about trivial matters, and by the creatures; as appears by what follows, *neither by heaven*; which is directly contrary to the *Jewiſh canons* [m], which ſay, " they that ſwear " בשמים *by heaven*, and by earth, are free." Upon the words in *Cant*. ii. 7. *I adjure you*, *&c.* 'tis aſked [n], " by what does ſhe adjure them? *R. Eli-* " *ezer* ſays, *by the heavens, and by the earth*; by " the hoſts, the hoſt above, and the hoſt below." So *Philo* the *Jew* ſays [o], that the moſt high and ancient cauſe, need not to be immediately mentioned in ſwearing; but the *earth*, the ſun, the ſtars, ȣρανον, *heaven*, and the whole world. So *R. Aben Ezra*, and *R. David Kimchi*, explain *Amos* iv. 2. *The Lord God hath ſworn by his holineſs*; that is, ſay they, בשמים, by *heaven*: which may be thought to juſtify them, in this form of ſwearing; though they did not look upon it as a binding oath, and therefore if broken, they were not criminal [p]. " He " that ſwears בשמים *by heaven*, and by the earth, " and by the ſun, and the like; though his inten- " tion is nothing leſs, than to him that created " them, this is no oath." The reaſon why it is forbidden by Chriſt to ſwear by heaven, is, *for it is God's throne*; referring to *Iſa*. lxvi. 1. where he ſits, the glory of his majeſty ſhines forth, and is itſelf glorious and excellent, and not to be mentioned in a vain way; and eſpecially, for the reaſon Chriſt elſewhere gives, *Matt*. xxiii. 22. that *he that ſhall ſwear by heaven, ſweareth by the throne of God, and by him that ſitteth thereon*; ſo that they doubly ſinned, firſt, by openly ſwearing by that which is God's creature; and then, by tacitly bringing God into their raſh and vain oaths.

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[i] Miſn. Gittin c. 9. §. 10. Vid. T. Hieroſ. Gittin, fol. 49. 4. & Sota, fol. 16. 2. & Bemidbar Rabba, §. 9. fol. 195. 2.

[k] Maimon. & Bartenora in Gittin, c. 9. §. 10.

[l] T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 90. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Geruſhin, c. 10. §. 21, 22.

[m] Miſn. Shebuot, c. 4. §. 13.

[n] Shirhaſhirim Rabba, fol. 10. 4.

[o] De Special. leg. p. 770.

[p] Maimon. Hilch. Shebuot, c. 12. §. 3.

Ver. 35. *Nor by the earth, for it is his footſtool,* &c.] That the *Jews* were wont to ſwear by the earth, is clear from the above-mentioned inſtances; and is condemned by Chriſt for this reaſon, becauſe the earth is God's *footſtool*, referring, as before, to *Iſa.* lxvi. 1. on which he treads; and where he alſo manifeſts forth his glory, and is a conſiderable part of the work of his hands. *Neither by Jeruſalem*, which the *Jews* uſed to ſwear by: ſuch forms of vows as theſe, are to be met with in their writings [q]; "as the altar, as the temple, כירושלם *as Jeruſalem*;" that is, by *Jeruſalem*, I vow I'll do this, or the other thing. "*R. Judah* ſays, he that ſays *Jeruſalem* (*i. e.* as *Bartenora* obſerves [r], without the note of compariſon, *as*) ſays nothing." In the *Gemara* [s] it is, "he that ſays as *Jeruſalem*, does not ſay any thing, till he has made his vow concerning a thing, which is offered up in *Jeruſalem*." Dr. *Lightfoot* [t] has produced forms of vowing and ſwearing, which have not occurred to me. "*Jeruſalem*; לירושלם *for*, or *unto Jeruſalem*, which exactly anſwers to εις Ιεροσολυμα here; and *by Jeruſalem*." The reaſon given for prohibiting this kind of oath, is; *for it is the city of the great king*: not of *David*, but of the king of kings, the Lord of hoſts; who had his reſidence, and his worſhip, here; ſee *Pſal.* xlviii. 2.

Ver. 36. *Neither ſhalt thou ſwear by thy head*, &c.] This alſo was a common form of ſwearing among the *Jews*: take a few inſtances. "If any one is bound to his friend by an oath, and ſays to him, vow unto me בחיי ראשך *by the life of thy head*; *R. Meir* ſays [u], he may retract it; but the wiſe men ſay, he cannot." Again [w], a certain *Rabbi* ſaid to *Elijah*, "I heard *Bath Kol* (or the voice from heaven) mourning like a dove, and ſaying, woe to my children; for, becauſe of their ſins, I have deſtroyed my houſe, and have burnt my temple, and have carried them captive among the nations: and he (*Elijah*) ſaid unto him, חייך וחיי ראשך *by thy life, and by the life of thy head*, not this time only it ſays ſo, but it ſays ſo three times every day." Once more [x], ſays *R. Simeon ben Antipatras*, to *R. Joſhua*, "I have heard from the mouth of the wiſe men, that he that vows in the law, and tranſgreſſes, is to be beaten with forty ſtripes: he replies, bleſſed art thou of God, that thou haſt ſo done, חייך וחיי ראשך, *by thy life, and by the life of thy head*, he that is uſed to do ſo is to be beaten." This form of ſwearing is condemned, for this reaſon, *becauſe thou canſt not make one hair white or black*; which ſhows, that a man's head, nor indeed, one hair of his head, is in his own power, and therefore he ought not to ſwear by it; as he ought not to ſwear by heaven, or earth, or *Jeruſalem*, becauſe theſe were in the poſſeſſion of God. Some copies read, *canſt not make one white hair, black*.

Ver. 37. *But let your communication be yea, yea*, &c.] That is, let your ſpeech, in your common converſation, and daily buſineſs of life, when ye anſwer to any thing in the affirmative, be *yea*; and when ye anſwer to any thing in the negative, *nay*; and for the ſtronger aſſeveration of the matter, when it is neceſſary, double theſe words; but let no oaths be joined unto them: this is enough, a righteous man's yea, is yea, and his no, is no; his word is ſufficient. Hence it appears, that our Lord is here ſpeaking of raſh ſwearing, and ſuch as was uſed in common converſation, and is juſtly condemned by him. The *Jews* have no reaſon to reject this advice of Chriſt, who often uſe and recommend the ſame modes of expreſſion. They endeavour to raiſe the eſteem of their doctors and wiſe men, by ſaying, that their words, both in doctrines and dealings with men, are *yea, yea* [y]. One of their [z] commentators on the word *ſaying*, in *Exod.* xx. 1. makes this obſervation; "hence we learn, that they uſed to anſwer, על הן חן ועל לאו לאו *concerning yea, yea, and concerning nay, nay*." This way of ſpeaking, they looked upon equivalent to an oath; yea, they affirm it was one. "Says *R. Eliezer* [a], לאו שבועה הן שבועה, *nay is an oath, yea is an oath*, abſolutely; *nay* is an oath, as it is written, *Gen.* ix. 11. and *Iſa.* liv. 9. But that *yea* is an oath, how does it appear? Its concluded from hence, that *nay* is an oath; ſaith *Rabba*, there are that ſay *nay, nay*, twice, and there are that ſay *yea, yea*, twice; as it is written, *Gen.* ix. 11. and from hence, that *nay* is twice, *yea*, is alſo twice ſaid." The *Gloſs* upon it is, "he that ſays either *nay, nay*, twice, or *yea, yea*, twice; lo! it is כשבועה מאחר *as an after oath*, which confirms his words." *For whatſoever is more than theſe, cometh of evil*: that is, whatever exceeds this way of ſpeaking and converſation, in the common affairs of life, is either from the devil, who is the evil one, by way of eminency; or from the evil heart of man, from the pride, malice, envy, &c. that are in it.

Ver. 38. *Ye have heard that it hath been ſaid*, &c.] That is, to, or by them of old time, as is expreſſed in ſome of the foregoing inſtances, *an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth*, *Exod.* xxi. 24. This is *lex talionis*, the *law of retaliation*; which, whether it is to be underſtood literally, or not, is a matter of queſtion. The *Baithuſeans*, or *Sadducees*, among the *Jews*, took it in a literal ſenſe, and ſo does *Joſephus*, who ſays [b], he that ſhall blind, *i. e.* put out a man's eyes, ſhall ſuffer the like. But the *Jewiſh* doctors, generally underſtood it of paying a price equivalent to the damage done, except in caſe of life. *R. Sol. Jarchi* [c] explains the law thus: "He that puts out his neighbour's eye, muſt give him דמי עינו *the price of his eye*, according to the price of a ſervant, ſold in the market; and ſo the ſame of them all; for, not taking away of the member is ſtrictly meant." And, ſays *Maimonides* [d], "if a man cuts off his neighbour's hand, or foot, he is to be conſidered as if he was a ſervant ſold in a market; what he was worth then, and what he is worth now; and he muſt pay the diminution which is made of his price; as it is ſaid, *eye for eye*. From tradition 'tis learned, that this *for*, ſpoken of, is to be underſtood of paying money: this is what is ſaid in the law, *as he hath cauſed a blemiſh in a man, ſo ſhall it be done to him again*. Not that he is to be hurt, as he has hurt his neighbour; but inaſmuch as he deſerves to want a member, or to be hurt as he has done; therefore he ought to pay the damage." And *Joſephus* himſelf [e] ſays, that he muſt be deprived of that, which he has deprived another of, except he that has his eye put out, is willing to receive money; and which he obſerves, the law allows of. The controverſy about the ſenſe of this law, may be ſeen in a few words, as managed between *R. Saadiah Hagaon*, and *Ben Zeta* [f]. "Says *R.*

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[q] Miſn. Nedarim, c. 1. §. 3.
[r] In ib.
[s] T. Bab. Nedarim, fol. 11. 1.
[t] In loc. ex Toſapht. in Nedarim, c. 1.
[u] Miſn. Sanhedrim, c. 3. §. 2.
[w] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 3. 1.
[x] Derech Eretz c. 6. fol. 18. 2.
[y] T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 20. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Dayot. c. 5. §. 13.
[z] R. Sol. Jarchi, in Exod. xx. 1.
[a] T. Bab. Shebuot, fol. 36. 1. Vid. Maimon. Hilch. Shebuot, c. 2. §. 1.
[b] Antiqu. Jud. l. 4. c. 8. §. 35.
[c] In Exod. xxi. 24.
[d] Hilchot Chobel. c. 1. §. 2, 3.
[e] In loc. ſupra-citat.
[f] In Aben Ezra in Exod. xxi. 24.

“ *R. Saadiah*, we can't explain this verſe according to its literal ſenſe; for if a man ſhould ſmite “ the eye of his neighbour, and the third part of “ the light of his eye ſhould depart, how will he “ order it, to ſtrike ſuch a ſtroke, as that, without “ adding or leſſening? perhaps he will put out the “ whole light of his eye. And it is yet more difficult with reſpect to burning, wound, and ſtripe; “ for ſhould they be in a dangerous place, the man “ might die, but that's intolerable. *Ben Zeta* anſwers him, is it not written, in another place, *as* “ *he hath cauſed a blemiſh in a man, ſo ſhall it be* “ *done to him again?* To which *Hagaon* replies, ב “ *in*, is inſtead of על *upon*, or *againſt*; and lo! “ the ſenſe is, ſo ſhall the puniſhment be upon “ him. *Ben Zeta* anſwers him again, as he does, “ ſo ſhall it be done to him. *Hagaon* replies, behold *Samſon* ſaid, *as they have done to me, ſo will* “ *I do to them*; but *Samſon* did not take their “ wives, and give them to others, he only rendered “ to them their reward: but *Ben Zeta* replies, if a “ poor man ſhould ſmite, what muſt be his puniſhment? *Hagaon* anſwers him, if a blind man “ ſhould put out the eye of one that ſees, what “ ſhall be done to him? as for the poor man, he “ may become rich, and pay, but the blind man “ can never pay.” Now our Lord here, does not find fault with the law of retaliation, as delivered by *Moſes*, but with the falſe gloſs of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*; who, as they interpreted it of pecuniary mulcts, as a compenſation for the loſs of a member, which ſometimes exceeded all juſt and due bounds; ſo they applied it to private revenge, and in favour of it: whereas this law did not allow of a retaliation to be made by private perſons, at their pleaſure, but by the civil magiſtrate only.

Ver. 39. *But I ſay unto you, that ye reſiſt not evil*, &c.] This is not to be underſtood of any ſort of evil, not of the evil of ſin, of bad actions, and falſe doctrines, which are to be oppoſed; nor of the evil one ſatan, who is to be reſiſted; but of an evil man, an injurious one, who has done us an injury. We muſt not render evil for evil, or repay him in the ſame way; ſee *James* v. 6. Not but that a man may lawfully defend himſelf, and endeavour to ſecure himſelf from injuries; and may appeal to the civil magiſtrate for redreſs of grievances; but he is not to make uſe of private revenge. As if a man ſhould pluck out one of his eyes, he muſt not in revenge pluck out one of his; or ſhould he ſtrike out one of his teeth, he muſt not uſe him in the ſame manner; but patiently bear the affront, or ſeek for ſatisfaction in another way. *But whoſoever ſhall ſmite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other alſo*; which is to be underſtood comparatively, rather than ſeek revenge, and is directly contrary to the *Jewiſh* canons; which require, in ſuch a caſe, a pecuniary fine [g]. “ He that ſtrikes his neighbour (which *Maimonides* explains, he that ſtrikes “ his neighbour with his hand ſhut, about the “ neck) he ſhall give him a *ſela*, or *ſhekel*; *R. Judah* ſays, in the name of *R. Joſe* the *Galilean*, “ one pound: if he ſmite him, (*i. e.* as *Maimonides* ſays, if he ſmite him with his double fiſt up- “ on the face; or as *Bartenora*, with the palm of “ his hand לחיי *on the cheek*, which is a greater reproach) he ſhall give him two hundred *zuzim*; “ and if he does it with the back of his hand, four “ hundred *zuzim*.” *R. Iſaac Sangari* [h], manifeſtly refers to this paſſage of Chriſt's, when he ſays to the king he's converſing with; “ I perceive that “ thou upbraideſt us with poverty and want; but “ in them the great men of other nations glory: “ for they do not glory but in him, who ſaid, *Whoſoever ſmiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the* “ *left*; *and whoſoever taketh away thy coat, give* “ *him thy cloak*.”

Ver. 40. *And if any man will ſue thee at the law*, &c.] Or *will contend with thee*, or as the *Syriac* renders it, דנדון עמך *will ſtrive*, or *litigate with thee*; not conteſt the matter, or try the cauſe in an open court of judicature, a ſenſe our verſion inclines to; but will wrangle and quarrel in a private way, in order to *take away thy coat*, by force and violence, *let him have thy cloak alſo*; don't forbid, or hinder him from taking it; ſee *Luke* vi. 29. The *coat*, is the ſame with טלית *the upper garment*; and what we render a *cloak*, anſwers to חלוק *the inward garment*; by which words, *Sangari* expreſſes the paſſage in the place before cited: and the ſenſe is, if a wrangling, quarrelſome man, inſiſts upon having thy coat, or upper garment, let him take the next; and rather ſuffer thyſelf to be ſtript naked, than engage in a litigious broil with him. This alſo is contrary to the above canon of the *Jews* [i], which ſays; “ If a man ſhould pull another by his ear, or pluck “ off his hair, or ſpit, and his ſpittle ſhould come “ to him, העביר טליתו ממנו, or *ſhould take his* “ *coat from him*, or uncover a woman's head in the “ ſtreet, he ſhall pay four hundred *zuzim*, and all “ this is according to his dignity; ſays *R. Akiba*; “ even the poor in *Iſrael*, they conſider them as if “ they were noblemen, who are fallen from their “ eſtates, for they are the children of *Abraham*, “ *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*.”

Ver. 41. *And whoſoever ſhall compel thee to go a mile*, &c.] The word αγγαρευσει, rendered *compel*, is generally ſaid to be of *Perſic* original; the *Angari* among the *Perſians*, were the king's meſſengers, or thoſe who rode poſt, and were maintained at the king's expences; and had power to take horſes, and other carriages, and even men, into their ſervice, by force, when they had occaſion for them: hence the word is uſed to force, or compel perſons to do this or the other thing; the word אנגריא is often to be met with in the *Jewiſh* writings, and is in them expounded to be [k], the taking of any thing, for the ſervice of the king. *David de Pomis* renders it by עול *a yoke* [l]; meaning any ſervile work, which ſuch, who were preſſed into the king's ſervice, were obliged unto. And [m] עשה אנגריא is uſed to compel perſons to go along with others, to do any ſervice; in which ſenſe it is here uſed: and Chriſt adviſes, rather than to contend and quarrel with ſuch a perſon, that obliges to go with him a mile, to *go with him twain*: his meaning is, not to diſpute ſuch a matter, though it may be ſomewhat laborious and diſagreeable, but comply, for the ſake of peace. The *Jews* [n], in their blaſphemous book of the birth of Chriſt, own, that he gave advice in ſuch words as theſe, when they introduce *Peter* thus ſpeaking of him. “ He, *i. e.* Jeſus, hath warned and commanded you, to do no more evil to “ a *Jew*; but if a *Jew* ſhould ſay to a *Nazarene*, “ go with me one mile, he ſhall go with him two “ miles; and if a *Jew* ſhall ſmite him on the left “ cheek, he ſhall turn to him alſo the right.” Can a *Jew* find fault with this advice?

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[g] Miſn. Bava Kama, c. 8. §. 6. Vid. Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

[h] Sepher Coſri, Orat. 1. Sign. 113. fol. 56. 1.

[i] Miſn. Bava Kama, c. 8. §. 6.

[k] Vid. Maimon. & Bartenora in Miſn. Bava Metzia, c. 6. §. 3.

[l] Tzemach David, fol. 8. 4.

[m] Vid. Buxtorf. Lex. Rabb. p. 131, 132.

[n] Toldos Jeſu, p. 22.

Ver. 42. *Give to him that aſketh thee,* &c.] To every man, *Luke* vi. 30. whether *Jew* or *Gentile*; friend or foe; believer or unbeliever; a good, or a bad man; worthy or unworthy; deſerving or not, that aſketh alms, whether food or money; give it freely, readily, chearfully, according to your abilities, and as the neceſſity of the object requires: for ſuch rules are always ſuppoſed, and to be obſerved; and though all are to be relieved, yet the circumſtances of perſons, and their relation to men, are to be conſidered, and ſpecial regard is to be had to the houſhold of faith. *And from him that would borrow of thee, turn not away*; refuſe him not, turn not away from him with a frown, or without ſpeaking to him, or with a denial; look upon him with a pleaſant countenance, chearfully lend him what he wants, whether he be a *Jew*, from whom it was not lawful to take uſury; or a ſtranger, from whom it was lawful to take it, yet take it not; lend him freely, *hoping for nothing again*, *Luke* vi. 35. which muſt not be underſtood of not hoping for the money lent, for then it would be giving, and not lending; but of not hoping for any reward for lending it: and indeed, the money itſelf, is not to be hoped for again, when the circumſtances of the borrower are ſuch, that he is not able to make a return.

Ver. 43. *Ye have heard that it hath been ſaid,* &c.] By, or to them of old time. This law has been delivered to them, *thou ſhalt love thy neighbour*, with this appendage to it, or falſe gloſs upon it, *and hate thine enemy*; for the firſt of theſe only, is the law of *Moſes*, *Levit.* xix. 18. the other is the addition, or wrong interpretation of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*: wherefore the *Jew* [o] has no reaſon, to charge Chriſt, or the *Evangeliſt*, with a falſe teſtimony, as he does, becauſe the latter is no where written in the law, nor in the prophets: nor does Chriſt ſay it is; he only obſerves, that it had been traditionally handed down to them, from the ancients, by the maſters of the traditions of the elders, that the law of loving the neighbour, was ſo to be underſtood, as to allow, and even enjoyn hatred of enemies: in proof of which, take the following inſtances [p]. "When one man ſins againſt another, he mayn't hate him in his heart, and be ſilent, as is ſaid of the wicked; *Abſalom* ſpoke not with *Amnon*: but it is commanded to make it known to him, and to ſay to him, why haſt thou done to me ſo and ſo? As it is ſaid, *rebuking, thou ſhalt rebuke thy neighbour*; and if he returns, and deſires him to pardon him, he ſhall not be implacable and cruel; but if he reproves him many times, and he don't receive his reproof, nor turn from his ſin, then מותר לשנאותו *it is lawful to hate him.*" Again, they ſay [q], "Every diſciple of a wiſe man, שאינו נוקם ונוטר כנחש *who does not revenge, and keep as a ſerpent*; that is, as the *Gloſs* explains it, *enmity in his heart*, as a ſerpent, is no diſciple of a wiſe man." And ſo *Maimonides* [r], one of their better ſort of writers, ſays; "A diſciple of a wiſe man, or a ſcholar, whom a man deſpiſes and reproaches publickly, it is forbidden him to forgive him, becauſe of his honour; and if he forgives him, he is to be puniſhed, for this is a contempt of the law; but *he muſt revenge, and keep the thing as a ſerpent*, until the other aſks pardon of him, and then he may forgive him." Thus they bred their ſcholars, in hatred and malice againſt their enemies. This ariſes from a miſtaken ſenſe of the word *neighbour*, which they underſtood only of a friend; and concluded, that if a friend was to be loved, an enemy was to be hated; not the *Gentiles* only, but any one among themſelves, which could come under that name.

Ver. 44. *But I ſay unto you, love your enemies,* &c.] That is, as the Apoſtle *Paul* may be thought to interpret the words of Chriſt, *Rom.* xii. 20. *If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirſt, give him drink*: unleſs our Lord ſhould be ſuppoſed, rather to regard the internal affection of the mind; ſince outward expreſſions of love, by words and works, are urged in the following exhortations: the actions of a man may be hated, and juſt indignation be expreſſed againſt them, and yet his perſon be loved, tenderneſs be uſed to him, and pity ſhown him: all men, even enemies, are to be loved with a natural love, as men; though they can't be loved, with a ſpiritual affection, as brethren in Chriſt: and in natural affection there are degrees, according to the relation and circumſtances, that perſons ſtand in to one another. *Bleſs them that curſe you*: when wicked men curſe you, as *Shimei* curſed *David*, don't *render evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwiſe, bleſſing*; give good words, uſe kind language, mild and ſoft expreſſions; ſuch as may either win upon them, or put them to ſhame and ſilence: *bleſs, and curſe not*; the latter belongs to them, the former to you; *let them curſe, but bleſs thou*; curſes better fit their mouths, and bleſſings thine. Bleſſing here, does not ſignify praiſing them, for that would be ſinful, which is ſometimes the ſenſe of the word; nor wiſhing, or praying for a bleſſing on them, which is right and good; but this is mentioned afterwards, as diſtinct from bleſſing: wherefore, it is better to underſtand it of a ſweet and engaging addreſs unto, and behaviour and conduct towards ſuch, whoſe mouths are full of curſing and bitterneſs. *Do good to them that hate you*; ſuch as hate you in their hearts, and diſcover their hatred by their actions; don't make returns in the ſame way, but on the contrary, do them all the good you can; perform all the kind offices that lie in your power; let them partake of your bounty and liberality; if poor, feed, cloath, and ſupply them, as you are able, with the neceſſaries of life; and give them wholeſome advice, for the good of their ſouls: by *ſo doing*, you will *heap coals of fire on* their *heads*; of enemies, make them friends; engage their affections to you, and you may be happy inſtruments in doing them good, both in ſoul and body: *and pray for them that deſpitefully uſe you and perſecute you*. What Chriſt here commands and adviſes to, he himſelf did; for as he hung upon the croſs, he prayed for his crucifiers, who were then uſing him in the moſt deſpiteful, as well as cruel manner; ſaying, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do*: and in this he has left us an example, that we ſhould tread in his ſteps; and herein he was quickly followed, by his holy martyr *Stephen*; who, whilſt he was ſtoning, prayed for his perſecutors and murderers, ſaying, *Lord, lay not this ſin to their charge*. This breathes out the true ſpirit of Chriſtianity, and is peculiar to it. The whole of this, is directly oppoſite to the tenets of the *Jews*, particularly the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*; who allowed of revenge, and keeping anger againſt any perſon that had done them an injury, as has been obſerved: and which were alſo the ſentiments of the *Karaites*, or *Scripturarians*, another ſect among them who kept to the letter of the ſcriptures, and rejected the traditions of the elders, which the *Phariſees* held: but in this they agreed with them, "that it was right to do good to their friends, and "to forgive them that aſked pardon of them; but "to ſuch men who rendered evil, and did not "return to do well, that they might receive for"giveneſs, אינו אסור לנקום ולנטור מהם, *it is not* "*forbidden to revenge, and to keep anger againſt* "*them*[s]." It is indeed ſaid[t] of their former holy men, חסידים, *Haſideans*, which ſome have thought to be the ſame with the *Eſſenes*, and a ſort of Chriſtians; however, were a better ſort of *Jews*; that theſe "heard their reproach, but did not return it; and "not only ſo, but they pardoned him that reproach"ed them, and forgave him." And it is reported of theſe men, that they uſed to pray to God to pardon and forgive all that diſturbed them. But the *Phariſees*, whom Chriſt had to do with, and againſt whom he inveighs, were men of another complexion.

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[o] R. Iſaac Chizuk Emunah, par. 2. c. 11. p. 402.

[p] Moſes Kotſenſis Mitzvot Tora precept. neg. 5. Vid. Maimon. Hilchot Rotzeach, c. 13. §. 14.

[q] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 22. 2. & 23. 1.

[r] Maimon. Hilch. Talmud Tora, c. 7. §. 13.

Ver. 45. *That ye may be the children of your father*, &c.] Not that any became the children of God, by doing things in imitation of him: for as in nature no man becomes the ſon of another by imitating him, or by doing the things he does, but either by birth, or by adoption; ſo in grace no man becomes a child of God by the works he does, as a follower of God, but by adopting grace; and which is diſcovered in regeneration. Chriſt's meaning is, that they might appear, and be known to be the children of God, by doing thoſe things in which they reſemble their heavenly father; and which are agreeable to his nature and conduct; as the tree is known by its fruit, and the cauſe by its effect: for where adoption and regenerating grace take place, the fruit of good works is brought forth to the glory of God. Some copies, inſtead of υιοι, *children*, read ομοιοι, *like*; and accordingly, the *Perſic* verſion renders it thus, *that ye may be like to your father, which is in heaven*. Our Lord ſeems to have reſpect to the *Jews*, often having in their mouths this expreſſion אבינו בשמים, *our father which is in heaven*; and to their frequent boaſting that they were the children of God: and therefore he would have them make this manifeſt by their being like him, or acting in imitation of him; *for he maketh his ſun to riſe on the evil, and on the good*. Chriſt inſtances in one of the greateſt bleſſings in nature, the *ſun*, ſo uſeful to the earth, and ſo beneficial to mankind for light, and heat; which he calls *his ſun*; his own, and not another's; which he has made, and maintains, orders to run its race, and commands it to riſe morning by morning, and that upon good and bad men; one, as well as another; all equally ſhare in, and partake of its benign influences, and enjoy the comfortable effects and bleſſings of it: *and ſendeth rain on the juſt and unjuſt*; that is, on the fields of perſons of ſuch different characters, even both the early and the latter rain; which makes the earth fruitful, crowns it with goodneſs, and cauſes it to bring forth bread to the eater, and ſeed to the ſower. This is one of the moſt conſiderable bleſſings of life; the gift of it is God's ſole prerogative; it's peculiar to him; it is what none of the vanities of the *Gentiles* can give; and yet is beſtowed by him on the moſt worthleſs, and undeſerving. This flows from that perfection of God, which the *Cabbaliſts*[u] call "*cheſed*, "*mercy*, or benignity, to which it is eſſential to "give largely to all, both *to the juſt and unjuſt*." The *Jews* have a ſaying[x], that "greater is the day "of rain, than the reſurrection of the dead; for the "reſurrection of the dead is for the juſt; but *rain* "*is* בין לצדקים בין לרשעים, *both for the juſt, and* "*for the wicked*;" a way of ſpeaking much like this here. They alſo uſed to praiſe God for rain, on this conſideration, becauſe it was given to unworthy perſons. [y] *R. Joſe Bar Jacob* went to viſit "*R. Joden* of *Magdala*; whilſt he was there, rain "deſcended, and he heard his voice, ſaying, thou"ſands of thouſands, and millions of millions are "bound to praiſe thy name, O our king, for "every drop thou cauſeſt to deſcend upon us, "שאת גומל טובה לחייבים, *becauſe thou rendereſt* "*good to the wicked*." Now our Lord inſtances in things which could not be denied, and they themſelves allowed; and makes uſe of their own words, to engage them to imitate God, whom they call their father, by doing good to their enemies, and them that hated them, as well as to their friends and neighbours: yet ſometimes they could ſcarcely allow, that the Gentiles had the ſame ſhare in this divine favour with themſelves; for they ſay[z], that "God works by way of miracle, that rain "ſhould not be wanting in his land, although it is "wanting in the countries of the heathen; as he "ſays, *Job* v. 10. *who giveth rain on the earth*, "which is the land of *Iſrael*; for on that רב מטר, "*a great rain* deſcends, and *ſendeth waters* מעטים, "*few* (which is added to the text) *upon the fields*; "which relates to what is without the land, where"upon it does not deſcend, but the ſubſtance of "the land of *Iſrael*; therefore he ſaith, the Lord "will open to thee his good treaſure, and not to "others."

Ver. 46. *For if ye love them which love you*, &c.] That is, if ye only love ſuch that love you; for that ſuch, who love ſhould be loved again, is both natural and juſt: our Lord's meaning is not, that ye ought not to love them that love you, but that theſe ſhould not be the only objects of your love; for ſhould this be the caſe, *what reward have ye?* or *ſhall ye have?* Do you deſerve any thanks for your love now? none at all, it is what you are obliged to by your friend's love to you. Do you expect any hereafter with God? if you do, you'll be miſtaken; you have your reward with men, who have loved you as much as you have done them, and therefore none can be due to you, either from God or men; beſides, *do not even the publicans the ſame?* men of the worſt characters, and who were moſt hateful to the *Jews*, upon many accounts; partly becauſe of their buſineſs, which was to collect the *Roman* tax, and carry it to the proper officers appointed to receive it, and of whom they ſometimes farmed it. Now the *Roman* yoke was very grievous to the *Jews*, who boaſted of their being a free people; nor did they willingly pay their tribute-money; and ſome of them would refuſe to do it, under a pretence of religion; wherefore thoſe publicans, or tax-gatherers, which were oftentimes men of their own nation, as appears from the inſtances of *Levi* and *Zaccheus*, were very odious to them; becauſe they looked upon them as joining with the *Romans*, in oppreſſing them, and abridging them in their liberty: and partly becauſe of their character and conduct, being men of great improbity, rapine, and covetouſneſs: hence, as in the *New Teſtament*, they are frequently joined with *ſinners*, as being notorious ones themſelves; ſo in the *Talmudic* writings, with thieves [a], and are reckoned as thieves, with murderers, and robbers [b]; they were not allowed as witneſſes [c] in any of their courts of judicature; nor were they to be kept company [d] with in private houſes. Now our Lord inſtances in theſe men who were the moſt profligate part of the nation, and had in greateſt contempt by the reſt; and yet theſe, by the very dictates of nature, loved ſuch as loved them: wherefore it muſt be ſhameful and ſcandalous in the *Phariſees*, and others, who pretended to great ſanctity and religion, to do no more then theſe perſons did.

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[s] R. Eliahu in Adderet, c. 3. apud Trigland. de Sect. Karæorum, c. 10. p. 166, 167.
[t] Maimon. Hilch. Talmud Tora, c. 7. §. 13.
[u] Sepher Shaar Haſſamaim Tract. 7. c. 12. p. 155.
[x] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 7. 1.
[y] T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 14. 1. & Taanith, fol. 64. 2.
[z] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 152. 4.

Ver. 47. *And if you ſalute your brethren only*, &c.] This does not mean ſalutation by embraces or kiſſes, but by words, aſking of each other's welfare, and wiſhing proſperity and happineſs to one another. “The manner of ſalutation among the wiſe men was “this [e]; he that ſalutes ſays, a good day to my “lord; and he replies, ſaying, a good, and long “day to my lord: always he that replies doubles “the ſalutation.” The perſons they uſually gave their ſalutations to, were thoſe of their own nation, their countrymen, relations, and friends; and who are here deſigned by *brethren*; meaning, not brethren in the ſtrict ſenſe, but any kindred, acquaintance, or any of their own nation. Some copies read it *friends*, who, generally ſpeaking, only partook of ſuch favours. “A man, ſays *Maimonides* [f], “might not ſalute his maſter, nor return a ſalutation to him in the manner they gave a ſalutation “לרעים, *to friends*; and they return it to one an-“other.” They were not very free in ſaluting any perſons, as ſtrangers and Gentiles: ſuch advice as this is indeed given הוי מקדים בשלום כל אדם [g], *prevent every man with a ſalutation*, or be firſt in ſaluting every man; upon which paſſage their *commentators* [h] ſay, even a *Gentile* in the ſtreets. Accordingly, 'tis elſewhere [i] obſerved, that “*R. “Abai* uſed to ſay, let a man be always cunning “with fear, for *a ſoft anſwer turns away wrath*; “and multiply ſalutation with his brethren, and “with his relations, and with every man, even “with a ſtranger in the ſtreets.” But this proceeded not from any cordial hearty reſpect, but out of policy, and from fear; and in order to maintain peace; and for ſelfiſh ends, and with ſiniſter views: otherwiſe their ſalutations were confined to their brethren and kinsfolk after the fleſh. Now, this being the caſe, ſays Chriſt, *what do ye more than others? do not even publicans ſo?* Or, as ſome copies read it, *Gentiles* or *Heathens*; and accordingly the *Ethiopic* verſion, and the *Vulgate Latin* ſo render it: the *Arabic* renders it *Idolaters*. Now, what great matter was this to ſalute their brethren and their friends, when even the very Heathens, who had nothing but the light of nature to guide them, did the ſame?

Ver. 48. *Be ye therefore perfect, as your father*, &c.] This perfection is to be reſtrained to the ſubject Chriſt is upon, love to men, and not to be referr'd to any, or every other thing; wherefore, in *Luke* vi. 36. 'tis, *be ye merciful, as your father alſo is merciful*; and regards not a perfection of degree in that, but objects and quality: that is to ſay, not that men may, or can, or ought to be as perfect in love, as to the degree of it, as God is; that is impoſſible: the *as* here, is not a note of equality, but of likeneſs: ſuch, who profeſs God to be their father, ought to imitate him, particularly in their love to men, which ought to be extended to the ſame objects, as the divine goodneſs is; that, as he ſhews regard in a providential way to all men, good and bad, juſt and unjuſt, and his tender mercies are over all his works; ſo ought they to love all men with a natural affection, and hate no man, no, not their enemies: for he that loves only his friends, and not his enemies, loves imperfectly; he does not take in the whole compaſs of objects, his love is to extend unto; and as God loves ſincerely, and without diſſimulation, ſo ſhould they. To be *perfect*, is to be ſincere and upright: in this ſenſe is the word often uſed, and anſwers to the *Hebrew* word תמים, which ſignifies the ſame: ſee *Deut.* xviii. 13. which is the paſſage Chriſt ſeems to refer to here; and the ſenſe is, be ye ſincere and upright in your love to all men, as your heavenly father is hearty and ſincere in his affections to them.

## CHAP. VI.

Ver. 1. TAKE *heed that ye do not your alms before men*, &c.] Some copies read, *take heed that ye do not your righteouſneſs*, &c. which is a very good reading: but then, by *righteouſneſs*, is not meant righteouſneſs, as comprehending all other righteous acts, as particularly alms, prayer, and faſting, hereafter mentioned; but alms only; nothing being more common with the *Jews* than to call alms צדקה, *righteouſneſs*: and whatever word *Matthew* made uſe of, there is no doubt to be made of it, but this was the word Chriſt uſed. Now alms was ſo called, becauſe it is a righteous action, which ought to be performed; and to with-hold from the poor what is meet, is to deal unrighteouſly: hence we read of the *mammon of unrighteouſneſs*; by which is meant, not money unrighteouſly got, but that which is unrighteouſly kept from the poor: alſo it might be ſo called, becauſe the *Jews* very much placed their juſtifying righteouſneſs before God in the performance of it: let us firſt ſee how, according to them, it was to be done, and then what confidence they placed in it, and how much they made uſe of it. The account *Maimonides* [k] gives, is as follows, who obſerves; that “we are bound to take heed to the commandment “of alms more than all the affirmative commands; “becauſe alms is a ſign of a *righteous* man, the “ſeed of *Abraham* our father; as it is ſaid, in *Gen.* “xviii. 19. Nor is the throne of *Iſrael* eſtabliſhed, “nor can the law of truth ſtand, but by alms; as “it is ſaid, *Prov.* xvi. 12. Nor ſhall *Iſrael* be re-“deemed, but by alms, according to *Iſ.* i. 27.” “There are, ſays he, eight degrees in giving alms, “the one above another; the higheſt, than which “there is none higher, is this; when one relieves “an *Iſraelite*, and gives him a gift, or lends to “him, or takes him into partnerſhip, or finds him “work, ſo that he ſtrengthens his hands before he

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[a] Maimon. Hilch. Gezela, c. 5. §. 9, 11. [b] Miſn. Nedarim, c. 3. §. 4. [c] T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 25. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Eduth, c. 10. §. 4. Moſes Kotſenſis Mitzvot Tora pr. neg. 214. [d] Maimon. Hilch. Miſhcab, c. 10. §. 8. [e] Sepher Chaſidim, fol. 5. col. 2. apud Buxtorf. Florileg. Heb. p. 300, 301. [f] Hilch. Talmud Tora, c. 5. §. 5. [g] Pirke Abot, c. 4. §. 15. [h] Jarchi & Bartenora in ib. [i] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 17. 1. [k] Hilch. Mattanot Anayim, c. 10. §. 1. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14.

"ſtands in need of aſking; and of this it is ſaid, "and *thou ſhalt relieve him, a ſtranger and a ſojourner, that he may live with thee:* which is as much "as to ſay, relieve him before he falls, and is "brought to neceſſity. The next to this is, when "a man gives alms to the poor, and he knows "not to whom he gives; nor does the poor man "know of whom he receives; for, behold, this is "doing it for the ſake of it; as the chamber of "ſecrets, which was in the ſanctuary, into which "righteous men privately put, and the poor children of good men were privately ſupported: "and the next to this is, when a man puts into "the alms-cheſt; and a man does not put into the "alms-cheſt except he knows that the governor is "faithful and wiſe, and knows how to manage as "ſhould be; ſuch an one as *R. Chananiah ben Tradion.* The next to this is, when the giver knows "to whom he gives, but the poor man does not "know from whom he receives; as the great ones "of the wiſe men, who uſed to go ſecretly, and "caſt their money at the doors of the poor; and "this is right to do, and a good method it is when "the governors of alms do not diſpoſe aright. "The next to this is, when the poor man knows "of whom he takes, but does not know the giver; "as the great men among the wiſe men, who uſed "to bind up their money in linen cloths, and put "them behind them, and the poor came and took "them, that they might not be aſhamed. The "next to this is, when a man puts it into his hands "before he aſks. The next to this is, when he "gives to him after he has aſked. The next to "this is, when he gives to him leſs than is proper, with a pleaſant countenance. The next to "this is, when he gives with grief." Now this work, or duty, they magnify at a very great rate: not content to ſay [g], that "he that does alms, does "that which is more excellent than all offerings;" they further affirm [h], that "giving of alms and "beneficence כנגד התורה כולה, *are equal to the "whole law*;" or, it is all one, as if a man performed the whole law. Moreover, they give [i] out, "that whoever takes of his goods, and does "alms with them, he ſhall be delivered from the "*damnation of hell.*" Yea, they reckon that this gives a right and title to eternal life [k]. "He that "ſays, let this *ſela*, or *ſhekel*, be for alms, that his "children may live, and that he may be worthy "of the life of the world to come, lo! this is "צדיק גמור, *a perfect righteous man.*" Or, as elſewhere [l] expreſſed, "let this ſela be for alms, "that my ſon may live, and that he may be a ſon "of the world to come; lo! this is a perfect righ"teous man." Thus, you ſee, they looked upon it as their righteouſneſs; and what made them heirs of heaven, and gave them a title to eternal glory. Now our Lord adviſes them to take heed, as what would be of bad conſequence, and very detrimental to them, that they did not their alms before men, *to be ſeen of them*; not but alms may be lawfully done before, or in the ſight of men, and a good end may be anſwered by it; namely, to ſtir up others to acts of liberality; but then this muſt not be done with this view, to be ſeen of men, in order to gain their applauſe, and a good name among them, *otherwiſe, ye have no reward of your father, which is in heaven.* You expect a reward, and a very great one, for your alms; but if you do them only to raiſe your credit, and gain eſteem among men, you have your reward already with men: nor muſt you expect any from God, ſince you ſeek not his glory, but your own. When a man's ſelf, and not the glory of God, is the chief end of any action, that can't be called a good work, nor will it have any reward; whereas a good work, which ſprings from a principle of grace, and is directed to the glory of God, will have a reward, not of debt, but of grace, from whence it ariſes.

Ver. 2. *Wherefore, when thou doſt thine alms*, &c.] Chriſt proceeds to give ſome directions and cautions about giving of alms, that they might be done aright, and anſwer ſome valuable purpoſes for the glory of God, the good of others, and their own: *do not ſound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do, in the ſynagogues, and in the ſtreets, that they may have glory of men.* The perſons, Chriſt has reference to, were the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, who did all they did to be ſeen of men; whom he calls *hypocrites*; as he often does, becauſe they put on an appearance of religion and holineſs, but inwardly, and otherwiſe, were very wicked men. It does not appear that any ſuch practice was literally performed, as blowing a trumpet before them, when they gave their alms; tho' the collectors of alms did, by ſome means, publickly notify to the people when they were about that ſervice: for one of their rules is [m], "the collectors of alms don't *proclaim* on a "feaſt, as they proclaim on a common day; but "they collected בצינעה, *privately*, and put it into "their boſom, and diſtributed it to every one by "himſelf." Wherefore this muſt be underſtood proverbially; and the ſenſe is, that when they did their alms, they choſe public places for it, ſuch as the *ſynagogues*, where was a large concourſe of people met together for religious worſhip; or the open *ſtreets* of the city, where people were continually walking to and fro, ſo that nothing could be done in this way, but what muſt be ſeen and obſerved: and moreover, they took care, either by themſelves, or others, to proclaim their good actions, that they might *have glory of men*; not only of the poor, or, the collectors for them, but of the ſpectators. *R. Aben Ezra* [n] ſays, that "a man that gives alms to "the poor, muſt not give it becauſe of the glory "of the collector, *i. e.* that he may have glory of "him; nor that the children of men may praiſe "him." But his anceſtors were of another mind: but what did they get by it? *verily I ſay unto you, they have their reward*; and a poor one it is, the applauſe of men: however, it is what they ſeek after, and is all their empty performances deſerve, and all they will have. "He that glories in any "thing done by himſelf, הוא נוטל את שכרו, *he "takes, or receives his reward* [o]; for as for any reward from God, they'll have none; in this ſenſe, as the *Ethiopic* verſion reads it, *they have loſt their reward*; and as a learned critic has thought, is the ſenſe of the *Greek* word, *they forbid*, or *hinder their reward.* By ſeeking the glory of men, they lay impediments in the way of receiving honour from God.

Ver. 3. *But when thou doſt alms*, &c.] Do it ſo privately, and with ſo much ſecrecy, that, if it was poſſible, thou mighteſt not know it thyſelf, much leſs make it known to others: *let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth*; acquaint not thy neareſt and deareſt friend with it; let not one that ſits at thy left hand know what thou art doing with thy right hand; 'tis a proverbial and hyperbolical phraſe, expreſſing the ſecrecy of the action. It is a *Jewiſh* canon [p], that "he that gives a gift to his friend out of love, may make it known אבל לא בצדקה, *but not if it be by way of alms.*"

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[g] T. Bab. Succa, fol. 49. 2. [h] T. Hieroſ. Peah, fol. 15. 2, 3. [i] T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 7. 1, 2. [k] T. Bab. Roſhhaſhanah, fol. 4. 1. Bava Bathra, fol. 10. 2. [l] T. Bab. Peſachim, fol. 8. 1, 2. [m] T. Hieroſ. Demai, fol. 23. 2. [n] In Exod. xx. 3. [o] R. Jona apud Capell. Spicileg. in loc.

Ver. 4. *That thine alms may be in ſecret*, &c.] May be done in ſecret, and be kept a ſecret. The alluſion ſeems to be to the ſecret-chamber, where money was brought privately for the relief of the poor. "There were two chambers in the ſanctuary, the one was לשכת חשאים, *the chamber of ſecrets*, and the other the chamber of veſſels: the chamber of ſecrets was that into which pious perſons put בחשאי, *in ſecret*, and the poor children of good men were maintained out of it privately [q]." The *Jews* ſay many things in favour of doing alms privately. "Greater, ſay they [r], is he that gives alms בסתר, *in ſecret*, than *Moſes* our maſter." They tell us [s], that "*R. Jannai* ſeeing a certain man give *Zuz* (a piece of money) to a poor man publickly, ſaid unto him, it would have been better, if thou hadſt not have given him any thing, than to have given him in this manner." This was the practice of the ancient religious *Jews*, to give their alms privately; but the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* had brought that practice into diſuſe, and which our Lord labours to reſtore; adding, for encouragement, *and thy father, which ſeeth in ſecret*; beholds all ſecret actions, and knows the ſecret ſprings of actions, *himſelf ſhall reward thee openly*; in the great day of account, before angels and men, when all ſecret things ſhall be brought to light, and every good man have praiſe of God. This duty, of giving alms to the poor, is mentioned by Chriſt before prayer to God; it may be for this reaſon, becauſe it was uſual to give alms before prayer. "The great, or famous men, among the wiſe men, uſed to give a *Prutah* (a ſmall piece of money) to a poor man before every prayer, and after that they prayed; as it is ſaid, *I ſhall behold thy face in righteouſneſs* [t]."

Ver. 5. *And when thou prayeſt, thou ſhall not be as the hypocrites*, &c.] As the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*; whoſe poſture in prayer, the places they choſe to pray in, and the view they had therein, are particularly taken notice of: *for they love to pray ſtanding in the ſynagogues, and in the corners of the ſtreets, that they may be ſeen of men.* It was their uſual cuſtom to pray *ſtanding*; nay, it is eſtabliſhed by their canons. "There are eight things, ſays *Maimonides* [u], that a man that prays ought to take heed to do; and the firſt he mentions is *ſtanding*; for, ſays he, no man may pray אלא מעומד, *but ſtanding*; if he is ſitting in a ſhip, or in a cart, if he can ſtand, he muſt ſtand; if not, he may ſit in his place and pray." Several hints of this cuſtom there are in the *Miſna* [w]. "On their faſt days they uſed to bring out the ark into the ſtreets—עמדו בתפלה, *and they ſtood in prayer*, or praying; and cauſed an old man to go down before the ark, who was uſed to recite prayers, and he ſaid them." Again [x], "whoever עומד בתפלה, *ſtood praying*, and remembred that any uncleanneſs attended him, he might not break off, but he might ſhorten." Yea, ſtanding itſelf is interpreted of praying; for it is ſaid [y], "and *Abraham* roſe up early in the morning to the place, where he ſtood, ואין עמידה אלא תפלה, *and there is no ſtanding but prayer*;" tho' ſometimes they prayed ſitting, as *David* did, 2 *Sam.* vii, 18. ſo it is ſaid of *R. Joſe*, and *R. Eleazar*, that יתבו וצלי, *they ſat and prayed*, and afterwards roſe up and went on their way [z]. So it was likewiſe cuſtomary to go to the *ſynagogues*, and there pray; and indeed they were places built and appointed for this purpoſe. "Wherever there were ten *Iſraelites*, a houſe ought to be provided, in which they may go to prayer at every time of prayer; and this place is called a ſynagogue [a]." Hence ſome have thought, that not ſuch places are here deſigned, but any aſſembly, or concourſe of people gathered together upon any occaſion; but ſuch an interpretation will find no place, when the following things are obſerved. "For ever let a man go, morning and evening, to the ſynagogue; for no prayer is heard, at any time, but in the ſynagogue; and every one that hath a ſynagogue in his city, and does not pray in it with the congregation, is called a bad neighbour [b]." Again [c], "he that prays in the houſe of the Lord, is as if he offered up a pure offering." Now, partly on account of the publickneſs of the place, and partly becauſe they thought their prayers were only heard there, therefore they choſe to pray in the ſynagogues; and alſo in *the corners of the ſtreets*, where two ſtreets met, and they might be the more eaſily ſeen. This was alſo a common thing to pray in the ſtreets; "ſays *R. Jochanan*, I ſaw *R. Jannai* ſtand and pray in the ſtreets of *Tzippore* [d]." And, a little after, 'tis ſaid of another, that he ſtood and prayed באסרטיא, *in the ſtreets*; tho' ſuch places were not reckoned holy, as the ſynagogues were. "The ſtreet of a city, ſays *Maimonides* [e], altho' the people pray in it at faſts, and ſtations, becauſe that there is a great collection of people, and the ſynagogues can't hold them, has no holineſs in it, becauſe it is accidental, and not appointed for prayer." Wherefore ſtreets were only uſed in caſe of neceſſity, or by ſuch of the *Phariſees*, who choſe to be ſeen of men. A reaſon is given for this practice in another place [f], where 'tis aſked, "why do they go out to the ſtreets, *i. e.* on their faſt-days? to ſhew that we are reckoned as if we were carried captive before thee: ſays *Joſhua ben Levi*, becauſe they prayed in *ſecret*, and were not anſwered; therefore they went without, ויתפרסמו, *that they might be made publick.*" Now let it be obſerved, that neither the poſture, nor places of prayer, are condemned by our Lord, but their view in all to *be ſeen of men*; and a conſiderable emphaſis lies upon the word *love*; they loved *ſtanding* in prayer, rather than any other poſture, becauſe they could be better ſeen; and they loved to be in the ſynagogues and ſtreets, rather than in their cloſets; they liked publick, better than private prayer, becauſe it gained them applauſe among men. *Verily I ſay unto you, they have their reward*; they gain their point; they have what they ſeek for; and this is all they will have.

Ver. 6. *But thou, when thou prayeſt, enter into thy cloſet*, &c.] Or *chamber*, a ſecret place, fit for private retirement, meditation, and prayer. *And when thou haſt ſhut thy door*; ſee ſome ſuch like phraſes in *Iſ.* xxvi. 20. where they are uſed to expreſs

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[p] Piſke Toſephot in Sabbat. c. 1. art. 134.
[q] Miſn. Shekalim, c. 5. §. 6. Maimon. Hilch. Eracin, c. 2. §. 12.
[r] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 9. 2.
[s] T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 5. 1.
[t] Maimon. Hilch. Mattanot Anayin, c. 10. §. 15.
[u] Hilch. Tephilla. c. 5. §. 1, 2.
[w] Miſn. Taanith, c. 2. §. 1, 2.
[x] Miſn. Beracot, c. 3. §. 5.
[y] Zohar in Lev. fol. 47. 1. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 26. 2.
[z] Zohar in Exod. fol. 4. 4.
[a] Maimon. Hilch. Tephilla, c. 11. 1.
[b] Ib. c. 8. §. 1. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 8. 1. & Piſke Toſephot Beracot, c. 1. art. 7.
[c] T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 8. 4.
[d] Ib. fol. 8. 3. & 9. 1.
[e] Hilch. Tephilla, c. 11. §. 21. Vid. Maimon. & Bartenora in Miſn. Megilla, c. 3. §. 1.
[f] T. Hieroſ. Taaniot, fol. 65. 1.

preſs ſecurity, here ſecrecy. Our Lord does not mean to exclude and condemn publick prayer, in joining with few, or more perſons, in ſuch ſervice; for he himſelf directs to it, and approves of it, ch. xviii. 19, 20. but his view is to inſtruct perſons that they ſhould not only pray in publick, but in private alſo; and eſpecially the latter, which is more ſuitable and fitting for their particular caſes, and leſs liable to pride, hypocriſy, and vanity. *Pray to thy father, which is in ſecret*; who is inviſible; not to be ſeen with the eyes of the body, but to be approached with a true heart, in faith and fear, through his ſon Jeſus Chriſt, the only mediator between God and man; and who is the image of the inviſible God, and in whom he is pleaſed to manifeſt himſelf to his people, ſo as he does not unto the world: *and thy father, which ſeeth in ſecret*, obſerves, and takes notice of the ſecret breathings, pantings, deſires, and requeſts of thy heart, and lips, *ſhall reward thee openly*, both here and hereafter; by pouring into thy boſom all the good things thou haſt been praying for, both for time and eternity. This is agreeable to what the *Jews* ſometimes ſay, "that a man ought not to cauſe his voice to be "heard in prayer; but ſhould pray בלחש, *ſilently*, "with a voice that is not heard; and this is the "prayer which is daily accepted [g]."

Ver. 7. *But when ye pray, uſe not vain repetitions*, &c.] Saying the ſame things over and over again, *as the Heathens do*, as the worſhippers of *Baal*, from morning till noon, 1 *Kings* xviii. 26. This our Lord obſerves, to diſſuade from ſuch practices, becauſe the *Gentiles*, who were odious to the *Jews*, uſed them, and the *Jews* were guilty of the ſame; had they not, there would not have been any need of ſuch advice: *for they think they ſhall be heard for their much ſpeaking*; as did the *Jews*, who, under pretence of *long prayers*, devoured widows houſes; and with whom it is an axiom, that *every one* המרבה בתפילה נענה, *that multiplies prayer is heard* [h]; and whoever prolongs his prayer, his prayer does not return empty; and he that is long in prayer, his days are prolonged [i]: and, according to their canons, every day a man ought to pray eighteen prayers. Moreover, their prayer-books abound in tautologies, and in expreſſing the ſame things in different words, and by a multiplicity of them.

Ver. 8. *Be not ye therefore like unto them*, &c.] Don't be imitators of them, and follow their ways, who have only the dim light of nature to guide them; it would be ſhameful in you to do as they do, when you have a divine revelation for your direction; and eſpecially, becauſe *your father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye aſk him*; and therefore have no need to make uſe of many words, or much ſpeaking, or long prayers. The omniſcience of God is a conſiderable argument, and a great encouragement to prayer; he knows our perſons and our wants before-hand; and as he is able to help us, we have reaſon to believe he will; eſpecially ſince he ſtands in the relation of a father to us.

Ver. 9. *After this manner therefore pray ye*, &c.] That is, in ſuch a conciſe and ſhort way, without much ſpeaking and vain repetitions; making uſe of ſuch like words and expreſſions as the following: not that Chriſt meant to pin down his diſciples to theſe expreſs words, and no other; for this prayer is not a ſtrict form, but a pattern of prayer, and a directory to it, both as to brevity, order, and matter; for we don't find the diſciples ever making uſe of it in form: and when it is recited by another Evangeliſt, it is not in the ſelf-ſame words as here; which would have been, had it been deſigned as an exact form. Beſides, Chriſt does not bid them pray in theſe very words, but *after this manner*; ſomewhat like this: not but that it is very lawful to uſe the very expreſs words of this prayer in any of the petitions here directed to; and which indeed were no other than what good people among the *Jews* did frequently make uſe of; and which were collected and ſingled out by Chriſt, as what he approved of, in diſtinction from, and oppoſition to, other impertinent expreſſions, and vain repetitions, which ſome uſed; as will appear by a particular conſideration of them. *Our father which art in heaven*. This may be looked upon as the preface and introduction to the prayer, and regards the object of it, and his character, which is an epithet of God, often to be met with in *Jewiſh* writings, and particularly in their prayers; for thus they [k] ſay, "אבינו שבשמים, *our father which art in heaven*, ſhew mercy to us, becauſe thy great "name is called upon us." Again [l], let the prayers and the requeſts of all *Iſrael* be received by אבוהון די בשמיא, *their father, which is in heaven*. They ſeem to have a regard to this prayer, when they apply that paſſage in *Prov.* iii. 35. *ſhame ſhall be the promotion of fools*, to the nations of the earth; who, they ſay [m], "do not conſider the glory of "the law; and how, ſay they, *our father which art* "*in heaven*, hear our voice, have mercy on us, "and receive our prayer?" So in confeſſions, thankſgivings, and ſacrifices of praiſe, they required, and looked upon it, as the main thing, for a man to direct his heart לאביו שבשמים, *to his father which is in heaven* [n]. By *father*, our Lord means the firſt perſon in the Trinity, who is the father of all men by creation, and of the ſaints by adoption; who are to addreſs him in prayer under the character of *our father*, partly to command a reverential fear of him, and partly to ſecure boldneſs and liberty of ſpeech before him; and alſo to expreſs fiducial confidence in him, faith of intereſt in him, and relation to him; which ariſes from ſome experience of his paternal love, and requires the witneſſings of the ſpirit of adoption; and inaſmuch as the direction is not to ſay *my father*, but *our father*; it ſhews, that we ſhould pray for others, as well as for ourſelves, even for all the dear children of God. It is a rule [o] with the *Jews*, "that a man ought "always to join himſelf in prayer with the church;" upon which the Gloſs ſays, "let him not pray the "ſhort prayer בלשון יחיד אלא בלשון רבים, *in* "*the ſingular, but in the plural number*, that ſo his "prayer may be heard." The object of prayer is further deſcribed by the place of his reſidence, *in heaven*; not that he is included in any place, but that the heaven of heavens is the place where he moſt eminently diſplays his glory: and this may teach us to look upwards in prayer, and ſeek thoſe things which are above; and alſo, that this earth, on which we dwell, is not our native country, but heaven is, where our father dwells. Next follows the firſt petition, *hallowed, or ſanctified be thy name*; ſo the *Jews* [p] in their prayers "יתקדש שמך, *let* "*thy name be hallowed*, or *ſanctified* by us, O Lord "our God, before the eyes of all living." And very often [p], "let his great *name* be magnified and "*ſanctified* in the world, which he hath created ac-"cording to his will." And again [q], "let us *ſanc-"tify thy name* in the world, as they ſanctify it in "the higheſt heavens." By the *name* of God is meant he himſelf, the perfections of his nature, and the ſeveral names by which he is known, and which we are to think and ſpeak of with holy reverence. By ſanctifying his name, is not meant a making him holy, but acknowledging, and declaring him to be holy, and a glorifying him, and all his perfections. He is ſanctified by himſelf, by declaring himſelf to be holy; by glorifying his perfections in his works; by implanting grace and holineſs in the hearts of his people; by reſtoring the purity of his worſhip; by diffuſing the knowledge of himſelf in the world; and by taking vengeance on the wicked: and he is ſanctified by others, when they fear him, believe in him, call upon his name, uſe it reverently, ſubmit to his will, acknowledge his mercies, regard his commands and ordinances, and live a holy life and converſation; all which is earneſtly deſired by truly gracious ſouls.

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[g] Zohar in Gen. fol. 114. 4.
[h] T. Hieroſ. Taaniot, fol. 67. 3.
[i] Zohar in Exod. fol. 104. 4.
[k] Seder Tephillot, fol. 4. 2. Ed. Baſil.
[l] Ib. fol. 33. 2.
[m] Raya Mehimna in Zohar in Lev. fol. 34. 1.
[n] T. Bab. Shebuot, fol. 15. 1.
[o] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 30. 1.
[p] Seder Tephillot, fol. 78. 1. Ed. Amſtelod. Zohar in Exod. fol. 43. 4.

Ver. 10. *Thy kingdom come*, &c.] The form of expreſſion uſed by the ancient *Jews*, relating to this article, before the coming of Chriſt, doubtleſs was, as it now ſtands in their prayers [r], מלכות משיחך יבא, *the kingdom of thy Meſſiah come.* Chriſt alters the expreſſion, leaves out the word *Meſſiah*, and puts it thus, *thy kingdom come*, to let them know that the *Meſſiah* was come; and that it was the kingdom of the father, in the power of his grace, upon the ſouls of men, they muſt pray for, and expect: however, he conformed to a rule of theirs in this, as well as in the former petition [s]; that "every bleſſing, or prayer, "in which there is no ברכת השם, *mention made of "the name*, i. e. of God, is no prayer; and that "every prayer, in which there is not מלכות, *the "kingdom*, is no prayer." In this petition the diſciples were taught to pray for the ſucceſs of the Goſpel, both among *Jews* and *Gentiles*; for the converſion of God's elect, in which the kingdom of God would greatly appear, to the deſtruction of the kingdom of ſatan, and the abolition of the kingdom of the beaſt, in the latter day; which will uſher in the kingdom of the mediator, he will receive from his father, and this will terminate in the kingdom of glory: in a word, not the kingdom of nature and providence is meant, which always was; but the kingdom of heaven, which was at hand, nay had took place, tho' as yet was not very viſible, and which is ſpiritual in the hearts of God's people, *Jews* and *Gentiles*; and which will appear exceeding glorious in the latter day, and at laſt be ſwallowed up in the ultimate glory; all which muſt be very deſireable by the ſincere lovers of Jeſus Chriſt. *Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.* There is ſome appearance of this petition ſtill remaining, in what the [t] *Jews* call the ſhort prayer: "what is the ſhort prayer? "*R. Eliezer* ſays עשה רצונך בשמים, *do thy will "in heaven*; and give quietneſs of ſpirit, or ac-"quieſcence of ſpirit in thy will, to them that fear "thee below." Chriſt ſays *thy will*; not the will of wicked men, nor the will of ſatan, nor a man's own will, but the will of God: by which is meant either his ſecret will, which is the rule of all his proceedings both in providence and grace; is unknown to us, till facts make it appear; is always fulfilled in heaven and in earth; and ſometimes is fulfilled by thoſe who have no regard to his revealed will; and is what ought to be ſubmitted to patiently, and without murmuring: or rather his revealed will, which conſiſts, partly in the declarations of his grace and mercy; as that ſalvation is by Chriſt, whoever believes in him ſhall be ſaved, that all the redeemed be ſanctified, perſevere to the end, and be glorified; and partly in the commands enjoined his people, which will of his, is good, perfect, and acceptable. The will of God may be ſaid to be done by us, when our wills are reſigned to his; when we patiently ſubmit to every adverſe diſpenſation of providence; when our hearts and actions are, in ſome meaſure, conformed to his law; when what is done, is done in faith, with a view to his glory, and without dependance upon it; of which ſuch only are capable, who have a ſpiritual underſtanding of the will of God, believe in Chriſt, receive grace and ſtrength from him, and are aſſiſted by his Spirit. Theſe deſire to do the will of God, as it is done in heaven; meaning not ſo much by the inanimate creatures, the ſun, and moon, and ſtars, as glorified ſaints and holy angels; who do it voluntarily and chearfully; ſpeedily, and without delay; conſtantly, and without any interruption; and perfectly and completely.

Ver. 11. *Give us this day our daily bread.*] The *Arabic* verſion reads it, *our bread for To-morrow*; and *Jerom* ſays, that in the *Hebrew* Goſpel, uſed by the *Nazarenes*, he found the word מחר, which ſignifies *To-morrow*: but this reading and ſenſe ſeem to be contradicted by Chriſt, ver. 34. were it not that it may be obſerved, that this ſignifies the whole ſubſequent time of life, and ſo furniſhes us with a very commodious ſenſe of this petition; which is, that God would give us, *day by day*, as *Luke* expreſſes it, ch. xi. 3. that is, every day of our lives, to the end thereof, a proper ſupply of food: or the meaning of it is, that God would give us, for the preſent time, ſuch food as we ſtand in need of; is ſuitable to us, to our nature and conſtitution, ſtate and condition, and is ſufficient and convenient for us: to which agrees the petition of the [u] *Jews*; "The neceſſities of thy people are great, and their "knowledge ſhort; let it be thy good will and "pleaſure, O Lord, our God, that thou wouldſt "give to every one כדי פרנסתו, *what is ſufficient "for his ſuſtenance*, and to every one's body what "it wants." "Says *R. Joſe* [w], all the children of "faith ſeek *every day* לשאלא מזונייהו, *to aſk their "food* of the Lord, and to pray a prayer for it." By *bread* is meant all the neceſſaries of life, and for the ſupport of it: it is called *ours*; not that we have a right unto it, much leſs deſerve it, but to diſtinguiſh it from that of beaſts; and becauſe it is what we need, and can't do without; what is appointed for us by providence, is ours by gift, and poſſeſſed by labour. It is ſaid to be *daily* bread, and to be aſked for *day by day*; which ſuggeſts the uncertainty of life; ſtrikes at all anxious and immoderate cares for the morrow; is deſigned to reſtrain from covetouſneſs, and to keep up the duty of prayer, and conſtant dependance on God; whom we muſt every day aſk to *give* us our daily bread: for he is the ſole author of all our mercies; which are all his free gifts; we deſerve nothing at his hands: wherefore we ought to be thankful for what we have, without murmuring at his providences, or envying at what he beſtows on others. All kind of food, every thing that is eatable, is with the *Jews* called לחם, *bread* [x].

Ver. 12. *And forgive us our debts*, &c.] Nothing is more frequent in the *Jewiſh* writings than to call ſins חובי, *debts*; and the phraſe, of forgiving, is uſed both of God and men. Thus the prayer of *Solomon* is paraphraſed [y] by the *Targumiſt*; "and "hear thou the petition of thy ſervant, and of thy "people *Iſrael*, which they ſhall make before this "place; and do thou receive it from the place of "the houſe of thy *ſhechinah*, from heaven; and do "thou accept their prayer ותשבק לחוביהון, *and* "*forgive their debts.*" So *Joſeph*'s brethren ſignify to him, that it was their father's orders to ſay unto him, *forgive, I pray thee now, the treſpaſs of thy brethren, and their ſin*; which is rendered by the *Chaldee paraphraſts* [z] שבוק לחובי, *forgive the debts* of thy brethren, and their ſins. Accordingly, by *debts* are meant ſins here, as appears from *Luke* xi. 4. where it is read, and *forgive us our ſins*. Theſe are called *debts*; not becauſe they are ſo in themſelves, for then it would be right to do them; debts ſhould be paid; they are not debts we owe to God, but are ſo called, becauſe on account of them we owe ſatisfaction to the law and juſtice of God: the proper debts we owe to God are love, obedience, and gratitude; and in default of theſe, we owe the debt of puniſhment. Now theſe debts are numerous, and we are uncapable of paying, nor can any mere creature pay them for us; wherefore, we are directed to pray, that God would forgive them, or remit the obligation to puniſhment we lie under, on account of ſin. This petition ſuppoſes a ſenſe, acknowledgment, and confeſſion of ſin, and of inability to make ſatisfaction for it; and that God only can forgive it, who does, for Chriſt's ſake, and on account of his blood, ſacrifice, and ſatisfaction: what is here requeſted is a manifeſtation and application of pardon to the conſcience of a ſenſible ſinner; which, as it is daily needed, is daily to be aſked for. The argument, or reaſon uſed, is, *as we forgive our our debtors*; which is to be underſtood not ſo much of pecuniary debtors, though they are to be forgiven, when poor and unable to pay; but of ſuch who have offended, or done real injuries to others, either by word or deed: the injuries of enemies, the unkindneſs of friends, all ſorts of offences, are to be forgiven by us; and not only ſo, but we are to pray to God to forgive them alſo. Now this is mentioned, not as if our forgiving others is the cauſe of God's forgiving us, or the model of it, or as ſetting him an example, or as if his and our forgiving were to be compared together, ſince theſe will admit of no compariſon; but this is an argument founded upon God's own promiſe and grace, to forgive ſuch who have compaſſion on their fellow-creatures.

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[p] Seder Tephillot, fol 17. 2. Ed. Baſil & paſſim. [q] Ib. fol. 22. 1. & paſſim. [r] Seder Tephillot, fol. 128. 2. Ed Baſil. [s] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 40. 2. [t] Ib fol. 29. 2. [u] Ib. [w] Zohar in Exod. fol. 26. 2. [x] Jarchi in Job vi. 7.

Ver. 13. *And lead us not into temptation*, &c.] Such a petition as this is often to be obſerved in the prayers of the *Jews* [a], "אל תביאני, *do not lead me* "neither into ſin, nor into tranſgreſſion and iniquity, "ולא לידי נסיון, *nor into temptation*, or *into the* "*hands of temptation*;" that is, into the power of it, ſo as to be overcome by it, and ſink under it; in which ſenſe the phraſe is to be underſtood here. We are not here taught to pray againſt temptations at all, or in any ſenſe, for they are ſometimes needful and uſeful; but that they may not have the power over us, and deſtroy us. There are various ſorts of temptations. There are the temptations of God; who may be ſaid to tempt, not by infuſing any thing that is ſinful, or by ſoliciting to it; but by enjoining things hard and diſagreeable to nature, as in the caſe of *Abraham*; by afflicting, either in body or eſtate, of which *Job* is an inſtance; by permitting and letting looſe the reins to ſatan, and a man's own corruptions; by with-drawing his preſence, and with-holding the communications of his grace; and ſometimes by ſuffering falſe prophets to ariſe among his people: his ends in them are on his own account, the diſplay of his power, grace, wiſdom, and faithfulneſs; on account of his ſon, that his ſaints might be like him, and he might have an opportunity of exerciſing his power and pity: and on his peoples account, that they might be humbled; their faith and patience tried; might ſee their weakneſs, and need of Chriſt, and be excited to prayer and watchfulneſs. There are alſo the temptations of *ſatan*; which lie in ſoliciting to evil, ſuggeſting hard, and blaſphemous thoughts of God, and filling with doubts and fears; which are cunningly formed by him, and are very afflictive. There are moreover the temptations of the world; which ariſe from poverty and riches, from the men of the world, the luſts of it, and from both its frowns and flatteries: add to all this, that there are temptations ariſing from a man's own heart. Now, in this petition, the children of God pray, that they may be kept from every occaſion and object of ſinning; from thoſe ſins they are moſt inclined to; that God would not leave them to ſatan, and their own corrupt hearts; nor ſuffer them to ſink under the weight of temptations of any ſort; but that, in the iſſue, they might have a way to eſcape, and be victorious over all. *But deliver us from evil.* This petition, with the *Jews*, is in this [b] form; "ותצילני מפגע רע, *but deliver me from an evil* "*accident*, and diſeaſes; and do not trouble me "with evil dreams, and evil imaginations." *R. Juda*, after his prayer, or at the cloſe of it, as is this petition, uſed [c] to ſay; "let it be thy good "pleaſure, O Lord our God, and the God of our "fathers, שתצילנו, *that thou wouldſt deliver us* "from impudent men, and impudence; from an "*evil* man, and from an *evil* accident; from the "*evil* imagination, *i. e.* the corruption of nature; "from an *evil* companion; from an *evil* neighbour; "and from *ſatan* the deſtroyer; and from hard "judgment; and from an hard adverſary, whether "he is the ſon of the covenant, or is not the ſon "of the covenant." And moſt, if not all of theſe things, may be very well thought to be comprized in the word *evil* here: particularly *ſatan* may be meant, by *evil*, or *the evil one*, as the word may be rendered; who is eminently, originally, and immutably evil; his whole work and employment is nothing elſe but evil: and to be delivered from him, is to be reſcued out of his hands, preſerved from his ſnares, and delivered from his temptations. Evil men may alſo be intended: all men are naturally evil, and unalterably ſo, without the grace of God; and ſome are notoriouſly wicked; from whoſe company, ſinful luſts, and pleaſures, to which they are addicted, as well as from their rage and perſecution, good men cannot but deſire deliverance; as alſo from the evil of afflictions, and eſpecially from the evil of ſin; as that they may be kept from the commiſſion of it; have the guilt of it removed; be preſerved from its power, and dominion; and, at laſt, be freed from the very being of it. *For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.* This concluſion is left out in the *Arabic* and *Vulgate Latin* verſions, as it is in *Luke*

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[y] Targum in 2 Chron. vi. 21. [z] Targum Onkelos & Jon. ben Uzziel in Gen. l. 17. Vid. Targum in 1 Chron. iv. 18. & in Cant. i. 1. & in Gen. iv. 13. & paſſim. [a] Seder Tephillot, fol. 3. 1. Ed. Baſil. fol. 4. 2. Ed. Amſtelod. Shaare Zion, fol. 73. 1. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 60. 2. [b] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 60. 2. [c] Ib. fol. 16. 2.

xi. 4. It ſtands thus in the *Jewiſh* prayers [d], "כי המלכות שלך היא, *for the kingdom is thine*, and thou ſhalt reign in glory for ever and ever." The uſual reſponſe at the cloſe of prayers, and reading the *Shema*, inſtead of *Amen*, was [e] this; "Bleſſed be the name of the glory of his kingdom, for ever and ever." Which bears ſome reſemblance to this concluding expreſſion, which aſcribes everlaſting kingdom, power, and glory, to God: which may be conſidered, either as a doxology, or an aſcription of glory to God, which is his due; and ought to be given him in all our prayers to him; or as ſo many reaſons ſtrengthening our faith in prayer; or as ſo many arguments with God, with reſpect to the petitions made; ſince the kingdom of nature, providence, grace, and glory, is his: he is omnipotent, he has power to give us our daily bread; to forgive our ſins; to preſerve from, ſupport under, and deliver out of temptation; to keep from all evil, and preſerve from a total and final falling away: whoſe glory is concerned in all, to whom the glory of all is, and to whom it muſt, and ſhall be given; and all this for ever: and the whole is concluded with the word *Amen*; which is a note of aſſeveration, of the truth herein contained; is added by way of aſſent, to every petition made; is expreſſive of an hearty wiſh, and deſire to have all fulfilled; and alſo of faith and confidence, that they will be anſwered. And this word being retained, and kept the ſame in all languages, ſignifies the unity of the Spirit, and faith in prayer, in all the ſaints, in all ages. I leave this prayer with one obſervation, and that is, whereas it has been ſo long, and ſo often ſaid, that this is the Lord's prayer, it can never be proved, that he ever made uſe of it; and it is certain, that he did not make it, as appears from what has been cited out of the *Jewiſh* records: the ſeveral petitions in it, were in being and uſe, before he directed to them; and not only the petitions, but even the very preface and concluſion, are manifeſtly of *Jewiſh* original: what our Lord did, was, he took the moſt proper and pertinent petitions, that had been uſed by good men among that people; which, with ſome alterations much for the better, he put together in this order, and gave his approbation of; and that with this view, to point out to his diſciples, ſome of the beſt and moſt ſuitable petitions to be made; and to give them a pattern of brevity and conciſeneſs in prayer; and teach them to pray after ſuch a manner, or in ſome ſuch like words and expreſſions. This I obſerve, not to leſſen the uſefulneſs of this excellent pattern of ſound words; the whole, and every part of it, being exceedingly inſtructive, and worthy of imitation; but to rectify a vulgar miſtake, and to abate the formal and ſuperſtitious obſervance of it.

Ver. 14. *For if ye forgive men their treſpaſſes*, &c.] Chriſt here refers to the petition in ver. 12. which is inforced with this reaſon and argument, *as*, or *for*, ſo *Luke* xi. 4. *we forgive our debtors*; which he repeats and explains: and the reaſon why he ſingles out this particularly is, becauſe he knew the *Jews* were a people very ſubject to revenge; and were very hardly brought to forgive any injuries done them: wherefore Chriſt preſſes it upon them cloſely, to *forgive men their treſpaſſes*; all ſorts of injuries done them, or offences given them, whether by word or deed; and that fully, freely, from the heart; forgetting, as well as forgiving; not upbraiding them with former offences; and even without aſking pardon, and though there might be no appearance of repentance. Now to this he encourages, by ſaying, *your heavenly Father will alſo forgive you*; will hear your prayers, and manifeſt his forgiving love to you: not that the forgiveneſs of others, is the procuring cauſe of forgiveneſs with God, which is the blood of Chriſt; or of the manifeſtation and application of it, that is, the advocacy of Chriſt; nor the moving cauſe of it, that is, the free grace of God: but this enters into the character, and is deſcriptive of the perſons, to whom God is pleaſed to make a comfortable diſcovery, and give a delightful ſenſe, of his pardoning grace; ſuch perſons, ſo diſpoſed and aſſiſted by his grace, may expect it of him.

Ver. 15. *But if you forgive not men their treſpaſſes*, &c.] On the other hand, where men are not of a forgiving temper to their fellow creatures, and fellow chriſtians, how can they expect forgiveneſs at the hands of God? or what ſenſe of pardoning grace, can there be upon their minds? Had they any right apprehenſions of the grace and goodneſs of God, in the forgiveneſs of their ſins, this would influence their minds, and engage their hearts to forgive ſuch who have offended them: wherefore, where this is wanting, it may be concluded of, and ſaid to ſuch perſons, *neither will your Father forgive your treſpaſſes*. It is a plain caſe, that your Father has not given you a true ſenſe of the pardon of your ſins, nor can you be certain that he will; nor have you any reaſon to expect it, when you are ſo cruel and revengeful to others. There is a conſiderable emphaſis lies upon the word *men*, to which *heavenly Father* is oppoſed; and the ſenſe, according to it, is, that if men, who are upon an equal foot with each other, ſhould not forgive one another, how ſhould it be expected that our Father which is in heaven, who is ſo much above, and no ways obliged to us, ſhould forgive us?

Ver. 16. *Moreover when ye faſt*, &c.] This is to be underſtood, not ſo much of their publick ſtated faſts, and which was by divine appointment, as of their private faſts; which, with the *Jews*, were very frequent and numerous, and particularly every *Monday* and *Thurſday*; ſee *Luke* xviii. 12. in which they affected great ſeverity, and is here condemned by Chriſt: *be not as the hypocrites*, the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, *of a ſad countenance*; who put on very mournful airs, and diſmal looks; made wry faces, and diſtorted countenances; baniſhed all pleaſantry and chearfulneſs from them, ſo that they looked quite like other men, than they really were; *for they disfigure their faces*; not by covering them out of ſight; by putting a veil over them, as ſome have thought; but they neglected to waſh their faces, and make them clean, as at other times; and not only ſo, but put aſhes upon their heads, and other methods they uſed: they diſcoloured their faces, or *made* them *black*, as the *Arabic* verſion reads it; that they might look as if they became ſo through faſting: and ſuch perſons were in great eſteem, and thought to be very religious. It is ſaid [f], in commendation of *R. Joſhua ben Chananiah*, that all his days הושחרו פניו *his face was black*, through faſtings; and this is ſaid [g] to be the reaſon of *Aſhur*'s name, in 1 *Chron.* iv. 5. becauſe *his face was black* with faſting: yea, they looked upon ſuch a disfiguring of the face to be meritorious, and what would be rewarded hereafter. "Whoever, ſay they [h], המשחיר פניו, *makes his face black*, on account of the law in this world, God will make his brightneſs to ſhine in the world to come."

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[d] Seder Tephillot, fol. 280. 1. Ed. Baſil.

[e] Miſn. Yoma, c. 4. §. 1. & 6. 2. T. Bab. Peſachim, fol. 56. 1. & Taanith, fol. 16. 2. Seder Tephillot, fol. 70. 2. Ed. Baſil.

[f] Juchaſin, fol. 59. 1.

[g] T. Bab. Sota, fol. 12. 1.

[h] T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 100. 1.

“ come.” Now theſe practices they uſed, *that they might appear unto men to faſt*: ſo that either they did not really faſt, when they pretended to it; only put on theſe outward appearances, that men might think they did; or, not content with real faſting, which they muſt be conſcious of themſelves, and God knew; they took ſuch methods, that it might appear to men that they faſted, and that they might be took notice of, and applauded by them: for their view in faſting, was not to ſatisfy their own conſciences, or pleaſe God; but that they might have glory of men. Hence, ſays Chriſt, *verily I ſay unto you, they have their reward*; they obtain what they ſeek for, honour from men, and that is all they will have.

Ver. 17. *But thou when thou faſteſt*, &c.] Chriſt allows of faſting, but what is of a quite different kind from that of the *Jews*; which lay not in an outward abſtinence from food, and other conveniences of life, and refreſhments of nature; but in an abſtinence from ſin, in acknowledgment and confeſſion of it; and in the exerciſe of faith and hope in God, as a God pardoning iniquity, tranſgreſſion and ſin; wherefore chearfulneſs, and a free uſe of the creatures, without an abuſe of them, beſt became ſuch perſons. *Anoint thine head, and waſh thy face*; directly contrary to the *Jewiſh* canons, which forbid theſe things, with others, on faſt-days: “ On the day of atonement, ſay [i] they, “ a man is forbidden eating and drinking, “ וברחיצה ובסיכה *and waſhing, and anointing*, “ and putting on of ſhoes, and the uſe of the bed.” And the ſame were forbidden on other faſts: in anointings, the head was anointed firſt, and this rule and reaſon are given for it: “ he that would “ anoint his whole body, סך ראשו תחילה, *let him* “ *anoint his head firſt*, becauſe it is king over all “ its members [k].” Anointing and waſhing, were ſigns of chearfulneſs and joy; ſee *Ruth* iii. 3. 2 *Sam.* xii. 20.

Ver. 18. *That thou appear not unto men to faſt*, &c.] Which is juſt the reverſe of the hypocrites, the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*; and quite contrary to the cuſtoms of the *Jews*, who when they faſted, particularly on their noted faſts [l], “ brought out the “ ark into the ſtreet of the city, and put burnt “ aſhes upon it, and upon the head of the prince, “ and upon the head of the preſident of the *San-* “ *hedrim*, and every man upon his own head.” All which was done, to be ſeen of men to faſt; but Chriſt directs to ſuch ſort of faſting, and which is to be done in ſuch a manner, as only to be ſeen by God: *but unto thy Father which is in ſecret*; who is inviſible, and who ſees what is done in ſecret; and takes notice of the internal exerciſe of grace; which he approves of, and prefers to outward faſtings; and *thy Father which ſeeth in ſecret, ſhall reward thee openly*: and to have honour from God, is infinitely more than to have the applauſe of men; for as God delights in, ſo he will reward his own grace with glory.

Ver. 19. *Lay not up for yourſelves treaſures upon earth*, &c.] Meaning either treaſures that are of an earthly nature and kind, the more valuable and excellent things of the earth, worldly wealth and riches; or the things and places, in which theſe are laid up, as bags, cheſts, or coffers, barns and other treaſuries, private or publick. Chriſt here diſſuades from covetouſneſs, and worldly mindedneſs; an anxious care and concern, to hoard up plenty of worldly things for themſelves, for time to come, making no uſe of them at preſent, for the good of others: and this he does, from the nature of the things themſelves; the places where they are laid up; the difficulty of keeping them; and their liableneſs to be corrupted or loſt. *Where moth and ruſt doth corrupt, and thieves break through and ſteal.* Garments formerly, were a conſiderable part of the treaſures of great men, as well as gold and ſilver; ſee *Job* xxvii. 16. So according to the [m] *Targumiſt*, *Haman* is bid to go לבית גנזי דמלכא *to the king's treaſury*, and take from thence, one of the purple garments, the beſt, and raiment of the beſt ſilk, *&c.* and theſe were liable to be eaten with *the moth*, *James* v. 2. The word tranſlated *ruſt*, does not here ſignify the ruſt of metals, as gold and ſilver; by which there is not ſo much damage done, ſo as to deſtroy them, and make them uſeleſs; but whatever corrupts and conſumes things eatable, as blaſting and mildew in corn, or any ſort of vermin in granaries: for gold and ſilver, or money, with jewels and precious ſtones, which make a very great part of worldly treaſure, ſeem to be more particularly deſigned, by what thieves break through into houſes for, and carry away. So that here are three ſorts of earthly treaſures pointed at, which are liable to be corrupted, or taken away: garments, which may be deſtroyed, and rendered uſeleſs for wearing; proviſions of things eatable, as all ſorts of corn and grain, which may be ſo corrupted by ſmut and vermin, as not to be fit for uſe; and money and jewels, which may be ſtolen by thieves: ſo that no ſort of worldly riches and treaſure is ſafe, and to be depended on; and therefore it is a great folly and vanity to lay it up, and truſt in it.

Ver. 20. *But lay up for yourſelves treaſure in heaven*, &c.] That is, either be concerned for, and ſeek after heavenly treaſure, the riches of glory, the joys and glories of another world, which infinitely excel every thing that is valuable on earth; and which can never be corrupted, or taken away: or rather, lay up your earthly treaſures in heaven; that is, put them into the hands of God in heaven; and this is done, by liberally communicating to the poor; by which means men *provide themſelves bags which wax not old, and a treaſure in heaven that faileth not*, *Luke* xii. 33. They ſhall never want any good thing here, and they *lay up in ſtore for themſelves, a good foundation againſt the time to come*, 1 *Tim.* vi. 18, 19. This is the way to have worldly treaſure ſecured from moth, ruſt, and thieves; for to lay it up in heaven with God, to give it to him, to his poor, to make uſe of it for his glory, is to lay it up in a place, *where neither moth nor ruſt doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor ſteal.* Treaſures are ſafer here than in our own hands, and will turn to better account, and more to our own advantage, both in this life, and that which is to come; ſee *Matt.* xix. 21. In this way, though not for it, men come to have treaſure in heaven, even the treaſure of eternal life, glory, and happineſs. Heaven is often repreſented by the *Jewiſh* writers, as a treaſury; and the treaſures which are in it, are ſaid [n] to be “ גנזי חיים *treaſures of life*, “ and treaſures of peace, and treaſures of bleſſing; “ and the ſouls of the righteous, and the ſpirits and “ ſouls that ſhall be created, and the dew with “ which God will quicken the dead.” Thoſe words in *Deut.* xxxi. 16. *And the Lord ſaid unto Moſes, thou ſhalt ſleep with thy fathers*, are thus [o] paraphraſed. “ And the Lord ſaid unto *Moſes*, lo! thou ſhalt “ ſleep in the duſt with thy fathers, and thy ſoul

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[i] Miſn. Yoma, c. 8. §. 1. & Taanith, c. 1. §. 4, 5, 6. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 77. 2. Taanith, fol. 12. 2. Moſes Kotſenſis Mitzvot Tora, pr. affirm. 32.

[k] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 61. 1.

[l] Miſn. Taanith, c. 2. §. 1.

[m] Targum Sheni. in Eſth. vi. 10.

[n] T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 12. 2.

[o] Targum Jon. ben Uzziel, in Deut. xxxi. 16.

"ſhall be treaſured up, בגניז חיי עלמא, *in the treaſury of eternal life*, with thy fathers." They tell us [p] a ſtory of *Monbaz* the king, who was ſon to queen *Helena*; in which, are many things agreeable to theſe words of Chriſt, and which may ſerve to illuſtrate them. "*Monbaz* the king, ſtood and "gave all his goods to the poor: his relations ſent "to him, and ſaid, thy fathers added to that "which was theirs, and to that which was their fa-"thers; but thou haſt given away that which "was thine, and that which was thy father's: "he replied to them all thus; my fathers "גנזו בארץ ואני גנזתי בשמים *laid up treaſure on* "*earth, but I have laid up treaſure in heaven*, ac-"cording to *Pſal.* lxxxv. 11. My fathers laid up "treaſures, which do not bring forth fruit; but I "have laid up treaſures, which bring forth fruit, "according to *Iſa.* iii. 10. My fathers gathered in "a place, where the hand, *i. e.* of man rules, "(where thieves break through and ſteal) but I have "gathered in a place, where the hand of man does "not rule, according to *Pſal.* xcvii. 2. My fathers "gathered *mammon*, or money, but I have gather-"ed ſouls, according to *Prov.* xi. 30. My fathers "gathered *for others*, but I have gathered לעצמי "*for myſelf*, according to *Deut.* xxiv. 13. My "fathers gathered *in this world*, but I have gather-"ed *for the world to come.*" One of their *commentators* [q] on the phraſe, *my fathers laid up treaſures below*, as it is in the *Babyloniſh Talmud* [r], has this remark; "for lo! all that they treaſured up, "was for the neceſſaries of this world; which is "מקום עפר רמה תולעה *a place of duſt and ver-*"*min*, which corrupt and deſtroy every thing; *but* "*I have laid up treaſures above*, a place ſecure and "firm, and which preſerves every thing that is "put into it."

Ver. 21. *For where your treaſure is, there will your heart be alſo.*] This ſeems to be a proverbial expreſſion, and contains in it another reaſon, diſſuading from worldly mindedneſs; becauſe of the danger the heart is in, of being enſnared and ruined thereby: and the ſenſe of it is, if your treaſure is on earth, and lies in earthly things, your hearts will be ſet upon them, and be in them, in your bags, your coffers and ſtore-houſes; and ſo your ſouls will be in danger of being loſt; which loſs will be an irreparable one, though you ſhould gain the whole world. But if your treaſure is put into the hands of God, your hearts will be with him, and be ſettled on him; your deſires will be after heavenly things; your affections will be ſet on things above; your converſation will be in heaven, whilſt you are on earth; and that will be the place and ſeat of your happineſs, to all Eternity.

Ver. 22. *The light of the body is the eye*, &c.] Or, the *candle of the body is the eye*; for the eye is that in the body, as a candle is in the houſe; by the light of it, the ſeveral members of the body perform their office; and what is ſaid of the eye of the body, is transferred to the eye of the mind: *if therefore thine eye be ſingle*; that is, if thy mind be liberal, generous, and bountiful: for Chriſt is ſtill upon the ſame ſubject of liberality, and againſt covetouſneſs; and here ſpeaks entirely in the language of the *Jews*, who could eaſily underſtand him; in whoſe writings, we read of three ſorts of eyes; a good eye, a middling one, and an evil one; ſo in the offerings of the firſt-fruits [s], "עין יפה, *a good* "*eye* gave the fortieth, the houſe *Shammai* ſay, "the thirtieth part; a middling one, the fiftieth; "and an evil one, the ſixtieth part." Upon which the *commentators* ſay [t], a *good eye*, means one that is liberal, and an *evil eye*, the contrary: hence you often read [u], of *trading*, *dedicating*, and *giving with a good* or *an evil eye*; that is, either generouſly, liberally, or in a niggardly and grudging manner; which may help us to the ſenſe of our Lord in theſe words; whoſe meaning is, that if a man is not covetous, but his mind is diſpoſed to generoſity and liberality; if this be the caſe, as if he ſhould ſay, *thy whole body ſhall be full of light*: all thy actions will be influenced by this noble principle; thy whole life will be illuminated, guided and governed by it; thy mind will be chearful and pleaſant, and thy eſtate and condition will be proſperous and ſucceſsful.

Ver. 23. *But if thine eye be evil*, &c.] If thou art of a ſordid diſpoſition, of an avaricious temper, if the ſin of covetouſneſs prevails over thee, *thy whole body will be full of darkneſs*: thy judgment will be ſo influenced by that ſordid principle, that thou wilt not be able to diſcern what is agreeable to the law of God, or human reaſon; what is fitting to be done for thyſelf, for God, or for thy fellow creatures; all the powers and faculties of thy ſoul will be enſlaved by it, and all be intent upon, and employed in the gratification of it: thy mind will be always ſad and ſorrowful, harraſſed and diſtreſſed; and thy eſtate, and condition, will be moſt miſerable and uncomfortable: *if therefore the light that is in thee be darkneſs, how great is that darkneſs!* as it is in the body, ſo it is with the mind; as when the eye, the light of the body, is put out by any means, all the members of the body are in entire darkneſs; ſo when the light of reaſon in the mind, is ſo far extinguiſhed by any prevailing iniquity, particularly the ſin of covetouſneſs, ſo that it is wholly influenced and governed by it, what irregular actions is it led into! What deeds of darkneſs does it perform! and what will be the conſequence of it, but utter and eternal darkneſs, if grace prevent not!

Ver. 24. *No man can ſerve two maſters*, &c.] Whoſe orders are directly contrary to one another: otherwiſe, if they were the ſame, or agreed, both might be ſerved; but this is rarely the caſe, and ſeldom done. This is a proverbial expreſſion, and is elſewhere uſed by Chriſt, *Luke.* xvi. 13. The *Jews* have ſayings pretty much like it, and of the ſame ſenſe as when they ſay [w], "we have not found that "כל אדם זוכה לשתי שולחנות *any man is fit for two* "*tables.*" And again [x], "that it is not proper for "one man to have two governments:" their meaning is, that two things can't be done together: *for, either he will hate the one, and love the other*; he will have leſs affection and regard to the one, than to the other; as the ſervice or orders of the one, are leſs agreeable to him than the others: *or elſe he will hold to the one*; hearken to his commands, obey his orders, and abide in his ſervice: *and deſpiſe the other*; ſhew diſreſpect to his perſon, neglect his orders, and deſert his ſervice: *ye cannot ſerve God and mammon*. The word *mammon* is a *Syriac* word, and ſignifies money, wealth, riches, ſubſtance, and every thing that comes under the name of worldly goods. *Jerom* ſays, that riches, in the *Syriac* language, are called *mammon*; and ſo the word is often uſed in the above ſenſes, in the *Chaldee paraphraſes* [y], and in the *Talmudic* writings; where [z] דיני ממונות *pecuniary judgments*,

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[p] T. Hieroſ. Peah, fol. 15. 2. [q] Caphtor, fol. 97. 1. [r] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 11. 1. [s] Miſn. Trumot, c. 4. §. 3. [t] Maimon. Bartenora & Ez Chayim in ib. [u] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 37. 2. & 71. 1. & 72. 1. [w] Præfat. Celi Jaker, fol. 3. 1. [x] Piſke Toſephot Cetubot, art. 359. [y] Vid. Targum Onkelos, & Jon. in Gen. xiii. 13. & in Jud. v. 19. & in Prov. iii. 9. & in Iſa. xlv. 13. & paſſim. [z] Miſn. Sanhed. c. 1. §. 1. & c. 4. §. 1.

*judgments*, or cauſes relating to money affairs, in which were pecuniary mulcts, are oppoſed to דיני נפשות *judgments of ſouls*, or cauſes relating to life and death. The account and interpretation *Irenæus*[a] gives of the word, is very wide and foreign; who ſays, that “ *Mammon*, according to the *Jewiſh* way of ſpeaking, which the *Samaritans* uſed, “ is one that is greedy, and would have more than “ he ought; but, according to the *Hebrew* language, “ it is called adjectively *Mam*, and ſignifies one that “ is gluttonous; that is, who can't refrain himſelf “ from gluttony.” Whereas it is not an *Hebrew* word, nor an adjective, but a ſubſtantive, and ſignifies riches; which are oppoſed to God, being by ſome men loved, admired, truſted in, and worſhipped, as if they were God; and which is incompatible with the ſervice of the true God: for ſuch perſons, whoſe hearts go after their covetouſneſs, and are ſet upon earthly riches, who give up themſelves to them, are eagerly and anxiouſly purſuing after them, and place their confidence in them; whatever pretenſions they may make to the ſervice of God, as did the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, who are particularly ſtruck at by this expreſſion, both here and elſewhere, they cannot truly and heartily ſerve the Lord. *Mammon* is the god they ſerve; which word may well be thought to anſwer to *Pluto*, the god of riches, among the Heathens. The *Jews* in Chriſt's time, were notorious for their love of *mammon*; and they themſelves own, that this was the cauſe of the deſtruction of the ſecond temple: the character they give of thoſe, who lived under the ſecond temple, is this; “ we know that they laboured in the law, “ and took care of the commandments, and of the “ tithes, and that their whole converſation was “ good; only that they אוהבין את הממם *loved* “ *the mammon*, and hated one another without a “ cauſe[b].

Ver. 25. *Therefore I ſay unto you, take no thought for your life*, &c] Since ye cannot ſerve both God and *mammon*, obey one, and neglect the other. Chriſt does not forbid labour to maintain, ſupport, and preſerve, this animal life; nor does he forbid all thought and care about it, but all anxious, immoderate, perplexing, and diſtreſſing thoughts and cares; ſuch as ariſe from diffidence and unbelief, and tend to deſpair; which are diſhonourable to God, as the God of nature and providence, and uncomfortable to men: *what ye ſhall eat, or what ye ſhall drink, nor yet for your body, what ye ſhall put on*. The ſeveral and the only things, which are neceſſary for the ſupport and comfort of human life, are mentioned; as meat, drink, and clothing. Eating and drinking, are neceſſary to preſerve life; and raiment, to cover and defend the body, from the injuries of the heavens: and having theſe, men have every thing neceſſary, and ought herewith to be content; nor ſhould they be anxiouſly thoughtful about theſe: for *is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?* And yet, God has given theſe without man's thought: and ſince theſe are better, and much more excellent, than food and raiment, as all muſt and will acknowledge; and God has given theſe the greater gifts, it may be depended upon, that he will give the leſſer; that he will give meat and drink, to uphold that valuable life, which he is the author of; and raiment to clothe that body, which he with ſo much wiſdom and power, has accurately and wonderfully made.

Ver. 26. *Behold the fowls of the air*, &c.] Not ſuch as are brought up in houſes, but which fly abroad in the air, wild; and are not ſupported by their own, or any human care, but by the care of God: *Luke*, ch. xii. 24. particularly mentions the *ravens*, referring probably, to *Pſal.* cxlvii. 9. and becauſe they are very voracious creatures: and there it is ſaid, *conſider the ravens*; look attentively upon them, and with obſervation, *for they ſow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns*. This is not ſaid, that men ſhould not ſow, nor reap, nor gather into barns; but to reprove their diffidence and unbelief: who, though they have the opportunity of ſowing, reaping, and gathering in, year by year, yet diſtruſt the providence of God; when the fowls of the air do none of theſe, *yet your heavenly Father feedeth them*; ſee *Pſal.* cxlv. 15, 16. and cxlvii. 9. The *Jews* acknowledge this, that the leaſt and meaneſt of creatures, are fed by God. “ *Mar* “ ſays[c], the holy bleſſed God ſits וזן *and feeds*, “ *i. e.* all creatures, and takes care of them.” *Are ye not much better then they?* Don't you differ from them? are ye not much more excellent than they? And if God feeds and provides for inferior creatures, ſuch as are very mean and contemptible, how much more will he not provide for you? There is a paſſage in the *Talmud*, which has great affinity to this of Chriſt's, and appears to have in it, pretty much of the like kind of reaſoning. In the *Miſna*[d] it is ſaid, that *R. Simeon ben Eleazer* ſhould ſay, “ Did you ever ſee a beaſt, or a fowl, “ that had a trade? but they are fed without trou- “ ble.” In the *Gemara*[e] is added, “ Did you ever “ ſee a lion bearing burdens, an hart gathering ſum- “ mer-fruits, a fox a money-changer, or a wolf “ ſelling pots? And yet מתפרנסין בלא צער *they* “ *are nouriſhed without labour*, and wherefore are “ they created? To ſerve me, and I am created to “ ſerve my Maker: and lo! theſe things have in “ them an argument, *from the leſs to the greater*; “ for if theſe, which are created to ſerve me after “ this manner, are ſupported without trouble; I, “ who am created to ſerve my Maker, is it not fit “ that I ſhould be ſupplied without trouble? And “ what is the reaſon that I am ſuſtained with trou- “ ble? My ſins.”

Ver. 27. *Which of you by taking thought*, &c.] As Chriſt argued before, from the unneceſſarineſs of anxious thoughts and cares, about the proviſions of life; ſo here, from the unprofitableneſs of them; it being impoſſible for a man, with all his care and thought, to *add one cubit unto his ſtature*, or *to his age*; ſo the word is rendered, *John* ix. 21—23. *Heb.* xi. 11. to the days of his life, he is ſo ſollicitous about; for a cubit may as well be applied to a man's age, as an *hand's breadth* is to his days, *Pſal.* xxxix. 5. Nor is it ſo reaſonable to think, that Chriſt ſhould be ſpeaking of making ſuch an addition to a man's height; though, that to be ſure, is an impoſſible thing: ſince the far greater part of Chriſt's hearers, muſt be come to their full growth, and could not hope to have any addition made to their height; though they might hope to add to their days; much leſs ſuch a monſtrous one, as that of a cubit, and which is a ſtrong reaſon againſt the other ſenſe of the word, and for this; for our Lord is ſpeaking of ſomething very ſmall, which men can't do; as appears from what *Luke* ſays, ch. xii. 26. *If ye then be not able to do that which is leaſt, why*

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[a] Adv. Hæreſ. l. 3. c. 8. p. 249. [b] T. Hieroſ. Yoma, fol. 38. 3. [c] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 107. 2. Avoda Zara, fol. 3. 2. [d] Kiddúſhin, c. 4. §. 14. [e] T. Hieroſ. Kidduſhin, fol. 66. 2. Vid. T. Bab. Kidduſhin, fol. 82. 1, 2.

*why take ye thought for the reſt?* Whereas, to add a cubit to a man's height, is a great deal: “ the ſtature “ of a middling man, ſays [f] *Bartenora*, is three “ cubits.” And to add one more, makes a large addition to his ſtature; but to apply this to a man's age, is a ſmall matter, and yet is what men can't do: the ſenſe of the words is this, that no man, by all the care and thought he can make uſe of, is ever able to add one cubit, or the leaſt meaſure to his days; he can't lengthen out his life one year, one month, one day, one hour; no, not one moment.

Ver. 28. *And why take ye thought for raiment*, &c.] Having expoſed the folly of an anxious and immoderate care and thought, for food to ſupport and prolong life, our Lord proceeds, to ſhew the vanity of an over concern for raiment: *conſider the lilies of the field*, or *the flowers of the field*, as the *Arabic* verſion reads it, the lilies being put for all ſorts of flowers. The *Perſic* verſion mentions both roſe and lily; the one being beautifully cloathed in red, the other in white. Chriſt does not direct his hearers to the lilies, or flowers which grow in the garden, which receive ſome advantage from the management and care of the gardener; but to thoſe of the field, where the art and care of men, were not ſo exerciſed: and beſides, he was now preaching on the mount, in an open place; and as he could point to the fowls of the air, flying in their ſight, ſo to the flowers, in the adjacent fields and vallies: which he would have them look upon, with their eyes, conſider and contemplate in their minds, *how they grow*; in what variety of garbs they appear, of what different beautiful colours, and fragrant odours, they were; and yet *they toil not*, or do not labour as huſbandmen do, in tilling their land, plowing their fields, and ſowing them with flax, out of which linnen garments are made: *neither do they ſpin*; the flax, when plucked and dreſſed, as women do, in order for cloathing; nor do they weave it into cloth, or make it up into garments, as other artificers do.

Ver. 29. *And yet I ſay unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory*, &c.] This is a certain truth, to be affirmed in the ſtrongeſt manner, and to be believed, that not only men and kings too in general; but even particularly *Solomon*, the richeſt and moſt magnificent of all the kings of *Iſrael*, whoſe grandeur, and glory, exceeded all the princes of the earth; that even he, not in his common dreſs, but when *in his glory*, and in *all* his glory, when arrayed with his royal and richeſt robes, with his crown on his head, and when ſeated on his throne, *was not arrayed like one of theſe*, lilies, or flowers of the field: for the glory and beauty of his garments, were purely from art, but theirs by nature; which can never be equalled by art. This phraſe, *Solomon in all his glory*, is the ſame which the *Jewiſh* doctors in their writings, expreſs by שלמה בשעתו *Solomon in his hour*[g]: that is, as their commentators explain it[h], בעת מלכותו *in the time of his reign*; for they ſay, he was firſt a king, and then a private perſon. Now, not whilſt he was a private perſon, but when a king, in the height of his grandeur and magnificence, and when dreſſed out in the moſt ſplendid manner, he was exceeded in array, by a ſingle lily: or the ſenſe is, in his royal apparel. For as the ſame doctors ſay, “ what is a man's *glory*? It is “ his cloathing that is his outward glory; and “ again, garments are the glory of a man[i].”

Ver. 30. *Wherefore if God ſo clothe the graſs of the field*, &c.] Theſe words are a concluſion from the former, and contain an argument from the leſſer to the greater; that if God, for this is ſolely his work, *ſo* clothes the lilies, the flowers of the field, and whatever grows up out of the earth, in ſuch a beautiful and ſplendid manner, as even to out-do *Solomon*, in his richeſt apparel; there's no doubt to be made of it, or at leaſt ought not, but that he will much more provide clothing for men. The argument is illuſtrated, by the ſhort continuance of the graſs of the field, which is ſo clothed; and the uſe it is put to, when cut down; *which to day is* in being, but abides not long, as it were but for a day: it flouriſhes in the morning, continues for the day in its glory and verdure, is cut down at evening, and withers and dies, *and to-morrow is caſt into the oven*, to heat it with, or as the *Syriac* verſion reads בתנורא *in the furnace*. And ſo *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* edition of this Goſpel. For furnaces uſed to be heated with ſtraw and ſtubble, and ſuch like things, as were gathered out of the fields; ſo, we read in the *Miſna*[k], that pots and furnaces were heated; “ a pot which they heat, *with ſtraw and* “ *ſtubble*, they put into it, that which is to be boil- “ ed——a furnace which they heat *with ſtraw and* “ *ſtubble*, they put nothing into it, nor upon it, “ (*i. e.* till they have removed the coals or aſhes:) “ a little furnace, which they heat בקש ובגבבא “ *with ſtraw and ſtubble*, is as the pots.” The laſt word גבבא *Bartenora* ſays, ſignifies wood, or ſticks, ſmall as ſtubble, which they gather out of the field; that is, the ſtalks of ſome ſort of herbs and plants, that grow in the field: now if God clothes theſe plants, which are ſo ſhort-lived, and at laſt uſed for ſuch mean purpoſes; *ſhall he not much more clothe you* men, his people, who are of a much longer life, and deſigned for greater ends and purpoſes; for the worſhip and ſervice of God, for his honour and glory here, and for eternal life and happineſs hereafter, *O ye of little faith?* As ſuch perſons are, who diſtruſt the providence of God, with reſpect to food and raiment. The phraſe, קטני אמנה *men of little faith*, is often to be met with in the *Rabinical* writings: ſo *Noah* is repreſented by them, as one of *little faith*, who believed, and did not believe the flood; and therefore did not go into the ark, till the waters drove him[l]: and though he is ſaid to be perfect, this was not by his works, but by the grace of God[m]. So the *Iſraelites* at the *Red-Sea*, who thought that when they came out on one ſide, the *Egyptians* would come out on the[n] other. So the little children that mocked *Eliſha*, are ſaid to be ſo called, becauſe they were men *of little*[o] *faith*. So every one that exalts his voice in prayer, is reckoned ſuch an one[p]. But what comes neareſt to the caſe before us, is the following[q] paſſage; “ Says *R. Eliezer* the Great, whoever has a morſel “ in his baſket, and ſays, what ſhall I eat to mor- “ row? is no other, than מקטני אמנה *one of thoſe* “ *of little faith*.”

Ver. 31. *Therefore take no thought*, &c.] That is, for the morrow, as it is explained, ver. 34. for it is lawful to take proper care and thought for preſent food, drink and raiment; but not to be anxiouſly concerned for futurity; *ſaying, what ſhall we eat? or what ſhall we drink? or wherewithal ſhall we be clothed?* Theſe are a repetition of the ſeveral things inſtanced in, and are the very language and expreſſions, of men of little faith; as in the above citation, מה אוכל למחר *what ſhall I eat to morrow?*

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[f] In Miſn. Erubim, c. 4. §. 5. & Negaim, c. 13. §. 1.

[g] Miſn. Baya Metzia, c. 7. §. 1. T. Bab. ib. fol. 49. 1. & 83. 1. & 86. 2.

[h] Jarchi & Bartenora in ib.

[i] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 95. 1. & 99. 4. & 110. 4.

[k] Sabbat, c. 3. §. 1, 2.

[l] Jarchi in Gen. vii. 7.

[m] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 10. 2.

[n] T. Bab. Peſachim, fol. 118. 2. Erachin, fol. 15. 1.

[o] T. Bab. Sota, fol. 46. 2. Zohar in Exod. fol. 90. 2.

[p] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 24. 2. Zohar in Num. fol. 93. 2.

[q] T. Bab. Sota, fol. 48. 2.

Ver. 32. *For after all theſe things do the Gentiles ſeek*, &c.] Or *the nations of the world*, as in *Luke* xii. 30. The *Syriac* reads it ſo here: the phraſe, אומות העלם, *the nations of the world*, is uſed of the *Gentiles*, in diſtinction from the *Iſraelites*, thouſands of times in the *Jewiſh* writings, it would be endleſs to give inſtances. Theſe knew not God, nor acknowledged his providence; the greater part of them thought, that the ſoul periſhed with the body; few of them thought, that any thing remained after death; and they that did, ſpoke very doubtfully of it: wherefore it is no wonder, that ſuch perſons ſhould greedily ſeek after, and be anxiouſly concerned for all theſe things, food, raiment, and riches, and a great plenty of them; ſince this is all the happineſs they expect; and imagine, that this is to be acquired by their care, thought, diligence, and induſtry; having no regard to a ſuperior being, and his all-wiſe providence: but for the *Jews*, and ſo Chriſtians, who have a divine revelation, the knowledge of God, and his providence, and of a future ſtate after this life, to act the ſame part the *Heathens* do, is exceedingly unbecoming, abſurd, and wicked: and beſides, ſuch greedy deſires, immoderate care, and anxious ſollicitude, are altogether unneceſſary; *for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all theſe things.* Every word almoſt, carries in it an argument, to ſtrengthen the faith of God's children, to encourage them to believe, that he will beſtow upon them, whatever is needful, for meat, drink, and clothing: he is a *Father*, and will take care of his children; *their Father*; they have intereſt in him, being related to him, and need not doubt of his paternal care, and affectionate regard to them: their *heavenly* father, or their father in heaven; who has all things at his command, who ſits there, and does whatever he pleaſeth on earth: *he knoweth that they have need*; he knows all things, all their ſtraits, difficulties, wants and neceſſities; he knows they need every day, *all theſe things*, food and raiment, and can't do without them: and therefore they may depend upon it, that as it is in his power to relieve them, and their perſons and caſes are not unknown to him; he who ſtands in the relation of a father to them, will ſupply them with whatever is proper and convenient for them.

Ver. 33. *But ſeek firſt the kingdom of God*, &c.] Meaning either the Goſpel, and the miniſtration of it; in which ſenſe this phraſe is often uſed, ſee *Matt.* xxi. 43. *Mark* i. 14. *Luke* iv. 43. and ix. 2—60. and xvi. 16. and which is diligently to be ſought after, and into; to be conſtantly attended on, and to be preferred to our neceſſary food, to raiment, or riches, or any enjoyment of life: or elſe the kingdom of glory, which is prepared by God, and is his gift; for which he makes his people meet here, and will introduce them into it hereafter. *And his righteouſneſs*; the righteouſneſs of God, which is revealed in the Goſpel, and is what gives a right and title to the kingdom of heaven. This is not the righteouſneſs of man, but of God; and is no other than the righteouſneſs of Chriſt; ſo called, becauſe he is God who has wrought it; it is what God approves of, accepts, and imputes, and which only can juſtify in his ſight, and give an abundant entrance into his kingdom and glory. Heaven is to be ſought for in the firſt place, as the perfection of the ſaints happineſs; and Chriſt's righteouſneſs is to be ſought for, and laid hold on by faith, as the way and means of enjoying that happineſs; without which, there will be no entering into the kingdom of heaven. *And all theſe things ſhall be added unto you*; of the free bounty, goodneſs, and liberality of God, without your thought and care, and much leſs merit; even *all theſe things*, meat, drink, clothing, or whatſoever worldly ſuſtenance elſe is neceſſary for you: which are not parts of the happineſs of ſaints, only appendages thereunto; which they have over and above what they are, or ſhould be chiefly ſeeking after. The *Hebrews* [r] ſay, "that no good ſign "will be ſhewn to *Iſrael*, until they return and "*ſeek* three things: *afterwards the children of Iſrael* "*ſhall return and ſeek the Lord*; זו מלכות שמים "*this is the kingdom of heaven*; and *David their* "*king*, according to its literal ſenſe; *and ſhall fear* "*the Lord and his goodneſs*; this is the houſe of the "ſanctuary, as it is ſaid, *this goodly mountain*, and "*Lebanon*."

Ver. 34. *Take therefore no thought for the morrow*, &c.] Reference is had to *Prov.* xxvii. 1. *Boaſt not thyſelf of to-morrow*: a man can't promiſe or aſſure himſelf, that he ſhall have a morrow, and therefore 'tis great weakneſs and folly, to be anxiouſly thoughtful about it. This is expreſſed in the *Talmud* [s], nearer the ſenſe of Chriſt's words, after this manner: "אל תצר צרת מחר *don't diſtreſs thy*"*ſelf with to-morrow's affliction, for thou knoweſt* "*not what a day may bring forth*; perhaps to mor"row may not be, and thou wilt be found diſtreſ"ſing thyſelf, for the time which is nothing to "thee." And ſhould it come, it is unneceſſary to be thoughtful of it in a diſtreſſing manner beforehand; *for the morrow ſhall take thought for the things of itſelf.* The morrow is here introduced by a *proſopopeia*, as if it was a perſon ſufficiently thoughtful and careful for the neceſſaries of it: every day brings along with it freſh care and thought, being attended with freſh wants and troubles; and therefore, it is very unadviſeable, to bring the cares and troubles of two days upon one; as he does, who is anxiouſly concerned to day, for the things of to-morrow; *ſufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.* This proverb is thus expreſſed in the *Talmud* [t], דיה לצרה בשעתה *ſufficient for diſtreſs, or vexation, is the preſent time*; which the Gloſs explains thus, "ſufficient for the vexation it is, that men ſhould "grieve for it, at the time that it comes upon them." It is very wrong to anticipate trouble, or meet it beforehand; if it was for no other reaſon but this, that every day's trouble is enough, and ſhould not be needleſsly added to, by an over concern what ſhall be done for to morrow; or how ſhall the neceſſities of it be anſwered, or the trials of it be endured.

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[r] Jarchi & Kimchi, in Hoſ. iii. 5.

[s] T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 100. 2.

[t] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 9. 2.

CHAP.

## CHAP. VII.

Ver. 1. JUDGE *not, that ye be not judged.*] This is not to be underſtood of any ſort of judgment; not of judgment in the civil courts of judicature, by proper magiſtrates, which ought to be made and paſs, according to the nature of the caſe; nor of judgment in the churches of Chriſt, where offenders are to be called to an account, examined, tried, and dealt with according to the rules of the Goſpel; nor of every private judgment, which one man may make upon another, without any detriment to him; but of raſh judgment, interpreting mens words and deeds to the worſt ſenſe, and cenſuring them in a very ſevere manner; even paſſing ſentence on them, with reſpect to their eternal ſtate and condition. Good is the advice given by the famous *Hillell* [u], who lived a little before Chriſt's time; “ Don't judge thy neighbour, ſays “ he, until thou comeſt into his place.” It would be well, if perſons ſubject to a cenſorious ſpirit, would put themſelves in the caſe and circumſtances the perſons are in they judge; and then conſider, what judgment they would chuſe others ſhould paſs on them. The argument Chriſt uſes to diſſuade from this evil, which the *Jews* were very prone to, is, *that ye be not judged*; meaning, either by men, for ſuch cenſorious perſons rarely have the good-will of their fellow-creatures, but are commonly repaid in the ſame way; or elſe by God, which will be the moſt awful and tremendous: for ſuch perſons take upon them the place of God, uſurp his prerogative, as if they knew the hearts and ſtates of men; and therefore will have judgment without mercy at the hands of God.

Ver. 2. *For with what judgment ye judge, ye ſhall be judged,* &c.] Both by God and men; to which agree thoſe proverbial ſentences uſed by the *Jews*; “ He that judgeth his neighbour according to the “ balance of righteouſneſs, or innocence, they judge “ him according to righteouſneſs.” [w] And a little after, “ As ye have judged me according to the “ balance of righteouſneſs, God will judge you ac- “ cording to the balance of righteouſneſs.” Hence that advice of *Joſhua ben Parachiah* [x], who by the *Jewiſh* writers, is ſaid to be the maſter of Chriſt; “ Judge every man according to the balance of “ righteouſneſs.” Which their commentators explain thus [y]; when you ſee a man as it were in *equilibrio*, inclining to neither part, it is not clear from what he does, that he is either good or evil, righteous or unrighteous; yet when you ſee him do a thing which may be interpreted either to a good or a bad ſenſe, it ought always to be interpreted to the beſt. *And with what meaſure you mete, it ſhall be meaſured to you again.* This was an uſual proverb among the *Jews*; it is ſometimes delivered out thus, מדה כנגד מדה *meaſure againſt meaſure* [z]; but oftner thus, and nearer the form of it here, במדה שאדם מודד בה מודדין לו *with what meaſure a man meaſures, they meaſure to him*: one might fill up almoſt a page, in referring to places, where it is uſed in this form: beſides thoſe in the [a] margin, take the following, and the rather, becauſe it gives inſtances of this retaliation [b]: “ *With what meaſure* “ *a man meaſures, they meaſure to him*; ſo the “ woman ſuſpected of adultery, ſhe adorned her- “ ſelf to commit ſin, and God diſhonoured her; “ ſhe expoſed herſelf to iniquity, God therefore “ ſtripped her naked; the ſame part of her body in “ which her ſin begun, her puniſhment did. *Sam-* “ *ſon* walked after his eyes, and therefore the *Phi-* “ *liſtines* plucked out his eyes. *Abſalom* was lifted “ up in his mind, with his hair, and therefore he was “ hanged by it; and becauſe he lay with his father's “ ten concubines, they therefore pierced him with “ ten lances; and becauſe he ſtole away three hearts, “ the heart of his father, the heart of the *Sanhe-* “ *drim*, and the heart of *Iſrael*, therefore he was “ thruſt with three darts: and ſo it is with reſpect “ to good things; *Miriam* waited for *Moſes* one “ hour, therefore the *Iſraelites* waited for her ſeven “ days in the wilderneſs; *Joſeph*, who was greater “ than his brethren, buried his father; and *Moſes*, “ who was the greateſt among the *Iſraelites*, took “ care of the bones of *Joſeph*, and God himſelf “ buried *Moſes*.”

Ver. 3. *And why beholdeſt thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye,* &c.] By *mote* is meant, any little bit of ſtraw, or ſmall ſplinter of wood, that flies into the eye, and does it damage, hinders its ſight, and gives it pain; and deſigns little ſins, comparatively ſpeaking, ſuch as youthful follies, human frailties, and infirmities, inadvertencies and imprudencies; which may be ſaid to be light faults, in compariſon of others: and though not to be vindicated, nor continued in, yet not to be ſeverely looked upon and chaſtized. To ſcrutinize diligently into, aggravate, dwell upon, and ſharply reprove the lighter faults of others, is a conduct, which is here inveighed againſt, and condemned by Chriſt; and more eſpecially, when it may be ſaid with the greateſt truth and juſtice to ſuch, *but conſidereſt not the beam that is in thine own eye*: by the *beam* is meant, greater ſins, groſſer abominations, and ſuch as were more peculiar to the *Phariſees*; as pride, arrogance, a vain opinion of themſelves, confidence in their own righteouſneſs, hypocriſy, covetouſneſs, and iniquity; things they did not advert to in themſelves, when they loudly exclaimed againſt leſſer evils in others. Such men muſt be of all perſons inexcuſable, who condemn that in others, which either they themſelves do, or what is abundantly worſe.

Ver. 4. *Or how wilt thou ſay to thy brother,* &c.] This is not ſo much an interrogation, as an expreſſion of admiration, at the front and impudence of ſuch cenſorious remarkers, and rigid obſervators; who not content to point at the faults of others, take upon them to reprove them in a very magiſterial way: and it is as if Chriſt had ſaid, with what face canſt thou ſay to thy friend or neighbour, *let me pull out the mote out of thine eye*; give me leave to rebuke thee ſharply for thy ſin, as it deſerves, *and behold a beam is in thine own eye*; thou art guilty of a far greater iniquity: aſtoniſhing impudence! Art thou ſo blind, as not to ſee and obſerve, thy viler wickedneſs? Or which, if conſcious of, how canſt thou prevail upon thyſelf to take upon thee to reprove and cenſure others? Doſt thou think thy brother can't ſee thy beam? and may he not juſtly retort thine iniquities upon thee, which exceed his? and then what ſucceſs canſt thou promiſe thyſelf? Such perſons are very unfit to be reprovers of others.

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[u] Pirke Abot, c. 2. §. 4.

[w] T. Bab Sabbat, fol. 127. 2.

[x] Pirke Abot, c. 1. §. 6.

[y] Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

[z] Bereſhit Rabba, §. 9. fol. 7. 4.

[a] T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 12. 2. Sota, fol. 8. 2. Sanhedrim, fol. 100. 1. Zohar in Gen. fol. 87. 4. & in Lev. fol. 36. 1. & 39. 3. & in Num. fol. 67. 3. Bemidbar Rabba, fol. 194. 1. Miſn. Beracot, c. 9. §. 5.

[b] Miſn. Sota, c. 1. § 7, 8, 9. Vid. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 99. 1, 2.

Ver. 5. *Thou hypocrite, firſt caſt out the beam out of thine own eye*, &c.] Very rightly does our Lord call ſuch a man an hypocrite, who is very free in remarking and reproving other mens ſins, and covering his own; and indeed, one end of his critical obſervations, rigid cenſures, and raſh judgments is, that he might be thought to be holier than he is: Chriſt very manifeſtly points at the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, who were men of ſuch a complexion; and whom he often, without any breach of charity, calls hypocrites. The meaning of this proverbial expreſſion is, that a man ſhould firſt begin with himſelf, take notice of his own ſins, reprove himſelf for them, and reform; and then it will be ſoon enough to obſerve other mens. *And then ſhalt thou ſee clearly, to caſt out the mote out of thy brother's eye:* then will he, and not before, be a proper perſon to reprove others; all objections and impediments to ſuch a work, will then be removed. Our Lord here ſpeaks in the language of the *Jewiſh* nation, with whom ſuch like expreſſions were common, and of long ſtanding[c]. "In the generation that judged the "judges, one ſaid to another, טול קיסם מבין עיניך, "*caſt out the mote out of thine eye*; to whom it was "replied, טול קורה מבין עיניך, *caſt out the beam* "*from thine eye:* one ſaid to another, *thy ſilver is* "*become droſs*; the other replies, *thy wine is mixed* "*with water*." Again[d], "*R. Tarphon* ſaid, I "wonder whether there is any in this generation, "that will receive reproof; if one ſhould ſay to "him, *caſt out the mote out of thine eye*, will he "ſay to him, *caſt out the beam out of thine eye?* "Says *R. Eleazer ben Azariah*, I wonder whether "there is any in this generation, that knows how to "reprove." From whence its clear, that theſe phraſes were uſed in the ſame ſenſe they are by Chriſt; and which is ſtill more evident by the *Gloſs* upon them: for upon the word *mote*, it obſerves, "That it is as if it had been ſaid, עון קטן, *a little* "*ſin*, which is in thine hand (*i. e.* which thou haſt "committed): the other could ſay to him, caſt thou "away עון גדול *the great ſin*, which is in thine "hand; ſo that they could not reprove, becauſe "they were all ſinners." Agreeable to theſe, are ſome other proverbs uſed by the *Jews*, ſuch as "a "vice which is in thyſelf, do not ſpeak of to thy "neighbour,"[e] or upbraid him with it: and[f] again, "adorn thyſelf, and afterwards adorn others." Which is produced by a noted *commentator*[g] of theirs, to illuſtrate the text in *Zeph.* ii. 1. on which he alſo makes this remark; "enquire firſt into your own "blemiſhes, and then enquire into the blemiſhes of "others. The ſenſe of each of them is, that a man ſhould firſt reform himſelf, and then others; and that he that finds fault with others, ought to be without blame himſelf.

Ver. 6. *Give not that which is holy to the dogs*, &c.] Dogs were unclean creatures by the law; the price of one might not be brought into the houſe of the Lord, for a vow, *Deut.* xxiii. 18. yea, theſe creatures were not admitted into ſeveral temples of the Heathens[h]. Things profane and unclean, as fleſh torn by beaſts, were ordered to be given to them, *Exod.* xxii. 31. but nothing that was holy was to be given them, as holy fleſh, or the holy oblations, or any thing that was conſecrated to holy uſes; to which is the alluſion here. It is a common maxim[i] with the *Jews*, "שאין פודין את הקדשים להאכילן לכלבים, *that* "*they don't redeem holy things, to give to the dogs to* "*eat*." Here the phraſe is uſed in a metaphorical ſenſe; and is generally underſtood of not delivering or communicating the holy word of God, and the truths of the Goſpel, comparable to pearls, or the ordinances of it, to perſons notoriouſly vile and ſinful: to men, who being violent and furious perſecutors, and impudent blaſphemers, are compared to *dogs*; or to ſuch, who are ſcandalouſly vile, impure in their lives and converſations, and are therefore compared to ſwine; *neither caſt ye your pearls before ſwine*. But ſince the ſubject Chriſt is upon, is reproof, it ſeems rather to be the deſign of theſe expreſſions, that men ſhould be cautious, and prudent, in rebuking and admoniſhing ſuch perſons for their ſins, in whom there is no appearance or hope of ſucceſs; yea, where there is danger of ſuſtaining loſs; *leſt they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rent you:* that is, deſpiſe the admonitions and reproofs given, and hurt the perſons who give them, either by words or deeds; ſee *Prov.* ix. 7, 8. The *Jews* have ſome ſayings much like theſe, and will ſerve to illuſtrate them[k]; "אל תשליכו הפנינים לפני החזירים, *do* "*not caſt pearls before ſwine*, nor deliver wiſdom to "to him, who knows not the excellency of it; "for wiſdom is better than pearls, and he that does "not ſeek after it, is worſe than a ſwine."

Ver. 7. *Aſk and it ſhall be given you*, &c.] This is to be underſtood of aſking of God in prayer, for ſuch things as are wanting; whether of a temporal nature, as food and raiment, which Chriſt in the former chapter, had warned againſt an immoderate and anxious concern for; or of a ſpiritual nature, as grace, and wiſdom to behave in a proper manner, both towards God and men: and ſuch, who aſk according to the will of God, in the name of Chriſt, and under the direction, guidance, and influence of the Spirit, who aſk in faith and fear, and with ſubmiſſion to the divine will, ſhall have what they aſk for; not as what they deſerve, but as a free gift. *Seek, and ye ſhall find.* This is ſtill meant of prayer, and of ſeeking God, his face and favour; which ſuch ſhall find, who ſeek in a right way, by Chriſt, and with their whole hearts, diligently: *knock and it ſhall be opened unto you*; as beggars do, who uſe much importunity for relief and aſſiſtance. So men ſhould ſtand and knock at the door of mercy, which will not always be ſhut againſt them. Faith in prayer, is a key that opens this door, when a poor ſoul finds grace and mercy to help it in time of need. Our Lord's deſign, is to expreſs the nature, fervor, and conſtancy of prayer, and to encourage to it.

Ver. 8. *For every one that aſketh receiveth*, &c.] For God is no reſpecter of perſons; whoever makes application, be he a *Jew*, or a *Gentile*, rich or poor, bond or free, a man of great gifts, or mean parts, provided he aſks aright, from right principles, and with right views, ſhall not loſe his labour; but ſhall receive all ſuch good things at the hand of God, as are ſuitable and convenient for him. *And he that ſeeketh findeth*; he that ſeeks for God in Chriſt, the grace and mercy of God, the kingdom of God, and his righteouſneſs; that ſeeks after the true riches, both of grace and glory, ſhall be ſure to find them; ſee *Prov.* xxi. 21. *And to him that knocketh it ſhall be opened*; that is, to him that is conſtant at the throne of grace, who continues knocking at the door of mercy, and will have no denial, it ſhall be opened to him; and he ſhall have entrance into the holieſt of all by the blood of Jeſus.

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[c] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 15. 2. [d] T. Bab. Erachin, fol. 16. 2. [e] T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 59. 2. [f] T. Bab Sanhedrim, fol. 19. 1. [g] R. David Kimchi in Zeph. ii. 1. Vid. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 142. 4. [h] Vid. Alex. ab. Alex. Gneial. Dier. l. 2. c. 14. [i] T. Bab. Temura, fol. 17. 1. & 31. 1. & 33. 2. Becorot, fol. 15. 1. Hieroſ. Peſachim, fol. 27. 4. & Maaſer Sheni, fol. 53. 3. [k] Miſchar Happeninim apud Buxtorf. Florileg. Heb. p. 306.

Ver. 9. *Or what man is there of you*, &c.] *That is a father*, as in *Luke* xi. 11. that is, is in the relation, and has the affections of a father; and indeed is a man, and has the nature and paſſions of a man; unleſs he is become a mere brute, and devoid of all humanity, *whom if his ſon aſk bread, will he give him a ſtone?* No, by no means; no man can act ſuch a mercileſs, cruel part as this to a child: for tho' he might impoſe upon him by the likeneſs of ſome ſort of ſtones with bread; yet could not hope to ſatisfy his hunger, or ſtop his mouth this way; but muſt expect to hear from him again with bitter complaints.

Ver. 10. *Or if he aſk a fiſh, will he give him a ſerpent?*] Which is ſomewhat like a fiſh, eſpecially an eel. Fiſh and bread are mentioned, becauſe theſe were common food; ſee *Mark* v. 41. and viii. 6, 7. *John* xxi. 13. and particularly in *Galilee*, a fiſh-country, where Chriſt now was, and from whence he had called his diſciples, who were fiſhermen. In *Luke* xi. 12. 'tis added, *or if he ſhall aſk an egg, will he offer him a ſcorpion?* which is uſed, as the reſt, to ſhew the abſurdity and inhumanity of ſuch conduct; and that indeed nothing of this kind is to be found among men, unleſs it be among monſters in nature.

Ver. 11. *If ye then being evil*, &c.] As all mankind in general are, both by nature and practice: they are conceived in ſin, ſhapen in iniquity; are evil from their youth, and tranſgreſſors from the womb; are corrupt, and do abominable things; and ſuch theſe *Jews* were, Chriſt ſpeaks unto; and who, very likely, has reſpect chiefly to the evil of covetouſneſs they were addicted to. The argument is taken from the leſſer to the geater, and runs thus; that if ye, who are but men, men on earth, yea evil men, not over liberal and beneficent, nay covetous and niggardly, *know how to give good gifts unto your children*; can find in your hearts, having it in the power of your hands, to give ſuitable proviſions for the ſupport and ſuſtenance of your children; *how much more ſhall your father, which is in heaven*; who is omniſcient and omnipotent; who knows the perſons and wants of his children, and what is proper for them, and is able to relieve them, being Lord of heaven and earth, *give good things to them that aſk him?* Not only temporal good things, as meat, drink, and clothing; but all ſpiritual good things; every ſupply of grace; all things pertaining to life and godlineſs. In *Luke* xi. 13. *the holy ſpirit* is mentioned, and ſo ſeems to deſign his gifts and graces, every thing that is neceſſary for the ſpiritual and eternal good of his people: but for theſe things he muſt be enquired of, and ſought after; and it is the leaſt ſaints can do to aſk for them; and they have encouragement enough to aſk; for 'tis but aſk and have.

Ver. 12. *Therefore all things whatſoever*, &c.] Theſe words are the epilogue, or concluſion of our Lord's diſcourſe; the ſum of what he had delivered in the two preceding chapters, and in this hitherto, is contained in theſe words: for they not only reſpect the exhortation about judging and reproving; but every duty reſpecting our neighbour; it is a ſummary of the whole. 'Tis a golden rule, here delivered, and ought to be obſerved by all mankind, *Jews* and *Gentiles*. So the *Karaite Jews*[l] ſay, "all "things that a man would not take to himſelf, "אין ראוי לעשותם לאחיו, *it is not fit to do them* "*to his brethren.*" And *Maimonides*[m] has expreſſed it much in the ſame words our Lord here does; "all things whatſoever ye would that others ſhould "do to you, ſays he, do you the ſame to your "brethren, in the law, and in the commandments:" only there ſeems to be a reſtriction in the word *brethren*; the *Jews*, perhaps, meaning no other than *Iſraelites*; whereas our Lord's rule reaches to all, without exception, *all things whatſoever ye would that men ſhould do to you, do ye even ſo to them:* let them be who they will, whether brethren, or kinſmen, according to the fleſh, or what not; *for this is the law and the prophets:* the ſum of the law and the prophets; not the whole ſum of them, or the ſum of the whole law; but of that part of it which reſpects our neighbours. Remarkable is the advice given by *Hillell*[n], to one who came to be made a proſelyte by him; "whatſoever is hate"ful to thee, that do not thou to thy neighbour; "זו היא כל התורה כולה, *this is all the whole* "*law*, and the reſt is an explication of it, go and "be perfect:" yea, this rule is not only agreeable to the law of *Moſes*, and the prophets, but even to the law and light of nature. *Ariſtotle* being aſked, how we ought to carry ourſelves to our friends, anſwered[o], as we would wiſh they would carry it to us: *Alexander Severus*, a Heathen emperor, ſo greatly admired this rule of Chriſt's, that he ordered it to be written on the walls of his cloſet.

Ver. 13. *Enter ye in at the ſtrait gate*, &c.] By the *ſtrait gate* is meant Chriſt himſelf; who elſewhere calls himſelf *the door*, *John* x. 7—9. as he is into the church below, and into all the ordinances and privileges of it; as alſo to the father, by whom we have acceſs unto him, and are let into communion with him, and a participation of all the bleſſings of grace; yea, he is the gate of heaven, through which we have boldneſs to enter into the holieſt of all by faith and hope now; as there will be hereafter an abundant entrance into the kingdom and glory of God, thro' his blood and righteouſneſs. This is called *ſtrait*; becauſe faith in Chriſt, a profeſſion of it, and a life and converſation agreeable to it, are attended with many afflictions, temptations, reproaches, and perſecutions. *Entering* in at it is by faith, and making a profeſſion of it: hence it follows, that faith is not the gate itſelf, but the grace, by which men enter in at the right door, and walk on in Chriſt, as they begin with him. *For wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to deſtruction*; ſo that the one may be eaſily known from the other. There is no difficulty in finding out, or entering in at, or walking in the way of ſin, which leads to eternal ruin. The gate of carnal luſts, and worldly pleaſures, ſtands wide open, *and many there be which go in thereat*; even all men in a ſtate of nature: the way of the ungodly is *broad*, ſmooth, eaſy, and every way agreeable to the fleſh; it takes in a large compaſs of vices, and has in it abundance of company; but its end is deſtruction. Our Lord ſeems to allude to the private and publick roads, whoſe meaſures are fixed by the *Jewiſh* canons; which ſay[p], that "a pri"vate way was four cubits broad, a way from city "to city eight cubits, a publick way ſixteen cu"bits, and the way to the cities of refuge thirty"two cubits."

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[l] R. Eliahu Addaret, c. 3. apud Trigland. de ſect. Karæorum, c. 10. p. 166. Vid. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 146. 4.

[m] Hilch. Ebel. c. 14. §. 1.

[n] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 31. 1. Maimon. in Miſn. Peah, c. 1. §. 1.

[o] Diog. Laert. in Vit. Ariſtotel. l. 5.

[p] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 100. 1, 2. Vid. Maimon. & R. Sampſon in Miſn. Peah, c. 2. §. 1. & Maimon. in Sabbat, c. 1. §. 1.

Ver. 14. *Becauſe ſtrait is the gate, and narrow is the way*, &c.] And ſo, difficult to enter in at; and when entered, the way is unpleaſant to the fleſh to walk in, being hedged up on each ſide with afflictions and tribulations; and moreover, is like the *narrow place*, or ϛενος τοπος, *the ſtrait place*, as the *Septuagint* in *Numb.* xxii. 26. render it; in which the angel that met *Balaam* ſtood; and in which there was no turning to the right-hand or the left; and ſuch is the way to eternal happineſs. The great encouragement to walk on in it is, becauſe it is that way *which leadeth unto life*; unto eternal life: it certainly leads thither; it never fails of bringing perſons to it; believers in Chriſt, all that walk in Chriſt the way, though they are ſaid to be *ſcarcely* ſaved, by reaſon of their afflictions and trials, they meet with in their way to the kingdom; yet they are, and ſhall be certainly ſaved: they ſhall be ſafely brought to glory; which will be an abundant recompence for all the troubles and ſorrows that have attended them in their journey. *And few there be that find it*; the way, and ſo conſequently the life it leads to. *The gate is ſtrait*; ſmall and little, and ſo unobſerved: there is but one way to heaven, and the generality of men neglect it. *The way is narrow*, and ſo diſagreeable; the company few, and not engaging. Men chuſe large gates, broad ways, and much company. The fleſh loves to walk at liberty, unconfined, and uncontrolled, and with a multitude to do evil: hence, *Zion*'s ways are thin of paſſengers; a ſmall number, comparatively ſpeaking, walk therein, and will be ſaved; a remnant, a little flock, a little city, and few men in it. 'Tis aſked in the *Talmud*[q], “why is the world to come “created with *Jod?* (the leaſt of the letters in “the *Hebrew alphabet*) the anſwer is, becauſe “צדיקים שבו מועטים, *the righteous which are* “*in it are few.*” Some read the words, as the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Vulgate Latin*, with a note of admiration, *how ſtrait is the gate!* &c. and ſo ſome copies.

Ver. 15. *Beware of falſe prophets*, &c.] Or falſe teachers; for not ſuch who pretended to foretel things to come, but ſuch who ſet up themſelves to be teachers of others, are here meant; ſee 2 *Pet.* ii. 1. It may be queried, whether our Lord has not reſpect to the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, who ſat in *Moſes*'s chair, and taught, for doctrines, the commandments of men? and of whoſe doctrines he elſewhere bids men beware: for whatever plauſible pretences for holineſs and righteouſneſs might appear in them, they were repugnant to the word of God, and deſtructive to the ſouls of men; ſuch as their doctrines of free-will, juſtification by the works of the law, the traditions of the elders, *&c.* ſince it follows, *which come to you in ſheeps clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves*; for theſe *loved to go in long clothing*, *Mark* xii. 38. בטלית, in a garment which reached to the feet, and was made of the wool of ſheep. The *Babyloniſh* garment *Achan* ſaw and ſtole, *Rab* ſays[r] was, איצטלא דמילתא, a garment called *melotes*; which is the very *Greek* word the author of the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews* uſes for ſheep-ſkins, perſecuted ſaints wandred about in, *Heb.* xi. 37. and the *Gloſs* upon the place in the *Talmud* referred to, ſays, that this was, טלית של צמר נקי, *a Talith*, or *garment of pure wool*; and *Jarchi*[s] ſays, that “it was the way of deceivers, and profane men, “to cover themſelves, בטליתם, *with their Talith*, “or long garment, *as if they were righteous men*, “that perſons might receive their lyes.” All which agrees very well with the *Phariſees*, who would have been thought to have been holy and righteous, humble, modeſt, and ſelf-denying men; when they were inwardly full of hypocriſy and iniquity, of rapine, oppreſſion, and covetouſneſs; and, under a pretence of religion, *devoured widows houſes.* Though, it ſeems, by what follows, that Chriſt has reſpect, at leaſt alſo, to ſuch, who bore his name, and came in his name, tho' not ſent by him, and called him Lord, and propheſied, and caſt out devils, and did many wonderful works in his name; who, that they might get the good-will and affections of the people, clothed themſelves, not in garments made of ſheeps wool, but in the very ſkins of ſheep, with the wool on them, in imitation of the true prophets, and good men of old; pretending great humility, and ſelf-denial, and ſo *wore a rough garment to deceive*, *Zech.* xiii. 4. when they were inwardly greedy dogs, grievous wolves, of inſatiable covetouſneſs; and, when opportunity offered, ſpared not the flock to ſatisfy their rapacious and devouring appetites. The *Jews* ſpeak of a *wolfiſh humility*; like that of the wolf in the fable, which put on a ſheep-ſkin. “There are ſome men, ſays one of their[t] writers, “who appear to be humble, and fear God in a de-“ceitful and hypocritical way, but inwardly lay “wait: this humility our wiſe men call ענוה זאבית, “*wolfiſh humility.*” Such is this our Lord inveighs againſt, and bids his followers beware of.

Ver. 16. *Ye ſhall know them by their fruits*, &c.] By *fruits* are meant, not ſo much their external works in life and converſation; for a falſe prophet may ſo behave, as not to be diſcovered thereby. So the *Phariſees* were outwardly righteous before men; and falſe teachers among Chriſtians may have the form of godlineſs, and keep it up, tho' they are ſtrangers to, and even deny the power of it: but their doctrines are here meant, and the effects of them. When doctrines are contrary to the perfections of God, repugnant to the ſcriptures of truth, tend to depreciate the perſon and offices, blood, righteouſneſs, and ſacrifice of Chriſt, to leſſen the glory of God's grace, to exalt the creature, and to fill mens minds with notions of the purity, ſelf-ſufficiency, and ability of human nature; when they are calculated to feed the pride and vanity of men, to get money, and gain applauſe, to ſerve their own intereſts, and gratify mens luſts and paſſions, they may be eaſily diſcerned who they are, and from whence they come. The *Jews* have a proverb pretty much like this[u], בוצין מקטפיה ידיע, *a gourd is known by its branches.* The *Gloſs* upon it is, “it “is, as if it was ſaid, from the time it buds forth, “and goes out of the branch, it is known whether “it is good or no;” *i. e.* the goodneſs of the gourd is known by the fruit its branches bear. So a good preacher is known by the good doctrine he brings, and a bad one, by his unſound doctrine. Chriſt is not ſpeaking of theſe falſe prophets, as men, or as private profeſſors of religion, but as prophets, or teachers. *Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thiſtles?* Grapes and figs were common fruit; there was great plenty of them in *Judea*; we often read of the *gathering* of them. It is a matter in diſpute with the doctors[w], “if a man intends “ללקט תאנים ולוקט ענבים, *to gather figs, and* “*he gathers grapes*, black ones, and he gathers “white ones, white ones, and he gathers black “ones, whether he is gulty of a ſin-offering or no.”

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[q] T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 29. 2.

[r] T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 41. 1.

[s] In Zech. xiii. 4.

[t] Abarbinel Nachalath Abot, fol. 192. 1. & 20. 1.

[u] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 48. 1.

[w] T. Bab. Ceritot, fol. 19. 1, 2.

One ſays he is, another [illegible] These words of Chriſt put me in [illegible] paſſage, which ſeems to ſpeak o[illegible]s [x]; "he that marries his d[illegible]lar, it is like to grapes of th[illegible]s of the vine, a thing beauti[illegible] but he that marries his dau[illegible] is like to grapes of the vin[illegible]*th grapes of the thorn*, a thing [illegible]eptable." Though ענבי, in the laſt [illegible] be taken for berries which grow on ſome thorn-buſhes, and not what are properly grap[illegible] do not grow upon, and are not to be gathered from thorns, and bramble-buſhes. The meaning of our Lord is, that from the falſe doctrines of men comes no good fruit of faith, holineſs, joy, peace, and comfort. Their doctrines are like *thorns*, which prick and pierce, give pain and uneaſineſs; and, like *thiſtles*, choak, and are unprofitable, afford no ſolid food and nouriſhment; yea, their words eat as do a canker, are contrary to vital religion and powerful godlineſs. This ſenſe I prefer: becauſe, on the one hand, it is poſſible for a falſe teacher to do works, which may be externally good; tho' indeed no good works, properly ſpeaking, can be performed by an unregenerate man, becauſe he has neither good principles to act from, nor good ends in view: and, on the other hand, a man deſtitute of the grace of God, and lives ill, may yet have right notions of the Goſpel, tho' he has no experimental knowledge and reliſh of it; but where falſe doctrines are imbibed, and propagated, no good fruit can follow upon it.

Ver. 17. *Even ſo every good tree bringing forth good fruit*, &c.] As is the tree, ſo is its fruit; if the tree is good, it will bring forth good fruit. The tree that brings forth good fruit, is good antecedent to the fruit it produces; its firſt good, and then puts forth good fruit: it is not the fruit that makes the tree good, but makes it appear to be ſo; but it is the goodneſs of the tree that makes the fruit good. As a good man does, and will do good works, but his works don't make him a good man; he is ſo before he performs good works, or he would never be able to do them; theſe make him appear to be a good man: ſo a good preacher, that has an experimental knowledge of the doctrines of the Goſpel, will deliver out ſound doctrine, who is firſt made ſo by the gifts and graces of the Spirit of God; and by ſearching the ſcriptures, and examining his doctrines by them, he will be known and appear to be a good miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt, nouriſhed up in the words of faith and good doctrine; and ſuch a good miniſter of the Goſpel, out of the good treaſure of Goſpel-truths put into his earthen veſſel, will bring forth, from time to time, good and excellent truths, to the edification and profit of thoſe that hear: *but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit*; if the tree is corrupt, the fruit will be corrupt; and as is the preacher, ſo will be his doctrines: if he is a corrupt preacher, or a man of a corrupt mind, deſtitute of the truth, his preaching will be ſuch as will tend to corrupt both the principles and practices of men; for ſuch evil men and ſeducers, out of the evil treaſure of falſe doctrines, which they have received into their judgments, will bring forth either more ſecretly or openly, evil tenets in their miniſtry, which prove of bad conſequence to the ſouls of men.

Ver. 18. *A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit*, &c.] A man that is imprincipled with the grace of God, has an experimental acquaintance with the Goſpel of Chriſt, and is guided by the Spirit of God into all truth, as it is in Jeſus, cannot knowingly deliver, maintain, and abide by any doctrine that is contrary to the glory of God's grace, and the perſon of Chriſt, the work of the Spirit, the fundamental doctrines of the bible; or what is repugnant to the experiences of God's people, and prejudicial to their ſouls. *Neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.* A corrupt preacher, one deſtitute of the truth of the Goſpel, reprobate concerning the faith, who never had any experience of the doctrines of grace, and denies them in the theory of them, can't, conſiſtent with himſelf, and his own principles, deliver, or preach good doctrine; or that which tends to produce any good fruit, either in the experience or lives of men. 'Tis true, a corrupt man, that is, an unregenerate man, may preach ſound doctrine, it being what he believes, tho' he has no experience of it: but then this man is not *a corrupt tree*, that is, a corrupt preacher, though a corrupt man. As our Lord means by a *good tree*, not a good man, barely, or one that is made ſo by the grace of God; but a good miniſter, one that is furniſhed by the Spirit of God, and is well inſtructed in the kingdom of heaven: ſo by *a corrupt tree* he does not mean a corrupt man, a man that is in a ſtate of nature, habitually and practically evil; but a corrupt preacher, a falſe prophet or teacher, that has ſucked in corrupt principles, and has nothing elſe in him, and therefore can bring forth no other.

Ver. 19. *Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit*, &c.] Every preacher and teacher that does not bring the Goſpel of Chriſt with him, and plainly and faithfully preach it to the people, ſooner or later, *is hewn down*: however he may have appeared as a tall lofty cedar, and have carried it with a high hand againſt Chriſt and his Goſpel, ſpoke *great ſwelling words of vanity*, and behaved with much *loftineſs* and *haughtineſs*; yet the time comes on, when all this is bowed and made low, *and the Lord alone is exalted*: ſuch preachers are either cut off from the churches of Chriſt, or hewn down by death, *and caſt into the fire*; into the fire of hell; into the lake of fire and brimſtone, *where the beaſt and falſe prophet ſhall be*.

Ver. 20. *Wherefore by their fruits ye ſhall know them.*] This is the concluſion of the whole, and a repetition of what is before ſaid, the more to fix the rule of judgment upon their minds, and engage them to try men by their doctrines, and their doctrines by the ſtandard of the ſcriptures, and not believe every ſpirit; for with ſome care and diligence ſuch perſons may be detected, and the malignant influence of their miniſtry be prevented. The ſum of the whole is, that ordinarily, and generally ſpeaking, as men are, ſo are the doctrines they preach, and by them they may be known, and judged to be what they are. Chriſt here, and in the preceding verſes, is ſpeaking not of men of bad lives and converſations, who take upon them to teach others; for there is not ſo much reaſon to caution good men againſt theſe; they are eaſily detected, and generally diſcarded; but of men that put on ſheeps clothing, who pretended to much holineſs of life and converſation, and ſtrictneſs of religion; and under that diſguiſe delivered out the moſt corrupt and unwholeſome doctrines; which tended greatly to depreciate him and his grace, and to do damage to the ſouls of men.

Ver. 21. *Not every one that ſaith unto me Lord, Lord*, &c.] Not every one that calls Chriſt his Lord and Maſter, profeſſes ſubjection to him, or that calls upon his name, or is called by his name, or makes uſe of it in his publick miniſtrations. There are many who deſire to be called, and accounted Chriſtians, and who make mention of the name of Chriſt in their ſermons, only to take away their reproach, to cover themſelves, and gain credit with, and get into the affections and good-will of the people; but have no hearty love to Chriſt, nor true faith in him: nor is it their concern to preach his Goſpel, advance his glory, and promote his kingdom and intereſt; their chief view is to pleaſe men, aggrandize themſelves, and ſet up the power of human nature in oppoſition to the grace of God, and the righteouſneſs of Chriſt. Now not every one of theſe, no, not any of them, *ſhall enter into the kingdom of heaven.* This is to be underſtood not of the outward diſpenſation of the Goſpel, or the Goſpel church-ſtate, or the viſible church of Chriſt on earth, in which ſenſe this phraſe is ſometimes uſed; becauſe ſuch perſons may, and often do, enter here; but of eternal glory, into which, none ſhall enter, *but he that doeth the will of my father which is in heaven.* This, as it may regard private chriſtians, intends not merely outward obedience to the will of God, declared in his law, nor barely ſubjection to the ordinances of the Goſpel; but more eſpecially faith in Chriſt for life and ſalvation; which is the ſource of all true evangelical obedience, and without which nothing is acceptable to God. He that ſeeth the ſon, looks unto him, ventures on him, commits himſelf to him, truſts in him, relies on him, and believes on him for righteouſneſs, ſalvation, and eternal life, he it is that does the will of the father, and he only; and ſuch an one, as he is deſirous of doing the will of God in all acts of chearful obedience to it, without dependance thereon; ſo he ſhall certainly enter the kingdom of heaven, and have everlaſting life; ſee *John* vi. 40. but as theſe words chiefly reſpect preachers, the ſenſe of them is this, that only ſuch who are faithful diſpenſers of the word ſhall enter into the joy of their Lord. Such do the will of Chriſt's father, and ſo his own, which are the ſame, who fully and faithfully preach the Goſpel of the grace of God; who declare the whole counſel of God, and keep back nothing that is profitable to the ſouls of men; who are neither aſhamed of the teſtimony of Chriſt, nor afraid of the faces of men; but as they are put in truſt with the Goſpel, ſo they ſpeak it boldly, with all ſincerity, not as pleaſing men, but God, and commend themſelves to every man's conſcience in the ſight of God: ſuch as theſe ſhall have an abundant entrance into the kingdom and glory of God. The *Vulgate Latin* adds this clauſe, *he ſhall enter into the kingdom of heaven,* and ſo does *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* edition of the Goſpel according to *Matthew.*

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[x] T. Bab. Peſachim, fol. 49. 1.

Ver. 22. *Many will ſay to me in that day, Lord, Lord,* &c.] That is, in the laſt day, the day of judgment, the great and famous day, fixed by God, unknown to angels and men, which will be terrible to ſome, and joyful to others; the day in which the faithful miniſters of the Goſpel ſhall be owned by Chriſt, and received into the kingdom of heaven: *many,* not of the common people only, but of the preachers of the word, who have filled up the higheſt ſtation in the church below; not one, or two, or a few of them only, but many of them *will ſay to me;* to Chriſt, who will appear then as the judge of quick and dead, to which he is ordained by his father, *Lord, Lord;* not *my Lord, my Lord,* as the *Syriac* verſion reads it; for they'll not be able to claim any intereſt in him, though they'll be obliged to own his dominion, power, and authority over them. The word is repeated to ſhew their importunity, ſenſe of danger, the confuſion they'll be in, the wretched diſappointment they will have; and therefore ſpeak as perſons amazed and confounded, having expected they would have been the firſt perſons that ſhould be admitted into heaven. Their pleas follow; *have we not propheſied in thy name?* This may be underſtood either of foretelling things to come; which gift wicked men may have, who have never had any experience of the grace of God, as *Balaam,* and *Caiaphas,* and others; or rather of preaching the word, which is ſometimes called propheſying, *Rom.* xii. 6. 1 *Cor.* xiii. 9. and xiv. 1—3, 4, 5. and which may be done in the name of Chriſt, pretending miſſion and authority from him, and to be preachers of him, and yet be no better than *ſounding braſs,* or *a tinkling cymbal;* yea, nothing at all as to true grace, or ſpiritual experience. *And in thy name have caſt out devils?* Diabolical poſſeſſions were very frequent in the times of Chriſt; no doubt but they were ſuffered, that Jeſus might have an opportunity of ſhewing his power over ſatan, by diſpoſſeſſing him from the bodies, as well as the ſouls of men; and of giving proof of his deity, divine ſon-ſhip and meſſiah-ſhip: and this power of caſting out devils was given to others, not only to the twelve apoſtles, among whom *Judas* was, who had the ſame power with the reſt, and to the ſeventy diſciples; but even to ſome who did not follow him, and his diſciples, *Mark* ix. 38. and ſome did this in the name of *Jeſus,* who don't appear to have any true faith in him, and knowledge of him; as the vagabond *Jews,* exorciſts, and the ſeven ſons of *Sceva, Acts* xix. 13, 14. An awful conſideration it is, that men ſhould be able to caſt out devils, and at laſt be caſt to the devil. *And in thy name done many wonderful works?* that is, many miracles; not one, or a few only, but many; ſuch as ſpeaking with tongues, removing mountains, treading on ſerpents and ſcorpions, and drinking any deadly thing without hurt, and healing all manner of diſeaſes and ſickneſſes. *Judas,* for one, was capable of pleading all theſe things; he had the gift of preaching, and a call from Chriſt to it, and yet a caſtaway; he had the power of caſting out devils, and yet could not prevent the devil from entering into him; he could perform miracles, do wonders in Chriſt's name, and yet, at laſt, was the betrayer of him. Theſe pleas and arguments will be of no uſe to him, nor of any avail to any at the great day. It may be obſerved, that theſe men lay the whole ſtreſs of their ſalvation upon what they have done in Chriſt's name; and not on Chriſt himſelf, in whom there is ſalvation, and in no other: they ſay not a ſyllable of what Chriſt has done and ſuffered, only of what they have done. Indeed, the things they inſtance in, are the greateſt done among men; the gifts they had were the moſt excellent, excepting the grace of God; the works they did, were of an extraordinary nature; whence it follows, that there can be no ſalvation, nor is it to be expected from men's works: for if preaching the word, which is attended with ſo much ſtudy, care, and labour, will not be a prevailing argument to admit men into the kingdom of heaven; how can it be thought that ever reading, or hearing, or any other external performance of religion, ſhould bring perſons thither?

Ver. 23. *Then will I profeſs unto them,* &c.] Publickly before men and angels, at the day of judgment, *I never knew you;* which muſt be underſtood conſiſtent with the omniſcience of Chriſt; for as the omniſcient God he knew their perſons and their works, and that they were workers of iniquity; he knew what they had been doing all their days under the guiſe of religion; he knew the principles of all their actions, and the views they had in all they did; nothing is hid from him. But, as words of knowledge often carry in them the ideas of affection, and approbation, ſee *Pſ.* i. 6. 2 *Tim.* ii. 19. the meaning of Chriſt here is, I never had any love, or affection for you; I never eſteemed you; I never made any account of you, as mine, as belonging to me; I never approved of you, nor your conduct; I never had any converſe, communication, nor ſociety with you, nor you with me. The *Perſic* verſion reads it, *I have not known you of old*, from ancient times, or from everlaſting; I never knew you in my father's choice, and my own, nor in my father's gift to me, nor in the everlaſting covenant of grace; I never knew you as my ſheep, for whom, in time, I died, and called by name; I never knew you believe in me, nor love me, or mine; I have ſeen you in my houſe, preaching in my name, and at my table adminiſtring mine ordinance; but I never knew you exalt my perſon, blood, righteouſneſs, and ſacrifice; you talk of the works you have done, I never knew you do one good work in all your lives, with a ſingle eye to my glory; wherefore, I'll neither hear, nor ſee you; I have nothing to do with you. In this ſenſe the phraſe is uſed in the *Talmud*[y]: "*Bar Kaphra* went to viſit *R. Juda*; "he ſays to him, *Bar Kaphra*, איני מכירך מעולם, "*I never knew thee.*" The Gloſs upon it is, "he "intimates, that he would not ſee him." So here, Chriſt declares, he knew them not; that is, he did not like them; he would not admit them into his preſence and glory; but ſaid, *depart from me, ye workers of iniquity.* The former of theſe expreſſions contains the awful ſentence pronounced by Chriſt, the judge; which is, baniſhment from his preſence, than which nothing is more terrible: for as it is his preſence that makes heaven, it is his abſence that makes hell; and this ſuppoſes a place and ſtate, whither they are baniſhed; which is elſewhere called their *own place*, *the lake* which burns with fire and brimſtone; *everlaſting fire*, prepared for the devil and his angels. Departure from Chriſt's preſence is the puniſhment of loſs, and being ſent to everlaſting burnings, is the puniſhment of ſenſe; and the whole, as it is an inſtance of ſtrict juſtice, ſo a diſplay of Chriſt's almighty power. The latter expreſſion contains the character of theſe perſons, and in it a reaſon of their puniſhment; they were *workers of iniquity*: it may be, neither adulterers, nor murderers, nor drunkards, nor extortioners, nor thieves, or any other openly profane ſinners; but inaſmuch as they did the work of the Lord deceitfully, preached themſelves, and not Chriſt; ſought their own things, and not his; what they did, they did with a wicked mind, and not with a view to his glory; they wrought iniquity, whilſt they were doing the very things they pleaded on their own behalf, for their admiſſion into the kingdom of heaven. Some copies read, *all the workers of iniquity*, as in *Pſ.* vi. 8. from whence the words are taken.

Ver. 24. *Therefore whoſoever heareth theſe ſayings of mine*, &c.] The compariſon in this, and the following verſes, is the concluding part of our Lord's diſcourſes upon the mount, which are meant by *theſe ſayings*, or doctrines, he here ſpeaks of; and as he had in ſome foregoing verſes chiefly reſpect to preachers, ſo here, to hearers, his diſciples and followers in general. The ſubject of this compariſon, in *Luke* vi. 47. is, *whoſoever cometh unto me*; as all that are given to Chriſt by the father will do, ſooner or later: ſuch whom he encourages to come to him, are they that labour and are heavy laden; and they that come aright, come as poor periſhing ſinners; they believe in him, give up themſelves to him, to be ſaved by him with an everlaſting ſalvation; all which is owing to efficacious grace. Theſe hear his ſayings, as doctrines, not merely externally, but internally, having ears to hear given unto them, ſo as to underſtand them, love them, believe them, feel the power, taſte the ſweetneſs, and have a delightful reliſh of them; and ſuch an one hears them, *and doth them*: he is not only an hearer, but a doer of the word of the Goſpel; the doctrines of it he receives in the love of them, and exerciſes faith on them; upon Chriſt, his grace and righteouſneſs held forth in them; which is the great work and buſineſs of a Chriſtian, he is to do, and does do in this life: the ordinances of it he chearfully obeys; and all the duties of religion he performs from love to Chriſt, without any view to obtain eternal life hereby, which he only expects from Chriſt, as his ſayings and doctrines direct him. The compariſon follows, *I will liken him to a wiſe man, which built his houſe upon a rock.* *Luke* ſays, *he is like a man which built an houſe, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock.* Every believer is a builder; the houſe he builds, is his own ſoul, and the ſalvation of it; in order to which he digs deep, till he comes to a rock, to a good foundation; he ſearches diligently into the ſcriptures of truth; he conſtantly attends the miniſtry of the word; he enquires of Goſpel-preachers, and other ſaints, the way of ſalvation; which having found, he lays the whole ſtreſs of his ſalvation on the rock of ages, which rock is Chriſt: he makes him the foundation of all his hope of eternal life and happineſs; which is the foundation God has laid in *Zion*; and which has been laid miniſterially by the prophets of the Old, and the apoſtles of the New Teſtament; and by believers themſelves, when they build their faith and hope upon it. This foundation, the perſon, blood, and righteouſneſs of Chriſt is as a rock, firm and ſtrong, will bear the whole weight that is laid upon it; it is ſure and certain, it will never give way; 'tis immoveable and everlaſting; the houſe built upon it ſtands ſafe and ſure.

Ver. 25. *And the rains deſcended, and the floods came*, &c.] Theſe ſeveral metaphors of *rain*, *floods*, *ſtream*, and *winds*, may deſign the temptations of ſatan, the perſecutions of the world, the corruptions of a man's own heart, and the errors and falſe doctrines of men; from all which ſuch a man is ſafe, who is built upon the rock Chriſt Jeſus; ſee *Iſ.* xxxii. 2. not but that the rain of temptation may deſcend upon him, with great violence and force, but ſhall not beat him down; he ſhall be made able to bear the whole force of it; the gates of hell can't prevail againſt him; the floods of perſecution may be caſt after him, but ſhall not carry him away; the ſtream of corruption may run ſtrong againſt him, yet ſhall not over-ſet him; and the wind of divers and ſtrange doctrines may blow hard upon him, but not caſt him down: ſome damage he may receive by theſe ſeveral things, but ſhall not be deſtroyed; he may be ſhaken by them, but not ſo as to be removed off of the foundation, on which he is laid; yea, he may fall from ſome degree of the ſtedfaſtneſs of his faith, but not ſo as to fall totally and finally; the reaſon is, becauſe he is founded on the rock Chriſt Jeſus, which is ſure and immoveable: whence it appears that ſuch a man acts the wiſe and prudent part, and may be truly called *a wiſe man*.

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[y] T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 16. 1.

Ver. 26. *And every one that heareth theſe ſayings of mine*, &c.] Who only externally hears them, but has no underſtanding of them; don't believe them, nor like and approve of them, but hates and deſpiſes them; or if not, depends upon his external hearing of them, and contents himſelf with a ſpeculative knowledge, without the practice of them, *and doth them not*; does not yield the obedience of faith to the doctrines of the Goſpel, nor ſubmits to the ordinances of it, but neglects them, and all other duties of religion: or if he does obey, it is only outwardly, not from the heart; nor from a principle of love; nor in faith; nor in the name and ſtrength of Chriſt; nor for the glory of God, but in order to obtain life for himſelf: ſuch *ſhall be likened unto a fooliſh man, which built his houſe upon the ſand*; or, as *Luke* has it, *without a foundation upon the earth*; upon the ſurface of the earth, without digging into it for a foundation: and ſuch may be ſaid to build *without a foundation*, who pretend to make their peace with God, by their own works; who hope for pardon on the foot of the mercy of God, and their own repentance; ſeek for juſtification by their own, and not the righteouſneſs of Chriſt; look for acceptance with God, for the ſake of their own worthineſs; and who expect ſalvation in any other way than by Chriſt: as in each of theſe articles, they leave out Chriſt, they may be ſaid to build without a foundation indeed, and to build *upon* the ſurface of *the earth*; as they do, who build their hope of ſalvation upon any thing that is merely external; as, their riches and grandeur, their wiſdom and learning, their natural deſcent, and religious education, their civility, courteouſneſs, and what is called good nature, their liberality and alms-deeds, their morality, common juſtice and honeſty, their legal righteouſneſs, whether moral or ritual, and a round of religious duties; and ſuch may be ſaid, to build *upon the ſand*, on that which will bear no weight, but gives way, and ſinks. The ſalvation of the ſoul is a weighty thing; and that which is like ſand, as is every thing of a man's own, can never ſupport it: God has therefore laid the ſalvation of his people on his own ſon; and he muſt be a *fooliſh man* that builds on any thing ſhort of him.

Ver. 27. *And the rain deſcended, and the floods came*, &c.] Such builders, and ſuch a building, can't ſtand againſt the violent rain of ſatan's temptations, the floods of the world's perſecutions, the ſtream and rapid torrent of their own heart's luſts, nor the blowing winds of hereſy and falſe doctrine, and much leſs the ſtorms of divine wrath and vengeance. They are in a moſt dangerous condition; they can't ſupport themſelves; they muſt fall, and great will be their fall; their deſtruction is inevitable, their ruin is irrecoverable. The *Jews* make uſe of ſome ſimilies, which are pretty much like theſe of Chriſt's. "*R. Eliezer ben Azariah* uſed " to ſay [z], he whoſe wiſdom is greater than his " works, to what is he like? to a tree, whoſe " branches are many, and its roots few, *and the* " *wind comes*, and roots it up, and overturns it; as " it is ſaid, *Jer.* xvii. 6. but he whoſe works are " greater than his wiſdom, to what is he like? to " a tree, whoſe branches are few, and its roots " many, *againſt which, if all the winds in the world* " *were to come and blow*, they could not move it " out of its place; as it is ſaid, *Jer.* xvii. 8." Again [a], " *Eliſha ben Abuijah* uſed to ſay, a man " who hath good works, and learns the law much, " to what is he like? to a man that *builds with* " *ſtones below*, and afterwards with bricks; and " though באים מים הרבה, *many waters come*, " and ſtand at their ſide, they cannot remove them " out of their place; but a man who hath no good " works, and learns the law, to what is he like? " to a man that *builds with bricks firſt*, and afterwards with ſtones; and tho' few waters come, " they immediately overturn them." The ſame uſed to ſay, " a man who hath good works, and " learns the law much, to what is he like? to mortar " ſpread upon bricks; and tho' יורדין עליו גשמים, " *the rains deſcend upon it*, they can't remove it out " of its place: a man that hath no good works, " and learns the law much, to what is he like? " to mortar thrown upon bricks; and tho' but a " ſmall rain deſcends upon it, it is immediately " diſſolved, and *falls*."

Ver. 28. *And it came to paſs, when Jeſus had ended theſe ſayings*, &c.] Delivered in this, and the two foregoing chapters, concerning true happineſs; the duty and uſefulneſs of Goſpel-miniſters; the true ſenſe and meaning of ſeveral commandments in the law; concerning alms, prayer, and faſting; concerning the care of worldly things, raſh judging, rigid cenſures, and reproofs; the ſtraitneſs and narrowneſs of the way to eternal life, and the largeneſs and breadth of the way to deſtruction; concerning falſe prophets, and the right hearing of the word. *The people were aſtoniſhed at his doctrine*; it being ſomething new, and unheard-of, what they had not been uſed to; and coming in the demonſtration of the ſpirit, and of power, it carried its own evidence along with it, wrought conviction in their minds, and obliged them to acknowledge the truth of it.

Ver. 29. *For he taught them, as one having authority*, &c.] This does not ſo much reſpect the ſubject-matter of his miniſtry, the gravity, weight, and ſolidity of his doctrine; which, to be ſure, was greatly different from that of the Scribes, which chiefly lay in propoſing and handling things trivial, and of no moment; ſuch as the rituals of the law, the tradition of the elders, or waſhing of the hands and cups, *&c.* nor merely the manner of his delivery, which was with great affection, ardour, and fervency of ſpirit, with much liberty and utterance of ſpeech, and with wonderful perſpicuity and majeſty; in which alſo he differed from the Scribes, who taught, in a cold and lifeleſs manner, without any ſpirit and power: but this chiefly regards the method he uſed in preaching, which was by delivering truths of himſelf in his own name, and by his own authority; often uſing thoſe words, *but I ſay unto you*: he ſpoke as a lawgiver, as one that had authority from heaven, and not from men; *and not as the Scribes*, who uſed to ſay, when they delivered any thing to the people, *our Rabbins*, or *our wiſe men ſay* ſo and ſo: ſuch as were on the ſide of *Hillell* made uſe of his name; and thoſe who were on the ſide of *Shammai* made uſe of his name; ſcarce ever would they venture to ſay any thing of themſelves, but ſaid, the ancient doctors ſay thus and thus: almoſt innumerable inſtances might be given, out of the *Talmud*, in which one *Rabbi* ſpeaks in the name of another; but our Lord ſpoke boldly, of himſelf, in his own name, and did not go about to ſupport his doctrine by the teſtimony of the elders; but ſpake, as having received power and authority, as man, from his father, *and not as the Scribes*. Some copies add, and *Phariſees*; theſe generally going together; and ſo read the *Vulgate* Latin, the *Syriac*, the *Perſic* verſions, and the *Hebrew* edition of *Matthew* by *Munſter*.

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[z] Pirke Abot, c. 3. §. 17. & Abot R. Nathan, c. 22. fol. 6. 1, 2.

[a] Abot R. Nathan, c. 24. fol. 6. 2.

## CHAP. VIII.

Ver. 1. WHEN *he was come down from the mountain*, &c.] Into which he went up, and preached the ſermon recorded in the *three* preceding chapters: *great multitudes followed him*; which is mentioned, partly to ſhew, that the people which came from ſeveral parts, ſtill continued with him, being affected with his diſcourſes and miracles; and partly on account of the following miracle, of healing the leper, which was not done in a corner, but before great multitudes, who were witneſſes of it: tho' ſome think this miracle was wrought more privately.

Ver. 2. *And behold there came a leper*, &c.] As ſoon as he came down from the mountain, and whilſt he was in the way; though *Luke* ſays, ch. v. *when he was in a certain city*; in one of the cities of *Galilee*; one of their large towns, or unwalled cities, into which a leper might come: he might not come into walled [b] towns, at leaſt they might turn him out, tho' without puniſhment; for the canon runs thus [c], "a leper that enters into *Jeruſalem* is to be beaten; but if he enters into any of the other walled towns, tho' he has no right, as it is ſaid, *he ſitteth alone*, he is not to be beaten." Beſides, this leper, as *Luke* ſays, was *full of leproſy*, ch. v. 12. ſee the note there; and he might be pronounced clean by the prieſt, tho' not healed, and ſo might go into any city or ſynagogue: the law concerning ſuch an one, in *Lev.* xiii. is a very ſurprizing one; that if only there were ſome riſings and appearances of the leproſy here and there, the man was unclean; but if *the leproſy covered all his fleſh*, then he was pronounced clean; and ſuch was this man: he was a very lively emblem of a poor vile ſinner, full of ſin and iniquity, who is brought to ſee himſelf all over covered with ſin, when he comes to Chriſt for pardon and cleanſing; and is ſo conſidered by Chriſt the high-prieſt, when he applies his juſtifying righteouſneſs and ſin-purging blood to his conſcience. A leper, by the *Jews* [d], is called רשע, *a wicked* man; for they ſuppoſe leproſy comes upon him for evil ſpeaking. This account is uſhered in with a *behold*, as a note of admiration and attention, expreſſing the wonderfulneſs of the miracle wrought, and the ſeaſonableneſs of it to confirm the doctrines Chriſt had been preaching to the multitude. This man came of his own accord, having heard of the fame of Chriſt; *and worſhipped him* in a civil and reſpectful way, ſhewing great reverence to him as a man; which he did by falling down on his knees, and on his face; proſtrating himſelf before him, in a very humble and ſubmiſſive manner, as the other *Evangeliſts* relate: for that he worſhipped him as God, is not ſo manifeſt; tho' it is certain he had an high opinion of him, and great faith in him; which he very modeſtly expreſſes, *ſaying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canſt make me clean*: he was fully aſſured of his power, that he could make him clean, entirely rid him of his leproſy, which the prieſt could not do; who could only, according to the law, pronounce him clean, ſo that he might be admitted to company, but could not heal him of his diſeaſe: this the poor man was perſuaded Chriſt could do for him, and humbly ſubmits it to his will; of which, as yet, he had no intimation from him. And thus it is with poor ſenſible ſinners under firſt awakenings; they can believe in the ability of Chriſt to juſtify them by his righteouſneſs, cleanſe them by his blood, and ſave them by his grace to the uttermoſt; but they ſtick at, and heſitate about his willingneſs, by reaſon of their own vileneſs and unworthineſs.

Ver. 3. *And Jeſus put forth his hand, and touched him*, &c.] This is a wonderful inſtance both of the grace, and goodneſs of Chriſt, in touching this loathſome creature; and of his unſpotted purity and holineſs, which could not be defiled by it; and of his mighty power in healing by a touch, and with a word of his mouth, *ſaying, I will, be thou clean*: in which he expreſſes at once his willingneſs, *I will*, of which the leper before was not certain; and his power by a word of command, *be thou clean*; and in which alſo is ſhewn the readineſs of Chriſt to do it: he did not ſtand parlying with the man, or making any further trial of his faith, or objecting to him his uncleanneſs; but at once ſtretches out his hand, touches his filthy fleſh, and commands off the diſorder. A great encouragement this, for poor ſenſible ſinners to betake themſelves to Chriſt, under a ſenſe of their guilt and filth; who readily receives ſuch, in no wiſe caſts them out, but gives immediate diſcoveries of his power and grace unto them. *And immediately his leproſy was cleanſed*, or he was cleanſed from it; he was not only pronounced clean, but was made ſo; he was thoroughly healed of the diſeaſe of leproſy. The *Jews* themſelves acknowledge this fact; for ſo they tell us in their wicked and blaſphemous book [e], that Jeſus ſhould ſay, "bring me a leper, and I will heal him; and they brought him a leper, and he healed him alſo by *Shemhamphoraſh*," i. e. by the ineffable name *Jehovah*. Tho' they greatly miſrepreſent the matter; for this man was not brought by others, at the requeſt of Chriſt, but came of his own accord; nor was he healed by the uſe of any name, as if it was done by a ſort of magic, but by a touch of his hand, and the word of his mouth. Whether this was the ſame man with *Simon* the leper, *Matt.* xxvi. 6. as ſome have thought, is not certain.

Ver. 4. *And Jeſus ſaith unto him, ſee thou tell no man*, &c.] Not that this fact could be concealed, if it was done publickly, before the multitude; nor was it Chriſt's deſign that it ſhould be; only it was his counſel to this man, that whilſt he was on the road to *Jeruſalem*, and when he was come there, that he would ſpeak of it to no man, before he came to the prieſt, or prieſts; leſt out of ill will to Chriſt, they ſhould refuſe to pronounce him clean: *but go thy way, ſhew thyſelf to the prieſt, and offer the gift that Moſes commanded, for a teſtimony unto them*. The man was now in one of the cities of *Galilee*; from hence Chriſt orders him to make the beſt of his way, directly to *Jeruſalem*; and preſent himſelf to one of the prieſts, by him to be examined, whether he was free of his leproſy; and then offer what was ordered by the law of *Moſes* in ſuch caſes: for as yet the ceremonial law was not aboliſhed; and therefore, as Chriſt was ſubject to it himſelf, ſo he enjoins others the obſervance of it. There was a twofold offering, according to the law of *Moſes*, on account of the cleanſing of the leper; ſee *Lev.* xiv. the one was on the firſt day of his cleanſing, when he firſt ſhewed himſelf to the prieſt, and conſiſted of two birds, alive and clean, cedar-wood, ſcarlet, and hyſſop; the other, and which was properly the offering on the eighth day, was, if the man was able, two he-lambs and one ew-lamb, with a meat offering; but if poor, one lamb, with a meat offering, and two turtle doves, or two young pidgeons. The *Jewiſh* canons, concerning this matter, are as follow [f]; "when a leper is healed of his leproſy, after they have cleanſed him with cedar wood, and hyſſop, and ſcarlet, and the two birds, and have ſhaved all his fleſh, and bathed him; after all this he enters into *Jeruſalem*, and numbers ſeven days; and on the ſeventh day he ſhaves a ſecond time, as he ſhaved at firſt, and bathes—and on the morrow, or eighth day, he bathes a ſecond time, and after that they offer his offerings—he bathes on the eighth day in the court of the women, in the chamber of the lepers, which is there—if it is delayed, and he ſhaves not on the ſeventh day, but he ſhaves on the eighth, or ſome days after, on the day that he ſhaves, he bathes, and his ſun ſets; and on the morrow he brings his offerings, after he hath bathed a ſecond time, as we have declared: how do they do unto him? The leper ſtands without the court of *Iſrael*, over againſt the eaſtern gate, in the gate of *Nicanor*, and his face to the weſt; and there ſtand all they that want atonement; and there they give the bitter waters to the ſuſpected women: and the prieſt takes the leper's treſpaſs offering, while it is alive, and waves it with the log of oil, towards the eaſt, according to the way of all wave offerings; and if he waves this by itſelf, and this by itſelf, it is right: after that he brings the leper's treſpaſs offering to the door, and he brings it in both his hands into the court, and layeth them upon it; they ſlay it immediately, and two prieſts receive its blood; the one receives it in a veſſel, and ſprinkles it upon the top of the altar; and the other, in his right hand, and pours it into his left hand, and ſprinkles with his finger the right hand; and if he repeats it, and receives it in his left hand firſt, it is unlawful. The prieſt that receives ſome of the blood in a veſſel, carries it, and ſprinkles it upon the altar firſt; and after that comes the prieſt, who receives the blood in the palm of his hand, to the leper, the prieſt being within, and the leper without; and the leper puts in his head, and the prieſt puts of the blood that is in the palm of his hand, upon the tip of his right ear; after that he puts in his right hand, and he puts of it on the thumb of his hand; and after that he putteth in his right foot, and he puts of it upon the toe of his foot, and if he puts of it upon the left, it is not right; and after that he offers his ſin offering, and his burnt offering: and after that he hath put the blood upon his thumb and toe, the prieſt takes of the log of oil, and pours it into the left hand of his fellow-prieſt; and if he pours it into his own hand, it will do; and he dips the finger of his right hand into the oil, which is in his hand, and ſprinkles it ſeven times towards the moſt holy place: at every ſprinkling there is a dipping of the finger in the oil; and if he ſprinkles, and does not intend it, over againſt the holy place, 'tis right; and after that, he comes to the leper, and puts of the oil upon the place of the blood of the treſpaſs offering, on the tip of the ear, and on the thumb of his hand, and toe of his foot; and that which is left of the oil, that is in his hand, he puts it on the head of him that is to be cleanſed; and if he puts it not, atonement is not made; and the reſt of the log is divided among the prieſts; and what remains of the log is not eaten, but in the court, by the males of the prieſts, as the reſt of the holy things; and its forbidden to eat of the log of oil, until he has ſprinkled it ſeven times, and has put of it upon the thumb and toe; and if he eats, he is to be beaten, as he that eats holy things before ſprinkling." Now theſe were the things, which, as the other Evangeliſts ſay, this leper was ordered to offer for his cleanſing, *for a teſtimony unto them*; meaning either to the prieſts; for the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read the former clauſe, *ſhew thyſelf to the prieſts*, in *Luke* xvii. 4. that they being ſatisfied of the healing and cleanſing of this man, and accordingly pronouncing him clean, and accepting his offerings, this might be either a convincing teſtimony to them, that Jeſus was the ſon of God, and true Meſſiah, and that he did not deny or oppoſe the law given by *Moſes*; or might be a ſtanding teſtimony againſt them, ſhould they continue in unbelief; or elſe to the *Jews*, who ſaw the miracle, and heard the orders Chriſt gave to the man after he had healed him; or to the lepers that they were cleanſed; or this law of *Moſes* was for a teſtimony or ſtatute to be always obſerved by them in ſuch caſes.

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[b] Miſn. Celim. c. 1. §. 7.

[c] Maimon. Biath Hamikdaſh, c. 3. §. 8. & in Miſn. Celim. c. 1. §. 8.

[d] Maimon. in Miſn. Negaim, c. 12. §. 5. & Bartenora in ib. §. 6.

[e] Toldos Jeſu, p. 8.

Ver. 5. *And when Jeſus was entered into Capernaum*, &c.] Was returned from his journey thro' *Galilee*, to the place where he before dwelt, and is called his own city, ch. ix. 1. *there came unto him a centurion*, a *Roman* officer, שר מאה, *a commander of an hundred men*, as the *Hebrew* Goſpel by *Munſter* reads it: tho' the number of men under a *centurion* was more, according to ſome accounts. "A band, 'tis ſaid [g], made two centuries, each of which conſiſted of an hundred and twenty-eight ſoldiers; for a doubled century made a band, whoſe governor was called an ordinary *centurion*." Such an one was *Cornelius*, a centurion of a band, *Acts* x. 1. The other perſon that was healed was a *Jew*. The next inſtance of Chriſt's power and goodneſs, is the ſervant of a *Gentile*; he came to do good both to *Jews* and *Gentiles*; *beſeeching him*, not in perſon, but by his meſſengers; ſee *Luke* vii. 3. and the *Jews* [h] ſay, ששלוחו של אדם כמותו, *that a man's meſſenger is as himſelf*.

Ver. 6. *And ſaying, Lord, my ſervant lieth at home*, &c.] It would be a difficulty whether it was a ſon or a ſervant he was ſo concerned for; ſince παις, the word here uſed, more commonly ſignifies a *ſon* or *child*; but that *Luke*, ſuppoſing it to be the ſame caſe he relates, expreſsly calls him δουλος, *a ſervant*, *Luke* vii. 2. The concern of the *centurion* for him, ſhews him to have been a good ſervant, faithful and obedient to his maſter; ſince he was ſo much affected with his caſe, and took ſo much care of him; and *Luke* ſays, he *was dear unto him*; in great eſteem, highly valued, and much beloved: and alſo, that the centurion was a good maſter; he does not put his ſick ſervant from him, but takes care of him at home, and ſeeks out for relief for him; being greatly deſirous of his life. And as his keeping him at home diſcovered a tender regard to him; ſo his not bringing him forth, or ordering him to be brought out to Chriſt, which was ſome times done in ſuch caſes, ſhews his great faith in Chriſt, that he was as able to cure him lying at home, as if brought before him; abſent, as well as preſent. 'Tis in the original text, *is caſt*; or, as it is rendered, ver. 14. *laid in the houſe*, as if he was dead, ſpeechleſs, and without motion; and *Luke* ſays, that he was *ready to die*, being as one laid out for dead. The phraſe anſwers to מוטל, a word often uſed by the *Rabbins*; ſometimes of ſick perſons, as when they ſay [i] of any one, that he is חולה ומוטל במטה, *ſick, and laid upon the bed*; and ſometimes of a perſon really dead, and laid out: and often this phraſe is to be met with, מי שמתו מוטל לפניו, *he that hath his dead caſt*, or *laid out before him* [k]; concerning whom they diſpute many things; as what he is free from, the reading of *Shema*, prayer, and the phylacteries; and where he ought to eat and drink till ſuch time his dead is buried out of his ſight. But this man's ſervant was not dead, but lay as one dead; *ſick of the palſy*, his nerves all relaxed, and he ſtupid, ſenſeleſs, motionleſs, *grievouſly tormented*, or *puniſhed*, or rather *afflicted*; as the *Ethiopic* verſion, and *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* edition read it; for paralytick perſons don't feel much pain and torment: but the meaning is, that he was in a miſerable afflicted condition. The account of his diſorder is given to move Chriſt's compaſſion, and recorded to ſhew the greatneſs of the miracle.

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[f] Maimon. Hilchot Mechoſre Capporah, c. 14. per totum.

[g] Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 6. c. 13.

[h] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 34. 2.

Ver. 7. *And Jeſus ſaith unto him, I will come, and heal him.*] This anſwer of Chriſt's, which is ſhort and full, not only ſhews the readineſs of Chriſt to do good, how ſoon and eaſily he complied with the centurion's requeſt, it being a prayer of faith, and ſo effectual, and was heard as ſoon as delivered; but alſo contains an abſolute promiſe that he would heal him. He does not ſay that he would come and ſee him, and what his caſe was, and do what he could for him, as ordinary phyſicians do; but he would come and heal him at once: and indeed 'tis a propoſal of more than what was aſked of him; his preſence was not aſked, and yet he offered it; tho' *Luke* ſays, that he beſought him by the meſſengers *to come and heal his ſervant*; and ſo this is an anſwer to both parts of the requeſt; the whole is granted. Chriſt can't deny any thing to faith, his preſence or aſſiſtance.

Ver. 8. *The centurion anſwered, and ſaid*, &c.] This, according to *Luke* vii. 6. was ſaid by his friends in his name, when he underſtood that Chriſt had agreed to come to his houſe, with the elders of the *Jews*, he firſt ſent to him; and after he was actually ſet out with them, and was in the way to his houſe; who, conſcious of his own unworthineſs, deputes ſome perſons to him, to addreſs him in this manner, *Lord, I am not worthy that thou ſhouldſt come under my roof*. This is not ſaid as rejecting and deſpiſing the preſence and company of Chriſt; but is expreſſive of his great modeſty and humility, and of his conſciouſneſs of his own vileneſs and unworthineſs, of having ſo great a perſon in his houſe: it was too great a favour for him to enjoy. And if ſuch a man was unworthy, having been an idolater, and lived a profane courſe of life, that Chriſt ſhould come into his houſe, and be, tho' but for a ſhort time, under his roof; how much more unworthy are poor ſinful creatures, (and ſenſible ſinners ſee themſelves to be ſo) unworthy, that Chriſt ſhould come into their hearts, and dwell there by faith, as he does, in all true believers, however vile and ſinful they have been? *But ſpeak the word only, and my ſervant ſhall be healed*. As the former expreſſion declares his modeſty and humility, and the mean apprehenſions he had of himſelf; ſo this ſignifies his great faith in Chriſt, and the perſuaſion he had of his divine power: he does not ſay pray, and my ſervant ſhall be healed, as looking upon him barely as a man of God, a prophet, one that had great intereſt in God, and at the throne of grace; but ſpeak, command, order it to be done, and it ſhall be done, which is aſcribing omnipotence to him; ſuch power as was put forth in creation, by the all-commanding word of God; *he ſpake, and it was done, he commanded, and it ſtood faſt*, *Pſ.* xxxiii. 9. yea, he ſignifies that if he would but ſpeak a word, the leaſt word whatever; or, as *Luke* has it, *ſay in a word*; let but a word come out of thy mouth, and it will be done.

Ver. 9. *For I am a man under authority*, &c.] Of *Cæſar* the *Roman* emperor, and of ſuperior officers under him, as a tribune, *&c. having ſoldiers under me*; an hundred of them at leaſt, for military ſervice, and ſome of them were uſed by him as his domeſtics: *and I ſay unto this man go, and he goeth, and to another come, and he cometh*: for there is no diſputing the commands of officers, by ſoldiers, in any thing, in exerciſes, marches, battles, *&c. and to my ſervant*, that was more properly his domeſtic ſervant, who waited upon him, and did thoſe things for him which every ſoldier under him was not employed in, *do this, and he doth it*; immediately, without any more ado; as indeed a ſervant ought. The *Jews* [l] have a ſaying, that "a "ſervant over whom his maſter אין רשות, *hath no* "*power*, is not called a ſervant." Now, theſe words are not a reaſon excuſing Chriſt's coming to his houſe, or ſhewing how unworthy it was, and how unfit it would be for him to come thither, ſince he was a man that held ſoldiers under him, and his houſe was incumber'd with them; for theſe were not with him, but quarter'd out elſewhere: but they are an argument, from the leſſer to the greater, that ſeeing he was a man, and Chriſt was God, he was under the authority of others. Chriſt was ſubject to none; and yet he had ſuch power over his ſoldiers and ſervants, that if he bid one go, and another come, or ordered them to ſtand in ſuch a place, and in ſuch a poſture, or do this, and the other ſervile work, his orders were immediately obeyed: how much more eaſily then could Chriſt, who had all power in heaven and in earth, command off this diſtemper his ſervant was afflicted with? He ſuggeſts, that as his ſoldiers were under him, and at his command; ſo all bodily diſeaſes were under Chriſt, and to be controlled by him, at his pleaſure; and that, if he would but ſay to that ſervant of his, the palſy, remove, and it would remove at once.

Ver. 10. *When Jeſus heard it, he marvelled*, &c.] Which muſt be underſtood of him as man; for as God, ſeeing nothing could preſent itſelf unto him at unawares, unthought of, and not known before; and ſo could not raiſe admiration in him, and which cannot properly fall on a divine perſon: or he behaved, both by words and geſture, as perſons do when they are aſtoniſhed at any thing; and this he might do, to raiſe the attention and wonder of thoſe that were with him: *and ſaid to them that followed.* This agrees perfectly with the account that *Luke* gives, that Chriſt was ſet out with the meſſengers, the centurion ſent unto him, in order to come to his houſe, and heal his ſervant; and theſe that followed him were his diſciples, and ſo ſome copies read, and others that were ſollowing him thither to ſee the miracle. *Verily, I ſay unto you*; a ſtrong aſſeveration, and which Chriſt uſed, when he was about to deliver any thing of conſiderable importance, and required attention: *I have not found ſo great faith, no not in Iſrael*; that is, among the people of *Iſrael*: ſo the *Arabic* verſion reads it, *in any of Iſrael*; and the *Perſic*, *among the children of Iſrael*; and is to be underſtood, not of the patriarchs and prophets, and other eminent believers, which were in *Iſrael* formerly; but of the men of the then preſent generation, his mother and his apoſtles being excepted: though it may be queſtioned, whether the apoſtles themſelves as yet, had expreſſed ſuch a ſtrong faith in him, as this man: or it may have a particular reſpect to them in *Iſrael*, who had applied to him for healing, and had been healed by him; that he had not met with and obſerved any ſuch expreſſion of faith, in his divine power from them, as this centurion had delivered. And it was the more remarkable, that it came from a *Gentile*, and from a ſoldier too: but as great as it was, he did not exceed in it; he did not aſcribe more to Chriſt than was proper, and which, by the way, is a clear proof of our Lord's divinity: for had he not been truly God, he would have rebuked, and not have commended this man's faith in him; who aſcribed that power to him, which is peculiar to God: he is ſo far from finding fault with him, for thinking or ſpeaking ſo highly of him, that he praiſes him for it, and prefers his faith in him, to any inſtance of it, he had met with among the *Iſraelites*; who yet had far greater advantages of knowing him, and believing in him. There is a phraſe in the *Talmud* [m] ſomewhat like this, only uſed of a perſon of a different character; where a certain *Jew*, obſerving another called by ſome of his neighbours *Rabbi*, thus expreſſed himſelf; "If this be a *Rabbi*, אל ירבו כמותו בישראל, "*let there not be many ſuch as he in Iſrael*." And it is ſaid [n] of *Nadab* and *Abihu*, "that two ſuch "were not *found* כוותיהו בישראל *as they in* "*Iſrael*."

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[i] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 146. 2. 147. 1. Cetubot, fol. 103. 2.

[k] Miſn. Beracot, c. 3. §. 1. T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 23. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Ebel, c. 4. §. 7.

[l] T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 72. 2.

Ver. 11. *And I ſay unto you, that many ſhall come from the eaſt and weſt*, &c.] On occaſion of the faith of the centurion, who was a *Gentile*, our Lord makes a ſhort digreſſion, concerning the call of the *Gentiles*; and ſuggeſts, that what was ſeen in that man now, would be fulfilled in great numbers of them in a little time: that many of them from the ſeveral parts of the world, from the riſing of the ſun to the ſetting of it, from the four points of the heaven, eaſt, weſt, north, and ſouth, as in *Luke* xiii. 29. and from the four corners of the earth, ſhould come and believe in him; *and ſit down with Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven*: ſignifying, that as the Goſpel would be preached in a ſhort time to all nations, many among them would believe in him, as *Abraham*, and the reſt of the patriarchs did; and ſo would partake of the ſame bleſſings of grace with them; ſuch as adoption, juſtification, pardon of ſin, and the like; for *they which be of faith, are bleſſed with faithful Abraham*, *Gal.* iii. 9. now, under the Goſpel diſpenſation, though *Gentiles*; and ſhall enjoy with him the ſame eternal glory and happineſs he does, in the other world. Which ſhews, that the faith of Old and New Teſtament ſaints, *Jews* and *Gentiles*, is the ſame; their bleſſings the ſame, and ſo their eternal happineſs; they have the ſame God and Father, the ſame Mediator and Redeemer, are actuated and influenced by the ſame Spirit, partake of the ſame grace, and ſhall ſhare the ſame glory. The alluſion is to ſitting, or rather lying along, which was the poſture of the ancients at meals, and is here expreſſed, at a table, at a meal, or feaſt: and under the metaphor of a feaſt or plentiful table to ſet down to, are repreſented the bleſſings of the Goſpel, and the joys of heaven; which are not reſtrained to any particular nation, or ſett of people; not to the *Jews*, to the excluſion of the *Gentiles*. Our Lord here, goes directly contrary to the notions and practices of the *Jews*, who thought it a crime, to ſit down at table, and eat with the *Gentiles*; ſee *Acts* xi. 3. and yet *Gentiles* ſhall ſit at table, and eat with the principal men, the heads of their nation, in the kingdom of heaven, and they themſelves at the ſame time ſhut out.

Ver. 12. *But the children of the kingdom*, &c.] The *Jews*, who were ſubjects of the kingdom, and commonwealth of *Iſrael*, from which the *Gentiles* were aliens; and who were alſo in the church of God, which is his kingdom on earth; and beſides, had the promiſe of the Goſpel diſpenſation, ſometimes called the kingdom of heaven, and by them, often the world to come; and were by their own profeſſion, and in their apprehenſion and expectation, children, and heirs of the kingdom of glory. Theſe phraſes, בן העולם הבא, *a ſon of the world to come*, and בני עלמא דאתי *children of the world to come* [o], are frequent in their writings: theſe Chriſt ſays, *ſhall be caſt out*; out of the land of *Iſrael*, as they were in a few years after, and out of the church of God: theſe branches were broken off, and the *Gentiles* grafted in, in their room; and will be excluded from the kingdom of heaven, where they hoped to have a place, *and caſt into outer darkneſs*: into the *Gentile* world, and into judicial blindneſs, and darkneſs of mind, and into the blackneſs of darkneſs in hell, *where ſhall be weeping, and gnaſhing of teeth.* Phraſes expreſſive of the miſerable ſtate and condition, of perſons out of the kingdom of heaven; who are weeping for what they have loſt, and gnaſhing their teeth with the pain of what they endure. The *Jews* ſay [p], "he that ſtudies "not in the law in this world, but is defiled with "the pollutions of the world, he is taken "וישליכו אותו הברה, *and caſt without*: this is "hell itſelf, to which ſuch are adjudged, who do "not ſtudy the law." The alluſion in the text is, to the cuſtoms of the ancients at their feaſts and entertainments; which were commonly made in the evening, when the hall or dining-room, in which they ſat down, was very much illuminated with lamps and torches; but without in the ſtreets, were entire darkneſs: and where were heard nothing but the cries of the poor, for ſomething to be given them, and of the perſons that were turned out as unworthy gueſts; and the gnaſhing of their teeth, either with cold in winter nights, or with indignation at their being kept out. Chriſt may alſo be thought to ſpeak in the language, and according to the notions of the *Jews*, who aſcribe gnaſhing of teeth to the devils in hell; for they ſay [q], that "for the flattery with which they flattered *Korah*, in the buſineſs of rioting, *the prince of hell* חרק שניו *gnaſhed his teeth at them.*" The whole of this may be what they call רוגז גהנם, *the indignation*, or *tumult of hell* [r].

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[m] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 20. 2. Derech Eretz, fol. 18. 1.

[n] Zohar in Lev. fol. 24. 1. & 25. 4.

[o] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 4. 2. Taanith, fol. 22. 1. Megilla, fol. 28. 2. Yoma, fol. 88. 1. & Sanhedrim, fol. 88. 2. Raziel, fol. 37. 1. & 38. 1. Caphtor, fol. 15. 1. & 18. 2. & 60. 1. & 84. 2. Raya Mehimna, in Zohar in Lev. fol. 34. 2.

[p] Zohar in Gen. fol. 104. 3.

Ver. 13. *And Jeſus ſaid unto the centurion,* &c.] Chriſt having finiſhed the digreſſion, returns an anſwer to the centurion, agreeable to his deſire, ſaying to him, *go thy way*; not as diſpleaſed with him, but as granting his requeſt: for it follows, *and as thou haſt believed, ſo be it done unto thee.* As he had faith to believe, that Chriſt could cure his ſervant by a word ſpeaking, it was done accordingly. Chriſt by his almighty *fiat* ſaid, let him be healed, and he was healed: juſt as God in the creation ſaid, *let there be light, and there was light.* He does not ſay according to thy prayer, or according to thy righteouſneſs, and goodneſs, but according to thy faith: and it is further to be obſerved, that this cure was wrought, not ſo much for the ſake of the ſervant, as his maſter; and therefore Chriſt ſays, *be it done unto thee*; let him be healed for thy ſake, and reſtored unto thee, to thy uſe, profit, and advantage. *And his ſervant was healed in the ſelf ſame hour*, at the very exact time, even in that moment. Some copies add, *and when the centurion returned to his houſe, in the ſelf ſame hour he found his ſervant healed*; which the *Ethiopic* verſion has, and it agrees with *Luke* vii. 10.

Ver. 14. *And when Jeſus was come into Peter's houſe*, &c.] And which was alſo *Andrew*'s, *Mark* i. 29. for theſe two brothers lived together, and this was in *Capernaum*, as appears from the context. Though *Andrew* and *Peter* were originally of *Bethſaida*, a place not far from this, but had removed hither ſince their call by Chriſt, this being his city; though probably this houſe was *Peter*'s wife's mother's, and only called theirs, becauſe they lodged there, whilſt in this city: into this houſe Chriſt entered, with *James* and *John*, and others; when he *ſaw his (Peter's) wife's mother, laid*, or *caſt* on a bed, ſee note on ver. 6. *and ſick of a fever*: *Luke* ſays, chap. iv. 38. that ſhe *was taken*, or rather held, or *detained with a great fever*; the diſtemper was very raging and furious, it had got to a very great height. The other Evangeliſts ſay, that the perſons in the houſe told him of her, and beſought him for her, that he would heal her, having a very great affection for her, and deſire of her life, which ſeemed to be in great danger. Hence it may be obſerved againſt the *Papiſts*, that miniſters of the Goſpel may lawfully marry; *Peter*, an Apoſtle, and from whom they pretend to derive their ſucceſſion of biſhops, was a married man, had a wife, and that after he was called to be an apoſtle. His wife's mother is expreſsly mentioned, being the perſon labouring under a violent fever, and whom Chriſt cured in the following manner.

Ver. 15. *And he touched her hand*, &c.] Sometimes he healed by a word, as the centurion's ſervant; and ſometimes by a touch, as here; and ſometimes by both, as the leper. *Luke* ſays, that he *ſtood over her*, reached over her to take her by the hand, and lift her up, *and rebuked the fever.* Juſt as he did the winds and ſea, having all diſeaſes, as well as the elements, at his beck and controul; and *the fever left her* immediately, as the other Evangeliſts ſay. *And ſhe aroſe and miniſtred unto them*: the former of theſe actions, is a proof of her being reſtored to health and ſtrength, inſomuch that ſhe could riſe and walk about of herſelf; whereas generally, perſons after fevers, continue very weak a conſiderable time; which ſhews what a miracle was wrought upon her by Chriſt: and the latter of them expreſſes her gratitude, for the mercy ſhe had received; ſhe riſes and ſerves him and his friends, preparing proper and ſuitable proviſions for them.

Ver. 16. *When the even was come*, &c.] The other Evangeliſts ſay, when *the ſun was ſet*, or *ſetting*; which circumſtances are obſerved, not as ſome think, becauſe the cool of the evening, and when the ſun was ſet, it was more ſeaſonable and convenient, in thoſe hot countries, to bring out their ſick, than in the heat of the day: nor are they remarked, as others think, becauſe it was an unſeaſonable time to bring them to Chriſt, when he had been fatigued all day long, and yet he healed them; ſuch was his goodneſs and compaſſion: but the true reaſon of the mention of them is, becauſe it had been their ſabbath-day, as appears from *Mark* i. 21. *Luke* iv. 31. and they could not, according to their canons, bring them ſooner. Their ſabbath began at ſun-ſetting; hence they ſay [s], that on the eve of the ſabbath, that is, immediately preceding it, when the ſabbath is about to begin, it is lawful to work עד שתשקע החמה *until the ſun ſets*; and ſo it ended at ſun ſetting the next day, which they judged of by the appearance of three ſtars [t]. "*R. Phinehas*, in the name of *R. Aba Bar Papa* ſays, if but one ſtar appears, it is certainly day; if two, its a doubt whether its night or no; if three, its certainly night.——On the eve of the ſabbath, if he ſees one ſtar and does any work, he's free; if two, he brings a treſpaſs offering for a doubt; if three, he brings a ſin offering: at the going out of the ſabbath, if he ſees one ſtar, and does any work, he brings a ſin-offering; if two, he brings a treſpaſs-offering for a doubt; if three, he is free." So that till the ſun was ſet, and three ſtars appeared as a proof of it, it was not lawful to do any ſort of buſineſs; but as ſoon as it was out of doubt, that the ſun was ſet, they might do any thing: and this being the caſe, *they brought to him* (Chriſt) *many that were poſſeſſed with devils*; whoſe bodies ſatan had been ſuffered to enter into, and were acted, and governed, and thrown into ſtrange diſorders by him. Such poſſeſſions, through divine permiſſion, were frequent; that Chriſt, who was come in the fleſh, might have an opportunity of ſhewing his power over ſatan, and giving proof of his deity and Meſſiahſhip. *And he caſt out the ſpirits with his word*; only by ſpeaking to them; who were obliged, at his command, and by his orders, to quit their tenements, though unwillingly enough. *And healed all that were ſick*; whoever they were, without any reſpect of perſons, of whatſoever diſeaſe attended them: the moſt ſtubborn, inveterate, and otherwiſe incurable diſorder, was not too hard for him, which he cured without the help of medicine, and where that could be of no uſe, and either by ſpeaking, or touching, or ſome ſuch like means.

Ver. 17. *That it might be fulfilled which was ſpoken by Eſaias the prophet*, &c.] In *Iſa.* liii. 4. *He hath born our griefs and carried our ſorrows*, here rendered, *himſelf took our infirmities and bare our ſickneſſes*; very agreeable to the *Hebrew* text, הוא *he himſelf*, not another; נשא *took up*, upon himſelf voluntarily, freely, as a man lifts up a burden, and takes it on his ſhoulders; חלינו *our infirmities*, diſeaſes, ſickneſſes, whether of body or ſoul, ומכאבינו סבלם *and bare*, or carried, as a man does a burden upon his back, *our ſickneſſes*, or diſeaſes, which occaſion pain and ſorrow. And that theſe words are ſpoken of the Meſſiah, the *Jews* themſelves own; for among the names they give to the Meſſiah, *a leper* is one; which they prove from this paſſage [u]. "The *Rabbans* ſay, a *leper* of the houſe of *Rabbi* is his name; as it is ſaid, *ſurely he hath born our griefs, and carried our ſorrows, yet we did eſteem him ſtricken, ſmitten of God and afflicted.* Says *R. Nachman*, if he is of the living, he is as I am, as it is ſaid, *Jer.* xxx. 21. Says *Rab*, if of the living, he is as our *Rabbi*, the holy." Upon which laſt clauſe the *Gloſs* is, "If the *Meſſiah* is of them that are alive, our *Rabbi* the holy is he, *becauſe* דסובל החלואים *he bears infirmities*." Elſewhere [w] they ſay, "There is one temple that is called the temple of the ſons of afflictions; and when the *Meſſiah* comes into that temple, and reads all the afflictions, all the griefs, and all the chaſtiſements of *Iſrael*, which come upon them, then all of them ſhall come upon him: and if there was any that would lighten them off of *Iſrael*, and take them upon himſelf, there is no ſon of man that can bare the chaſtiſements of *Iſrael*, becauſe of the puniſhments of the law; as it is ſaid, *ſurely he hath born our griefs*, &c." And in another ancient *book* [x] of theirs, God is repreſented ſaying to the Meſſiah, "תסבול ישורין *wilt thou bear chaſtiſements*, in order to remove their iniquities? (the iniquities of the children of God) as it is written, *ſurely he hath born our griefs*: he replied, *I will bear them with joy*." Hence it is manifeſt, that according to the mind of the ancient *Jews*, this paſſage belongs to the *Meſſiah*, and is rightly applied to him by the Evangeliſt. But the difficulty is, how it had its accompliſhment in Chriſt's healing the bodily diſeaſes of men; ſince *Iſaiah* ſpeaks not of his actions and miracles, but of his ſufferings and death; and not of bearing the diſeaſes of the body, as it ſhould ſeem, but of the diſeaſes of the mind, of ſins, as the Apoſtle *Peter* interprets it, 1 *Peter* ii. 24. To remove which, let it be obſerved, that tho' the Prophet chiefly deſigns to point out Chriſt taking upon him, and bearing the ſins of his people, in order to make ſatisfaction for them, and to ſave them from them; yet ſo likewiſe, as to include his bearing, by way of ſympathy, and taking away by his power, the bodily diſeaſes of men, which ariſe from ſin; and which was not only an emblem of his bearing, and taking away ſin, but a proof of his power and ability to do it: for ſince he could do the one, it was plain he could do the other.

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[q] T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 52. 1.

[r] Targum in Job iii. 17.

[s] T. Hieroſ. Sheviith, fol. 33. 1.

[t] T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 2. 2. Maimon. Sabbat, c. 5. § 4.

Ver. 18. *Now when Jeſus ſaw great multitudes about him*, &c.] Who got together, partly out of novelty to ſee his perſon, of whom they had heard ſo much; and partly to ſee the miracles he wrought: ſome came to have their bodily diſeaſes healed; few, if any, to hear the Goſpel preached by him, and for the good of their immortal ſouls: the moſt part came with ſome ſiniſter, ſelfiſh, and carnal views; wherefore *he gave commandment to depart unto the other ſide*. Different were the reaſons, which at certain times moved Chriſt to depart from the multitude; as that he might have an opportunity of private prayer, or to preach to others, or to ſhew he ſought not popular applauſe, and to avoid ſeditions: his reaſons here ſeem to be with reſpect to himſelf, that being wearied as man, with the work of the day, he might have an opportunity of refreſhing himſelf with ſleep; with reſpect to his diſciples, that he might have a trial of their faith, when in danger at ſea; and with reſpect to the multitude, becauſe of their carnality, and ſole concern for their temporal, and worldly good. The perſons he gave commandment to, muſt be either the multitude, or the diſciples; not the former, becauſe he ſtudiouſly avoided their company, and his concern was to be rid of them; but the latter, and ſo the *Vulgate Latin* and *Munſter's Hebrew* goſpel read, *he commanded his diſciples*. The place he would have them go to was, the other ſide of the lake of *Tiberias*, or *Geneſaret*; not over the river *Euphrates*, as ſays the author of the old *Nizzachon* [y].

Ver. 19. *And a certain Scribe came*, &c.] *As they went in the way*, *Luke* ix. 57. to go to the ſea-ſide, in order to take ſhipping, and paſs to the other ſhore; *and ſaid unto him, Maſter, or Rabbi, I will follow thee whitherſoever thou goeſt.* One would have thought, that this man deſired in good earneſt to be a diſciple of Chriſt, were it not for Chriſt's anſwer to him, who knew his heart: from whence it appears, that he, ſeeing the miracles which Chriſt wrought, and obſerving the fame of him among the people, began to think that he would be generally received as the *Meſſiah*; and by joining himſelf to him, promiſed himſelf much eaſe, honour, and wealth. Theſe ſeem to be the motives, which prevailed upon him to take ſo ſudden and haſty a ſtep; for he did not wait to be called to follow Chriſt, as the other diſciples were, but offers himſelf to be one; that is, to be one of his intimates, one of his apoſtles; and beſides, he raſhly promiſes to do that, which he knew nothing of, and which in ſome caſes is impoſſible to be done.

Ver. 20. *And Jeſus ſaith unto him*, &c.] Knowing his heart, and the carnal and worldly views with which he acted; *the foxes have holes* in the earth, where they hide themſelves from danger, take their reſt, and ſecure their whelps; *and the birds of the air have neſts*, where they ſit, lay, and hatch their eggs, and bring up their young; *but the Son of man has not where to lay his head*, when he is weary, and wants reſt and ſleep, as he did at this time. So that though he was Lord of all, as being the mighty God; yet as *the Son of man*, a phraſe, expreſſive both of the truth and meanneſs of his human nature, the moſt deſpicable of creatures in the earth and air, were richer than he. This he ſaid, to convince the *Scribe* of his miſtake; who expected much worldly grandeur and wealth, by becoming his diſciple. When Chriſt ſtiles himſelf *the ſon of man*, it is no contradiction to his being God; nor any objection to truſt and confidence in him, as the *Jew* [z] ſuggeſts; for he is truly and properly God, as well as really man, having two natures, human and divine, united in his perſon; ſo that he is, as was propheſied of him, *Emmanuel*, God with us, in our nature, God manifeſted in the fleſh: and ſince he is ſo, it can't be unlawful to truſt in him; which it would be indeed, was he a mere man. The *Jews* ought not to object to this name and title of the *Meſſiah*, *the Son of man*; ſince he is ſo called, as their own writers and commentators acknowledge, in [a] *Pſal.* lxxx. 17. and [b] *Dan.* vii. 14. And whereas it is further urged againſt theſe words of Chriſt, that if he was God, why does he complain of want of place? Is not the whole world his, according to *Pſal.* xxiv. 1? It may be replied, that it is very true, that the whole world is his, nor could he be in want of any thing, as God; but yet, as man, for our ſakes he became *poor*, that we *might be rich*: nor ſhould this be any difficulty with a *Jew*, when they themſelves ſay, as ſome have thought, if he (the *Meſſiah*) ſhould come, לי דוכתא דיתיבנא ביה, *there's no place in which he can ſit down*[c]. Unleſs it be underſtood of *Nebuchadnezzar*, as the *Gloſs* explains it; let the learned inſpect the place, and judge: the coming of the *Meſſiah* is immediately ſpoken of.

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[u] T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 98. 2.

[w] Zohar in Exod. fol. 85. 2.

[x] Peſikta in Abkath Rochel, l. 1. par. 2. p. 309. Ed. Hulſ.

[y] Pag. 205.

[z] R. Iſaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 12. p. 403.

[a] Targum & Aben Ezra in loc. Abarbinel Maſhmia Jeſhua, fol 81. 2.

[b] R. Jeſhua in Aben Ezra in loc. & Saadiah Gaon & Jarchi in loc. Zohar in Gen. fol. 85. 4.

Ver. 21. *And another of his diſciples ſaid unto him, &c.*] That is, one of his diſciples; for this does not ſuppoſe, that the other, the *Scribe* before-mentioned, was one. 'Tis poſſible, he might be one of the twelve. The *Perſic* verſion makes him one of the diſciples, whom they call *Hawarion*, Apoſtles; and, according to ancient tradition, it was [d] *Philip*. And certain it is, that he was one, who was called to preach the Goſpel; ſo that he was not a common ordinary diſciple; nor could he be one of the ſeventy diſciples, ſince it was after this, that they were called and ſent forth; as appears from *Luke*'s account, chap. ix. 60. and x. 1. But who he particularly was, cannot be certainly known, nor is it of any great importance to know it: his addreſs to Chriſt, is made with great reſpect and reverence, and in a very modeſt and humble manner, *Lord, ſuffer me firſt to go and bury my father*: for it ſeems, according to *Luke*, that Chriſt had bid him *follow* him: he had given him a call to be his diſciple, and to go and preach the Goſpel, which he did not refuſe; but deſires leave *firſt*, to attend his father's funeral, who was now dead; as his requeſts, and Chriſt's anſwer, both ſuppoſe: though ſome conjecture, that he was only very aged, or was dangerouſly ill; and therefore it could not be thought, he would live long: hence he was deſirous of doing this laſt good office, before he entered on his publick work; but theſe are conjectures, without any foundation: its plain, his father was dead, and what he requeſted was, to go home, which perhaps might not be a great way off, and perform the funeral rites, and then return. This may ſeem very reaſonable, ſince burying the dead, was reckoned by the *Jews*, not only an act of kindneſs and reſpect to the deceaſed, but an act of piety and religion; and in which, men are followers of God, and imitate him, who himſelf buried the body of *Moſes*[e]. And though this man was called to preach the Goſpel, yet he might think he would be eaſily excuſed for the preſent, on this account; ſince, according to the *Jewiſh* canons, ſuch whoſe dead lay before them, who were as yet unburied, were excuſed reading the *Shema*, they were free from performing the duty of prayer, and were not obliged to wear their *phylacteries*[f].

Ver. 22. *But Jeſus ſaid unto him, follow thou me, &c.*] Chriſt would not excuſe him on this account, but inſiſts on what he had before called him to; to attend upon him, and give himſelf up to the miniſtry of the word: which was done, partly to ſhew, that a greater regard ought to be had to him, than to the neareſt relation and friend whatever; and partly, on account of the dignity of the goſpel miniſtry, which greatly exceeds any ſuch ſervices; as alſo to ſignify, of what little account were the traditions of the elders with him; wherefore he ſays, *let the dead bury the dead.* Our Lord is not to be underſtood, as ſpeaking againſt, or diſreſpectfully of burying the dead; his words ſuppoſe it ought to be done: only it was not proper, that this perſon ſhould be concerned in it at this time, who was called to an higher employment; and therefore ſhould leave this to be done by perſons, whom it better became. And however ſtrange and odd ſuch a phraſe may ſound in the ears of ſome, of one dead man's burying another, it was eaſily underſtood by a *Jew*; with whom it is common to ſay, החוטא חשוב כמת, *that a ſinner is counted as* [g] *dead*, and that *ungodly perſons, even while they are alive*, קרויין מתים, are *called dead*[h]. And in this ſenſe is the word uſed, in the former part of this phraſe; and Chriſt's meaning is, let ſuch who are dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, and to all that is ſpiritually good, bury thoſe who are dead in a natural or corporal ſenſe. It is likely, the deceaſed was an unregenerate man; however, it is plainly ſuggeſted, that many of the relations were; and there were enough of them to take care of this ſervice: and therefore, there was no need why he ſhould neglect the miniſtry of the Goſpel to attend that; but ought to leave it to perſons who were fitter for it.

Ver. 23. *And when he was entered into a ſhip, &c.*] Which was got ready by his diſciples, or hired by them for his uſe, according to the directions he had given; *his diſciples followed him* into the ſhip, and they only; for as for the men hereafter mentioned, they were the men that belonged to the ſhip, and had the management of it: the multitude were diſmiſſed, and in order to be clear of them, Chriſt took this method; and being deſirous alſo of trying the faith of his diſciples, he ordered it ſo, that they ſhould be alone with him.

Ver. 24. *And behold, there aroſe a great tempeſt, &c.*] *A great concuſſion*, or *ſhaking* of the ſea; the ſtormy wind moved the ſea, and the waves thereof; and both wind and ſea ſhook the ſhip, and the men that were in it. *Luke* calls this tempeſt a *ſtorm of wind*, chap. viii. 23. and *Mark* ſays, it was *a great ſtorm of wind*, chap. iv. 37. and both uſe the word *lælaps*, which ſignifies a particular kind of wind, which is ſuddenly whirled about upwards and downwards; or rather, a conflict of many winds: it ſeems to be a whirlwind, or hurricane. It is ſaid, that this tempeſt *aroſe*, not by chance, nor by the power of ſatan, but by divine providence; for the trial of the faith of Chriſt's diſciples, and that he might have an opportunity of giving proof of his deity on the ſea, as he had lately done in ſeveral inſtances on the dry land. *Luke* ſays, that this ſtorm of wind *came down*; referring to the motion and courſe of the winds, which are exhalations from the earth, raiſed up into the middle region of the air, from whence they are depelled by a ſuperior force to the lower region, and from thence move in an oblique, ſlanting manner, downwards. The place where this tempeſt aroſe, or into which this ſtorm of wind came down, is here ſaid to be *in the ſea*. *Luke* calls it a *lake*, and it was the lake of *Geneſareth*. But both *Matthew* and *Mark*, call it the *ſea*, and is what is ſometimes called the ſea of *Tiberias*, and the ſea of *Galilee*; ſee *John* vi. 1. and xxi. 1. agreeable to the language of the *Jewiſh*[i] writers. To all this, the word *behold!* is prefixed; which is ſometimes uſed, when any thing extraordinary and preternatural is ſpoken of: and this ſtorm ſeems to be more than an ordinary one; at leaſt, it was very ſudden and unexpected: when the diſciples entered the ſhip, the air was ſerene, and the ſea ſtill and quiet; but as ſoon as they had ſet ſail, at once, on a ſudden, this ſtorm came down, with great force into the ſea, and lifted up its waves; *inſomuch that the ſhip was covered with the waves*; it was juſt ſinking to the bottom, ſo that they were in the utmoſt extremity: and what added to their diſtreſs was, *but he*, Chriſt, *was aſleep*. *Mark* mentions the place where he was aſleep, *in the hinder part of the ſhip*; that is, in the ſtern: where he, as Lord and maſter ſhould be, though to the great concern of his diſciples, there aſleep; and that in a deep ſound ſleep, as the word which *Luke* makes uſe of, ſignifies; and as appears by the loud repeated call of his diſciples to awake him: and though this ſleep doubtleſs aroſe from natural cauſes, he being greatly fatigued with the buſineſs of the day paſt; yet was ſo ordered by the providence of God, to come upon him in ſuch a manner at this time, for the trial of the faith of his diſciples. Chriſt's body needing ſleep, and refreſhment by it, ſhews that it was a real human body he aſſumed; ſubject to the ſame infirmities as ours, excepting ſin; and is no contradiction to the truth of his divinity, as the *Jew* [k] ſuggeſts. He ſlept as man, though as God, he is *Iſrael*'s keeper, who neither ſlumbers nor ſleeps.

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[c] T. Bab. Sanhedrim. fol. 96. 2. [d] Clement. Alex. Strom. l. 3. p. 436. [e] T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 30. 2. & Sota, fol. 14. 1. [f] Miſn. Beracot, c. 3. §. 1. [g] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 6. 2. [h] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 18. 2. Jarchi in Gen. 11. 32. Baal Hatturim, in Deut. xvii. 6. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 58. 3. Midraſh Kohelet, fol. 78. 2. Caphtor, fol. 79. 1, 2. & 84. 1. [i] T. Bab. Moed. Katon, fol. 18. 2. Bava Kama, fol. 81. 2. Bereſhit Rabba, fol. 86. 2.

Ver. 25. *And his diſciples came unto him*, &c.] From ſome other part of the ſhip, being in great conſternation, and diſtreſs, *and awoke him*; *ſaying, Lord, ſave us, we periſh*. They awoke him by their loud cries, and repeated calls; for in *Luke*, the form of addreſs is doubled, *Maſter, Maſter!* expreſſing their diſtreſs, importunity, and haſte for deliverance; ſaying, *ſave us, we periſh*, or *we are loſt*: which ſhews the apprehenſions they had of their condition; not only that they were in danger of being loſt, or were ready to be loſt, but were loſt: they ſaw no probability of eſcaping by any natural, rational methods; wherefore they apply to Chriſt, believing that he was able to ſave them, in this their extremity; as they had indeed a great deal of reaſon to conclude, from the miracles they had that day ſeen performed by him.

Ver. 26. *And he ſaith unto them, why are ye fearful?* &c.] Though they had ſome faith in him, yet there was a great deal of fear and unbelief, for which Chriſt blames them, ſaying, *O ye of little faith*; ſee note on chap. vi. 30. In *Luke*, the phraſe is, *where is your faith?* what is become of it? you profeſſed but juſt now to believe in me, is your faith gone already? In *Mark* it is, *how is it that ye have no faith?* That is, in exerciſe, their faith was very ſmall, it could hardly be diſcerned: ſome faith they had, as appears by their application to him, but it was very little. They had no faith in him, as ſleeping, that he could deliver them; but had ſome little faith in him that he might, could he be awaked out of ſleep; and for this Chriſt blames them; for he, as the eternal God, was as able to ſave them ſleeping as waking. *Then he aroſe and rebuked the winds and the ſea, and there was a great calm*: being awaked by his diſciples, he raiſes his head from his pillow, ſtands up, and with a majeſtic voice, in an authoritative manner, ſhewing ſome kind of reſentment at the wind and ſea, as if they had exceeded their commiſſion; and the one had blown, and the other raged too much and too long; he rebukes them in ſuch language as this, *peace, be ſtill*; σιωπα πεφιμωσο, as it is in *Mark*, be ſilent, hold your peace, ſtop your mouth, put a bridle on it, as the words uſed ſignify; and go on no longer to threaten with ſhipwrack and loſs of lives; upon which the wind ceaſed, the ſea became calm, and the ſhip moved quietly on.

Ver. 27. *But the men marvelled*, &c.] *Mark* ſays, *they feared exceedingly*; and *Luke*, *they being afraid, wondered*: they were filled with aſtoniſhment and fear, or reverence: there was ſuch a ſhine of majeſty, ſuch a luſtre of divine power appeared in this affair. The other two *Evangeliſts* ſeem to refer this to the diſciples, which *Matthew* ſeems to aſcribe to the men, the mariners that were in the ſhip; its likely it had the ſame effect on both; and both were abundantly convinced of his deity and dignity, ſaying, *what manner of man*, or *perſon is this?* For the word *man*, is not in the text; of what qualities, perfections and powers, is he poſſeſſed? Surely he muſt be more than a mere man; he can be no other than the mighty God, *that even the winds and the ſea obey him*; which can be ſaid of no other, than the moſt high God: never was ſuch a thing heard of, that the winds and ſea ſhould be rebuked by a mere creature, and ſhould obey. That man muſt be an infidel to *revelation*, that can read this account, and deny the deity of Chriſt; to one or other of theſe he muſt be drove, either to deny the truth of the fact, and the circumſtances of it, or believe that Jeſus Chriſt is truly and properly God, as the diſciples and mariners did.

Ver. 28. *And when he was come to the other ſide*, &c.] Of the lake, or ſea of *Tiberias*, right over-againſt *Galilee*, *into the country of the Gergeſenes*, the ſame with the *Girgaſhites*, *Gen.* xv. 21. *Deut.* vii. 1. *Joſh.* iii. 10. whom *Joſhua* drove out of the land of *Canaan*; and who, as a *Jewiſh* writer [l] ſays, left their country to the *Iſraelites*, and went to a country, which is called to this day, גורגיסטאן, *Gurgeſtan*; of which theſe people were ſome remains: both in *Mark*, ch. v. 1. and *Luke*, ch. viii. 26. it is called *the country of the Gadarenes*; and ſo the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read it here; which is eaſily reconciled by obſerving, not that *Gergeſa* and *Gadara*, were one and the ſame city, called by different names; but that theſe two cities were near each other, in the ſame country, which was ſometimes denominated from the one, and ſometimes from the other. *Origen* [m] has a remarkable paſſage, ſhewing the different ſituations of *Gadara* and *Gergeſa*; and that the latter cannot be *Geraſa* in *Arabia*; and alſo the ſignification of the name, for the ſake of which, I ſhall tranſcribe it. "*Geraſa*, ſays he, is a city of *Arabia*, having neither ſea nor lake near it; wherefore the *Evangeliſts*, who well knew the countries about *Judea*, would never have ſaid ſo manifeſt an untruth: and as to what we find in ſome few copies, *into the country of the Gadarenes*, it muſt be ſaid, that *Gadara* indeed was a city of *Judea*, about which, were many famous baths; but there was no lake, or ſea in it, adjacent with precipices; but *Gergeſa*, from whence were the *Gergaſenes*, is an ancient city about the lake, now called *Tiberias*; about which is a precipice adjacent to the lake, from whence is ſhewn, that the ſwine were caſt down by the devils. *Gergeſa* is interpreted, παροικια εκβεβληκοτων, *the habitation of thoſe that caſt out*; being called ſo perhaps prophetically, for what the inhabitants of thoſe places did to the Saviour, beſeeching him to depart out of their coaſts." Dr. *Lightfoot* ſuggeſts, that this place might be ſo called, from גרגשתא, which ſignifies *clay* or *dirt*, and mentions *Lutetia* for an example. But to paſs this, as ſoon as Chriſt was got out of the ſhip, and

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[k] Vet. Nizzachon, p. 210

[l] Juchaſin, fol. 135 2.

[m] Comment. in Joannem, T. 2. p. 131. Ed. Huet.

come to land in this country, *there met him two poſſeſſed with devils.* Both *Mark* and *Luke* mention but one, which is no contradiction to *Matthew*; for they don't ſay that there was only one; and perhaps, the reaſon why they only take notice of him, is, becauſe he was the fierceſt, had a legion of devils in him, and was the principal one, that ſpake to Chriſt, and with whom he was chiefly concerned. This is to be underſtood, not of any natural diſeaſe of body, but of real poſſeſſion by ſatan. Theſe poſſeſſed men met him, not purpoſely, or with deſign, but accidentally to them, and unawares to ſatan too; for though he knows much, he's not omniſcient: had he been aware of Chriſt's coming that way, and what he was about to do, he would have took care to have had the poſſeſſed out of the way; but ſo it was ordered by providence, that juſt as Chriſt landed, theſe ſhould be *coming out of the tombs.* Their cœmeteria, or burying places, were at ſome diſtance from towns or cities; wherefore *Luke* ſays, the poſſeſſed met him *out of the city,* a good way off from it; for the *Jews* [n] ſay, שלא היו בתי הקברות סמוכין לעיר, *that the ſepulchres were not near a city*; ſee *Luke* vii. 12. and theſe tombs were built ſo large, that perſons might go into them, and ſit and dwell in them, as theſe *dæmoniacks* did, and therefore are ſaid to come out of them. The rules for making them are [o] theſe; "He that ſells ground to his neighbour to make a burying-place, or that receives of his neighbour, to make him a burying-place, muſt make the inſide of the cave four cubits by ſix, and open in it eight graves; three here, and three there, and two over againſt them; and the graves muſt be four cubits long, and ſeven high, and ſix broad. *R. Simeon* ſays, he muſt make the inſide of the cave ſix cubits by eight, and open within thirteen graves, four here, and four there, and three over againſt them; and one on the right hand of the door, and one on the left: and he muſt make חצר *a court,* at the mouth of the cave, ſix by ſix, according to the meaſure of the bier, and thoſe that bury; and he muſt open in it two caves, one here and another there: *R. Simeon* ſays, four at the four ſides. *R. Simeon ben Gamaliel* ſays, all is according to the nature of the rock." Now in the court, at the mouth, or entrance of the cave, which was made for the bearers to put down the bier or coffin upon, before the interment, there was room for perſons to enter and lodge, as theſe poſſeſſed with devils did: which places were choſen by the devils, either becauſe of the ſolitude, gloomineſs, and filthineſs of them; or, as ſome think, to confirm that perſuaſion ſome had, that the ſouls of men after death, are changed into devils; or rather, to eſtabliſh a notion which prevailed among the *Jews,* that the ſouls of the deceaſed continue for a while to be about their bodies; which drew perſons to necromancy, or conſulting with the dead. 'Tis a notion that obtains among the *Jews* [p], that the ſoul for twelve months after its ſeparation from the body, is more or leſs with it, hovering about it; and hence, ſome have been induced to go and dwell among the tombs, and enquire of ſpirits: they tell us [q], "it happened to a certain holy man, that he gave a penny to a poor man on the *eve* of the new year; and his wife provoked him, and he went ולן בבית הקברות *and lodged among the tombs,* and heard two ſpirits talking with one another." Or the devil choſe theſe places, to render the perſons poſſeſſed, the more uncomfortable and diſtreſſed; to make them wilder and fiercer, by living in ſuch deſolate places, and ſo do more miſchief to others: which was the caſe of theſe, who were *exceeding fierce,* wicked, malignant, miſchievous, and troubleſome, through the influence of the devils in them; *ſo that no man might paſs that way,* without being inſulted, or hurt by them.

Ver. 29. *And behold, they cried out, ſaying,* &c.] This is an inſtance and proof, of the wonderful power of Chriſt over the devils; and has therefore the note of admiration, *behold!* prefixed to it, that the devils themſelves, who had took poſſeſſion of theſe men, and made them ſo fierce and cruel, and outragious, that there was no paſſing the way for them; yet upon the ſight of Chriſt, and eſpecially at hearing his orders to come out from them, not only ſay, but cry out, as being in great conſternation, horror, and fear, and with the utmoſt ſubjection to him, *what have we to do with thee, Jeſus, thou ſon of God?* They had nothing indeed to do with him; they had no intereſt in his grace, blood, righteouſneſs, and ſalvation; he was no Saviour for them: but he had to do with them, and that was what they dreaded; and therefore mean, that he would let them alone, in the quiet poſſeſſion of theſe men, and not diſturb and diſlodge them; for they knew that he was *Jeſus,* the Saviour of ſinful men, though none of theirs, the true *Meſſiah*; and that he was alſo *the ſon of God,* a divine perſon, poſſeſſed of almighty power, and ſo an over match for them; at whoſe preſence they trembled, and whoſe all-commanding voice they were obliged to obey, though ſorely againſt their wills. *Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?* This queſtion implies the apprehenſion the devils had of Chriſt as a judge, and their ſenſe of his authority, and power, to puniſh them; as alſo that they deſerved it, and expected it, nor do they ſay any thing againſt it; only imagine that the time of their full torment, was not yet come; which is generally referred unto the day of judgment, to which they were reſerved by the appointment of God; which they had ſome notion of, and as at a diſtance; and therefore complain of Chriſt's coming to them now, and expoſtulate with him about it: though it may be underſtood of the time they had propoſed to themſelves, to abide in the men they had poſſeſſed, and which they concluded, they had a permiſſion for; and nothing could give more torment, pain, and uneaſineſs, than to be turned out, and remanded to their priſon, and reſtrained from doing more miſchief to the bodies and ſouls of men. Or whether this mayn't have ſome reſpect to the time of the preaching of the Goſpel, and ſetting up the kingdom of Chriſt among the *Gentiles,* the devils might have ſome hint of, as not yet to be, I leave to be conſidered, with this obſervation; that there ſeems to be a conſiderable *emphaſis* on the word *hither,* meaning the country of the *Gergeſenes,* an heathen country, at leaſt where many *Gentiles* inhabited: and it is as if they had ſaid, is it not enough, that thou turneſt us out of the land of *Judea,* and haſt diſpoſſeſſed us out of the bodies of men dwelling there; but thou purſueſt us hither alſo, and will not let us have any reſt, even in this heatheniſh land; though the time is not yet come, for the diſſolution of our empire and government in the *Gentile* world?

Ver. 30. *And there was a good way off from them,* &c.] *Nigh unto the mountains,* as *Mark* ſays, or *on the mountain,* as *Luke,* bordering on the ſea-ſhore; ſo that though it was at ſome diſtance, yet within ſight. The *Vulgate Latin*, and the *Hebrew* edition of *Munſter* read, *not far off*; and the *Perſic* verſion, *near them*: which agree with the accounts of *Mark* and *Luke*, who ſay, that there were *there*, or hard by, *an herd of many ſwine feeding*. Since ſwines fleſh was forbidden the *Jews* to eat, *Levit.* xi. 7. it may be aſked, how came it to paſs, that there ſhould be any number of theſe creatures, or that ſuch a herd of them ſhould be kept in the land of *Iſrael*? To which may be replied, that though the *Jews* might not eat ſwines fleſh, they were not forbid to bring them up; which they might do, in order to ſell to the *Gentiles*, who dwelt among them; and particularly to the *Romans*, under whoſe government they now were, and with whom ſwines fleſh was in great eſteem: but ſtill a difficulty remains; for it was not only forbidden by the law of God to eat ſwines fleſh, but, by the *Jewiſh* canons, to bring them up, and make any advantage of them in any ſhape: their law was this, לא יגדל ישראל חזירים בכל מקום, *an Iſraelite might not bring up hogs in any place* [r]: the reaſons of this cannon were many, partly becauſe of the uncleanneſs of theſe creatures; hence one of their writers [s] obſerving, that next to thoſe words, *they are unclean unto you*, are, *and the ſwine*, ſays, that this is to teach us, that *it is forbidden to bring up hogs*; and partly, becauſe of the damage which theſe creatures do to other men's fields: hence [t] "the wiſe men ſay, curſed is he that brings "up dogs and hogs, מפני שהזיקן מרובה, *becauſe* "*they do much hurt.*" But the chief reaſon given by the *Gemariſts* [u] for this prohibition, was the fact following: "When the *Haſmonean* fa-"mily, or *Maccabees*, were at war with one ano-"ther, *Hyrcanus* was within (*Jeruſalem*,) and *Ari-*"*ſtobulus* without, and every day they let down "to them money in a box; and they ſent up to "them the daily ſacrifices: there was one old man, "who underſtood the wiſdom of the *Greeks*, and "he ſaid unto them, as long as they employ them-"ſelves in the ſervice (of God,) they'll not be de-"livered into your hands: on the morrow they let "down their money, and they ſent them up a hog; "and when it came to the middle of the wall, he "fixed his hoofs in the wall, and the land of *Iſrael* "ſhook, &c. at that time they ſaid, curſed be the "man שיגדל חזירים, *that breeds hogs*; and curſed "is the man that teaches his ſon the learning of the "*Grecians.*" Before this time, it ſeems to have been lawful to bring them up, and trade with them; but now it was forbid, not only to breed them, but to receive any gain or profit by them; for this is another of their rules [w]. "It is forbidden to bring "up a hog, in order to get any profit by his ſkin, "or by his lard, or fat, to anoint with, or to light "(lamps) with; yea, though it may fall to him "by inheritance." And nothing was more infamous and reproachful among them, than a keeper of theſe creatures: when therefore they had a mind to caſt contempt upon a man, they would call him מגדל חזירי [x] *a breeder of hogs*, or חזריא [y] *a hog-herd*. But after all, it was only an *Iſraelite* that was forbid this; a ſtranger might bring them up, for this is one of their canons [z]. "A man may ſell "fetches to give to a ſtranger that breeds hogs, "but to an *Iſraelite* it is forbidden to breed them." Yea, they ſay [a], "If others breed them to anoint "ſkins with their lard, or to ſell them to an *Iſra-*"*elite* to anoint with them, it was lawful: all fat "may be ſold, which is not for eating." And ſo ſome cities are ſuppoſed to have hogs in them, concerning which they obſerve [b], that "a city that "has hogs in it, is free from the *mezuzah*;" the ſchedules which were faſtened to the poſts of doors and gates: but now ſuppoſing this herd of ſwine belonged to *Jews* in theſe parts, it may eaſily be accounted for; for ſince they lived among Heathens, they might not have ſo great a regard to the directions of their *Rabbins*; and eſpecially, ſince it was ſo much for their profit and advantage, they might make no ſcruple to break through theſe ordinances. Though this herd of ſwine may well enough be thought to belong to the *Gentiles*, that dwelt in this country; ſince *Gadara* was a *Grecian* city, and then inhabited more by *Syrians*, than by *Jews*, as *Joſephus* relates [c].

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[n] T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 80. 2. Gloſſ.

[o] Miſn. Bava Bathra, c. 6. §. 8.

[p] Niſhmat Chayim, par. 2. c. 22. p. 81. 2. c. 24. p. 85. 1. &c. 29. p. 93. 1. p. 94. 1, 2.

[q] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 18. 2.

Ver. 31. *So the devils beſought him, ſaying*, &c.] All the devils, the whole legion of them, who perceiving that they muſt be obliged to go out of theſe men, and after they had earneſtly entreated they might not be ſent out of the country where they had long been, and had made themſelves maſters of the tempers, diſpoſitions, and circumſtances of the inhabitants, and ſo capable of doing the more miſchief, begged hard, *if thou caſt us out* of theſe men, or *from hence*, as the *Vulgate Latin*, the *Ethiopic*, and *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* goſpel read, or *out of our place*, as the *Perſic*; ſince we muſt depart, and can't be allowed to enter into other men, *ſuffer us to go away into the herd of ſwine*. This requeſt ſhews the weakneſs of the infernal ſpirits, they are not able to do any thing without leave; and the ſuperior power of Chriſt over them, and their acknowledgment of it; as well as the wretched malignity of their nature, who muſt be doing miſchief, if not to the bodies and ſouls of men, yet to their property and goods; and if they can't vent their malice on rational creatures, are deſirous of doing it on irrational ones. Many reaſons have been thought of, why the devils ſhould deſire to go into the herd of ſwine; as becauſe of the filthineſs of theſe creatures, theſe impure ſpirits delighting in what is impure; or out of pure hatred to the inhabitants of this country, who, becauſe they could no longer hurt their perſons, would deſtroy their goods; or that by ſo doing, they might ſet the people againſt Chriſt, and ſo prevent his uſefulneſs among them; which laſt ſeems to be the trueſt reaſon, and which end was anſwered.

Ver. 32. *And he ſaid unto them, go*, &c.] He gave them leave, as God did to *ſatan*, in the caſe of *Job*; for without divine permiſſion, theſe evil ſpirits cannot do any thing to the bodies, ſouls, or eſtates of men: they could not enter into the ſwine without leave, and much leſs do things of greater moment and conſequence; and therefore are not to be feared, or dreaded by men, eſpecially by the people of God. It may be aſked, why did Chriſt ſuffer the devils to enter the herd of ſwine, and deſtroy them, which was a conſiderable loſs to the proprietors? To which may be anſwered, that if the owners were *Jews*, and theſe creatures were brought up by them for food, it was a juſt puniſhment of their breach of the law of God; or if to be ſold to others, for gain and filthy lucres ſake, it was a proper rebuke, both of their avarice and the contempt of the laws of their own country, which were made to be a hedge or fence for the law of God: or if they were *Gentiles*, this was ſuffered to ſhew the malice of theſe evil ſpirits, under whoſe influence they were, and who would, if they had but leave, ſerve them as they did the ſwine; and to diſplay the power of Chriſt over the devils, and his ſovereign right to, and diſpoſal of the goods and properties of men; and to evince the truth of the diſpoſſeſſion, and the greatneſs of the mercy the diſpoſſeſſed ſhared in; and to ſpread the fame of the miracle the more. *And when they were come out* of the men that had been poſſeſſed by them, *they went into the herd of ſwine*; which ſhews the real exiſtence of theſe ſpirits, the truth of poſſeſſions and diſpoſſeſſions; and that by theſe devils can't be meant the ſins and corruptions of mens hearts, ſuch as pride, covetouſneſs, uncleanneſs, envy, malice, cruelty, *&c.* for theſe could never be ſaid to enter into a herd of ſwine, or be the authors of their deſtruction: *and behold, the whole herd of ſwine*, and which was a very large one, conſiſting of about two thouſand, *ran violently down a ſteep place*; a precipice of one of the rocks, by the ſea-ſide, *into the ſea* of *Tiberias*, or lake of *Geneſareth*, which were the ſame, and over which Chriſt had juſt now paſſed; *and periſhed in the waters* of the ſea, or lake, and not any other waters near *Gadara*, and afar off from hence.

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[r] Miſn. Bava Kama, c. 7. §. 7. Midraſh Kohelet, fol. 77. 2.
[s] Baal Hatturim, in Deut. xiv. 7, 8.
[t] Maimon. Nezike Mammon, c. 5. §. 9.
[u] T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 82. 2. Menachot, fol. 64. 2. Sota, fol. 49. 2.
[w] Toſaphot in Peſach, art. 62.
[x] T. Hieroſ. Shekalim, fol. 47. 3.
[y] Ib. Trumot, fol. 46. 3.
[z] Piſke Toſaphot in Sabbat, art. 317.
[a] Yom Tob & Ez Chayim, in Miſn. Bava Kama, c. 7. §. 7.
[b] Ib. art. 130.
[c] De Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 33.

Ver. 33. *And they that kept them, fled*, &c.] The hogherds, men of very low life, and whoſe employment was very infamous and reproachful, as has been obſerved. Theſe, amazed at what they had ſeen, diſtreſſed with the loſs of the ſwine, and ſo of their employment, and frighted alſo leſt they ſhould incur the blame and diſpleaſure of their maſters, ran away in great haſte, fear, and aſtoniſhment; *and went their way into the city*; either of *Gergeſa*, or *Gadara*. *Mark* and *Luke* ſay, they *went and told it in the city, and in the country*: in their fright and diſtreſs, ſome ran one way, and ſome another; ſome went into the city, others into the country, and ſo ſpread the affair far and near, and the fame of Chriſt, which was deſigned by this miracle; *and told every thing* they ſaw and heard; how the devils entered into the ſwine, and they ran headlong into the ſea, and were drowned: this they told firſt, as being done laſt, and with which they were moſt affected, and what chiefly concerned their employers; and after they had told every circumſtance of the affair, next they gave a narrative of *what was befallen to the poſſeſſed of the devils*, and which was the occaſion of the loſs of their ſwine; how ſubject the devils, that were in them, were to Chriſt; how eaſily he diſpoſſeſſed them by a word of command; how they entreated they might have leave to go into the herd of ſwine, which was granted; and how perfectly whole, and in health, both in body and mind, the men were.

Ver. 34. *And behold, the whole city*, &c.] The inhabitants of it, not every individual perſon, but the greater number of them, or, at leaſt, a very great number of them. *Luke* ſays, *the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about*: for as the news was carried both into the city and country, great numbers flock'd from all parts, *and came out to meet Jeſus*; not out of any love and reſpect to him, and in order to invite him, and conduct him into their city, and there receive him kindly, and treat him with due honour and reverence; but either out of curioſity to ſee ſuch an extraordinary perſon, which, doubtleſs, was the caſe of many; or, elſe being terrified at the report concerning him, and diſtreſſed with their preſent loſs, which was the caſe of others, went out to prevent his coming any farther, leſt they ſhould ſuffer ſomething worſe: accordingly, *when they ſaw him, they beſought him that he would depart out of their coaſts*; which was done, not as tho' they thought themſelves unworthy the preſence of ſo great a perſon, as did the *centurion*, in the former part of this *chapter*, or, as *Peter*, when he ſaid, *depart from me, I am a ſinful man*; but as fearing, leſt ſome greater puniſhment ſhould be inflicted on them for their ſins, of which they were conſcious; and therefore make no complaint of any injuſtice being done them by the loſs of their ſwine; tho' theſe they preferr'd to the preſence of Chriſt, and even to any cures wrought, or which might have been wrought, either upon the bodies, or ſouls of men.

## CHAP. IX.

Ver. 1. AND *he entered into a ſhip*, &c.] Or *the ſhip*, the ſelf-ſame ſhip he came over in, with his diſciples. The *Gergeſenes*, or *Gadarenes*, or both, having deſired him to depart their coaſts, ſhewing an unwillingneſs to receive him, and an uneaſineſs at his company, he immediately turn'd his back upon them, as an ungrateful people, being no better than their ſwine; and who, by their conduct, judged themſelves unworthy of his preſence, miniſtry, and miracles: he return'd to the ſea-ſide, took ſhipping, and *paſſed over* the ſea of *Tiberias* again, *and came into his own city*; not *Bethlehem*, where he was born, nor *Nazareth*, as *Jerom* thought, where he was educated, but *Capernaum*, as is clear from *Mark* ii. 1. where he much dwelt, frequently converſed, and his diſciples: here he paid tribute as an inhabitant, or citizen of the place, which he was entitled to by only dwelling in it twelve months, according to the *Jewiſh* canons; where 'tis aſked[d], "how long ſhall a man be in a city e'er he is as the men of the city? 'Tis anſwered, *twelve months*; but if he purchaſes a dwelling-houſe, he is as the men of the city immediately;" that is, he is a citizen, and obliged to all charges and offices, as they are: tho' they ſeem to make a diſtinction between an inhabitant and a citizen[e]. "A man is not reckoned כבני העיר, *as the children of the city*, or as one of the citizens, in leſs than twelve months; but he may be called, or accounted, מיושבי העיר, *as one of the inhabitants* of the city, if he ſtays there thirty days." One or other of theſe Chriſt had done, which denominated this city to be his, and he to be either an inhabitant, or a citizen of it.

Ver. 2. *And behold, they brought to him a man ſick of the palſy*, &c.] That is, ſome of the inhabitants of *Capernaum*, four men of that city particularly; for *Mark* ſays, ch. ii. 3. he *was born of four*: theſe brought him to Jeſus, *lying on a bed*, or couch, he being ſo enfeebled by the diſeaſe upon him, his nerves ſo weak, and the members of his body in ſuch a tremor, that he was not able to walk himſelf, nor even to be carried by others in any other way than this. *And Jeſus ſeeing their faith*; the faith of the bearers of him, his friends, who brought out a man to be healed, who was otherwiſe incurable; and tho' they could not, for the multitude, bring him directly to Chriſt, they were not diſcouraged, but took the pains to carry him to the top of the houſe, and there let him him down thro' the roof, or tiling; as both *Mark* and *Luke* ſay; and then ſet him down before him, believing he was able to cure him: moreover, Chriſt took notice not only of their faith, but of the ſick man's too, who ſuffered himſelf to be brought out in this condition, and was contented to go thro' ſo much fatigue and trouble, to get at him; when he *ſaid unto the ſick of the palſy, ſon, be of good chear, thy ſins are forgiven thee.* He calls him *ſon*, either meaning by it no more than *man*; ſee *Luke* v. 20. or uſing it as a kind, tender, and endearing appellation; or as conſidering him in the grace of adoption, as one that God had put among the children, had given to him as ſuch, and whom he ſhould bring to glory. He bids him *be of good chear*, whoſe animal ſpirits were fainting thro' the diſeaſe that was upon him, and the fatigue he had underwent in being brought to him; and his ſoul more diſtreſſed and dejected, under a ſenſe of his ſins and tranſgreſſions; which Jeſus knowing, very pertinently ſays, *thy ſins be forgiven thee*; than which, nothing could be more chearing and reviving to him: or Chriſt ſays this to ſhew, that ſin was the cauſe of the diſeaſe and affliction that were upon him, for אין יסורין בלא עון, *there are no chaſtiſements without ſin*, as the *Jews* ſay [f]; and that the cauſe being removed, the effects would ceaſe; of both which he might be aſſured, and therefore had good reaſon to chear up, and be of good heart. This was a wonderful inſtance of the grace of Chriſt, to beſtow a bleſſing unaſked, and that of the greateſt moment and importance.

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[d] Miſn. Bava Bathra, c. 1. §. 5.

[e] Gloſſ. in T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 112. 1.

Ver. 3. *And behold, certain of the Scribes ſaid within themſelves,* &c.] And of the *Phariſees* alſo, as *Luke* ſays; for there were at this time Phariſees and Doctors of the law, who were come out of every town of *Galilee* and *Judea*, and out of *Jeruſalem*, ſitting and hearing him teach, and obſerving what he ſaid, and did; who upon hearing him pronounce the ſentence of pardon, upon this *paralytick* man, reaſoned and concluded in their own minds, tho' they did not care to ſpeak it out, that *this man blaſphemeth:* the reaſon was, becauſe they thought he aſcribed that to himſelf, which was peculiar to God: and ſo he did, and yet did not blaſpheme; becauſe he himſelf was God, of which he quickly gave convincing proofs.

Ver. 4. *And Jeſus knowing their thoughts,* &c.] Which was a clear evidence, and full demonſtration of his deity; for none knows the thoughts of the heart but God; and ſince he knew the thoughts of mens hearts, it could be no blaſphemy in him to take that to himſelf which belonged to God, even to forgive ſins. And this, one would think, would have been ſufficient to have approved himſelf to them as the true *Meſſiah*; ſince this is one of the ways of knowing the Meſſiah, according to the *Jews*, and which they made uſe of to diſcover a falſe one. “*Bar Coziba*, they ſay [g], reigned two years and a half: he ſaid to the *Rabbins*, I am the Meſſiah; they replied to him, it is written of the Meſſiah, that he is *of quick underſtanding, and judges*, (referring to *Iſ.* xi. 3.) let us ſee whether this man is of quick underſtanding, and can make judgment, *i. e.* whether a man is wicked, or no, without any external proof; and when they ſaw he was not of quick underſtanding, and could not judge in this manner, they ſlew him.” But now Chriſt needed not any teſtimony of men; he knew what was in the hearts of men, of which this inſtance is a glaring proof: hence he ſaid, *wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?* it was no evil in them to think that God only could forgive ſin; but the evil was, that they thought Chriſt was a mere man, and ought not to have took ſo much upon him; and that, for ſo doing, he was a wicked man, and a blaſphemer.

Ver. 5. *For whether is eaſier to ſay,* &c.] Chriſt proceeds to clear himſelf of the charge of blaſphemy, and to prove his power to forgive ſins, by putting a caſe to them, of which he makes themſelves judges, and is this: which is eaſieſt to be ſaid, *thy ſins are forgiven thee? or to ſay, ariſe and walk?* Neither of them were eaſy to a mere creature, but both of them eaſy to God; and he that could ſay the one with power and efficacy going along with his word, could ſay the other as effectually: and whereas it was a plain caſe, and out of all queſtion, that he could bid this *paralytick* man, though in this weak condition, ariſe from his bed, ſtand upon his feet, and go home of himſelf; and ſince he had already healed many that were ſick of the palſy, and particularly the *centurion*'s ſervant, by a word ſpeaking, he muſt have equal power to forgive ſin. For to heal the diſeaſes of the body in ſuch a wonderful manner, was a very ſenſible proof of his power to heal the maladies of the ſoul; and tho' theſe are greater than thoſe of the body, yet ſince both require divine power, he that is able to do the one, is able to do the other. And that it might appear, he did not ſay this in a boaſting manner, he adds,

Ver. 6. *But that ye may know that the ſon of man,* &c.] That they might have a viſible proof, an ocular demonſtration, that tho' he was the ſon of man, truly and really man, yet not a mere man; but alſo as truly and properly God, God and man in one perſon, and ſo *hath power on earth to forgive ſins*: not only ability as God, but even authority to do it as mediator, even whilſt he was on earth, in a ſtate of humiliation, in faſhion as a man, in the form of a ſervant, converſing with ſinful mortals. *Then ſaith he to the ſick of the palſy*; turning himſelf from the Scribes, unto him, and without putting up any prayer to God, but by a mere word of command, ſays to him, *ariſe, take up thy bed, and go unto thine houſe:* he ordered him to *ariſe* from his bed, on which he was carried by four men, and *take up* his *bed*, and carry it himſelf; which would be not only an evidence that the diſeaſe had left him, but that he was in full ſtrength, and perfect health; and to *go* to his own *houſe*, not only that the multitude might ſee that he could walk home himſelf, whom they had ſeen brought by others; but that thoſe in the houſe, who had been eye-witneſſes of his great diſorder and weakneſs, might be alſo of his cure.

Ver. 7. *And he aroſe, and departed to his houſe.*] Immediately, at the command of Chriſt, believing he was able to heal him by a word ſpeaking; and, upon his attempt to ariſe, found himſelf perfectly healed of his diſeaſe, and endued with ſuch ſtrength, that he could, not only with the greateſt eaſe, ariſe from his bed, ſtand upon his feet, and walk alone, without any help; but, as the other *Evangeliſts* declare, took up his bed, on which he lay, carried it home on his ſhoulders, in the ſight of all the people, praiſing, and giving glory to God for this wonderful cure, which he had received.

Ver. 8. *But when the multitude ſaw it,* &c.] The miracle that was wrought; when they ſaw the man take up his bed, and carry it home, which was done by Chriſt, as a proof of his having power to forgive ſin, *they marvelled, and glorified God:* they were ſtruck with amazement and aſtoniſhment at the ſight, it being what was ſtrange and unuſual; the like to which they had never ſeen before, nor heard of: and concluding it to be more than human, they aſcribed it to God; they praiſed, and adored the divine goodneſs, *which had given ſuch power unto men*; of working miracles, healing diſeaſes, and delivering miſerable mortals from ſuch maladies, as were otherwiſe incurable; ſtill looking upon Chriſt as a mere man, by whom God did theſe things; not knowing yet the myſtery of the incarnation, God manifeſt in the fleſh.

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[f] T. Bab Sabbat. fol. 55. 1. Midraſh Kohelet, fol. 70. 4. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 99. 1.

[g] T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 93. 2.

Ver. 9. *And as Jeſus paſſed forth from thence*, &c.] That is, from *Capernaum* to the ſea-ſide; where, as *Mark* ſays, the multitude reſorted, and he taught them; *he ſaw a man named Matthew*; the writer of this Goſpel. The other *Evangeliſts* call him *Levi*, who was the ſon of *Alpheus:* he went by two names; *Mark* and *Luke* call him by the name, which perhaps was the more honourable, or the leaſt known, on purpoſe to conceal the former life of the apoſtle, which might expoſe him to the contempt of ſome; but he himſelf chuſes to mention the name by which he was moſt known, as an apoſtle, and that the grace of God might appear the more illuſtrious in his calling and converſion. The *Jews* ſay [h], that one of Chriſt's diſciples was called מתאי, *Matthew*, which, as *Levi*, is an *Hebrew* name; for tho' he was a publican, yet a *Jew*; for it was common with the *Jews* either to be employed by the *Roman* officers in collecting the toll or tribute, or to farm it of them. *Sitting at the receit of cuſtom*, or *at the cuſtom-houſe*, or *toll-booth*; which both the *Syriac verſion*, and *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel, call מכס, or בית מכסא, the *publican's houſe*. In the [i] *Talmud* mention is made of it, in the following parable, upon citing *Iſ*. lxi. 8. "it is like, ſay the doctors, "to a king of fleſh and blood, who paſſing by "בית המכס, *the toll-booth*, or *publican's houſe*, ſays "to his ſervants, give *toll to the publicans:* they "reply to him, is not all the toll thine? he ſays "to them, all that paſs by the ways will learn of "me, and will not avoid the toll; ſo ſays the holy "bleſſed God, *&c.*" The publicans had houſes, or booths built for them, at the foot of bridges, at the mouth of rivers, and by the ſea-ſhore, where they took toll of paſſengers that went to and fro: hence we read [k] of bridges being made to take toll at, and of publicans being at the water-ſide [l], and of קישרי מוכס [m], *the tickets*, or *ſeals of the publicans*; which, when a man had paid toll on one ſide of a river, were given him by the publican, to ſhew to him that ſat on the other ſide, that it might appear he had paid; in which were written two great letters, bigger than thoſe in common uſe [n]. Thus *Matthew* was ſitting in a toll-booth, near the ſea-ſhore, to receive the toll of paſſengers that came, or went in ſhips or boats. *And he ſaith unto him, follow me*; notwithſtanding the infamous employment he was in, as accounted by the *Jews:* this was no bar in the way of his call to be a diſciple of Chriſt; and ſhews, that there was no merit and motive in him, which was the reaſon of this high honour beſtowed upon him; but was entirely owing to the free, ſovereign, and diſtinguiſhing grace of Chriſt, and which was powerful and efficacious: for without telling him what work he muſt do, or how he muſt live, and without his conſulting with fleſh and blood, at once, immediately *he aroſe, and followed him:* ſuch a power went along with the call, that he directly left his employment, how profitable ſoever it might be to him, and became a diſciple of Chriſt.

Ver. 10. *And it came to paſs, as Jeſus ſat at meat in the houſe*, &c.] That is, as the *Arabic* verſion reads it, in the houſe of *Matthew*, not in the toll-houſe, but in his own houſe; for he immediately quitted the toll-booth, and his office there, and followed Chriſt, and had him to his own houſe, where he made a great feaſt for him, as *Luke* ſays, to teſtify the ſenſe he had of the wondrous grace which was beſtowed on him; and alſo, that other publicans and ſinners might have an opportunity of hearing Chriſt, and converſing with him, whom he invited to this feaſt; his bowels earning towards them, and ſincerely deſiring their converſion, which is the nature of true grace: for, when a ſoul is made a partaker of the grace of God, it is earneſtly deſirous that this might be the caſe of others, eſpecially its ſinful relations, friends, or companions; and it takes every opportunity of uſing, or bringing them under the means; ſo did *Matthew:* hence it is ſaid, *behold, many publicans and ſinners came and ſat down with him and his diſciples*; not of their own accord, but by the invitation of *Matthew*, and with the good will, and full conſent of Chriſt, who was far from being diſpleaſed with their company and freedom; but gladly embraced every opportunity of doing good to the ſouls of the worſt of men; for ſuch as theſe he came to call and ſave.

Ver. 11. *And when the Phariſees ſaw it*, &c.] The feaſt *Matthew* made, the gueſts that were invited, and particularly that Chriſt ſat down to meat with ſuch vile and wicked company; they and the *Scribes*, as *Mark* and *Luke* add, who generally were together, of the ſame complexion, equally enemies to Chriſt, and watchful obſervers of his conduct, and pretending to a more ſtrict and religious way of life, were offended at all this; *and ſaid to his diſciples*, which they choſe to do, rather than to Chriſt himſelf; partly, becauſe they were afraid to engage in a diſpute with him, who had juſt given them a full proof of his omniſcience, that he knew the very thoughts and reaſonings of their minds, and had ſo confounded them already, both by his arguments and miracles; and partly, becauſe they might think themſelves a match for the diſciples, and might hope to ſtumble and enſnare them, and prevail upon them to quit their profeſſion, and leave following him, whom they would ſuggeſt could not be a good man, that was guilty of ſo evil an action; which, with them, was very unlawful and abhorrent, as that for which they accuſe and reprove him, *why eateſt your maſter with publicans and ſinners?* The *publicans*, or gatherers of the *Roman* tax, toll, or tribute of any ſort, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, were perſons of a very infamous character; and, as here, ſo often, in *Jewiſh* writings, are ranked with *ſinners*, and thoſe of the worſt ſort: ſo falſe ſwearing was allowed to be made להורגים ולחרמין ולמוכסין, *to murderers, and to robbers, and to publicans* [o]; and ſo *publicans and thieves* are joined together by *Maimonides* [p], and a publican is ſaid by him to be as a thief. And indeed this was not only the ſenſe of the *Jews*, but alſo of other people, according to thoſe words of

*Zeno*

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[h] T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 43. 1.
[i] T. Bab. Succa, fol. 30. 1.
[k] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 33. 2.
[l] Jarchi in Jud. v. 10.
[m] Miſn. Sabbat, c. 8. §. 2. T. Hieroſ. Sabbat, fol. 11. 2. T. Bab Sabbat, fol. 78. 2. & Bechorot, fol. 30. 2. & Avoda Zara, fol. 39. 1.
[n] Jarchi, Maimonides, & Bartenora in Miſn. Sabbat, c. 8. §. 2. & Gloſſ. in T. Bab. Bechorot, fol. 30. 2.
[o] Miſ. Nedarim, c. 3. §. 4.
[p] Hilch. Gezela, c. 5. §. 9. 11.

*Xeno* the poet, παντες τελωναι παντες εισιν αρπαγες[q], *all publicans are all of them robbers:* tho' this was not originally their character; for formerly the beſt of the *Roman Gentry* were employed in this office, till by male practices it became ſcandalous, when the meaner ſort of people, yea, even vaſſals, were put into it[r]. Now, with ſuch ſort of men as theſe the *Phariſees* held it unlawful to have any ſort of converſation; they expelled ſuch their ſociety, would not dwell with them in the ſame houſe, nor eat or drink with them; concerning which, their rules and methods are theſe; “ a companion, or friend, who “ becomes the king's collector, or a *publican*, or “ the like, they drive him from ſociety with them: “ if he abſtains from his evil works, then he is as “ any other man[s].” Again, “ when the king's “ collectors enter into a houſe to dwell, all that are “ in the houſe are defiled[t].” Moreover, 'tis[u] ſaid, that “ the former ſaints eat their common food with “ purity, *i. e.* with their hands waſhed, and took “ care of all defilements every day; and theſe were “ called *Phariſees*; and this ſect was exceeding- “ ly holy, and was the way of piety; for ſuch a “ man was ſeparated, and he abſtained from the “ reſt of the people, and he did not touch them, “ ולא יאכל וישתה עמהם, *nor did he eat and drink* “ *with them*.” It was a general rule with them, that a clean perſon ought not to eat with an unclean, as they judged the common people to be; nay, that a *Phariſee*, who was unclean himſelf, might not eat with another perſon that was ſo, and which they boaſt of, as a great degree of holineſs. “ Come and “ ſee, ſay they[w], to what a pitch purity has arrived “ in *Iſrael*; for they not only teach, that a pure per- “ ſon may not eat with one that is defiled, but “ that one that has a *gonorrhœa*, may not eat with “ another that has one, leſt he ſhould be uſed to “ tranſgreſs this way; and a *Phariſee* that has a “ *gonorrhœa*, may not eat with a common perſon “ that has one, leſt he ſhould be uſed to do ſo.” Hence they looked upon Chriſt and his diſciples as ſuch, and would inſinuate that they were evil men, who had no regard to purity of life and converſation.

Ver. 12. *But when Jeſus heard that*, &c.] The charge the *Phariſees* brought againſt him, and the inſinuations they had made of him to his diſciples; which he either over-heard himſelf, or his diſciples related to him, *he ſaid unto them*; the *Phariſees*, with an audible voice, not only to confute and convince them, but chiefly to eſtabliſh his diſciples, they were endeavouring to draw away from him: *they that be whole need not a phyſician*; by which he would ſignify that he was a *phyſician*; and ſo he is in a ſpiritual ſenſe, and that a very ſkilful one: he knows the nature of all the diſeaſes of the ſoul, without being told them by the patient; what are the true cauſes of them; what is proper to apply; when is the beſt time, and what the beſt manner: he is an univerſal one, with regard both to diſeaſes and to perſons, that apply to him; he heals all ſorts of perſons, and all ſorts of diſeaſes; ſuch as are blind from their birth, are as deaf as the deaf adder, the halt, and the lame, ſuch as have broken hearts, yea the plague in their hearts, and have ſtony ones, and all the relapſes of his people; which he does by his ſtripes and wounds, by the application of his blood, by his word and goſpel, thro' ſinners looking to him, and touching him: he is an infallible one, none ever went from him without a cure; none ever periſhed under his hands; the diſeaſe he heals never returns more to prevail; ſo as to bring on death and deſtruction; and he does all freely, without money, and without price. So *Philo* the *Jew* calls the *Logos*, or word, ιατρον κακων, *an healer of diſeaſes*[x], and God our legiſlator, των της ψυχης παθων αριστος ιατρος, *the beſt phyſician of the diſeaſes of the ſoul*[y]. Now Chriſt argues from this his character, in vindication of himſelf; as that he was with theſe perſons, not as a companion of theirs, but as a phyſician to them; and as it is not unlawful, but highly proper and commendable, that a phyſician ſhould be with the ſick; ſo it was very lawful, fit, and proper, yea praiſe-worthy in him, to be among theſe publicans and ſinners, for their ſpiritual good. He ſuggeſts indeed, that *they that be whole*, in perfect health and ſtrength, as the *Phariſes* thought themſelves to be, even free from all the maladies and diſeaſes of ſin, were ſtrong, robuſt, and able to do any thing, and every thing of themſelves; theſe truly ſtood in no *need of* him, as a phyſician, in their own apprehenſion; they ſaw no need of him; in principle they had no need of him, and in practice did not make uſe of him; and therefore it was to no purpoſe to attend them, but converſe with others, who had need of him: *but they that are ſick*; who are not only diſeaſed and diſordered in all the powers and faculties of their ſouls; as all *Adam*'s poſterity are, whether ſenſible of it or not; but who know themſelves to be ſo, theſe ſee their need of Chriſt as a phyſician, apply to him as ſuch, and to them he is exceeding precious, a phyſician of value; and ſuch were theſe *publicans* and ſinners. Theſe words ſeem to be a proverbial expreſſion; and there is ſomething like it in the[z] *Talmud*, דכאיב ליה כאיבא איזל לבי אסיא, *he that is afflicted with any pain goes*, or *let him go to the phyſician's houſe*; that is, he that is attended with any ſickneſs or diſeaſe, does, or he ought to, conſult a phyſician.

Ver. 13. *But go ye and learn what that meaneth*, &c.] צא ולמד, *go and learn*, is a phraſe uſed by the *Jews*[a], when they are about to explain a paſſage of ſcripture, and fetch an argument from the connexion of the text. So the phraſe τι εστιν, *what that is*, or *what that meaneth*, is *Talmudic*, as, מהי, *what is it?* מאי דכתיב, *what is that which is written?* מאי קרא, *what is the ſcripture?* that is, what is the meaning of it? Our Lord ſpeaks in their own dialect, and tacitly reproves their ignorance of the ſcriptures; and inſtead of finding fault with him, and his conduct, he intimates, it would better become them to endeavour to find out the meaning of that paſſage in *Hoſ.* vi. 6. *I will have mercy, and not ſacrifice*; which, if rightly underſtood, was ſufficient to ſilence all their cavils and objections: and which words are to be taken, not in an abſolute and unlimited ſenſe; for ſacrifices even of ſlain beaſts, which were offered up in the faith of Chriſt's ſacrifice, and were attended with other acts of religion and piety, were acceptable to God, being his own inſtitutions and appointments; but, in a comparative ſenſe, as the following clauſe in the prophet ſhews; *and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings:* and ſo the ſenſe is given in the *Chaldee paraphraſe*, after this manner; *for in thoſe that exerciſe mercy is my good-will and pleaſure*, or *delight*, ממדבח, *more than in ſacrifice:*

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[q] Apud Fabricii Græc. Biblioth. l. 2. c. 22. p. 755.
[r] Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 2. c. 29.
[s] Maimon. Miſhcab & Moſhab, c. 10. §. 8.
[t] Ib. c. 12. §. 12.
[u] Ib. Hilchoth Tumaot Okelim. c. 16. §. 12.
[w] T. Bab. Sabbat fol. 13. 1.
[x] Allegor. l. 2. p. 93.
[y] Quod Deus ſit immutab. p. 303.
[z] T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 46. 2.
[a] T. Bab. Succa, fol. 5. 1. & Sanhedrim, fol. 86. 1. Moſes Kotſenſis Mitzvot Tora pr. neg. 116. Vid. Maimon. Hilchot Melachim, c. 5. §. 11.

and the meaning is, that God takes more delight and pleaſure, either in ſhewing mercy himſelf to poor miſerable ſinners; or in acts of mercy, compaſſion, and beneficence done by men, to fallen creatures in diſtreſs, whether for the good of their bodies, or more eſpecially for the welfare of their ſouls, than he does even in ſacrifices, and in any of the rituals of the ceremonial law, though of his own appointing: and therefore muſt be ſuppoſed to have a leſs regard to ſacrifices, which were offered, neither in a right manner, nor from a right principle, nor to a right end; and ſtill leſs to human traditions, and cuſtoms, which were put upon a level, and even preferr'd to his inſtitutions; ſuch as theſe the *Phariſees* were ſo zealous of. The force of our Lord's reaſoning is, that ſince his converſation, with publicans and ſinners, was an act of mercy and compaſſion to their ſouls, and deſigned for their ſpiritual good; it muſt be much more pleaſing to God, than had he attended to the traditions of the elders, they charge him with the breach of: beſides, what he was now doing was the end of his coming into this world, and which was anſwered hereby; *for I am not come to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance.* The phraſe, *to repentance*, is not in the *Vulgate Latin*, nor in *Munſter's Hebrew* Goſpel, nor in the *Syriac*, *Ethiopic*, and *Perſic* verſions; but is in the *Arabic*, and in the ancient *Greek* copies, and is very juſtly retained. The *repentance* here deſigned, is not a legal, but an evangelical one; which is attended with faith in Chriſt, with views, at leaſt hopes of pardon thro' his blood, and ſprings from a diſcovery and ſenſe of his love: it lies in a true ſenſe of ſin, and the exceeding ſinfulneſs of it, by the light of the Spirit of God; in a godly ſorrow for it, and hearty loathing of it; in real ſhame and bluſhing for it, ingenuous confeſſion of it, and departing from it; all which is brought on, influenced, heightened, and increaſed, by diſplays of the love of God through Chriſt. The perſons called to this are not the *righteous*; meaning either ſuch who are really ſo, becauſe theſe are already called to it, tho' whilſt in a ſtate of imperfection, daily need the exerciſe of this grace; or rather ſuch who are ſo in their own opinion, and in the ſight of men only, not in the ſight of God, which was the caſe of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, and very few of theſe were called and brought to repentance; but *ſinners*, even the worſt, and chief of ſinners, who, as they ſtand in need of this grace, and when thoroughly convinced, ſee they do; ſo Chriſt came into this world as a prophet and miniſter of the word to *call* them to it: which call of his does not ſuppoſe that they had a power to repent of themſelves; for this man has not, he is naturally blind, and don't ſee his ſin; his heart is hard and obdurate, and till his eyes are opened, and his ſtony heart taken away by a ſuperior power to his own, he'll never repent; tho' he may have ſpace, yet if he has not grace given him, he'll remain impenitent. No means will bring him to it of themſelves, neither the moſt ſevere judgments, nor the greateſt kindneſſes, nor the moſt powerful miniſtry; repentance is entirely a free grace-gift: nor does the call of Chriſt imply the contrary; which may be conſidered either as external, as a preacher of the word, and as ſuch was not always attended to, and effectual, but often ſlighted and rejected: or as internal, being by the power of his grace effectual; for he who called to repentance, as a miniſter of the word, as a prince and a ſaviour, was able to give it, and which none but a divine perſon is able to do. The *Jews* have a ſaying [b] of "ſhepherds, collectors of taxes and *publicans*, תשובתן קשה, *that their repentance is difficult.*" Now, ſince this was the end of his coming into the world, his conduct in converſing with publicans and ſinners was in all reſpects highly to be juſtified.

Ver. 14. *Then came to him the diſciples of John, &c.*] Of *John* the *Baptiſt*, to whom they had addicted themſelves, and by whom they abode: tho' their maſter was in priſon, and the *Meſſiah* was known to be come, yet ſtill they were attached to *John*, and particularly imitated him in the auſterities of his life. Theſe, either hearing of the great entertainment made at *Matthew*'s houſe for Chriſt, and his diſciples, at which they were offended; or elſe being moved, and ſet on by the *Phariſees*, with whom they were agreed in the buſineſs of faſting, came to Chriſt where he was, and put this queſtion to him, *ſaying, why do we, and the Phariſees, faſt oft, but thy diſciples faſt not?* Not that they wanted to know the reaſon why they and the *Phariſees* faſted; that they could account for themſelves, but why Chriſt's diſciples did not: and this is ſaid not ſo much by way of enquiry, as reproof; and their ſenſe is, that Chriſt's diſciples ought to faſt, as well as they and the *Phariſees*, and not eat, and drink, and feaſt in the manner they did. The faſtings here referr'd to, are not the publick faſts enjoined by the law of *Moſes*, or in any writings of the *Old Teſtament*; but private faſts, which were enjoined by *John* to his diſciples, and by the *Phariſees* to theirs; or which were, according to the traditions of the elders, or of their own appointing, and which were very *often* indeed: for beſides their faſting twice a week, on *Monday* and *Thurſday*, *Luke* xviii. 12. they had a multitude of faſts upon divers occaſions, particularly for rain [c]. If the 17th of *Marcheſvan*, or *October*, came, and there was no rain, private perſons kept three days of faſting, *viz.* *Monday*, *Thurſday*, and *Monday* again; and if the month of *Ciſleu*, or *November*, came, and there was no rain, then the *ſanhedrim* appointed three faſt-days, which were on the ſame days as before, for the congregation; and if ſtill there was no rain came, they added three more; and if yet there were none, they enjoined ſeven more, in all thirteen, which *R. Acha* and *R. Barachiah* kept themſelves [d]. Faſts were kept alſo on account of many other evils, as peſtilence, famine, war, ſieges, inundations, or any other calamity; ſometimes for trifling things, as for dreams [e], that they might have good ones, or know how to interpret them, or avoid any ill omen by them; and it is almoſt incredible what frequent faſtings ſome of the *Rabbins* exerciſed themſelves with, on very inſignificant occaſions. They [f] ſay, "*R. Joſe* צם תמני" צומין, *faſted fourſcore faſts* to ſee *R. Chiyah Rubba*; at laſt he ſaw, and his hands trembled, and his eyes grew dim.——*R. Simeon Ben Lakiſh* צם תלת מאוון צומין, *faſted three hundred faſtings* to ſee *R. Chiyah Rubba*, and did not ſee him." Elſewhere it is ſaid, that *R. Aſe* faſted *thirty days* to ſee the ſame perſon, and ſaw him not [g]. Again [h], "*R. Jonathan* faſted every eve of the new year, *R. Abin* faſted every eve of the feaſt of tabernacles, *R. Zeura* faſted *three hundred faſts*, and there are that ſay *nine hundred faſts.*" This may ſerve to illuſtrate and prove the frequency of the *Jewiſh* faſtings. *Luke* repreſents this queſtion as put by the *Phariſees*, which is here put by the diſciples of *John*: it was doubtleſs put by both agreeing in this matter; and which ſhews that *John*'s diſciples were inſtigated to it by the *Phariſees*, who ſought to ſow diſcord between them, and to bring Chriſt and his diſciples into contempt with them.

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[b] T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 94. 3.

[c] Miſn. Taanith, c. 1. §. 4, 5, 6. & c. 3. §. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

[d] T. Hieroſ. Taaniot, fol. 65. 2. & 66. 4.

[e] T. Bab. Sabbat. fol. 10. 1. Maimon Taaniot, c. 1. §. 12—14.

[f] T. Hieroſ. Cilaim, fol. 32. 2. & Cetubot, fol 35. 1.

[g] Midraſh Kohelet, fol. 79. 1.

[h] Ib. Nedarim, fol. 40. 4. & Taanioth, fol. 66. 1.

Ver. 15. *And Jeſus ſaid unto them*, &c.] To the diſciples of *John*, the *Phariſees* being preſent, who both have here a full anſwer; tho' it ſeems to be eſpecially directed to the former: *can the children of the bride-chamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them?* By the *bridegroom* Chriſt means himſelf, who ſtands in ſuch a relation to his church, and to all believers; whom he ſecretly betrothed to himſelf from all eternity, in the covenant of grace; and openly eſpouſes in effectual vocation; and will ſtill do it in a more publick manner at the laſt day. *John*, the maſter of thoſe men, who put the queſtion to Chriſt, had acknowledged him under this character, *John* iii. 29. and therefore they ought to own it as belonging to him; ſo that the argument upon it came with the greater force to them. By *the children of the bride-chamber* are meant the diſciples, who were the friends of the bridegroom, as *John* alſo ſays he was; and therefore rejoiced at hearing his voice, as theſe did, and ought to do; their preſent ſituation, having the preſence of Chriſt the bridegroom with them, required mirth and not mourning, *John*, their maſter, being witneſs. The alluſion is to a nuptial ſolemnity, which is a time of joy and feaſting, and not of ſorrow and faſting; when both bride and bridegoom have their friends attending them, who uſed to be called בני החופה, *the children of the bride-chamber*. The bride had her maidens waiting on her; and it is ſaid [i], "ſhe did "not go into the bride-chamber but with them; "and theſe are called, בני חופתא, *the children of "the bride-chamber*." So the young men that were the friends of the bridegroom, which attended him, were called by the ſame name; and, according to the *Jewiſh* canons, were free from many things they were otherwiſe obliged to: thus it is ſaid [k]; "the bridegroom, his friends, and all "בני חחופה, *the children of the bride-chamber*, are "free from the booth all the ſeven days;" that is, from dwelling in booths at the feaſt of tabernacles, which was too ſtrait a place for ſuch feſtival-ſolemnities. And again, "the bridegroom, his "friends, and all בני החופה, *the children of the "bride-chamber* are free from prayer and the phy"lacteries;" that is, from obſerving the ſtated times of attending to theſe things, and much more then were they excuſed from faſting and mourning; ſo that the *Phariſees* had an anſwer ſufficient to ſilence them, agreeable to their own traditions. Give me leave to tranſcribe one paſſage more, for the illuſtration of this text [l]. "When *R. Lazar ben "Arach* opened, in the buſineſs of *Mercava*, (the "viſions in the beginning of *Ezekiel*) *Rabban Jo"chanan ben Zaccai* alighted from his aſs; for he "ſaid it is not fit I ſhould hear the glory of my "creator, and ride upon an aſs: they went, and "ſat under a certain tree, and fire came down "from heaven and ſurrounded them; and the mi"niſtring angels leaped before them, כבני חופה, "*as the children of the bride-chamber* rejoice before "the bridegroom." The time of Chriſt's being with his diſciples, between his entrance on his public miniſtry, and his death, is the time here referr'd to, during which the diſciples had very little care and trouble: this was their rejoicing time, and there was a great deal of reaſon for it; they had no occaſion to faſt and mourn; and indeed the *Jews* themſelves ſay [m], that "all faſts ſhall ceaſe in "the days of the *Meſſiah*; and there ſhall be no "more but good days, and days of joy and re"joicing, as it is ſaid, *Zech.* viii. 19." *But the time will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them*; in a forcible manner, and put to death, as he was; *and then ſhall they faſt* and mourn, and be in great diſtreſs, as *John*'s diſciples now were, on account of their maſter being in priſon.

Ver. 16. *No man putteth a piece of new cloth*, &c.] Theſe words are, by *Luke*, ch. v. 36. called a *parable*, as are thoſe in the following verſe; and both are commonly interpreted of the unreaſonableneſs and danger of putting young diſciples upon ſevere exerciſes of religion, as faſting, *&c.* and it is true, that young converts are to be tenderly dealt with, as they are by Father, Son, and Spirit, as the diſciples were by Chriſt, and the firſt Chriſtians were by the Apoſtles: and ſome things in theſe parables may ſeem to agree; as that theſe auſterities ſhould be repreſented as *new*, and as burdenſome and troubleſome, and the diſciples as weak, and eaſily ſtaggered: but then there are others that will not bear; as that the diſciples ſhould be compared to *old garments, and old bottles*; when they were *young* converts, and men *renewed* by the ſpirit and grace of God, and had on the beautiful robe of Chriſt's righteouſneſs; and that ſuch ſevere exerciſes, under the notion of religion, ſhould be ſignified by *new wine*, which generally deſigns ſomething pleaſant and agreeable: nor were the diſciples unable to bear ſuch ſeverities, who very probably had been trained up in them, and been uſed to them before their converſion; and could now as well have bore them as *John*'s diſciples, or the *Phariſees*, had they been proper and neceſſary; but the true reaſon why they were not required of them, was not their weakneſs, or danger of falling off, and periſhing, of which there were none; but becauſe it was unſuitable to their preſent ſituation, the bridegroom being with them. But our Lord, in this parable of putting *a piece of new*, or *undreſſed cloth*, ſuch as has never paſſed through the fuller's hands, and ſo unfit to mend with, *unto an old garment*, refers not only to the faſtings of the *Phariſees*, but to their other traditions of the elders, which they held; as ſuch that reſpected their eating, drinking, and converſing with other perſons mentioned in the context, and which obſervances they joined with their moral performances; on account of which, they looked upon themſelves as very righteous perſons, and all others as ſinners: and to expoſe their folly, Chriſt delivers this parable. Wherefore, by *the old garment*, I apprehend, is meant their moral and legal righteouſneſs, or their obedience to the moral and ceremonial laws, which was very imperfect, as well as impure, and might be rightly called *filthy rags*; or be compared to an old worn-out garment, filthy and loathſome, torn, and full of holes, which can't keep a perſon warm, nor ſkreen him from the weather, and ſo old that it can't be mended. And by the *piece of new cloth*, or *garment*, put unto it, or ſewed upon it, are intended the traditions of the elders, theſe men were ſo fond of, concerning eating, and drinking, and faſting, and hundreds of other things, very idle and trifling, and which were new and upſtart notions. Now, by putting, or ſewing the new cloth to their old garment, is deſigned, their joining their obſervance of theſe traditions to their other duties of religion, to make up a juſtifying righteouſneſs before God; but in vain, and to no purpoſe. Their old garment of their own works, in obedience to the laws of God, moral and ceremonial, was full bad enough of itſelf; but became abundantly worſe, by joining this new piece of men's own deviſing to it; *for that which is put in to fill it up, taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worſe:* their new obedience to the traditions of men, making void the law of God, inſtead of mending, marred their righteouſneſs, and left them in a worſe condition than it found them: and beſides, as it is in *Luke*, *the piece that was taken out of the new, agreeth not with the old*; there being no more likeneſs between the obſervance of the commandments of men, and obedience to the laws of God, than there is between a piece of new undreſſed cloth, that has never been waſhed and worn, and an old worn out garment. Much ſuch a fooliſh part do thoſe men under the Goſpel diſpenſation act, who join the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, or a part of it, with their own, in order to make up a juſtifying righteouſneſs before God; for Chriſt's righteouſneſs, is the only juſtifying righteouſneſs; it is whole and perfect, and needs nothing to be added to it, nor can it be parted, any more than his ſeamleſs coat was; nor a piece taken out of it: nor is there any juſtification by works, either in whole or in part; the old garment of man's righteouſneſs muſt be thrown away, in point of juſtification; it can't be mended in ſuch a manner; and if any attempts are made in this way, the rent becomes worſe: ſuch perſons, inſtead of being juſtified, are in a worſe condition; for they not only ſet up, and exalt their own righteouſneſs, which is criminal, but diſparage the righteouſneſs of Chriſt as imperfect, by joining it to theirs; and whilſt they fancy themſelves in a good ſtate, are in a moſt miſerable one; harlots and publicans being nearer the kingdom of heaven than theſe, and enter into it before them; ſelf-righteous perſons are more hardly, and with greater difficulty convinced, than ſuch ſinners. Moreover, nothing is more diſagreeable than ſuch a patch-work; Chriſt's righteouſneſs and a man's own, bear no likeneſs to one another; and ſuch a patched garment muſt ill become the character and dignity of a ſaint, a child of God, an heir of heaven.

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[i] Zohar in Gen. fol. 6. 4.

[k] T. Bab. Succa, fol. 25. 2. & Hieroſ. Succa, fol. 53. 1. Maimon. Succa, c. 6. §. 3.

[l] T. Hieroſ. Chagiga, fol. 77. 1.

[m] Maimon. Hilchot Taaniot, c. 5. §. 19.

Ver. 17. *Neither do men put new wine into old bottles*, &c.] As in the former parable, our Lord expoſes the folly of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, in their zealous attachment to the traditions of the elders; ſo in this, he gives a reaſon why he did not call theſe perſons by his Goſpel, who were ſettled upon the old principle of ſelf-righteouſneſs, but ſinners, whom he renews by his Spirit and grace: for by *old bottles* are meant, the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*. The alluſion is to bottles, made of the ſkins of beaſts, which in time decayed, waxed old, and became unfit for uſe: ſuch were the wine-bottles, old and rent, the *Gibeonites* brought with them, and ſhewed to *Joſhua*, *Joſh.* ix. 4, 13. and to which the *Pſalmiſt* compares himſelf, *Pſal.* cxix. 83. and which the *Miſnic* doctors call חמתות, and their commentators [o] ſay, were, נודות של עור, *bottles made of ſkin*, or *leather*, and ſo might be rent. Of the uſe of new and old bottles, take the following hint out of the *Talmud* [p]. "The bottles of the *Gentiles* if ſcraped and חדשים *new*, they are free "for uſe; if ישנים *old*, they are forbidden." Now the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, may be ſignified by theſe old bottles, being natural men, no other than as they were born; having never been regenerated, and renewed in the ſpirit of their minds; in whom the old man was predominant, were mere formal profeſſors of religion, and ſelf-righteous perſons: and by *new wine* is meant, either the love and favour of God compared to wine, that is neat and clean, becauſe free from hypocriſy in him, or motives in the creature; to generous wine, for its chearing and reviving effects; and to new wine, not but that it is very ancient, even from everlaſting, but, becauſe newly manifeſted, in effectual vocation and converſion: or the Goſpel is ſignified by wine, for its purity, good flavour, and pleaſant taſte; for its generous effects, in reviving drooping ſpirits, refreſhing weary perſons, and comforting diſtreſſed minds; and by new wine, not that it is a new doctrine, an upſtart notion, for it is an ancient Goſpel, but becauſe newly and more clearly revealed by Chriſt and his apoſtles: or the bleſſings of grace which ſpring from the love of God, and are manifeſted in the Goſpel, ſuch as pardon of ſin, reconciliation and atonement, juſtifying and ſanctifying grace, ſpiritual joy and peace, and the like. Now as the new wine is not put into old bottles, *elſe the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles periſh:* ſo the love of God, the Goſpel of the grace of God, and the bleſſings of it, are not received and retained, nor can they be, by natural men, by ſelf-righteous perſons: they don't ſuit and agree with their old carnal hearts and principles; they ſlight and reject them, and let them run out, which proves their greater condemnation. *But they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preſerved.* By *new bottles* are meant, ſinners, whom Chriſt calls by his grace, and the Spirit regenerates and renews, who are made new creatures in Chriſt; who have new hearts, and new ſpirits, and new principles of light, life, love, faith, and holineſs, implanted in them; who have new eyes to ſee with, new ears to hear with, new feet to walk with, to and in Chriſt, new hands to work and handle with, and who live a new life and converſation. Now to ſuch as theſe, the love of God is manifeſted and ſhed abroad in their hearts; by theſe, the Goſpel of Chriſt is truly received and valued, and theſe enjoy the ſpiritual bleſſings of it; and ſo both the doctrine of the Goſpel, and the grace of God, are preſerved entire, and theſe perſons ſaved in the day of Chriſt.

Ver. 18. *While he ſpake theſe things unto them*, &c.] To the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, and to *John*'s diſciples, concerning, and in vindication of his, and his diſciples, eating and drinking with publicans and ſinners, and their not faſting as others did; and while he ſpake theſe parables, to expoſe the folly of ſelf-righteous perſons, and juſtify his own conduct, in calling ſinners to repentance, *behold, there came a certain ruler and worſhipped him.* This man, as both *Mark* and *Luke* ſay, was named *Jairus*; and was a ruler, not of the *Sanhedrim*, or leſſer conſiſtory, but of the ſynagogue that was at *Capernaum*; and whom the *Jews* call, ראש הכנסת, *the head of the ſynagogue*. *Mark* ſays, he was *one of the rulers:* not that there were more rulers than one, in one ſynagogue [q]: but as in great cities, ſo it is likely in *Capernaum* there were more ſynagogues than one, of which he was one of the rulers: ſo we read of ראשי כנסיות [r], *heads*, or *rulers of ſynagogues*. As this is one miſtake, ſo 'tis another to ſay, that Dr. *Light-*

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[o] Jarchi & Bartenora in Miſn. Celim, c. 24. §. 11. & Negaim, c. 11. §. 11.

[p] T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 33. 1.

[q] Vid. Rhenferd. de decem otioſis diſſert. 2. c. 7.

[r] T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 60. 1.

*Lightfoot* ſpeaks of this ruler, as the ſame with the *miniſter* of the congregation; when both here, and in the place referred to, he manifeſtly diſtinguiſhes them; as do the *Jews*: for, by this ruler, as their commentators [s] ſay, "the neceſſary affairs of the "ſynagogue were determined, as who ſhould diſ-"miſs with a prophet, who ſhould divide the "*ſhema*, and who ſhould go before the ark." Whereas the buſineſs of חזן הכנסת, *the miniſter of the ſynagogue*, was to bring in and out the ark, or cheſt, in which was the book of the law; and particularly, when the high-prieſt read, or pronounced the bleſſings, *he* took the book, and gave it to *the ruler of the ſynagogue*; and the ruler of the ſynagogue gave it to the *ſagan*, and the *ſagan* to the high-prieſt [t]. The doctor makes indeed, שליח הצבור, *the meſſenger of the congregation*, to be the ſame with *the miniſter of the ſynagogue*, and which is his miſtake; for theſe were two different officers [u]: the former was the lecturer, or preacher; and the latter, a ſort of a ſexton to keep the ſynagogue clean, open and ſhut the doors, and do other things before mentioned. This *Jairus*, was a man of great power and ſignificancy; who in ſuch a very humble manner, proſtrated himſelf at the feet of Jeſus, and expreſſed ſuch ſtrong faith in him; *ſaying, my daughter is even now dead, but come and lay thine hand upon her, and ſhe ſhall live. Luke* ſays, ſhe was *his only daughter*; and *Mark* calls her his *little daughter*: though both he and *Luke* ſay, ſhe was about *twelve* years of age, and that with ſtrict propriety, according to the *Jewiſh* canons, which [w] ſay; that "a daughter, from the day of her birth, un-"til ſhe is twelve years compleat, is called, קטנה, *a* "*little one*—and when ſhe is twelve years of age, "and one day and upwards, ſhe is called, נערה, *a* "*young woman*." Her caſe ſeems to be differently repreſented; *Mark* ſays, ſhe was *at the point of death*, or *in the laſt extremity*; and *Luke*, that ſhe *lay a dying*; but *Matthew* here ſays, that ſhe was *even now dead*, which may be eaſily reconciled: for not to obſerve, that αρτι, ſignifies *near*, and the phraſe may be rendered, *ſhe is near dead*, or juſt expiring, the caſe was this; when *Jairus* left his houſe, his daughter was in the agony of death, juſt ready to give up the ghoſt; ſo that he concluded, by the time he was with Jeſus, ſhe had made her exit; as it appears ſhe had, by a meſſenger, who brought the account of her death, before they could get to the houſe. The ruler's addreſs to Chriſt on this occaſion, is a very conſiderable, though not ſo great an inſtance of faith as ſome others; that he, who was a ruler of a ſynagogue ſhould apply to Chriſt, which ſort of men were generally moſt averſe to him; that he ſhould fall down and worſhip him, if not as God, ſince as yet he might be ignorant of his deity, yet behaved with the profoundeſt reſpect to him, as a great man, and a prophet; that he ſhould come to him when his child was paſt all hope of recovery; yea, when he had reaſon to believe, ſhe was actually dead, as ſhe was; that even then, he ſhould believe in hope againſt hope: he affirms, that he really believed, that if Chriſt would but come to his houſe, and lay his hand upon her, an action often uſed in grave and ſerious matters, as in bleſſing perſons, in prayer, and in healing diſeaſes, ſhe would certainly be reſtored to life again.

Ver. 19. *And Jeſus aroſe and followed him*, &c.] Immediately, without delay, or any more ado: he did not upbraid him with the treatment, he and his followers met with, from men of his profeſſion; who caſt out of their ſynagogues ſuch, who confeſſed him to be the Meſſiah: nor does he take notice of any weakneſs in his faith; as that he thought it neceſſary he ſhould go with him to his houſe, when he could as well have reſtored his daughter to life, abſent, as preſent; and that he ſhould preſcribe a form of doing it, by laying his hands upon her. Theſe things he overlooked, and at once got up from *Matthew*'s table, and went along with him, *and ſo did his diſciples*, to be witneſſes of the miracle; and according to the other *Evangeliſts*, a large multitude of people beſides; even a throng of them, led by curioſity to ſee this wondrous performance.

Ver. 20. *And behold a woman which was diſeaſed*, &c.] This affair happened in the ſtreets of *Capernaum*, as Chriſt was going from the houſe of *Matthew* the publican, to the houſe of *Jairus* the ruler of the ſynagogue, which were both in this city. This poor woman's caſe was a very diſtreſſed one; ſhe had been attended *with an iſſue of blood twelve years*: it was an uncommon flux, of a long ſtanding, was inveterate, and become incurable; though ſhe had not been negligent of herſelf, but had made uſe of means, applied herſelf to regular phyſicians, had took many a diſagreeable medicine, and had ſpent all her ſubſtance in this way; but inſtead of being better, was worſe, and was now given up by them, as paſt all cure. This woman might be truly called, זבה גדולה [x], *the greater profluvious woman*, in the language of the doctors; for if one that had a flux but three days was called ſo, much more one that had had it twelve years. She having heard of Jeſus, and his miraculous cures, had faith given her to believe, that ſhe alſo ſhould receive one from him; wherefore ſhe *came behind him*, through modeſty, being aſhamed to come before him, and tell him her caſe, eſpecially before ſo many people; and fearing leſt if her caſe was known, ſhe ſhould be thruſt away, if not by Chriſt, yet by the company; ſhe being according to the law an unclean perſon, and unfit for ſociety: *and touched the hem of his garment*; which was the, ציצת, or *fringes*, the *Jews* were obliged to wear upon the borders of their garments, and on it a ribband of blue; ſee *Numb.* xv. 38. *Deut.* xxii. 12. in both which places *Onkelos* uſes the word כרוספדין, the ſame with κρασπεδον, uſed here, and in *Mark* vi. 56. and rendered *hem*. The *Jews* placed much ſanctity in the wear and uſe of theſe fringes; and the *Phariſees*, who pretended to more holineſs than others, enlarged them beyond their common ſize: but it was not on account of any peculiar holineſs in this part of Chriſt's garment, that induced this poor woman to touch it; but this being behind him, and more eaſy to be come at, ſhe therefore laid hold on it; for it was his garment, any part of it ſhe concluded, if ſhe could but touch, ſhe ſhould have a cure. However, we learn from hence, that Chriſt complied with the rites of the ceremonial law in apparel, as well as in other things.

Ver. 21. *For ſhe ſaid within herſelf*, &c.] That is, ſhe thought within herſelf, ſhe reaſoned the matter in her mind, ſhe concluded upon it, and firmly believed it; being ſtrongly impreſſed and influenced by the Spirit of God, and encouraged by inſtances of cures ſhe had heard were performed by perſons only touching him; ſee *Luke* vi. 9. *if I may but touch*

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[s] Jarchi & Bartenora in Miſn. Yoma, c. 7. §. 1. & Sota, c. 7. §. 7.

[t] Miſn. Sota, c. 7. §. 7. & Bartenora in ib.

[u] Vid. Rhenfurd, diſſert. 1. p. 81, &c.

[w] Maimon. Hilchot Iſhot, c. 2. §. 1. & Bartenora in Miſn. Nidda, c. 5. §. 6.

[x] Ib. Iſſure Bia, c. 6. §. 7, 8. & in Miſn. Nidda, c. 4. §. 7.

*touch his garment*. The *Arabic* verſion reads it, *the hem of his garment*, as before; but is not ſupported by any copy, nor by any other verſion: her faith was, that if ſhe might be allowed, or if ſhe could by any means come at him, to touch any part of his garment, ſhe ſhould have a cure: *I ſhall be whole*, or, *I ſhall be ſaved*; that is, from her diſeaſe, from which ſhe could have no deliverance, by the advice and preſcriptions of all her former phyſicians, and by all the means ſhe had made uſe of.

Ver. 22. *But Jeſus turned him about*, &c.] Knowing what was done behind him, that virtue was gone out of him, that the woman had touched him, and was healed; which is a clear proof of his omniſcience, and ſo of his deity: not that he was angry with her for touching him, though ſhe was an impure woman; for though men and garments were defiled by the touch of a profluvious [x] perſon; yet ſuch was the power and holineſs of Chriſt, that as he could not be defiled by any ſuch means, ſo hereby at once, this woman's impurity was alſo removed: but Chriſt turned about to obſerve and point out the woman, and her cure, to the company; not for the ſake of his own honour, but for the glory of God, the commendation of the woman's faith, and chiefly for the ſtrengthening the faith of *Jairus*, with whom he was going to raiſe his daughter from the dead: *and when he ſaw her*. The other Evangeliſts, *Mark* and *Luke*, record, that Jeſus enquired who touched him, and what anſwer *Peter* and the diſciples made to him; and how he looked around, and very likely faſtened his eyes upon the woman; when ſhe perceiving that ſhe could not go off undiſcovered, came trembling to him, fell down before him, and told him the whole matter: and then *he ſaid, daughter be of good comfort, thy faith hath made thee whole*. He addreſſed her in a kind and tender manner, calling her *daughter*; an affable, courteous way of ſpeaking, uſed by the *Jewiſh* doctors [y], when ſpeaking to women: which ſhewed his affection, and beſpoke his relation; and bidding her take heart and be of good chear, ſince he meant not to blame her, for what ſhe had done, but to commend her faith in him, whereby ſhe had received a cure: meaning, not that there was ſuch virtue in her faith as to effect ſuch a cure; but that he, the object of her faith, had performed it for her: *and the woman was made whole from that hour*; her diſeaſe immediately left her, and from that time forward, was no more troubled with it: the cure was ſo effectual, and ſo perfect, that the diſorder never returned more.

Ver. 23. *And when Jeſus came into the ruler's houſe*, &c.] Both *Mark* and *Luke* relate, how that before this, whilſt they were in the way, and juſt as Chriſt had done ſpeaking to the poor woman, that news was brought to the ruler, that his daughter was actually dead, and therefore need not give Jeſus any further trouble; when Chriſt encouraged him not to be caſt down at the tidings, but believe, and ſhe ſhould be reſtored again; and that he ſuffered none to follow him, but *Peter*, *James*, and *John*: and *ſaw the minſtrels*, or *pipers*; how many there were, is not known: 'tis certain there were more than one; and it was a rule with the [z] *Jews*, that “ the pooreſt man in *Iſrael* (when his wife “ died) had not leſs, משני חלילים, *than two pipes*, “ and one mourning woman.” And ſince this was a daughter of a ruler of the ſynagogue that was dead, there might be ſeveral of them. Theſe inſtruments were made uſe of, not to remove the melancholy of ſurviving friends, or allay the grief of the afflicted family; but, on the contrary, to excite it: for the *Jewiſh* writers ſay [a], theſe pipes were hollow inſtruments, with which they made a known ſound, לעורר הבכיה והאבל, *to ſtir up lamentation and mourning*; and for the ſame purpoſe, they had their mourning women, who anſwered to the pipe; and by their diſheveled hair, and doleful tones, moved upon the affections, and drew tears from others; and very likely are the perſons, that *Mark* ſays, *wept and wailed greatly*. Sometimes trumpets were made uſe of on theſe mournful occaſions [b]; but whether theſe were uſed only for perſons more advanced in years, and pipes for younger ones, as by the Heathens [c], at leaſt, at ſometimes, is not certain. *And the people making a noiſe*; the people of the houſe, the relations of the deceaſed, the neighbours, who came in on this occaſion; and others, in a ſort of tumult and uproar, hurrying and running about; ſome ſpeaking in the praiſe of the dead, others lamenting her death, and others preparing things proper for the funeral; all which ſhew, that ſhe was really dead: among theſe alſo, might be the mourners that made a noiſe for the dead; “ for ſince mourning was for the honour of “ the dead, therefore they obliged the heirs to hire “ mourning men, and mourning women, to mourn “ for the ſame [d].”

Ver. 24. *And he ſaid unto them, give place*, &c.] Depart, be gone; for he put them out of the room, and ſuffered none to be with him, when he raiſed her from the dead, but *Peter*, *James*, and *John*, and the father and mother of the child, who were witneſſes enough of this miracle. *For the maid is not dead, but ſleepeth*: not but that ſhe was really dead; and Chriſt ſignifies as much, when he ſays, ſhe *ſleepeth*; a phraſe that is often uſed in [e] *Talmudic* writings, for one that is dead: but Chriſt's meaning is, that ſhe was not ſo dead as the company thought; as always to remain in the ſtate of the dead, and not to be reſtored to life again: whereas our Lord ſignifies, it would be ſeen in a very little time, that ſhe ſhould be raiſed again, juſt as a perſon is awaked out of ſleep; ſo that there was no occaſion to make ſuch funeral preparations as they did. The *Jews* ſay [f] of ſome of their dead, that they are aſleep, and not dead: it is ſaid, *Iſa.* xxvi. 19. *Awake and ſing, ye that dwell in the duſt*. “ Theſe, ſay “ they, are they that ſleep and die not; and “ ſuch are they that ſleep in *Hebron*, for they “ לאו מתין אלא דמיכין, *do not die, but ſleep*—the “ four couples in *Hebron* (*Adam* and *Eve*, &c.) “ they *ſleep, but are not dead*.” *And they laughed him to ſcorn*; they mocked at his words, and had him in the utmoſt contempt, as a very weak ſilly man; taking him either to be a madman, or a fool; knowing that ſhe was really dead, of which they had all the evidence they could have; and having no faith at all in him, and in his power to raiſe her from the dead.

Ver. 25. *But when the people were put forth*, &c.] Either out of the houſe or room, by Chriſt, or, at leaſt, by his orders: which was done, partly becauſe he was deſirous it might be kept a ſecret, as much as poſſible, and to ſhew, that he did not affect popular applauſe; and partly, becauſe they were unworthy to be admitted ſpectators of ſuch a wondrous action, who had treated him with ſo much ſcorn and contempt; *he went in*; not alone, but with his three diſciples, *Peter*, *James*, and *John*, who were taken in to be witneſſes of this reſurrection, and the parents of the child; who were ſo very ſollicitous for its life, under whoſe power ſhe was, and to whom ſhe was to be reſtored: *and took her by the hand*; juſt as one would do to awake another out of ſleep; and, perhaps, in compliance with her father's requeſt, to lay his hand upon her: and though the touch of a dead body, according to the law, *Numb.* xix. 16. was defiling; yet this did not defile him, any more than his touching the leper, or the profluvious woman's touching his clothes; for theſe actions produced ſupernatural effects, which came not under the cognizance of the law. His taking her by the hand, was not all that he did, but he called, as to a perſon aſleep, and ſaid unto her theſe words, *Talitha cumi*, as recorded by *Mark*, and are alſo in *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* goſpel of *Matthew*; and which, in the *Syriac* language, ſignify, *maiden ariſe*; and immediately, directly, as ſoon as ever he had thus ſaid, *the maid aroſe*, as out of a ſleep; ſhe revived, her ſoul came to her again, and ſhe got off of the bed, and walked about houſe, and food was ordered to be given to her. All which moſt fully demonſtrated that ſhe was really reſtored to life; which was as clear a caſe, as that before ſhe was really dead.

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[x] Miſn. Oholot, c. 1. §. 5. & Zabim, c. 2. §. 4. & 3. 1, 2, 3. & 4. 5. & 5. 1.

[y] Miſn. Yadaim, c. 3. §. 1.

[z] Miſn. Cetubot, c. 4. §. 4. Maimon. Iſhot, c. 14. §. 23.

[a] Maimon. & Bartenora in Miſn. Sabbat, c. 23. §. 4.

[b] Midraſh Kohelet, fol. 77. 4.

[c] Vid. Kirchman. de funer. Roman. l. 2. c. 5.

[d] Maimon. Hilch. Ebel, c. 12. §. 1.

[e] T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 6. 1. Avoda Zara, fol. 42. 3. Bereſhit Rabba Paraſh. 91. fol. 79. 3.

[f] Zohar in Exod. fol. 62. 4.

Ver. 26. *And the fame hereof went abroad into all that land.*] For though he ſtrictly charged the parents, as the other *Evangeliſts* ſay, that they ſhould tell no man what was done, he not affecting the applauſe of men; yet it was not poſſible the thing ſhould be entirely concealed; ſince there was ſuch a number of people, not only relations, but neighbours, who full well knew, and were aſſured ſhe had been dead: when theſe ſaw her alive, walk about, eat and drink, and converſe with them, they muſt be perſuaded of the miracle, and relate it wherever they came; ſo that the fame of it could not but be ſpread all over the country, in which *Capernaum* was.

Ver. 27. *And when Jeſus departed thence*, &c.] From the houſe of *Jairus*, to another in the ſame city; *two blind men followed him*: very cloſely, by the direction of others, having heard of the miracle juſt now performed by him; and from thence concluded, he was able to reſtore them to their ſight; *crying and ſaying*, with great faith and fervour, with much importunity, and frequently repeating the following words, *thou ſon of David, have mercy on us*. Whence it appears, that they firmly believed, and were fully perſuaded, that he was the true *Meſſiah*; for the *ſon of David*, was a known character of the Meſſiah among the *Jews*: nothing was more common than to call him by this title, without any other additional epithet; ſee the note on *Matt.* i. 1. and ſince it had been propheſied of the Meſſiah, that he ſhould *open the eyes of the blind*, *Iſa.* xxxv. 5. and xlii. 7. they might be greatly encouraged to hope and believe, they ſhould obtain mercy from him in this reſpect.

Ver. 28. *And when he was come into the houſe*, &c.] In which he dwelt, whilſt at *Capernaum*: for he took no notice of them by the way; but though they followed him cloſe, and cried vehemently, he did not ſtop to ſpeak to them, or give them a cure, according to their requeſt, but went on his way; which he did, partly to avoid the populace, and that he might not be ſeen by men, in what he did, and partly to try their faith, and the conſtancy of it. *The blind men came to him*; being directed by others, into what houſe he went, and where he was, and very probably with the leave of Chriſt: *and Jeſus ſaith unto them, believe ye that I am able to do this?* That is, to have mercy on them, as they requeſted, by curing them of their blindneſs; which, though not expreſſed, is implied, and is the thing deſigned: this queſtion is put, not as being ignorant of, or as doubting their faith in him, which they had expreſſed, in calling him the ſon of *David*; and had ſhewn the firmneſs and conſtancy of it, by following him, though he took no notice of them; but partly, for the further trial of their faith, and to bring them to a more open profeſſion of it, as to this particular, his power to cure them of their blindneſs; and partly, for the ſake of thoſe that were in the houſe: *they ſaid unto him, yea, Lord.* They firmly believed he had power to do it, they had not the leaſt doubt and heſitation in their minds about it; for though their bodily eyes were at preſent dark, the eyes of their underſtandings were enlightened, to ſee and know Jeſus to be the true *Meſſiah*, *David*'s ſon, and Lord.

Ver. 29. *Then touched he their eyes*, &c.] Not but that he could have reſtored ſight to them, without touching their eyes, by a word ſpeaking, or by the ſecret communication of his power; but he might do this as a ſign of his favour, and kindneſs to them, and of his will to cure them; as alſo in compliance with their weakneſs, who might expect ſome manual operation upon them; *ſaying, according to your faith be it unto you*: not that faith in his perſon and power, was the cauſe or condition of this cure, or the rule and meaſure according to which Chriſt proceeded; but the ſenſe is, that as they had believed, he was able to heal them, accordingly, a cure ſhould be effected; which, upon his ſo ſaying, they immediately found performed in them.

Ver. 30. *And their eyes were opened*, &c.] Some copies read, *immediately*; and ſo do the *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions: and this was certainly the true, and real matter of fact, that as ſoon as Chriſt had touched their eyes, and ſaid the above words, their ſight was perfectly reſtored to them; and they had a clear, full, and true ſight of objects, as men have, whoſe viſive faculty is in its full ſtrength and vigour, and their eyes open: *and Jeſus ſtraitly charged them, ſaying, ſee that no man know it.* This was a very ſtrict charge, and according to the ſignification of the word here uſed, it was given with great auſterity of countenance, and ſeverity of expreſſion, in a very rough and threatning manner; which Chriſt might be the rather induced to, becauſe he had given ſuch like orders already, and they had not been obſerved: the reaſons for concealing the miracle, are not very obvious; it ſeems likely, that with the ſame view he took no notice of theſe blind men in the ſtreet, but went into an houſe, and cured them; which ſeems to be, to ſhun all appearance of vain glory, or ſeeking popular applauſe, that he gave theſe orders; or it may be, he did not chuſe to be made more known by this miracle, or at this time, or by theſe men: he might foreſee that it would be attended with ill conſequences; either the more to irritate the reſentments of ſome perſons againſt him; or to put others on doing things, which were diſagreeable to him; as ſetting him up for a temporal prince among them, being *David*'s ſon.

Ver. 31. *But they when they were departed*, &c.] That is, out of the houſe where they received their cure, and out of the city; for it appears by what follows, they went into other parts, where it is probable they might originally belong; they *ſpread abroad his fame in all that country.* This they did, not in contempt of Chriſt and his orders; but rather

ther out of gratitude to their benefactor, and through an honeſt zeal to ſpread his honour and glory: though they are not to be commended for diſregarding the command of Chriſt; for, not our affection, but Chriſt's will, is to be the rule of our actions.

Ver. 32. *As they went out*, &c.] The *Syriac* verſion reads it, *when Jeſus went out*; to which agrees the *Arabic*, againſt all the copies: for not he, but the men who had been blind, and now had their ſight reſtored, went out from the houſe where Jeſus was; which circumſtance is mentioned, and by it the following account is introduced, partly to ſhew how buſy Chriſt was, how he was continually employed in doing good, and that as ſoon as one work of mercy was over, another offered; and partly, to obſerve how cloſely and exactly the prophecies of the Old Teſtament were fulfilled; in which, as it was foretold, that *the eyes of the blind* ſhould *be opened*; ſo likewiſe, that *the tongue of the dumb* ſhould *ſing*, *Iſa.* xxxv. 5, 6. *Behold, they brought to him a dumb man poſſeſſed with a devil.* The word ſignifies one that is deaf, as well as dumb; as does the *Hebrew* word חרש, often uſed by the *Jewiſh* writers, for a deaf and dumb man; one, they ſay [g], that can neither hear nor ſpeak, and is unfit for ſacrifice, and excuſed many things: and indeed theſe two, deafneſs and dumbneſs, always go together in perſons, who are deaf from their birth; for as they cannot hear, they cannot learn to ſpeak: but this man ſeems to be dumb, not by nature, but through the poſſeſſion of ſatan; who had taken away, or reſtrained the uſe of his ſpeech, out of pure malice and ill-will, that he might not have the benefit of converſation with men, nor be able to ſay any thing to the glory of God. This man did not come of himſelf to Chriſt, perhaps being unwilling, through the power and influence the devil had over him; but his friends, who were concerned for his welfare, and who were thoroughly perſuaded of the power of Chriſt to heal him, by the miracles they had ſeen, or heard performed by him, brought him to him; and no doubt, expreſſed their deſire, that he would caſt out the devil, and cure him, which he did.

Ver. 33. *And when the devil was caſt out, the dumb ſpake*, &c.] The cauſe of his dumbneſs being removed, the effect ceaſed, and the man ſpake as he did before, and as other men do; and this was done, according to the *Perſic* verſion, *as ſoon as Chriſt ſaw* him; the devil not being able to bear his preſence, much leſs withſtand his power: but as ſoon as Chriſt had ſet his eyes upon the man poſſeſſed by him, and had given him orders to be gone, he immediately went out, and the man was reſtored to his ſpeech again; *and the multitudes marvelled, ſaying, it was never ſo ſeen in Iſrael.* The vaſt crowds of people, who were alarmed with the former miracles of Chriſt, and came along with the friends of the dumb man, when they heard him ſpeak ſo ſuddenly and plainly, and with ſo much freedom, nothing being ſaid or done to him, were ſurprized; and declared very frankly, that though many wonderful things had been done in *Iſrael*, in times paſt, by *Moſes*, *Elijah*, *Eliſha*, and others, yet never were ſuch things ſeen, or heard, or known of, as were done by Chriſt: referring not to this miracle only, but to all the reſt he had juſt wrought; as curing the woman of her bloody iſſue, raiſing *Jairus*'s daughter from the dead, reſtoring ſight to the two blind men, and now caſting out a dumb devil.

Ver. 34. *But the Phariſees ſaid*, &c.] Who were the ſworn enemies of Chriſt, and were filled with envy at him, and malice againſt him: theſe men could not bear, that ſo much honour and glory ſhould be given to Chriſt; and therefore ſaid, *he caſteth out the devils through the prince of the devils:* they could not deny matter of fact, that he had caſt out a devil; nor could they ſay he had done an ill thing in ſo doing; they could not but own that it was a preternatural action, more than human; nor could they contradict what the multitude ſaid, that no ſuch thing had been ever ſeen, or known, in *Iſrael:* but that Chriſt might not have the glory of the action, and to fix a mark of infamy upon him, fooliſhly impute it to a diabolical influence, as if one devil would eject another; and to Chriſt's familiarity with, and the aſſiſtance he had from, not a common devil, but the prince of them. In *Beza*'s moſt ancient *manuſcript*, and in ſome others, this whole verſe is wanting; and were it not for the general conſent of copies, one ſhould be tempted to think theſe words were not ſaid at this time, becauſe Chriſt returns no anſwer to them; and what is obſerved by *Luke*, ch. xi. 15. as following this miracle, is the ſelf-ſame as was ſpoken by Chriſt, in *Matt.* xii. 24, 25. and where this paſſage is more thoroughly conſidered.

Ver. 35. *And Jeſus went about all the cities and villages*, &c.] He did not confine himſelf, and his acts of kindneſs and compaſſion, to his own city *Capernaum*, but he took a circuit throughout all *Galilee*; and not only viſited their larger and more principal cities and towns, but their villages alſo; doing good to the bodies and ſouls of men in every place, and of whatever ſtate and condition. *Teaching in their ſynagogues*; which were places of publick worſhip, where prayer was made, the law and the prophets were read, and a word of exhortation given to the people; and which, it ſeems, were in villages, as well as in cities and towns: and indeed it is a rule with the *Jews* [h], that "in what "place ſoever there are ten *Iſraelites*, they ought "to build a houſe, to which they may go to "prayer, at all times of prayer; and ſuch a place "is called בית הכנסת, *a ſynagogue*." And hence we often read, of [i] בית הכנסת של כפרים, *the ſynagogue of villages*, as diſtinct from the ſynagogues of cities and walled towns; which confutes a notion of the learned Dr. *Lightfoot* [k], who thought there were no ſynagogues in villages. Now wherever Chriſt found any of theſe, he entered into them, and taught the people publickly, *preaching the goſpel of the kingdom*; the good news and glad tidings of peace and pardon, reconciliation and ſalvation, by himſelf the Meſſiah; all things relating to the Goſpel diſpenſation; the doctrines of grace, which concern both the kingdom of grace and glory; particularly the doctrine of regeneration, and the neceſſity of having a better righteouſneſs than that of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*; the one as a meetneſs, the other as a title to eternal happineſs: *and healing every ſickneſs, and every diſeaſe among the people.* As he preached wholeſome doctrine for the good of their ſouls, for their ſpiritual health, and the cure of their ſpiritual maladies; ſo he healed all ſorts of diſeaſes, the bodies of men were incident to, that were brought unto him; and by his miracles confirmed, as well as recommended the doctrines he preached.

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[g] Maimon. & Bartenora in Miſn. Trumot, c. 1. §. 2. T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 2. 2.

[h] Maimon. Hilchot Tephilla, c. 11. §. 1.

[i] T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 26. 1. & Gloſſ. in ib. Maimon. & Bartenora in Miſn. Megilla, c. 3. §. 1. & Maimon. Hilch. Tephilla, c. 11. §. 16.

[k] In Mark i. 38. & Chorograph. ad Matt. c 98.

Ver. 36. *But when he ſaw the multitudes,* &c.] As he took his circuit through the ſeveral cities, towns, and villages, he made his obſervations upon the large numbers that flocked to his miniſtry, and ſeemed to be deſirous of ſpiritual inſtructions, in what an unhappy and melancholy ſituation they were; *and he was moved with compaſſion on them:* his bowels yearned for them, he was touched with a feeling of their infirmities, as the merciful high-prieſt, the good ſhepherd, and faithful prophet; being heartily concerned for the ſouls of men, their comfort here, and everlaſting happineſs hereafter: *becauſe they fainted*; being fatigued and tired, not in their bodies, through journeying from place to place, to hear the word, but in their minds; being burdened and wearied with the various traditions and doctrines of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*: *and were ſcattered abroad*; thrown and toſſed about, and divided through the different ſects of religion among them; no due care was taken of them, to gather and keep them together, and feed them with wholeſome doctrine; but were as abjects, outcaſts, that no man regarded, and in great danger of the loſs and ruin of their immortal ſouls; being *as ſheep without a ſhepherd*; that was good for any thing, or did the office and duty of a ſhepherd to them: the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* were ſhepherds indeed, ſuch as they were, but very bad ones; like the ſhepherds of *Iſrael* of old, who fed themſelves, and not the flock; who ſtrengthened not the diſeaſed, nor healed the ſick, nor bound up that which was broken; nor brought again that which was driven away, nor ſought that which was loſt: but on the contrary, cauſed them to go aſtray from mountain to hill; whereby they forgot their reſting-place, in the *Meſſiah* promiſed them, and who was now come.

Ver. 37. *Then ſaith he unto his diſciples,* &c.] His heart being drawn out, and filled with pity to theſe poor people, upon obſerving the miſerable and ſad condition they were in; he turns himſelf to his diſciples, whom he was about to call, and ſend forth in a more publick manner to preach the Goſpel, of which we read in the following chapter: and in order to quicken them to this ſervice, and engage their hearts in it, ſays unto them, *the harveſt truly is plenteous*; meaning the large number of God's elect, which were in theſe cities, towns, and villages, and in other places: not that theſe were maturely prepared by any thing in themſelves, or done by them, for the grace of God; and much leſs ripe for the kingdom of glory, and therefore called an harveſt: but as there are the appointed weeks of the harveſt, or a ſet time for the harveſt to be gathered in, ſo there is a certain fixed time, ſettled in the counſel, and by the purpoſe of God, for the effectual vocation and converſion of his elect; and this time being come, with reſpect to theſe in *Galilee*, and other parts, Chriſt calls them an *harveſt*; and becauſe of their number, a large, or *plenteous* one. *But the labourers are few*; goſpel miniſters; whoſe calling is a laborious one; whoſe buſineſs is to labour in the word and doctrine; to be conſtant in prayer; to give up themſelves to meditation and reading; to ſtudy to ſhew themſelves workmen; to preach the word in ſeaſon, and out of ſeaſon; and diligently diſcharge the ſeveral duties of their office, to the glory of Chriſt, and the good of ſouls: but ſuch painful and laborious miniſters, who are willing to ſpend, and be ſpent for Chriſt and immortal ſouls, have been but few in all ages; generally ſpeaking there are more loiterers than labourers.

Ver. 38. *Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harveſt,* &c.] By *the Lord of the harveſt*, is either meant God the father, whoſe are all the elect, who has a hearty concern for them, and will have them all gathered in, not one of them ſhall be left; or the Lord Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, who has the care and charge of the whole election of grace; and who as he muſt, he will bring them all in; and who, has power of ſending forth labourers, as the following chapter ſhews; and ſo this is a proof of prayer being made to Chriſt; *that he will ſend forth labourers into his harveſt.* This is the petition the diſciples of Chriſt were put upon making to the lord of the harveſt, on conſideration of the preſent condition, multitudes of ſouls were in: they could not make, qualify, and ſend out miniſters themſelves; this is not man's work, but God's: he only is able to furniſh with miniſterial gifts, to work upon, and powerfully incline the hearts of men to this ſervice, to call and ſend them forth into it, and to aſſiſt and ſucceed them in it. The perſons deſired to be ſent, are *labourers*; faithful, diligent, and induſtrious preachers of the Goſpel; ſuch as lay out themſelves, their time, talents, and ſtrength, in their maſter's ſervice; and don't indulge themſelves in ſloth and idleneſs: the place they are deſired to be ſent into is, *into the harveſt*; into the field of the world, where God's elect lie, and there labour in preaching the Goſpel; hoping for a divine bleſſing, and an almighty power to attend their miniſtrations, for the converſion of ſinners, and edification of ſaints. The requeſt the diſciples are directed to make, concerning theſe perſons for this work is, that the Lord of the harveſt would *ſend*, or *thruſt* them *forth*; implying power and efficacy, and authority, on the part of the ſender; and backwardneſs on the part of thoſe that are ſent, through modeſty; a ſenſe of the greatneſs of the work, and of their own unworthineſs and unfitneſs for it. Very opportunely did our Lord move his diſciples to put up this petition, and was done, no queſtion, with a view to, and to prepare for, his miſſion of the twelve to preach the Goſpel, of which there is an account in the next chapter.

## CHAP. X.

Ver. 1. AND *when he had called to him his twelve diſciples,* &c.] Theſe perſons had been for ſome time called by the grace of God, and were already the diſciples of Chriſt, and ſuch as were more familiar and intimate with him, than others, that went by that name. They had ſat down at his feet, and had received of his words; they had heard his doctrines, and had ſeen his miracles, and had been by him training up for publick work; but as yet had not been called and ſent forth to enter on ſuch ſervice: but now all things being ready, they being properly inſtructed, and the time for the converſion of a large number of ſouls being up, he called them together privately; and gave them a commiſſion to preach the Goſpel, ordained them miniſters of the word, and inſtalled them into the office of apoſtleſhip. The number *twelve*, is either in alluſion to the twelve ſpies that were ſent by *Moſes* into the land of *Canaan*; or to the twelve ſtones in *Aaron*'s breaſt-plate; or to the twelve

twelve fountains the *Iſraelites* found in the wilderneſs; or to the twelve oxen on which the molten ſea ſtood in *Solomon*'s temple; or to the twelve gates in *Ezekiel*'s temple; or rather, to the twelve patriarchs, and the tribes which ſprung from them; that as they were the fathers of the *Jewiſh* nation, which was typical of God's choſen people; ſo theſe were to be the inſtruments of ſpreading the Goſpel, not only in *Judea*, but in all the world, and of planting Chriſtian churches there. And that they might appear to come forth with authority, and that their doctrine might be confirmed, *he gave them power againſt unclean ſpirits, to caſt them out*; or *over all devils*, as *Luke* ix. 1. It was uſual with the *Jews*, to call a dæmon or devil, רוח טומאה, *an unclean ſpirit*; eſpecially ſuch as frequented burying-places: ſo in one place[l], an unclean ſpirit is interpreted by the Gloſs, רוח שדים, *the ſpirit of the dæmons*, or devils; and in another[m] place, שד בית הקברות, *the dæmon of the graves*; where necromancers ſought to be, that theſe ſpirits might be their familiars, and aſſiſt them in their enchantments: accordingly the devils are here called, *unclean ſpirits*; being in themſelves, in their own nature unclean, and being the cauſe and means of defiling others, and delighting in impure perſons, places, and things. There were many of theſe ſpirits, who, becauſe of the great impiety of the *Jews*, the prevalence of magic arts among them, and by divine permiſſion, had at this time taken poſſeſſion of great numbers of perſons; whereby Chriſt had an opportunity of giving proof of his deity, of his being the Meſſiah, the ſeed of the woman, that ſhould bruiſe the ſerpent's head, by his ejecting them; and of confirming the miſſion of his diſciples, and eſtabliſhing the doctrine preached by them, by giving them power and authority over them, to caſt them out alſo: and whereas various diſeaſes frequently followed and attended ſuch poſſeſſions; he likewiſe gave them power *to heal all manner of ſickneſſes, and all manner of diſeaſes*, as he himſelf had done. The expreſſions are very full and ſtrong, and include all ſorts of maladies incident to human bodies, either of men or women; all diſtempers natural or preternatural, curable or incurable, by human methods: ſo that at the ſame time they were ſent to preach the Goſpel, for the cure of the ſouls of men, they were empowered to heal the diſeaſes of their bodies; and which one ſhould think, could not fail of recommending them to men, and of ingratiating them into their affections.

Ver. 2. *Now the names of the twelve apoſtles are theſe*, &c.] This is the firſt time theſe diſciples are called *apoſtles*, they were learners before; now being inſtructed, they are ſent forth to preach publickly, and therefore are called apoſtles, or meſſengers, perſons that were ſent: ſo the elders of the prieſthood are called, שלוחי בית דין, *the apoſtles*, or meſſengers *of the Sanhedrim*[n], to whom the high-prieſt were delivered, before the day of atonement. So ſix months in the year, שלוחים, *apoſtles*, or meſſengers, were ſent by the[o] *Sanhedrim*, throughout all the land of *Iſrael*, and to the captive *Jews* in other parts, to give notice of the new moon; in alluſion to which, the diſciples might be ſo called. It was proper to give the names of them, for the truth of the hiſtory, and confirmation of it; for the ſake of the perſons themſelves, and the honour done them; and for the excluſion and detection of falſe apoſtles. *The firſt, Simon, who is called Peter*; his pure *Hebrew* name was, שמעון, *Simeon*, as he is called, *Acts* xv. 14. but in the then *Jeruſalem* dialect, and in *Rabbinical* language, this name is frequently read and pronounced, סימון, *Simon*, as here: we often read of *R. Simon*, and of *R. Juda bar Simon*, in both *Talmuds*[p]. This apoſtle is alſo called *Peter*, to diſtinguiſh him from *Simon* the *Canaanite*, and which ſignifies a ſtone, or rock, in alluſion to the object of his faith, and the ſteadineſs of it. He is ſaid to be the *firſt*; not that he was the head of the reſt of the apoſtles, or had any primacy, dominion, and authority over them; but becauſe he was firſt called, and was the firſt that was to open the door of faith to the *Gentiles*: but chiefly he is ſaid to be ſo for orders ſake; for, ſome one in the account muſt be named firſt, and he as proper as any: *and Andrew his brother*; who was called at the ſame time with him, and therefore are put together. This name is alſo to be met with in the *Talmudic* writings; ſee note on *Matt.* iv. 18. *James the ſon of Zebedee, and John his brother*; theſe two were called next and together, and therefore are placed in this order: the former is ſo called, to diſtinguiſh him from another *James*, the ſon of *Alpheus*, after mentioned; and the latter is the beloved diſciple; theſe were ſurnamed *Boanerges*, that is, *ſons of thunder*.

Ver. 3. *Philip and Bartholomew*, &c.] The firſt of theſe was called next; his name is a *Greek* one, which his parents, though *Jews*, might take from the *Greeks* that dwelt among them; ſee *John* xii. 20, 21. mention is made of one *R. Phelipi*, and *Phulipa*, in the *Jewiſh* writings[q]. The latter of theſe, *Bartholomew*, is conjectured, by Dr. *Lightfoot*, to be the ſame with *Nathanael*, he being called next in order after *Philip*; and that his name was *Nathanael*, בר תלמי, *Bar Talmai*, or *the ſon of Talmai*, or *Ptolomy*; a name once common to the kings of *Egypt*: ſo *Talmai*, king of *Geſhur*, is by the *Septuagint*, in 2 *Sam.* iii. 3. and xiii. 37. called *Tholmi*, and in 1 *Chron.* iii. 2. *Tholmai*: hence it appears, that *Bartholomew* is no other than *Bartholmi*, or the ſon of *Tholmi*. We read of one *R. Jonathan*, בן אבטולמוס, *ben Abtolemus*, in the *Talmud*[r], whether the ſame name with this, may be conſidered. *Thomas, and Matthew the publican*: by the other Evangeliſts *Matthew* is mentioned firſt; but he being the writer of this Goſpel, puts *Thomas* firſt, which is an inſtance of his modeſty; and alſo calls himſelf the *publican*, which the other do not: this he mentions, to magnify the grace of God in his vocation. The *Jews*[s] ſpeak of מתאי, *Matthai*, or *Matthew*, as a diſciple of *Jeſus*. *Thomas*, was ſometimes called *Didymus*; the one was his *Hebrew*, the other his *Greek* name, and both ſignify a *twin*, as it is very likely he was: mention is made of *R. Thoma*, or *Thomas bar Papias*, in a *Jewiſh* writer[t]. Next follow, *James the ſon of Alpheus, and Lebbeus, whoſe ſurname was Thaddeus*: the former of theſe is ſo called, to diſtinguiſh him from *James*, the ſon of *Zebedee*. This is the *James*, who was the brother of our Lord, *Gal.* i. 19. and is called *James the leſs*, *Mark* xv. 40. *Alpheus* his father, is the ſame with *Cleopas*, *Luke* xxiv. 18. or *Cleophas*, *John* xix. 25. The *Hebrew* name, חלפי, which often occurs among the *Jews*[u], may be pronounced either *Chlophi*, or *Alphi*, or with the *Greek* termination *Cleopas*, or *Alpheus*. The latter of this pair of apoſtles, is the ſame perſon with *Jude*, the writer of the epiſtle, which bears that name, and was the brother of *James*, with whom he is coupled: he was called *Lebbeus*, either from the town of *Lebba*, a ſea-coaſt town of *Galilee*, as Dr. *Lightfoot* thinks; or from the *Hebrew* word, לבי, *my heart*, as others, either for his prudence, or through the affections of his parents to him; as the *Latins* call one they love, *meum corculum, my little heart*; or from לביא, *a lion*, that being the motto of the tribe of *Judah*. His ſurname *Thaddeus*, is thought by ſome to be a deflexion of *Jude*, or *Judas*, and as coming from the ſame root, ידה, which ſignifies *to praiſe*, or *give thanks*; or from the *Syriack* word, תד, *a breaſt*, and may be ſo called for the ſame reaſon as he was *Lebbeus*. Frequent mention is made of this name, תדאי, *Thaddai*, or *Thaddeus*, among the *Talmudic* [w] doctors. The *Jews* themſelves ſpeak [x] of one תודה, *Thodah*, as a diſciple of *Jeſus*, by whom no doubt they mean this ſame diſciple. *Euſebius* [y] mentions one *Thaddeus*, as one of the ſeventy diſciples, who was ſent to *Agbarus*, king of *Edeſſa*, who was healed and converted by him. This *Agbarus*, is reported to have wrote a letter to Jeſus Chriſt, deſiring him to come and cure him of his diſeaſe; to which Chriſt is ſaid to return an anſwer, promiſing to ſend one of his diſciples, who ſhould do it; and that accordingly after Chriſt's death, *Thomas* ſent this *Thaddeus* to him.

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[l] T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 3. 2.

[m] T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 65. 2.

[n] Miſn. Yoma, c. 1. §. 5.

[o] Miſn. Roſhhaſhana, c. 1. §. 3. & Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

[p] T. Hieroſ. Shekalim, fol. 46. 4. Bab. Sabbath, fol. 55. 1. & Bava Kama, fol. 47. 2.

[q] Maſſechet Sopherim, c. 21. §. 7. Bereſhit Rabba, §. 71. fol. 63. 4.

[r] T. Bab. Nidda, fol. 19. 1.

[s] T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 43. 1.

[t] Juchaſin, fol. 105. 2.

[u] Echa Rabbati, fol. 58. 4. Midraſh Kohelet, fol. 60. 4. Juchaſin, fol. 92. 1.

Ver. 4. *Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iſcariot*, &c.] This is the laſt couple, for they are all mentioned by pairs, becauſe they were ſent forth *by two and two*, as the Evangeliſt *Mark* ſays, ch. vi. 7. The former of theſe is called *Simon the Canaanite*, to diſtinguiſh him from *Simon Peter*, before mentioned; not that he was a *Canaanite*, that is, an inhabitant of the land of *Canaan*, a man of *Canaan*, as a certain woman is called a *woman of Canaan*, *Matt.* xv. 22. for all the diſciples of Chriſt were *Jews*; though in *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* goſpel he is called, שמעון הכנעני, *Simeon* the *Canaanite*, or of *Canaan*, as if he belonged to that country; nor is he ſo called from *Cana* of *Galilee*, as *Jerom* and others have thought; but he was one of the קנאים, *Kanaim*, or *Zealots*; and therefore *Luke* ſtiles him, *Simon called Zelotes*, ch. vi. 15. and *Acts* i. 13. The *Kanaites*, or *Zelotes*, were a ſett of men, who, in imitation of *Phinehas*, who ſlew *Zimri* and *Cozbi* in the very act of uncleanneſs, when they found any perſons in the act of adultery, idolatry, blaſphemy, or theft, would immediately kill them without any more ado: this they did, from a pretended zeal for the honour and glory of God; nor were they accountable to any court of judicature for it; yea, ſuch an action was highly applauded, as a very laudable one [z]: under this ſpecious name of *Zealots*, innumerable murders, and moſt horrible wickedneſs were committed, both before, and during the ſiege of *Jeruſalem*, as *Joſephus* [a] relates. Now *Simon* was one of this ſect before his converſion, and ſtill retained the name afterwards. *Judas*, the laſt of the twelve, is called *Iſcariot*; concerning which name, the notation of it, and the reaſon of his being ſo called, many are the conjectures of learned men: ſome think that he belonged to the tribe of *Iſſachar*, and that he is called from thence, איש ישכר, *a man of Iſſachar*, as a certain man is, in *Judges* x. 1. others, that he takes his name from the place he belonged to, and that he was called, איש קריות, *a man of Keriot*. A place of this name is mentioned, *Joſh.* xv. 25. and ſome manuſcripts and copies in ſome places read *Judas* απο Καρυωτȣ, of *Caryot*. *Caryota* is ſaid [b] to be a plain of the city of *Jericho*, about eighteen miles from *Jeruſalem*, which abounded in palm-trees, called קורייטי, *Caryotæ*, of which mention is made in the [c] *Talmud*, and other writers [d]. Others think he is ſo called, from the *Syriac* word, סכריוטא, *ſecariota*, which ſignifies a *purſe*, or bag, becauſe he carried the bag. Some copies read it, σκαριωτες, *ſcariotes*: others are of opinion, that he is ſo called, from the manner of death he died, which was ſtrangling: for אסכרא, *Iſcara*, a word often uſed in the [e] *Talmudic* writings, ſignifies *ſtrangling*; and is accounted by the *Jews* the hardeſt of deaths, and an evil one; and which ſeems to bid fair for the true reaſon of his name: however, it is mentioned here, as elſewhere, to diſtinguiſh him from *Jude*, or *Judas*, the true and faithful apoſtle of Chriſt; for this was he, *who alſo betrayed him*; that is, Chriſt, as the *Perſic* verſion reads it; and which is mentioned, not only for further diſtinction's ſake, but to his great reproach. We learn from hence, that in the pureſt ſociety on earth, there has been an impure perſon; nor can it therefore be expected, it ſhould be otherwiſe in the beſt of churches, in the preſent ſtate of imperfection; yea, that a man may have the higheſt gifts and attainments, as *Judas* had, miniſterial gifts, and power of performing miracles, and yet be a vile perſon.

Ver. 5. *Theſe twelve Jeſus ſent forth*, &c.] And no other but them, under the character of apoſtles. Theſe had been with him a conſiderable time, to whom he had been gradually communicating ſpiritual knowledge; and by the benefit of private conference with him, and the obſervation they had made upon his doctrine and conduct, were greatly qualify'd for publick uſefulneſs: wherefore he gives them a commiſſion, furniſhes them with power and authority; and ſends them forth from him by pairs, that they might be aſſiſting to one another, and bear a joint teſtimony to the Goſpel they preached; but before he ſent them forth from his preſence, he gave them ſome directions where they ſhould go, and to whom they ſhould miniſter, and where not: *and he commanded them*, as their Lord and Maſter; he gave them ſtrict orders, which he expected them to comply with, and cloſely enjoined them, as they muſt anſwer it to him again, *ſaying, go not into the way of the Gentiles*; meaning, not the cuſtoms and manners of the Heathens, they were to avoid; but that they were not to ſteer their courſe, or take their journey towards them: they were not, as yet, to go among them, and preach the Goſpel to them; the calling of the Gentiles was not a matter, as yet, ſo clearly revealed and known, nor was the time of their vocation come: beſides, it was the will of God, that the Goſpel ſhould be firſt preached to the *Jews*, to take off all excuſe from them, and that their obſtinacy and perverſeneſs in rejecting Jeſus as the Meſſiah, might manifeſtly appear; and ſince Chriſt himſelf was the miniſter of the circumciſion, he would have his apoſtles, for the preſent, whilſt he was on earth, act agreeable to the character he bore, that there might be an entire harmony in their conduct. *And into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not*: the word *any* is ſupplied, and that very rightly; for, not the city of *Samaria*, the *metropolis* of that country, as the *Arabic* verſion reads it, is only meant, but any, and every city of the *Samaritans:* not that it was ſtrictly unlawful and criminal to go thither; for, he himſelf went into one of their cities, and ſo did his apoſtles, *John* iv. 4, 5. 8. *Luke* ix. 52. and after his death preached the Goſpel there; but he judged it not proper and expedient at this time, and as yet, to do it; that is, not before their preaching it to the *Jews*; for there was a very great hatred ſubſiſting between the *Jews* and the *Samaritans*, inſomuch that they had no converſation with each other in things civil or religious. The *Samaritans*, tho' they boaſted of their deſcent from *Jacob*, were a mungrel ſort of people, partly *Jews*, and partly Gentiles, a mixture of both; and therefore are diſtinguiſhed from both: and tho' they had, and held the law, and five books of *Moſes*, yet corrupted them in many places, to ſerve their purpoſe, and countenance their religion, particularly their worſhipping at mount *Gerizzim*; on which account they were looked upon by the *Jews* as apoſtates, idolaters, and even as heathens [f], and are therefore here joined with them; and to ſhun giving offence to the *Jews*, ſeems to be the reaſon of this prohibition; ſee the note on *John* iv. 20.

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[w] T. Hieroſ. Celaim, fol. 27. 2. Sabbat, fol. 6. 1. Erubim, fol. 23. 3. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 123. 1. & Erubim, fol. 71. 2. Juchaſin, fol. 81. 1. & 105. 2. & 108. 1.

[x] T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 43. 1.

[y] Eccl. Hiſt. l. 1. c. 12, 13.

[z] Miſn. Sanhedrim, c. 9. §. 6. & Bartenora, in ib. T. Avoda Zara, fol. 36. 2. Maimon. Iſſure Bia, c. 12. §. 4, 5, 6. 14. & Sanhedrim, c. 18. §. 6. & Obede Cochabim, c. 2. §. 9. Philo de Monarchia, l. 1. p. 818.

[a] De Bello Jud. l. 5. c. 1, 2. & 6. 1. Vid. Abot R. Nathan, c. 6. fol. 3. 2.

[b] Vid. Wolfii Heb. Bibl. p. 410.

[c] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 50. 2. & Avoda Zara, fol. 14. 2.

[d] Plin. Nat. Hiſt. l. 13. c. 4.

[e] T. Bab Beracot, fol. 8. 1. & Sabbat, fol. 33. 1. Sota, fol. 35. 1. Peſachim, fol. 105. 1. Taanith, fol. 19. 2. & 27. 2. Yebamot, fol. 62. 2.

Ver. 6. *But go rather to the loſt ſheep of the houſe of Iſrael.*] To whom he himſelf was ſent, ch. xv. 24. By *the houſe of Iſrael* is meant the whole *Jewiſh* nation; for though this phraſe, when diſtinguiſhed from the houſe of *Judah*, deſigns only the ten tribes; yet here it intends all the *Jews*, then living in the land of *Judea*, among whom there were ſome of all the tribes: and by *the loſt ſheep* of this houſe, are meant either all the people of the *Jews* in general, who were wandring, and were loſt in error and ſin, and to whom the external miniſtry of the Goſpel came; or rather the elect of God among them, for whoſe ſake particularly the apoſtles were ſent unto them. Theſe are called *ſheep*, becauſe they were choſen of God, and given to Chriſt to be redeemed, looked up, ſought out, and ſaved by him; and *loſt* ones, not only becauſe loſt in *Adam*, and by their own tranſgreſſions, ſo that neither they themſelves, nor any mere creature, could ſave them from eternal ruin and deſtruction; but alſo, becauſe they were made to go aſtray, and were loſt thro' the negligence and errors of their paſtors, the *Scribes* and *Phariſees:* and this character is the rather given of them, partly to reflect upon the characters of the ſhepherds of *Iſrael*; and partly to magnify the grace of God, in having regard to ſuch ruined and miſerable creatures; and alſo to excite the compaſſion and diligence of the apoſtles, to preach the Goſpel to them: reſpect ſeems to be had to *Jer.* l. 6.

Ver. 7. *And as ye go*, &c.] Thro' the cities of *Judea*, and the ſtreets thereof, from one city to another, from place to place; for theſe were itinerant preachers, who were not to abide long in any place, but to move about, that the Goſpel might be ſpread all over the land, and the loſt ſheep in every corner be ſought out and found. *Preach, ſaying, the kingdom of heaven is at hand.* This was to be the ſubject-matter of their miniſtry, which they were to proclaim aloud in every place; and which is expreſſed in the ſame words with which *John* the *Baptiſt*, and Chriſt himſelf, began their miniſtry, *Matt.* iii. 2. and iv. 17. which ſhews the entire harmony, and ſtrict agreement, there were between them; for the meaning of the phraſe, ſee note on *Matt.* iii. 2. The *Cambridge* copy reads, *repent, for the kingdom*, &c.

Ver. 8. *Heal the ſick*, &c.] For ſo he had given them power to do, and this both for the confirmation of their doctrine, and the recommendation of them to men; for nothing could more evidently prove their miſſion to be divine, and their doctrine from heaven, or be more acceptable to men, than to *heal* their *ſick* friends and relations, who were given up by phyſicians, and incurable by the art of man; and to do this without the uſe of medicines, either by a word ſpeaking, or by laying on of their hands, or by anointing with oil, joined with prayer; and particularly to *cleanſe the lepers*, of which there were many in *Iſrael*, who otherwiſe could not get rid of that diſorder, and by the law were deprived of many privileges, and advantages, which others enjoyed; and eſpecially to *raiſe the dead*, which had never been done before the times of Chriſt, ſince the days of *Elijah* and *Eliſha*; and which muſt be allowed by all men to be more than human, and to require the arm of almighty power: and laſtly, to *caſt out devils*, the ſworn enemies of mankind, and who had taken poſſeſſion of the bodies, as well as ſouls of multitudes in the *Jewiſh* nation; all which they are ordered to do, without taking any thing of the people, for ſo doing: *freely ye have received, freely give*; which refers both to the working of miracles, and preaching of the Goſpel. As they had theſe miraculous gifts freely imparted to them by Chriſt, they had them not of themſelves, nor did they procure them at any charge, or expence of theirs, or purchaſe them with their money, as *Simon Magus* impiouſly propoſed to the apoſtles; ſo they were freely to make uſe of theſe wonderful powers, they were poſſeſſed of, for the relief of the diſtreſſed, without inſiſting upon, or receiving any thing for the ſame; a practice which was formerly diſapproved and condemned in *Gehazi*, the ſervant of *Eliſha:* and with reſpect to the Goſpel, as the knowledge of it was freely communicated to them by Chriſt, and gifts qualifying them for the preaching of it, were of his mere grace and goodneſs beſtowed upon them, ſo they were to diſpenſe it without making a gain of godlineſs, or diſcovering in the leaſt an avaricious diſpoſition. Our Lord ſeems to have reſpect to a rule frequently inculcated by the *Jews* concerning teaching their oral law [g]; which is this; "in the place where they teach the written law for a reward, it is lawful to teach it for
" a reward; but it is forbidden to teach the oral
" law for a reward, as it is ſaid, *behold, I have*
" *taught you ſtatutes and judgments, even as the*
" *Lord my God commanded me*, &c. *Deut.* iv. 5.
" As I have בחנם, *freely* learned, and ye have
" alſo בחנם, *freely* learnt of me; ſo when ye
" learn poſterity, למדו בחנם כמו שלמדתם ממני,
" *teach them freely, as ye have learnt of me.*" Now what the *Jews* ſay of their traditions, Chriſt applies to the Goſpel; in diſpenſing of which he would not have his diſciples come behind them; but as they had freely received the Goſpel from his lips, ſo they would as freely, as well as faithfully, make it known to others; and which no ways contradicts the maintenance of the Goſpel-miniſters by the people; only forbids amaſſing wealth and riches by it, or preaching for ſordid gain, or filthy lucres ſake: for otherwiſe it is Chriſt's own ordinance, that the preachers of the Goſpel ſhould live by it;

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[f] T. Hieroſ. Shekalim, fol. 46. 2. Bartenora in Miſn. Taharot, c. 5. §. 8.

[g] Maimon. Talmud Tora, c. 1. §. 7. T. Bab. Nedarim, fol. 36. 2. & 37. 1. & Becorat, fol. 29. 1. Maimon. & Bartenora in Miſn. Nedarim, c. 4. §. 3. & in Pirke Abot. c. 4. §. 5.

it; and which is confirmed in the following verſes.

Ver. 9. *Provide neither gold, nor ſilver, nor braſs,* &c.] That is, not any ſort of *money*, as both *Mark* and *Luke* expreſs it: for money was then coined, as now, of theſe three ſorts of metals, and which include all kind of money; ſo that they were not to provide, get, prepare, or take along with them for their journey, as not gold, nor ſilver, or any parcel of this ſort of money, which might be of conſiderable importance, and laſting conſequence to them; ſo neither braſs-money, as, half-pence, and farthings, the leaſt, and moſt inconſiderable: they were forbidden to carry any of either ſort *in their purſes*; or, as it may be rendered, *in*, or *within your girdles*; in which travellers, among the *Jews*, uſed to carry their money; and who, in their travelling-dreſs, might not go into the temple, and are thus deſcribed [h]; "a man may not go into the mountain "of the houſe with his ſtaff, or with his ſhoes on, "nor בפונדתו, *with his girdle*. The פונדא, *phunda*, *Maimonides* ſays [i], is an inner garment, wore to keep off ſweat from other garments, to which were ſewed hollow things like purſes, in which a man put what he pleaſed; tho' other [k] interpreters ſay it is, אזור חלול שנותנין בו מעות, *a hollow girdle, in which they put their money*; and ſo the *Romans* [l] had uſed to do; and ſo do the *Turks* [m] to this day; to which practice the alluſion is here.

Ver. 10. *Nor ſcrip for your journey*, &c.] This the *Jews* call תרמיל, *tarmil*; and which their commentators [n] ſay, is a large leathern bag, in which ſhepherds and travellers put their food, and other things, and carried with them, hanging it about their necks; ſo that the diſciples were neither to carry money with them, nor any proviſions for their journey: *neither two coats*; one to travel in, and another to put on, when they came to their quarters: they were not allowed change of raiment; either becauſe ſuperfluous, or too magnificent to appear in, or too troubleſome to carry: *nor ſhoes*, only ſandals, as *Mark* ſays; for there was a difference between ſhoes and ſandals, as appears from the caſe of the plucking off the ſhoe, when a man refuſed his brother's wife [o]: if the *ſhoe* was plucked off it was regarded; but if the *ſandal*, it was not minded: this was the old tradition, though cuſtom went againſt it. Sandals were made of harder leather than ſhoes [p], and ſometimes of wood covered with leather, and ſtuck with nails, to make them more durable [q]; tho' ſometimes of bulruſhes, and bark of palm-trees, and of cork [r], which were light to walk with. "Says *R. Bar bar Chanah* [s], I ſaw "*R. Eleazar* of *Niniveh* go out on a faſt-day of "the congregation, בסנדל שעם, *with a ſandal* "*of cork*." Of what ſort theſe were, the diſciples were allowed to travel with, is not certain: *nor yet with ſtaves*; that is, with more than one ſtaff, which was ſufficient to aſſiſt them, and lean upon in journeying: for, according to *Mark*, one was allowed; as tho' they might take a travelling-ſtaff, yet not ſtaves for defence, or to fight with; ſee *Matt.* xxvi. 55. Now theſe ſeveral things were forbidden them, partly becauſe they would be burdenſome to them in travelling; and partly becauſe they were not to be out any long time, but were quickly to return again; and chiefly to teach them to live and depend upon divine providence. Now, ſince they were to take neither money, nor proviſions with them, and were alſo to preach the Goſpel freely, they might reaſonably aſk how they ſhould be provided for, and ſupported: when our Lord ſuggeſts, that they ſhould not be anxiouſly concerned about that, he would take care that they had a ſuitable ſupply; and would ſo influence and diſpoſe the minds of ſuch, to whom they ſhould miniſter, as that they ſhould have all neceſſary proviſions made for them, without any care or expence of theirs: *for the workman is worthy of his meat*; which ſeems to be a proverbial expreſſion, and by which Chriſt intimates, that they were workmen, or labourers in his vineyard, and they, diſcharging their duty aright, were entitled to food and raiment, and all the neceſſaries of life: this to have, was their due; and it was but a piece of juſtice to give it to them, and on which they might depend. So that this whole context is ſo far from militating againſt a miniſter's maintenance by the people, that it moſt ſtrongly eſtabliſhes it; for if the apoſtles were not to take any money or proviſions with them, to ſupport themſelves with, it clearly follows, that it was the will of Chriſt, that they ſhould live by the Goſpel, upon thoſe to whom they preached, as the following words ſhew: and tho' they were not to make gain of the Goſpel, or preach it for filthy lucres ſakes; yet they might expect a comfortable ſubſiſtence, at the charge of the people, to whom they miniſtred, and which was their duty to provide for them.

Ver. 11. *And into whatſoever city or town ye ſhall enter*, &c.] As Chriſt had inſtructed them in what manner they were to travel, ſo he directs them where to go, and who to aſk for, and take up their abode with, in the ſeveral towns and villages to which they ſhould come; that as ſoon as they had entered any town or village, they ſhould, in the firſt place, *enquire, who in it is worthy*; not of them, as the *Arabic* verſion reads, nor of the Goſpel they preached, or of the grace of God, of which no man is worthy: and beſides, who could anſwer to ſuch a queſtion when aſked? Who in any town, or city, could tell who in it were worthy of Chriſt, of his Goſpel, and miniſters, to which they were all equally ſtrangers before they came among them? Nor does it mean a man famous for piety and religion, or one that feared God, and was a worſhipper of him, but an hoſpitable man; one that was very liberal; who was willing and ready to entertain ſtrangers; for ſuch a man they would want, having neither money nor food: and ſo the ſame word, זכה, in the *Hebrew* language, ſignifies *to be worthy*, and *to give alms*; becauſe an eleemoſynary man, or a man given to alms, was reckoned by the *Jews* a very worthy man: they thought giving of alms to be a matter of merit. Chriſt here ſpeaks in the language of the maſters of *Iſrael*; take an inſtance or two: "ſaith "*R. Jona*, bleſſed is the man that giveth to the poor; "it is not written ſo, but *bleſſed is he that conſider-* "*eth the poor*: he looks upon him, how he may "לזכות עמו, *give alms to him*." And a little after,

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[h] Miſn. Beracot, c. 9. §. 5.
[i] In ib. & Celim. c. 29. 1. & Sabbat, c. 10. 3.
[k] Bartenora & Yom Tob in ib. Gloſſ. in T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 62. 2. & in Sabbat, fol. 92. 1. & 113. 1. & 120. 1. & Nedarim, fol. 55. 2.
[l] Gracchus apud A. Gell. Noct. Attic. l. 15. c. 12. Sueton. in Vita Vitellii, c. 16.
[m] Bobovius de Peregr. Meccan. p. 14.
[n] Maimon. & Bartenora in Miſn. Sheviith, c. 2. §. 8. & in Celim. c. 16. 4. & 24. 11. & Negaim, c. 11. §. 11.
[o] T. Hieroſ. Yebamot, fol. 12. 3. T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 102. 1. & Menachot, fol. 32. 1.
[p] Gloſſ. in T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 101. 1. & Bartenora in Miſn. Yebamot, c. 12. §. 1.
[q] Miſn. Yebamot, c. 12. §. 2. Maimon. Bartenora in Sabbat, c. 6. §. 2. & Edayot, c. 2. §. 8.
[r] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 78. 2. Gloſſ. in ib. Maimon. Hilch. Shebitat Aſhur, c. 3. §. 7.
[s] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 78. 2. Juchaſin, fol. 81. 1.

ter, "*God hath ſet one againſt the other*, that when "evil comes to thy friend, thou may'ſt ſee how "לזכות בו, *to do thine alms to him*, and nouriſh "him, ſo that thou may'ſt receive the gift of its "reward." Again, ſo a man ſays to his neighbour, זכי בי, *give alms unto me:* and afterwards, in the ſame place, 'tis ſaid, זכי בהדיא איתתא, *give alms unto that woman* [t]. Now, it was ſuch a worthy generous man, that was beneficent to the poor, and kind to ſtrangers, that the apoſtles were to enquire out, wherever they came; and having found ſuch a perſon, they were to continue with him: *and there abide till ye go out*; of that city or town, to another city or town: for to be often changing houſes would bring upon them an ill character, as if they were difficult to be pleaſed, not content with the proviſion made for them; and would look as if they ſought to ſerve their own bellies, and gratify their appetites, more than to do good to the ſouls of men; and beſides, moving from the houſe of a bountiful man, might bring ſome reproach upon his character, as if he had not uſed them well, and therefore left him. In ſhort, Chriſt's meaning is, that he would not have his diſciples be difficult, and dainty, or fickle, and inconſtant, but be content with ſuch things they ſhould have provided for them; and not ſeek for other, and better quarters, nor fear being troubleſome where they were.

Ver. 12. *And when ye come into an houſe*, &c.] Or the *houſe*; that is, the houſe of an hoſpitable man, when, upon enquiry, found out: *ſalute it*; meaning the inhabitants of it; or, as the *Perſic* verſion reads, *thoſe of the houſhold*, eſpecially the maſter of the family. Some copies add, *ſaying, peace be to this houſe*, as in *Luke* x. 5. and ſo read the *Vulgate Latin*, and *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel; and is a very juſt, and proper explanation of ſaluting: for the uſual form of ſalutation among the *Jews* was in ſuch words; of which ſee the note on *Matt.* v. 47. by which is meant all kind of happineſs, and proſperity, temporal, ſpiritual, and eternal.

Ver. 13. *And if the houſe be worthy*, &c.] If the family, and particularly the maſter of it, appeared to be civil, courteous, friendly, and hoſpitable, upon ſuch a ſalutation, and ready to receive and embrace them, and provide for them, *let your peace come upon it*, or *it ſhall come upon it*; the imperative for the future, which is not unuſual; and ſo read the *Syriac* and *Vulgate Latin*. The ſenſe is, the peace the apoſtles wiſhed for, in their form of ſalutation, ſhould come, and abide on the family; for not the Goſpel of peace, and the preaching of it, are here meant, but the ſalutation itſelf, or the things deſired in it, which ſhould be granted, and the houſe be bleſſed for their ſake, and as a reward of their generoſity, and hoſpitality: *but if it be not worthy*; does not prove to be what it was ſaid to be, and they expected; namely, to be generous, liberal, and beneficent; but, on the contrary, uncivil and churliſh, ſhould neglect their ſalutation, diſcover an unwillingneſs to receive them, and turn their backs upon them: *let your peace return to you*, or *it ſhall return to you*; the happineſs wiſhed for ſhall not come upon them, and the prayers and good wiſhes of the apoſtles ſhall be void, and of none effect, with reſpect to that family, but ſhould be made good to themſelves; and they ſhould be directed to another houſe, where they ſhould find perſons more generous and free to entertain them.

Ver. 14. *And whoſoever ſhall not receive you*, &c.] Into their houſes, and refuſe to entertain them, and provide for them in a friendly manner; *nor hear your words*, ſlight their ſalutations, make no account of, but deſpiſe their good wiſhes for their welfare; and alſo treat with contempt the doctrines of the Goſpel preached by them; and either would not attend on their miniſtry, or if they did, give no credit to what they ſhould ſay, but deride and reject them. *When ye depart out of that houſe, or city*; to another houſe, or to another city, being obliged to remove, through their contemptuous rejection of them; *ſhake off the duſt of your feet*. So *Paul* and *Barnabas* did at *Antioch* in *Piſidia*, when the *Jews* contradicted and blaſphemed the Goſpel preached by them, raiſed a perſecution againſt them, and expelled them out of their coaſts, *Acts* xiii. 51. which ceremony was ordered by Chriſt to be obſerved even to the cities of *Judea*, that ſhould deſpiſe and reject the miniſtry of his apoſtles; and that either to ſhew that they did not come to them with worldly views, with any deſign to amaſs riches and wealth to themſelves, for they would not ſo much as carry away with them the duſt on their feet, but it was purely with a view to their welfare, both ſpiritual and temporal; or to teſtify that they had been among them, and that that very duſt they ſhook off their feet would riſe up in judgment againſt them, and declare that the Goſpel had been preached among them, and they had rejected it, which will be an aggravation of their condemnation; or rather to obſerve to them, that ſuch was their wickedneſs, that even the duſt of their country was infected thereby, and therefore they ſhook it off, as tho' it defiled them, as the duſt of an Heathen country was thought by the *Jews* to do; ſo that by this action they ſignified that they would have nothing more to do with them, or ſay to them, and that they looked upon them as impure and unholy, as any Heathen city or country. There ſeems to be an alluſion to ſome maxims and cuſtoms of the *Jews*, with reſpect to the duſt of Heathen countries. "On account of "ſix doubts, they ſay [u], they burn the firſt offering, for a doubt of a field in which a grave might "be, and for a doubt עפר הבא מארץ העמים, *of the* "*duſt which comes from the land of the Gentiles*, &c." On which *Bartenora* has this note; "all duſt which "comes from the land of the Gentiles, is reckoned "by us as the rottenneſs of a dead carkaſs; and of "theſe two, *the land of the Gentiles*, and a field "in which is a grave, it is decreed that they "*defile* by touching, and by carrying." Again [w], "the duſt of a field in which is a grave, and the "duſt without the land (of *Iſrael*) which comes "along with an herb, are unclean." Upon which *Maimonides* makes this remark, "that the duſt of "a field that has a grave in it, and the duſt which "is without the land of *Iſrael*, defile by touching "and carrying; or if, when it hangs at the end of "an herb, when they root it out of the duſt of "ſuch a field, it is unclean." Hence they would not ſuffer herbs to be brought out of an Heathen country into the land of *Iſrael*, leſt duſt ſhould be brought along with them. "A *Miſnic* doctor "teaches [x], that they don't bring herbs from without the land (of *Iſrael* into it) but our Rabbins "permit it; what difference is there between them? "Says *R. Jeremiah*, they take care of their duſt; "that is, the difference between them." On that clauſe, *they take care of their duſt*, the Gloſs is, "leſt "there ſhould be brought with it מגוש ארץ העמים, "*any*

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[t] Vajikra Rabba, §. 34. fol. 173. 3, 4. & 174. 4. Midraſh Kohelet, c. 11. 1. fol. 82. 2.

[u] Miſn. Taharot, c. 4. §. 5. Vid. c. 5. 1. & Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

[w] Miſn. Oholot. c. 17. §. 5.

[x] T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 12. 1.

“ *any of the duſt of the land of the Gentiles*, which “ defiles in the tent; and pollutes the purity of the “ land of *Iſrael*.”

Ver. 15. *Verily, I ſay unto you*, &c.] This was not all the puniſhment that ſhould be inflicted on ſuch deſpiſers of the Goſpel of Chriſt, and the miniſters of it; as not to enjoy that peace and proſperity wiſhed for by the apoſtles, and to be declared to be on an equal foot with Heathen cities and countries; but they were to ſuffer everlaſting puniſhment in the world to come; which is here aſſerted by Chriſt in the ſtrongeſt manner, ſaying; *it ſhall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha, in the day of judgment, than for that city*. The inhabitants of the land of *Sodom* and *Gomorrha* are the rather mentioned, becauſe, as they were very notorious and abominable ſinners, ſo their temporal puniſhment was well known, exemplary and awful, tho' not that, but their future damnation is here regarded, of which the *Jews* made no doubt; for they ſay[y], “ the men of *Sodom* have no part in the “ world to come; as it is ſaid, *Gen*. xiii. 13. *the* “ *men of Sodom were wicked, and ſinners, before the* “ *Lord exceedingly*: they were *wicked* in this world, “ and *ſinners* in the world to come;” meaning, that by this paſſage is deſigned their double puniſhment in this, and the other world. But though their puniſhment was very tremendous, and they will ſuffer alſo *the vengeance of eternal fire*, as *Jude* ſays; yet, their puniſhment will be milder, and more tolerable, than that of the inhabitants of ſuch a city, that rejects the Goſpel of the grace of God: as there are degrees in ſinning, for all ſins are not alike, as the *Stoicks* ſay; ſo there will be degrees in ſuffering: the ſins of thoſe that are favoured with the Goſpel, are greater than thoſe who only have had the light of nature, and ſo their torments will be greater. The inhabitants of *Sodom* and *Gomorrha*, though they ſinned againſt the light of nature, deſpiſed the advice and admonitions of *Lot*, and ill treated the angels, yet will be more mildly puniſhed than the wicked *Jews*, who rejected Chriſt, and his Goſpel, and deſpiſed his apoſtles, and miniſters; becauſe they ſinned not againſt ſo much light, and ſuch means of grace, and knowledge, as theſe did; ſee *Lam*. iv. 6. which is thus paraphraſed by the *Targumiſt*, and may be aptly applied to the *Jews* in Chriſt's time: “ the ſin of the congregation of my “ people is greater than the ſin of *Sodom*, which “ was overturned in a moment; and there dwelt “ no prophets in it to propheſy, and turn it to re- “ pentance.” The time referred to, ſignified by *the day of judgment*, reſpects not the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, which was a very ſevere judgment on that people, but the general judgment, at the end of the world, which is appointed and fixed by God, tho' unknown to angels and men. The phraſe is *Jewiſh*, and often to be met with in their writings, who uſe it in the ſame ſenſe; particularly in the book of *Zohar*[z], mention is made of יומא דדינא, *the day of judgment*, when there will be no pollution in the ſanctuary.

Ver. 16. *Behold, I ſend you forth, as ſheep among wolves*, &c.] This, and the following verſes, chiefly reſpect the troubles, afflictions, perſecutions, and ſufferings which ſhould befal the apoſtles after the death and reſurrection of Chriſt; when their commiſſion was enlarged, and they afreſh ſent out by Chriſt to preach his Goſpel; of which he gives a faithful account before-hand, that they might be prepared for them, and not be ſurprized when they came upon them. He compares them to *ſheep*, becauſe they were meek and humble in their ſpirits, harmleſs, and inoffenſive, in their lives and converſations; were weak, and unable to protect themſelves, and were ſent out by him unarmed and defenceleſs; and their oppreſſors and perſecutors to *wolves*, becauſe fierce and furious, voracious and ravenous, cruel and hurtful, as theſe creatures are, eſpecially to ſheep; wherefore Chriſt gives them this wholeſome advice, *be ye therefore wiſe as ſerpents, and harmleſs as doves*. Much ſuch an expreſſion as this God is repreſented as ſaying of *Iſrael*[a]: “ Says *R*. “ *Judah*, in the name of *R. Simon*, the holy bleſſed “ God ſaid, concerning *Iſrael*, with me they are, “ תמימים כיונים, *harmleſs as doves*; but among “ the nations of the world they are, ערומים כנחשים “ *ſubtle as ſerpents*.” The ſerpent is a very ſharpſighted, cunning creature, and uſes various arts and ſtratagems for its own preſervation, and eſpecially of its head; and is ſo far to be imitated by the followers of Chriſt, as to make uſe of all proper methods to preſerve themſelves from the inſults and rage of men, and not expoſe themſelves to unneceſſary dangers: and, as much as in them lies, they ſhould be careful to give no juſt occaſion of offence, or irritate, and provoke them to uſe them ill, and to avoid all ſnares and traps that are laid for them; and, at the ſame time, maintain the innocence and harmleſſneſs of the dove, being free from all wicked cunning and craftineſs, without rancor, malice, and wrath; not meditating and ſeeking revenge, but meek and humble in their deportment, leading inoffenſive lives, and proceeding in the courſe of their vocation, tho' liable to many inſults, and much oppreſſion.

Ver. 17. *But beware of men*, &c.] Of theſe men, comparable to wolves, before ſpoken of: the phraſe is ſomewhat uncommon and emphatical, and deſigns not merely wicked men in common, the men of the world, and enemies of the Goſpel; but chiefly ſuch of them as were men of note and authority, eccleſiaſtical and civil governors of the people, the Scribes, Phariſees, Elders, and Chief-prieſts, and other rulers; and the advice to the apoſtles is, to take care how they came into their company, and put themſelves into their hands, who would ſeek all opportunities and occaſions againſt them, and uſe their power and intereſt to do them hurt: *for they will deliver you up to the councils*, or *ſanhedrim*, of which there were three ſorts; the greater, which conſiſted of ſeventy-one perſons, and was only held in *Jeruſalem*; the leſſer one, which was made up of twenty-three members, and was kept in every place where there were an hundred and twenty *Iſraelites*; and the third, where there was not that number, and was a triumvirate, or a bench of three judges only[b]. *And they will ſcourge you in their ſynagogues*; where the triumvirate, or bench of three judges kept their court; under whoſe cognizance were pecuniary judgments, and ſuch as related to thefts, damages, reſtitutions, raviſhing, and enticing of virgins, and defamation; alſo to plucking off of the ſhoe, and refuſing a brother's wife, to the plant of the fourth year, ſecond tithes whoſe price is unknown, holy things, and the eſtimations of goods; to theſe belonged alſo laying on of hands, the beheading of the heifer, and, among the reſt, מכות בשלשה, *ſcourging was by the bench of three*[c]. The manner of performing it was this[d]: “ they bind both his hands to a pillar, here and “ there; and the miniſter of the ſynagogue takes

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[y] Miſn. Sanhedrim, c. 11. §. 3. Hieroſ. Sanhedrim, fol. 29. 3.

[z] In Gen. fol. 13. 3. & 16. 1.

[a] Shirhaſhirim Rabba, c. 2. 14. fol. 12. 1.

[b] Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrim, c. 1. §. 3, 4.

[c] Miſn. Sanhedrim, c. 1. §. 1, 2, 3.

[d] Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrim, c. 16. §. 8, 9, 10, 11. Miſn. Maccot, c. 3. §. 12, 13, 14.

“hold of his clothes, and if they are rent, they are rent; and if they are ripp'd in the ſeam, they are ripp'd till his breaſt is uncovered; for he is not to beat him on his clothes, as it is ſaid, *he ſhall beat him*, but not his clothes: and a ſtone is placed behind him, on which the miniſter that ſcourges ſtands, and a whitleather whip, in his hand, doubled two and two with four, and two laſhes of an aſs's hide, going up and down: the breadth of the whip was an hand's breadth, and the length of it, ſo as to reach to the navel, and the handle of the whip, by which he took hold, was the length of an hand; and he lifts up the whip with both his hands, and ſtrikes with one hand, with all his might; and gives him the third part of his ſtripes before, upon his breaſt, between his paps, and two thirds behind him; one third upon this ſhoulder, and the other upon the other ſhoulder. He that ſcourges neither ſtands, nor ſits, but bows; as it is ſaid, *the judge ſhall cauſe him to lie down, and to be beaten before his face*; for the eyes of the judge ſhall be upon him, that he don't look upon any thing elſe, and ſmite him from thence; for no two ſtrokes are as one: the greateſt of the judges reads all the time he is ſcourging, *viz.* theſe paſſages; *if thou wilt not obſerve to do all the words of this law*, &c. and *the Lord will make thy plagues wonderful*, &c. and he intends to finiſh the verſes with the ſtripes; but if he does not finiſh, he returns to the beginning of the ſcripture, and reads, and returns, and reads until the whole ſcourging is over: and the ſecond of the judges numbers the ſtripes; and the third ſays to the miniſter ſtrike: every time he ſtrikes, 'tis at his orders he ſtrikes.” Now, as this puniſhment was inflicted by the *Chazan*, or miniſter of the ſynagogue, who was a ſort of ſexton, ſo it was done in the ſynagogue itſelf: and according to our Lord's predictions here, and in *Matt.* xxiii. 34. as the former of theſe, delivering up to councils, had its accompliſhment in part, in the apoſtles, *Acts* iv. and v. ſo the latter, ſcourging in their ſynagogues, was fulfilled both by *Paul*, *Acts* xxii. 19. and xxvi. 11. and upon him, 2 *Cor.* xi. 24. *Epiphanius* tells [e] us of one *Joſeph*, a *Jew*, who was caught by the *Jews* reading the Goſpels in his own houſe; upon which they dragg'd him away, and had him to the ſynagogue, and there *ſcourged* him. Now, as theſe things did not befal the apoſtles till after the death of Chriſt, it's clear that the context refers not to their firſt, but to an after miſſion.

Ver. 18. *And ye ſhall be brought before governors*, &c.] Meaning *Roman* governors; ſo *Paul* was had before *Gallio*, *Felix*, and *Feſtus*; for judgments relating to life and death were to be taken away, and were taken away from the *Jewiſh ſanhedrim*; and, as they themſelves ſay [f], forty years before the deſtruction of the ſecond temple, which was much about the time of Chriſt's death: ſo that what power they had, was only with regard to leſſer matters, and to inflict leſſer puniſhments, as beating and ſcourging: if they ſought to take away life, they were obliged to bring the cauſe before the governors of the *Roman* provinces, who are here intended: *and kings for my ſake*; as *Herod*, *Agrippa*, *Nero*, *Domitian*, and others, before whom one or other of the apoſtles were brought; not as thieves, or murderers, or traitors, and ſeditious perſons, or for having done any wrong or injury to any man's perſon or property; but purely for the ſake of Chriſt, for the profeſſion of their faith in him, and for preaching his Goſpel; of all which they had no reaſon to be aſhamed, nor were they: *for a teſtimony againſt*, or *to them, and the Gentiles*; that is, that thereby they might have an opportunity of bearing a teſtimony to the truths of the Goſpel, which would be either to the conviction and converſion of many *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*; or would be a teſtimony which would ſtand againſt them another day, both againſt the *Jews*, who charged, and accuſed them, and brought them before the Heathen kings and governors, to puniſh them with death; and againſt thoſe Gentile magiſtrates, and others, who ſhould join with them in rejecting the Goſpel, and putting them to death for preaching it: ſo that they ſhould have no pretext or excuſe; ſince the Goſpel had been faithfully and clearly preached to them, and they had deſpiſed it, and evil treated the miniſters of it. This confirms what is before obſerved, that this paſſage refers to an after miſſion.

Ver. 19. *But when they deliver you up*, &c.] The apoſtles hearing that they ſhould be delivered up to councils, and brought before governors and kings, might be under ſome concern how they ſhould behave, and what they ſhould be able to ſay in vindication of themſelves and truth, before ſuch great perſons; they not being uſed to converſe with men in ſuch high ſtations: they were illiterate men, and of no elocution; men of mean birth, low life, moſt of them poor fiſhermen; and might fear, on theſe accounts, that the Goſpel would ſuffer for want of abler perſons to defend it before the great ones of the earth. Now, in order to remove theſe their fears and objections, and to ſtrengthen and comfort their minds, our Lord bids them, when this would be their caſe, that the *Jews* would deliver them to the *Roman* magiſtrates, to *take no thought how, or what ye ſhall ſpeak*; not to be anxiouſly concerned, neither as to the matter, or manner of what they ſhould ſay in their defence: they ſhould have no occaſion, as orators do, to take pains, and rack their thoughts, to prepare a ſtudied, elaborate oration, dreſſed with all the flowers of *rhetorick*, filled with the moſt moving and powerful arguments, and clothed with diction of the ſtricteſt propriety and elegance; for they ſhould want neither words, nor things; they ſhould have arguments put into their mouths, and helped to proper language to expreſs them in: *for it ſhall be given you in the ſame hour, what ye ſhall ſpeak*; immediate aſſiſtance ſhould be afforded them either by his father, or himſelf; or rather, the bleſſed Spirit, who would ſuggeſt unto them, at once, things the moſt proper to be ſaid, and help them to deliver them in the moſt proper manner: and thoſe are the moſt convincing arguments, and that the beſt elocution, which the Spirit of God helps men to; theſe vaſtly exceed all the art of men, and ſtrength of nature. This was greatly verified in *Peter* and *John*, two poor fiſhermen, when before the council, and in *Stephen* the *protomartyr*.

Ver. 20. *For it is not ye that ſpeak*, &c.] Not but that they were to ſpeak the words, and did; but then both the things they ſpoke, and the very words in which they ſpoke them, were not of themſelves, but were ſuggeſted and dictated by the Spirit of God; for as *the preparation of the heart* in them, ſo *the anſwer of the tongue* by them, were both *from the Lord*: the Spirit, he was the efficient cauſe, they were only inſtruments; for not they of themſelves ſpoke; or not ſo much they, *but the Spirit of your father, which ſpeaketh in you*, or *by you*: what they ſhould ſay was not to be dictated by their own ſpirit or natural underſtanding, nor by an angel, but by the Spirit of God; called the *Spirit of their father*, becauſe he proceeds from him, is of the ſame nature with him, and is the reaſon of his being given to them: and this character of him might ſerve to ſtrengthen their faith in the expectation of him, and in the aſſiſtance promiſed, and to be had by him; ſince he was the Spirit of him, who ſtood in the relation of a father to them, and bore a paternal affection for them.

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[e] Contra Hæreſ. l. 1. Hæreſ. 30.

[f] Hieroſ. Sanhedrim, fol. 18. 1. & 24. 2. Juchaſin, fol. 26. 2. & 51. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrim, c. 14. §. 13.

Ver. 21. *And the brother ſhall deliver up the brother to death*, &c.] Chriſt having fortified the minds of his diſciples by the foregoing promiſes of divine influence and aſſiſtance, proceeds to open more largely and particularly the ſorrows, troubles, and afflictions they muſt expect would attend the faithful miniſtration of his Goſpel; as, that the true followers of Chriſt ſhould not only be perſecuted and betrayed, and delivered up into the hands of the civil magiſtrate, by perſons that were ſtrangers to them; and but even by their neareſt relations, brethren, whom the nearneſs of blood ſhould oblige to the tendereſt regards to each other, to the ſecuring of property and preſerving of life: theſe ſhould deliver up thoſe that were ſo nearly related to them in the bonds of conſanguinity, into the hands of perſecuting men in power, in order to be put to death; than which ſcarce any thing can be more barbarous and unnatural, tho' the next inſtances exceed it: *and the father the child, and the children ſhall riſe up againſt their parents, and cauſe them to be put to death.* The father, laying aſide his natural affection for his child, whom he has begotten, and brought up, and has took ſo much care of, and delight in, and perhaps his only one, his ſon and heir; and yet, profeſſing a faith different from his, ſuch is his blind zeal and bigotry, that, breaking thro' all the ties of parental relation and affection, he delivers him up into the hands of wicked magiſtrates, to put him to death: and, on the other hand, children, forgetting the bonds they are in, and the obligations they lie under to their aged parents, riſe up againſt them, and either with their own hands murder them, or appear as witneſſes againſt them, and give their hearty conſent to the taking away of their lives; even of them who have been the means and inſtruments of bringing them into the world, and of bringing them up in it. This ſhews the ſad corruption of human nature, its enmity to the Goſpel of Chriſt, and the inveterate malice and hatred of ſatan againſt Chriſt, and his intereſt. Something like this is ſaid by the *Jews* themſelves, as what ſhall be in the times of the *Meſſiah*; for a little before his coming, or in the age in which the ſon of *David* comes, they ſay, "the ſon ſhall deal baſely by his father, the daughter ſhall riſe up againſt her mother——a man's enemies ſhall be of his own houſhold; the face of that generation ſhall be as the face of a dog; and the ſon ſhall not reverence his father[e]."

Ver. 22. *And ye ſhall be hated of all men for my name ſake*, &c.] This is more particularly directed to the apoſtles themſelves, as what is ſaid before regards the followers of Chriſt in general; for this was to be the lot of the apoſtles, that they ſhould not only be ill treated in common with others, by their near friends and relations, whoſe love would be turned into hatred to them, but ſhould be the butt and mark of the malice and wrath of all men; that is, of moſt men, or of the far greater part of the *Jews*, even of all wicked men who diſbelieved and rejected the Meſſiah: for that the words are not to be underſtood in the utmoſt latitude, without any reſtriction, is certain; ſince there would be ſome who would be converted, and believe in Chriſt thro' their miniſtry, and conſequently would love, eſteem, and honour them as their ſpiritual fathers and guides, and as the diſciples and apoſtles of Chriſt. This hatred they ſhould be expoſed to, would not be on account of any ill will to their perſons; or becauſe of any evil or immorality committed by them; but purely, and alone, for the name of Chriſt, in whom they believed, by which they were called, of which they made a profeſſion, and zealouſly preached: which conſideration, as it muſt needs ſecure peace and tranquillity in their breaſts; ſo for their further encouragement, 'tis added, *but he that endureth to the end, ſhall be ſaved:* which words ſuggeſt, that the tribulations and perſecutions of the diſciples of Chriſt, thro' the hatred of wicked men againſt them, ſhall not laſt always; there will be an end to them; reſpecting either the end of time and life, or the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, when theſe their enemies would be cut off, or removed, and be capable of giving them no farther trouble: and that ſuch perſons are happy, who patiently endure the hatred of men, and all manner of perſecution, for Chriſt's ſake; who are not moved by the afflictions they ſuffer, but ſtand faſt in the faith, hold faſt the profeſſion of it, go on in their chriſtian courſe, and hold out to the end; for ſuch ſhall be ſaved, not only with a temporal ſalvation, as the Chriſtians were at the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, but with an eternal one.

Ver. 23. *But when they perſecute you in this city*, &c.] Or any city into which they went, and preached the Goſpel; and would not ſuffer them to go on in their work, they were not to deſiſt, but to go elſewhere, where they might hope for a better reception, and a longer continuance, and ſo of doing more good: *flee ye into another*; not ſo much for their own ſafety, tho' this, according to the circumſtances of things, is lawful, but for the further ſpreading of the Goſpel. The exhortation is not to take methods to avoid perſecution, or to make an eſcape from it, but to perſeverance under it: the ſenſe is, they were not to be diſcouraged, and to leave off, becauſe of perſecution in one place, but to perſiſt in the miniſtration of the Goſpel, by carrying it to other cities; and it ſeems to be a ſpur to them to make haſte, and fulfil their office of preaching the Goſpel, in the land of *Judea:* nor need they fear going on too faſt, leſt they ſhould have no places to preach in; *for verily I ſay unto you*, this is a certain and indiſputable truth not to be called in queſtion, being ſtrongly affirmed by truth itſelf, *ye ſhall not have gone over the cities of Iſrael*, or *finiſhed* them; that is, their tour through them, and their miniſtry, or the preaching of the Goſpel in them, *till the ſon of man be come*; which is not to be underſtood of his ſecond coming to judgment, but either of his reſurrection from the dead, when he was declared to be the ſon of God, and when his glorification began; or of the pouring forth of the Spirit at the day of *Pentecoſt*, when his kingdom began more viſibly to take place, and he was made, or manifeſted to be the Lord and Chriſt; or of his coming to take vengeance on his enemies, that would not have him to rule over them, and the perſecutors of his miniſters, at the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*.

Ver. 24. *The diſciple is not above his maſter*, &c.] So far from it, that he is inferior to him; as in knowledge, ſo in reputation and character; and can't expect the ſame honour to be given him, and the ſame reſpect ſhewn to him, as to his maſter; and therefore if his maſter is not uſed with that decency, and in that becoming manner he ought to be, he muſt not think it any hardſhip if he is treated in the ſame way. Our Lord hereby intends to fortify the minds of his diſciples againſt all the reproach and perſecution they were to meet with from the world, by obſerving to them the treatment he himſelf met with; wherefore, if he who was their maſter, a teacher that came from God, and taught as never man did, and was worthy of the utmoſt deference that could be paid, was maligned and evilly treated by men, it became them who were his diſciples, to look for, and patiently bear ſuch indignities; ſince they could expect no better uſage, than he himſelf had: the ſame doctrine is ſuggeſted in the next clauſe, *nor the ſervant above his Lord*; and both ſeem to be proverbial expreſſions. The *Jews* have a ſaying [h] much like unto them, אין העבד זכה מרבו, *no ſervant is worthier than his maſter*; and Chriſt might make uſe of ſuch common, well-known expreſſions, that he might be the more eaſily underſtood, and in the moſt familiar manner convey what he intended, into the minds of his diſciples; as, that ſince he was their Lord, and they were his ſervants, if his ſuperior character and dignity did not ſecure him from the obloquy and inſults of men, it could not be thought by them, who were inferior to him, that they ſhould eſcape them.

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[e] Miſn. Sota, c. 9. §. 15.

Ver. 25. *It is enough for the diſciple that he be as his maſter*, &c.] A diſciple ſhould think himſelf very well off, be entirely ſatiſfied, yea, abundantly thankful, if he meets with no worſe treatment than his maſter; if he has the ſame honour done him his maſter has, this is more than could be expected by him; and if he has the ſame ill uſage with his maſter, he need not wonder at it, but ſhould ſolace himſelf with this conſideration, that it is no other, nor worſe than his maſter had before him: and the ſame is equally true in the other caſe, *and the ſervant as his Lord*: theſe expreſſions, as before, were proverbs, or common ſayings among the *Jews*, which our Lord choſe to make uſe of, and adapt to his preſent purpoſe; דיו לעבד שיהא, *vel* להיות כרבו, *it is enough for the ſervant, that he be as his maſter*, is a ſaying often to be met with in their writings [i]; which our Lord applies, and reaſons upon, in the following manner: *if they have called the maſter of the houſe Beelzebub, how much more ſhall they call them of the houſhold?* By *the maſter of the houſhold*, he means himſelf, who is maſter of the family both in heaven and in earth; who is ſon over his own houſe, the high-prieſt over the houſe of God, the Lord and governor of all the houſhold of faith; who takes care of, provides for, and protects all that are of God's houſhold: and yet, tho' in ſuch an high office, and of ſuch great uſefulneſs, he did not eſcape the ſevereſt laſhes of the tongues of the wicked *Jews*; who called him by the moſt opprobrious names they could think of, and among the reſt *Beelzebub*; ſee *Matt.* xii. 24. *Luke* xi. 15. This was the God of the *Ekronites*, 2 *Kings* i. 2. The word ſignifies *a maſter-fly*, or the *Lord of a fly*; and ſo the *Septuagint* there call him Βααλ μυιαν, *Baal the fly*, the God of the *Ekronites*. And this idol was ſo called, either becauſe it was in the form of a fly; or elſe from the abundance of flies about it, by reaſon of the ſacrifices which it was not able to drive away; and therefore the *Jews* contemptuouſly gave it this name. They obſerve [k], that in the temple, notwithſtanding the multitude of ſacrifices offered up there, there never was ſeen a fly in the ſlaughter-houſe: or elſe this deity was ſo called from its being invoked to drive away flies, and the ſame with *Myiodes*, the God of flies, mentioned by *Pliny* [l], or *Myagros*, which the ſame author [m] ſpeaks of; ſo *Jupiter* was called απομυιος, a driver away of flies; as was alſo *Hercules* [n]; and were worſhipped by ſome nations on this account. In moſt copies, and ſo in the *Arabic* verſion, it is read *Beelzebul*; that is, as it is commonly rendered, the *Lord of dung*, or a dunghill God; and it is generally thought the *Jews* called the God of the *Ekronites* ſo, by way of contempt; as it was uſual with them to call an idol's temple זבול, *Zebul, dung*, and worſhipping of idols מזבל, *dunging* [o]: but I muſt own, that I ſhould rather think, that as *Beelſamin*, the God of the *Phœnicians*, is the ſame with *Beelzebul*, the God of the *Ekronites*, ſo it ſignifies the ſame thing: now בעל שמין, *Beelſamin*, is *the Lord of the heavens*, and ſo is *Beelzebul*; for, זבול, *Zebul*, ſignifies *heaven*; ſo the word is uſed in *Hab.* iii. 11. *the ſun and the moon ſtood ſtill*, זבלה, *in their habitation*; by which, as a *Jewiſh* [p] writer obſerves, הרצן בו השמים *is meant the heavens*; for they are the habitation of the ſun and moon: ſee alſo *Iſ.* lxiii. 15. and ſo among the ſeven names of the heavens, reckoned up by them, this is accounted one [q]. Now as the *Jews* looked upon all the deities of the Gentiles, as dæmons, or devils; and ſince *Beelzebub* was the chief of them, they thought they could not fix upon a more reproachful name, to give to Chriſt, than this: and our Lord ſuggeſts, that ſince the great maſter of the family was called in ſuch an abuſive manner, it ſhould be no cauſe of ſtumbling and offence, if thoſe of a lower claſs in a family ſhould be ſo ſtigmatized: if Chriſtians are called by ever ſuch hard names, even devils, they ſhould not be diſturbed at it; ſince their Lord and Maſter was called the prince of them.

Ver. 26. *Fear them not therefore*, &c.] That is, be not afraid of men, and of their reproaches and revilings; which our Lord intimates would do them no more hurt, than they did him, and which in a little while would be all wiped away: time would bring all things to light, when the wickedneſs of of theſe men would be diſcovered, their evil deſigns ſeen through; which were now covered with the ſpecious pretences of ſanctity, and zeal for religion, and the glory of God; and the innocence and integrity of him and his diſciples, would he made manifeſt. There is no need to refer this to the great day of account, when every ſecret thing ſhall be brought to light; but it chiefly regards the times when the Goſpel ſhould be more publickly known, and embraced, and ſhould prevail againſt all the oppoſition made unto it; and then all theſe reproachful names and characters would be ſeen plainly to ariſe from ſpight and malice: to which may be applied thoſe proverbial ſayings in common uſe, *for there is nothing covered, that ſhall not be revealed, and hid, that ſhall not be known.* Men may cover their malice and wickedneſs, for a while, under the beſt of names, but e'er long it will all be revealed to their great ſhame and reproach: the innocence of the followers of Chriſt may, for ſome time, lie out of ſight, and they may be traduced as the worſt of men; but in proceſs of time things take another turn, and their characters appear in quite another light: and ſo it is with the Goſpel preached and profeſſed by them, which though ſometimes it is little known, lies hid, and is covered with diſgrace; yet in the Lord's own time its light breaks forth, power attends it, and it is made manifeſt to the conſciences of men.

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[h] T. Hieroſ. Maaſer Sheni, fol. 55. 1. [i] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 58. 2. Bereſhit Rabba, fol. 43. 3. Juchaſin, fol. 93. 1. Tserot Hammor, fol. 64. 2. Aben Ezra in Hoſ. i. 2. [k] Pirke Abot, c. 5. §. 5. [l] Nat. Hiſt. l. 29. c. 6. [m] Ib. l. 10. c. 28. [n] Pauſanias, l. 5. p. 313. & l. 8. p. 497. Clement. Alex. ad Gentes, p. 24. [o] T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 13. 2. [p] R. Sol. Urbinas in Ohel Moed, fol. 100. 1. [q] T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 12. 2.

Ver. 27. *What I tell you in darkneſs*, &c.] Hence Chriſt proceeds to encourage his diſciples to an open, plain, and faithful miniſtration of the Goſpel, not fearing the faces and frowns of men. For with reſpect to the Goſpel, his meaning is, that what was hid and covered ſhould not remain ſo, but ſhould be revealed, and made known, and they were the perſons who were to do it; and it was with that view that he had communicated it to them: and whereas he had told them it *in darkneſs*; not in a dark and obſcure manner; for tho' he ſpoke in parables to others, yet to them he made known the myſteries of the kingdom of heaven: and if at any time he delivered parables, or dark ſayings, to them, he would afterwards, or when alone, explain them to them; but his meaning chiefly is, that what he communicated to them in private houſes, when they were by themſelves, and no one ſaw, or heard them, and ſo were in darkneſs with reſpect to others, *that ſpeak ye in light*; openly and publickly in the ſynagogues and temple, in the high places of the city, ſtreets, or fields, wherever there is a concourſe of people; hide and conceal nothing, but ſpeak out all clearly, diſtinctly, fully, without the leaſt reſerve, or throwing any obſcurity on it, which may cover the true ſenſe of it from the view of the people. *And what ye hear in the ear*, or is whiſpered to you by me, as your maſter. Chriſt alludes to the cuſtom of the *Jewiſh* doctors, who had each an interpreter, into whoſe ear he uſed to whiſper his doctrine, and then the interpreter delivered it to the people: ſo it is ſaid [s], "*Rab* came to the place of "*R. Shilla*, and he had no ſpeaker to ſtand by him; "wherefore *Rab* ſtood by him, and explained." The Gloſs upon it is, "an interpreter ſtands before "a doctor whilſt he is preaching, and the doctor "לוחש לו, *whiſpers to him* in the *Hebrew* tongue, "and he interprets it to the multitude in a tongue "they underſtand." Again [t], "they ſaid to *Judah bar Nachmani*, the interpreter of *Reſh Lekiſh*, "ſtand for a ſpeaker for him." The Gloſs upon it is, "to cauſe his expoſition to be heard by the "congregation, שילחוש לך, *which he ſhall whiſper* "*to thee.*" Now it was abſolutely requiſite, that the ſpeaker, or interpreter, ſhould faithfully relate what the doctor ſaid; ſometimes, it ſeems, he did not: 'tis ſaid [u] in commendation of the meekneſs of *R. Aba*, "that he delivered one ſenſe, and his "ſpeaker ſaid another, and he was not angry." The *Gloſs* ſays, "his ſpeaker was, he that interpreted "to the multitude what he לוחש לו, *whiſpered to* "*him* in the time of preaching." Sometimes one doctor is ſaid to whiſper in the ear of another, when he inſtructed him, or informed him of any thing. *R. Jochanan* [w] whiſpered *R. Joſhua* באודניה, *in his ear*. The *Jews* have a notion that the law was given this way; ſo they interpret *the eloquent orator* in *Iſ.* iii. 3. [x] this is he to whom it is fit to deliver the words of the law, שניתנה בלחש, *which was given by whiſpering*; and ſo, it ſeems, the Goſpel was in like manner delivered by Chriſt to his diſciples. It was reckoned a very great honour, and a token of magiſterial dignity, to have one to whiſper in the ear to, and ſpeak for them. So to one that related his dream, that he ſaw an aſs ſtanding at his pillow, and braying, anſwer is made, thou ſhalt be a king, that is, the head of a ſchool; and *a ſpeaker*, or *an intepreter ſhall ſtand by thee* [y]. Our Lord very juſtly takes upon him the character of a doctor, maſter, and dictator, and ſolemnly charges his diſciples, clearly, loudly, and faithfully to declare what he ſuggeſted to them. *That preach ye*, ſays he, *upon the houſe tops*; for the roofs of their houſes were not ridged, but plain, and flat, upon which they could ſtand or walk; and battlements were made about them to prevent their falling off, according to the law in *Deut.* xxii. 8. Here many religious actions were performed: here *Peter* went up to pray, *Acts* x. 9. and here perſons ſometimes ſat and read: hence that paſſage in the *Miſna* [z], if any one קורא בראש הגג, *was reading on the top of a roof*, and the book is rolled out of his hand, *&c.* and ſometimes they made their proclamations from hence of their feſtivals and ſolemn days, and particularly of their ſabbath; which was done by the ſound of a trumpet, that the people might ceaſe from work in the fields, and ſhut up their ſhops in the city, and light up their lamps. This proclamation, by the ſound of a trumpet, was made ſix times by the chazan, or miniſter of the congregation, from an houſe top; and, 'tis ſaid, that there was, גג מיוחד בגובה העיר, *a peculiar roof in the higheſt part of the city*, and from the middle of it he blew the trumpet [a]. In alluſion to this, our Lord orders his diſciples to blow the trumpet of the everlaſting Goſpel; and loudly proclaim to all, the truths and myſteries of grace, which he had made known to them.

Ver. 28. *And fear not them which kill the body*, &c.] This is a *periphraſis* of bloody perſecutors, who, not content to revile, ſcourge, and impriſon, put the faithful miniſters of Chriſt to death, in the moſt cruel and torturing manner; and yet are not ſo to be feared and dreaded by them, as to diſcourage and divert them from the performance of their important work and office; for, as *Luke* ſays, ch. xii. 9. *after* that they *have no more that they can do*. This is all they are capable of doing, even by divine permiſſion, when they are ſuffered to run the greateſt lengths in violence againſt the ſaints; this is the utmoſt of their efforts, which ſatan, and their own wicked hearts can put them upon, or is in the power of their hands to perform: and the taking away of the lives of good men is of no diſadvantage to them; but ſends them the ſooner out of this troubleſome world to their father's houſe, to partake of thoſe joys that will never end; ſo that they have nothing to fear from their moſt implacable enemies; but ſhould boldly and bravely go on in their maſter's ſervice, openly, freely, faithfully, and fully diſcharging the work they were called unto: for, the loſs of a corporal life is no loſs to them, their ſouls live after death, in eternal happineſs; and in a little time God will raiſe up their bodies, and re-unite them to their ſouls, and be for ever happy together. A noble argument this, which our Lord makes uſe of, to engage his diſciples to a publick and diligent miniſtration of the Goſpel, in ſpight of all oppoſers; who when they have vented all their malice, can only take away a poor, frail, mortal life; and which,

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[s] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 20. 2.

[t] T. Bab. Sanhed. fol. 7. 2.

[u] T. Bab. Sota, fol. 40. 1.

[w] T. Hieroſ. Kidduſhin, fol. 65. 4.

[x] T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 14. 1.

[y] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 56. 1.

[z] Erubin, c. 10. §. 3.

[a] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 35. 2. & Gloſſ. in ib.

if they did not, in a little time would ceaſe in courſe: *but are not able to kill the ſoul*; which is immortal, and can't be touched by the ſword, by fire, and faggot, or any inſtruments of violence: it is immortal, it ſurvives the body, and lives in a ſeparate ſtate, enjoying happineſs and bliſs, whilſt the body is in a ſtate of death: *but rather fear him which is able to deſtroy both body and ſoul in hell*. This is a deſcription of God, and of his power, who is able to do that which men are not: all that they can do, by divine permiſſion, is to kill the body; but he is able to *deſtroy*, that is, to torment and puniſh both body and ſoul *in hell*, in everlaſting burnings; for neither ſoul nor body will be annihilated; tho' this he is able to do. As the former clauſe expreſſes the immortality of the ſoul, this ſuppoſes the reſurrection of the body; for how otherwiſe ſhould it be deſtroyed, or puniſhed with the ſoul in hell? Now this awful being which is able to hurl, and will hurl all wicked and ſlothful, unfaithful and unprofitable, cowardly and temporizing ſervants and miniſters, ſoul and body, into the lake which burns with fire and brimſtone, is to be feared and dreaded; yea, indeed, he only is to be feared, and to be obeyed: cruel and perſecuting men are not to be feared at all; God alone ſhould be our fear and dread: though the argument ſeems to be formed from the leſſer to the greater; yet this is the ſenſe of the word *rather*, that God is to be feared, not chiefly and principally only, but ſolely; and in ſome verſions that word is left out, as in the *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic*, and in *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel.

Ver. 29. *Are not two ſparrows ſold for a farthing?* &c.] A farthing, with the *Jews*, was a very ſmall coin; according to them it contained four grains of ſilver [b]; was the ninety-ſixth part of a *ſela*, or ſhilling [c]; and ſometimes they make it to be of the ſame value with an *Italian* farthing: for they ſay [d], it is of the value of eight *prutahs*; and a *prutah* is the eighth part of an *Italian* farthing: it is uſed proverbially to ſignify a very little thing in the *Miſna* [e]; "if of a command, which is light כאיסר, *as a farthing*, which *Bartenora* explains a *very little thing*, the law ſays, *that it may be well with thee*, much more of the weighty commands in the law." Hence, in *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel, it is rendred by טבע קטון, *a little piece of money*; and this was the common price of two ſparrows. Our Lord appeals to his diſciples, for the truth of it, as a thing well known: according to the queſtion in *Luke*, five ſparrows were ſold for two farthings, which makes them ſomewhat cheaper ſtill. This ſhews they were of little account. *And one of them ſhall not fall on the ground without your father*: ſome copies add, *which is in heaven*; meaning, that one of them ſhould not be ſhot, or be killed, without the knowledge, will, and pleaſure of God. The deſign of Chriſt is to aſſert the doctrine of providence, as reaching to all creatures and things, even the moſt minute and worthleſs: he inſtances not in men, nor in the beaſts of the field, but in the fowls of the air, and in thoſe of the inferior ſort, and more uſeleſs, in ſparrows, yea in little ſparrows; as the word may be rendered; whoſe price was ſo low, that two are obliged to be put together to fetch the leaſt ſum of money currant: and yet the providence of God is concerned with each of theſe; ſo that not one of them is taken in a ſnare, or killed with a ſtone, or ſhot flying, or ſitting, but by the will of God: from whence it may be ſtrongly concluded, that nothing comes by chance; that there is no ſuch thing as contingency with reſpect to God, tho' there is to men, with reſpect to ſecond cauſes; that all things are firmly ordained by the purpoſe of God, and are wiſely ordered by his providence: and our Lord's further view is, from this conſideration, to animate his diſciples to a free, open, and conſtant preaching of his Goſpel, not regarding their lives for his ſake; for ſince their heavenly father, in his providence, takes care of the meaneſt, even of the moſt irrational creatures, ſo that the life of one of them is not taken away without his will, much more will he take care of them; nor could their valuable lives be loſt without his will and pleaſure. Much ſuch a way of arguing is uſed by the *Jews*, who [f] ſay, צפור מבלעדי שמיא לא יבדא כל שכן בר נשא, *a bird without God does not periſh, much leſs a man*; or, as it is elſewhere [g] expreſſed, "a bird *without God* is not hunted, or taken, how much leſs does the ſoul of a man go out of him." And again [h], "a bird *without God* does not fly away, much leſs the ſoul of a man." Two birds, or ſparrows, as the word may be rendered, in *Lev.* xiv. 4. were uſed in cleanſing the leper; one was killed, and the other let looſe into the open field: and though it might be a contingent thing with men which was killed, and which preſerved, yet not with God; and ſome think the alluſion is here to that caſe.

Ver. 30. *But the very hairs of your head are all numbred.*] A proverbial expreſſion, ſhewing the perfect knowledge God has, and the exquiſite care he takes, in providence, of all his creatures, particularly men, and eſpecially his dear children and faithful miniſters; as not a ſparrow, ſo not a ſingle hair of a man's head falls to the ground without the knowledge, and will of God; a way of ſpeaking ſometimes uſed to ſignify, that not the leaſt hurt or damage ſhould befal a perſon; ſee 1 *Sam.* xiv. 45. 2 *Sam.* xiv. 11. *Acts* xxvii. 34. and the phraſeology of the text was in uſe, and very well known by the *Jews*; for ſo they repreſent God ſpeaking [i]; "do not I number all the hairs of every creature?" As our Lord applies this particularly to his diſciples, his ſenſe is, that they had no reaſon to be afraid of men, or fear any thing that ſhould befal them, for their bearing a faithful teſtimony to him; for, their valuable lives were under the ſpecial and peculiar care of divine providence; not only the days, months, and years of their lives were with God, and put down in his book of purpoſes and decrees, which could neither be ſhortened nor lengthened; and not only the more principal, and even all the members of their bodies were written in his book of providence, and a ſingular care taken of them; but even their very excreſcencies, the more minute parts, and which were of no great account with them, the *hairs* of their *head*, even *all* of them, were not only known, but *numbred*, taken account of; yea, the thing was done already, it was not to be done; a very ſtrong way of ſetting forth the doctrine of divine providence: a doctrine which the *Jews* were not unacquainted with, who ſay [k]; "that the events of man, and accidents which come upon him, הכל בידי שמים, *are all by*, or *in the hands of God*;" and [l] that "nothing is by chance, but all things are בכונת, *with deſign*;" or, as they elſewhere ſay, "a man does not hurt his finger below, but they proclaim concerning it above;

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[b] Maimon. in Miſn. Peah, c. 8. §. 1.
[c] Maimon. & Bartenora in Miſn. Maaſer Sheni, c. 4. §. 3.
[d] Ib. in Miſn. Eracin, c. 8. §. 1.
[e] Cholin, c. 12. §. 5.
[f] T. Hieroſ. Sheviith, fol. 38. 4.
[g] Bereſhit Rabba, fol. 69. 3.
[h] Midraſh Kohelet, fol. 81. 2. & Midraſh Eſther, fol. 89. 3.
[i] Peſikta, fol. 18. 4. apud Druſium in loc.
[k] Piſke Toſaphot ad Cetubot, art. 119.
[l] Kimchi in Pſ. civ. 4.
[m] T. Bab. Cholin, fol. 7. 2.

that is, as the *Gloſs* explains, it יזרו עליו, *it is decreed* concerning it; which comes very near to the phraſe here uſed.

Ver. 31. *Fear ye not therefore*, &c.] Neither be afraid of men, nor diſtruſt the providence of God; for if that reaches to the meaneſt of creatures, ſparrows, and to that which is of leaſt account with men, the ſingle hair of a man's head; much more muſt it regard the lives of men, and ſtill more, ſuch uſeful lives as thoſe of the diſciples were, who were called to, and employed in preaching the everlaſting Goſpel; a work which ſo much concerned the glory of God, the intereſt of Chriſt, and the good of immortal ſouls: *ye are of more value than many ſparrows.* Two of them were worth no more than a farthing; there muſt be a great multitude of them to be mentioned with any man: and indeed there is no compariſon between the whole ſpecies of them, and the life of a ſingle man, and much leſs between them, and the apoſtles of the lamb. Any man is more valuable, as a man, than many ſparrows, and much more a chriſtian man, and ſtill more, an apoſtle: the argument then is, that if God takes care of ſparrows, and is concerned for their lives, much more will he take care of his faithful miniſters, and not ſuffer their lives to be taken away, till they have done the will, and work of their Lord.

Ver. 32. *Whoſoever therefore ſhall confeſs me before men*, &c.] The confeſſion of Chriſt here, more eſpecially deſigned, does not ſo much intend, tho' it may include, that which is leſs public, and is neceſſary to be made by every believer in Chriſt: for it is not enough to believe in him, with the heart, but confeſſion of him muſt alſo be made with the mouth; and which lies in aſcribing their whole ſalvation to him, giving him the glory of it; declaring their faith in him to others, and what he has done for their ſouls; and ſubjecting themſelves to his ordinances, and joining in fellowſhip with his church and people: which confeſſion, as it ought to be both by words and deeds, and to be hearty and ſincere, ſo likewiſe viſible, open, and before men. This, I ſay, may be included in the ſenſe of theſe words; but what they chiefly relate to, is a confeſſion of Chriſt by his miniſters, in the public preaching of the Goſpel; who ought openly, and boldly, to acknowledge, and declare, that Chriſt is truly and properly God, the eternal ſon of God, the only mediator between God and men, the ſaviour and redeemer of loſt ſinners; thro' whoſe blood alone is the forgiveneſs of ſins, according to the riches of grace; by whoſe righteouſneſs only men can be juſtified before God; and by whoſe ſacrifice and ſatisfaction, ſin is only expiated; that he died for, and in the room and ſtead of his people, roſe again for their juſtification, aſcended to heaven in their name, is ſet down at the right hand of God, and ever lives to make interceſſion for them, and will come again, and judge both quick and dead: ſuch a free and open confeſſion of Chriſt ought to be made by all his miniſters, before men, and in ſpight of all the rage and oppoſition of earth and hell; and ſuch ſhall not fail of being taken notice of, and requited by Chriſt; for he himſelf ſays, *him will I confeſs alſo before my father which is in heaven*: as he has a perfect knowledge of them, and bears an affectionate love to them; ſo he'll openly own, and acknowledge them, as his miniſters, and ſpeak in the praiſe and commendation of their works and labours; tho' they have been performed thro' the gifts, grace, and ſtrength, which he has communicated to them: he'll introduce them into his father's preſence, and recommend them to him, to be honoured, bleſſed, and glorified by him.

Ver. 33. *But whoſoever ſhall deny me before men*, &c.] Deny that he is a diſciple of Chriſt, and that Chriſt is his Lord and maſter, act contrary to him, deliver things repugnant to his mind and will; which for a diſciple to do to his maſter, was a very heinous crime, with the *Jews*: "if, ſay they [n], "*Rabbi Jochanan*, יכפור, *deny Rabbi Eleazar*, his "diſciple, he will not *deny Rabbi Jannai*, his *maſter*." Some regard may be had here to *Peter*'s after denial of Chriſt; and this proviſo be ſuppoſed, *except he repent*, as he did. Moreover, to deny Chriſt, is to drop, or oppoſe any of thoſe truths which regard his perſon, office, and grace; or to hide and conceal them from men, thro' fear, ſhame, or cowardice of mind: and even not to confeſs him, thro' fear of men, is interpreted, by Chriſt, a denial of him; and ſuch who deny him in any form and ſhape, either by words or deeds, *him*, ſays he, *will I alſo deny before my father which is heaven*; he'll deny them to be diſciples, or that they belong to him; he'll deny that he ever knew them, loved, or approved of them; he'll declare, in the preſence of his father, his diſapprobation of them, his indignation againſt them, that they are workers of iniquity; yea, he'll do more, he'll baniſh them from his preſence, and ſend them into everlaſting burnings.

Ver. 34. *Think not ye that I am come to ſend peace on earth*, &c.] The *Jews* had a notion of great outward peace and proſperity in the days of the Meſſiah; which was grounded on ſeveral prophecies of the Old Teſtament, not rightly underſtood by them; and the diſciples of Chriſt had imbibed the ſame notion: wherefore our Lord thought fit to let them know the contrary; and that they muſt not expect outward eaſe, and quiet, and worldly tranquillity would attend their miniſtry: for tho' he came to be a peace-maker between God and ſinners, by the blood of his croſs; and was both the author and donor of ſpiritual peace to his people; and the Goſpel he brought with him, and ſent them to preach, was the Goſpel of peace; which, accompanied with his power, would produce peace in the conſciences of men; and be the means of cultivating and maintaining peace among the ſaints; yet *peace on earth*, in a temporal ſenſe, whether in the world in general, or in *Judea* in particular, muſt not be expected as the conſequence of his coming; ſo far from it, that he ſubjoins, *I came, not to ſend peace, but a ſword.* By the *ſword* may be meant the Goſpel, which is the means of dividing and ſeparating the people of Chriſt from the men of the world, and from their principles and practices, and one relation from another; as alſo of diviſions, diſcords, and perſecutions ariſing from it: not that it was the intention, and deſign of Chriſt, in coming into the world, to foment and encourage ſuch things; but this, thro' the malice and wickedneſs of men, was eventually the effect and conſequence of his coming; ſee *Luke* xii. 51. where, inſtead of a *ſword*, it is *diviſion*; becauſe the ſword divides aſunder, as does the ſword of the Spirit, the word of God.

Ver. 35. *For I am come to ſet a man at variance againſt*, &c.] Or *to divide a man from his father.* Here our Lord opens and explains what he means by the ſword, inteſtine diviſions, domeſtic broils, family differences, as well as ſuch as appear in towns, cities, and kingdoms, which are exemplified by other inſtances following; *and the daughter againſt*

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[n] Juchaſin, fol. 80. 2.

*againſt her mother, and the daughter-in-law againſt her mother-in-law:* the caſe is this, a father believing in Chriſt, embracing his Goſpel, and ſubmitting to his inſtitutions, is contradicted, oppoſed, and perſecuted by his own ſon, and a mother by her own daughter; in both which relations, natural affection knit them together; and the mother-in-law by her daughter-in-law, who before lived together in the moſt peaceable, kind, and tender manner: which muſt be imputed, not to Chriſt, and the doctrines of Chriſt, and the natural tendency of them, embraced by the father, the mother, and mother-in-law; but to the natural enmity of the ſon, the daughter, and the daughter-in-law, to every thing divine, ſpiritual, and evangelical, or *vice verſa*.

Ver. 36. *And a man's foes ſhall be they of his own houſhold.*] His children, and his ſervants, ſuch that he has either begotten and brought up, or are daily fed at his table, and maintained by him. This, with the former inſtances, are borrowed from *Micah* vii. 6. and the times of the Goſpel are ſet forth in the ſame diſmal and black characters, as thoſe in which the prophet lived; and much ſuch a deſcription do the *Jews* themſelves give, of the times of their expected *Meſſiah*; which agreeing in words, as well as things, I can't forbear tranſcribing. "The government ſhall be turned to hereſy (*Sadduciſm*) and there will be no reproof; the ſynagogue ſhall become a brothel-houſe, *Galilee* ſhall be deſtroyed, and *Gablan* ſhall be laid waſte, and the men of the border ſhall wander from city to city, and ſhall obtain no mercy; the wiſdom of the *Scribes* ſhall ſtink, and they that fear to ſin ſhall be deſpiſed, and truth ſhall fail; young men ſhall turn pale, or put to ſhame the faces of old men, and old men ſhall ſtand before young men; *the ſon* ſhall deal baſely *with his father, the daughter ſhall riſe up againſt her mother, and the daughter-in-law againſt her mother-in-law, and the enemies of a man ſhall be they of his own houſe*; the face of that generation ſhall be as the face of a dog, and the ſon ſhall not reverence his father[o]." All which characters, how exactly they agreee with the generation in which Chriſt lived, is eaſy to obſerve.

Ver. 37. *He that loveth father or mother more than me*, &c.] The deſign of theſe words, is not at all to leſſen the due affection of children to their parents; or to detract from the reſpect and eſteem, in which they ought to be had by them: it is the duty of children, to love, honour, and obey them, who have been the means of bringing them into the world, and of bringing them up in it; nor do any of the doctrines of Chriſt break in upon the ties and obligations of nature, or in the leaſt ſet aſide any of the duties of natural religion: but the intent of this paſſage is, to ſhew, that as Chriſt is infinitely above all creatures, he is to be loved above the neareſt and deareſt relations and friends; being God over all bleſſed for ever, and alſo the Saviour and Redeemer; which itſelf, makes him more amiable and lovely than a common parent. That man therefore, that prefers father and mother to Chriſt, and their inſtructions, and orders, to the truths and ordinances of Chriſt; who, to pleaſe them, breaks the commands of Chriſt, rejects his Goſpel, and either denies him, or does not confeſs him, our Lord ſays, *is not worthy of me*; or, as in *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel, he is not ראוי לאותי, *fit for me:* it is not fit and proper, that ſuch a perſon ſhould name the name of Chriſt, or be called by his name, and ſhould be reckoned one of his diſciples; he is not fit to be a member of the church of Chriſt on earth, nor for the kingdom of heaven, but deſerves to be rejected by him, and everlaſtingly baniſhed his preſence: for otherwiſe, no man, let him behave ever ſo well, is worthy of relation to Chriſt, and intereſt in him; or of his grace, righteouſneſs, preſence, kingdom and glory. The ſame is the ſenſe of the following clauſe, *and he that loveth ſon or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me:* whoever, to gratify a child, drops the profeſſion of Chriſt, renounces his Goſpel, and neglects his commands, it is not proper and convenient that he ſhould bear the name of Chriſt, be accounted one of his, or be treated as ſuch, but all the reverſe.

Ver. 38. *And he that taketh not his croſs*, &c.] By the *croſs*, which was a *Roman* puniſhment, whereby malefactors were put to death, are meant all ſorts of afflictions, reproaches, perſecutions, and death itſelf; and particularly the ill-will, hatred, and perſecution, of near relations and friends, which muſt be expected by ſuch, who bear a faithful teſtimony for Chriſt. Every miniſter of Chriſt, or profeſſor of his name, has *his* own croſs, his own particular afflictions, appointed by God, and laid on him by Chriſt, and which he ſhould chearfully take up, and patiently bear, for his ſake. The alluſion is to the cuſtom of perſons ſentenced to be crucified, to carry their own croſs, as Chriſt did his, and *Simon* the *Cyrenian* for him; and which our Lord here may have a reſpect unto, as well knowing what death he was to die, and that ſome of his diſciples alſo would die the ſame death: wherefore Chriſt ſays, *and followeth after me*; led on by his example, to preach, or profeſs the Goſpel, ſubmit to the ordinances of it, and chearfully ſuffer for the ſake of it, when called to it. If a man, who would be thought to be a diſciple of Chriſt, is not willing to do all this, but, in order to avoid it, complies with his friends, conforms to the world, and turns his back on Chriſt; of ſuch an one he may well ſay, he *is not worthy of me*; it is not convenient that he ſhould ſtand among his diſciples and followers.

Ver. 39. *He that findeth his life ſhall loſe it*, &c.] That man that ſeeks to preſerve his life, and the temporal enjoyments of it, by a ſinful compliance with his friends and the world, and by a denial of Chriſt, or non-confeſſion of him; if he is not, by the providence of God, deprived of the good things of life, and dies a ſhameful death, both which are ſometimes the caſe of ſuch perſons; yet he is ſure to loſe the happy and eternal life of his ſoul and body, in the world to come: ſo that the preſent finding of life, or the poſſeſſion of it, on ſuch ſinful terms, will in the iſſue prove an infinite and irreparable loſs unto him. On the other hand, Chriſt obſerves, *he that loſeth his life for my ſake, ſhall find it.* That man that is willing to forego the preſent advantages of life, to ſuffer reproach and perſecution, and lay down his life chearfully for the ſake of Chriſt and his Goſpel, for the profeſſion of his name, rather than drop, deny, conceal, or neglect any truth and ordinance of his, ſhall find his ſoul poſſeſſed of eternal life, as ſoon as ſeparated from his body; and ſhall find his corporal life again, in the reſurrection morn, to great advantage; and ſhall live with Chriſt in ſoul and body, in the utmoſt happineſs, to all eternity.

Ver. 40. *He that receiveth you, receiveth me*, &c.] This is ſaid to comfort the diſciples, leſt they ſhould conclude from this account of the ſorrows, afflictions,

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[o] Miſn. Sota, c. 9. §. 15. T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 97. 1. Zohar in Num. fol. 102. 3. & Raya Mehimna in ib. in Lev. fol. 28. 2. Shirhaſhirim Rabba, fol. 11. 4. Derech Eretz Zuta, fol. 19. 4.

ons, and perſecutions they were to meet with, that there would be none that would receive them and their meſſage; Chriſt therefore ſuggeſts, that there would be ſome, that would embrace the Goſpel preached by them, and receive them kindly into their houſes, and entertain them in a very hoſpitable manner: and, for the encouragement of ſuch perſons, who would riſque their own goods and lives by ſo doing, he lets them know, that receiving of his diſciples, was interpreted by him, a receiving of himſelf; and what they did to them, would be taken as kindly, as if done to him perſonally; and, in like manner, would it be underſtood and accepted by his father; *and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that ſent me.* To which agrees, what the *Jews* ſay [p] of the angel, in *Exod.* xxiii. 22. *If thou ſhalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I ſhall ſpeak:* who obſerve, that it is not written, *that he ſhall ſpeak*, but *that I ſhall ſpeak*; intimating, that אם מקבלין אתם הימנו כאלו לי אתם מקבלים, *if ye receive him, it is all one as if you received me:* and the whole of this accords with a common ſaying among [q] them, ששלוחו של אדם כמותו, *that a man's meſſenger is as himſelf.* The *Jew* [r] therefore, has no reaſon to reproach Chriſt and his followers as he does, as if it was the ſenſe of theſe words of Chriſt, and which the Chriſtians give of them, that Chriſt and his twelve apoſtles were but one perſon.

Ver. 41. *He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet*, &c.] By *a prophet* is meant, not one that foretells things to come, but a preacher of the Goſpel; for as propheſying ſometimes ſignifies preaching, ſo a prophet deſigns a miniſter of the word: and to *receive* him, is not only to embrace his doctrine, but to entertain him in a kind, and generous manner; and he that does this, *in the name of a prophet*, not as coming in the name of another prophet, but upon this account, and for this conſideration, becauſe he himſelf is a prophet; ſo the phraſe, לשם, *in the name*, or on the account of any thing, is often uſed in the *Miſnic* writings [s]: he that regards ſuch a perſon, and ſhews him reſpect, by an hoſpitable entertainment of him; not becauſe he may be related to him after the fleſh; or becauſe he may be a man of good behaviour, of a ſingular diſpoſition and temper, of much learning and eloquence, of great natural parts and abilities; but becauſe he is a faithful miniſter of the Goſpel; he *ſhall receive a prophet's reward:* either a reward from the prophet himſelf, who ſhall interpret the ſcriptures to him, preach the Goſpel to him, lead him more fully into the truths of it, and guide him to the true, and more clear and diſtinct ſenſe of the ſacred writings; which is an ample reward for his kind entertainment of him: or elſe, that reward which God has appointed, prepared, and promiſed, to them who receive his prophets; and which indeed is no other, than what the prophets themſelves ſhall receive, even the reward of the inheritance, the kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world, a reward of grace, and not of debt; ſince both, in their way, ſerve the Lord Chriſt. *And he that receiveth a righteous man, in the name of a righteous man.* He that is kind and liberal to any good man, whether he is a miniſter of the Goſpel or not, who appears to have the work of grace upon his ſoul, and is juſtified by the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and expects eternal life on that account; if he ſhows reſpect to him, purely becauſe he has the image of Chriſt enſtamped on him, and the righteouſneſs of Chriſt imputed to him, and not on any natural, worldly, or civil accounts, *he ſhall receive a righteous man's reward*; either from the good man himſelf, who will not fail to pray for his benefactor, to wiſh him well, and give him all the aſſiſtance he can in his chriſtian courſe; to exhort, comfort, inſtruct him as much, and as far as his chriſtian experience will furniſh him with; or elſe the ſame reward of grace the righteous man himſelf ſhall have, namely, eternal life, as God's gift, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.

Ver. 42. *And whoſoever ſhall give to drink unto one of theſe little ones*, &c.] Our Lord gradually deſcends from prophets to righteous men, and from righteous men, to thoſe of the loweſt form and claſs among them; who have the leaſt meaſure of grace, and ſhare of ſpiritual light, and knowledge; who are outwardly the pooreſt, meaneſt, and moſt contemptible in the eyes of the world; and are little, even the leaſt of ſaints, in their own eſteem and account: whoſoever takes notice but of *one* of theſe, receives him into his houſe, and gives him *a cup of cold water only*, is regarded, a phraſe uſed to expreſs the leaſt favour, or benefit whatever. "So "ſays [t] *Maimonides*, one that calls to his friend to "dine with him, and he refuſes, and ſwears, or "vows, that he ſhall not enter into his houſe, nor "will he give him to drink, טפת צונן, *a drop of* "*cold water*, &c." Moreover, this is ſaid to prevent any objection, on account of the mean and low condition perſons may be in, to their relieving neceſſitous objects; for every one is capable of doing this, and if they can do no more, 'tis accepted. Now whoſoever takes notice of, and ſhews favour to the meaneſt of Chriſt's people, though it be but beſtowing ſo ſmall a benefit as a cup of cold water; yet, if it is done *in the name of a diſciple*, or becauſe that poor perſon is a diſciple of Chriſt, *verily*, ſays Chriſt, *I ſay unto you, he ſhall in no wiſe loſe his reward:* it will be obſerved another day by Chriſt, who takes what is done to the leaſt of his brethren, as done to himſelf. The *Jews* ſay many things in praiſe of hoſpitality, to תלמיד חכם, *a diſciple of a wiſe man*; and obſerve [u], that he that hoſpitably entertains ſuch an one in his houſe, and cauſes him to eat and drink, and partake of the goods of his houſe, there is reaſon to believe, he ſhall be much more bleſſed than the houſe of *Obed Edom* was for the ark's ſake, which neither eat, nor drank with him; and which may be compared with this paſſage.

## CHAP. XI.

Ver. 1. AND *it came to paſs*, &c.] In the courſe of things, and as before determined and reſolved on, that *when Jeſus had made an end of commanding his twelve diſciples*; when he had given them a commiſſion to preach the Goſpel, had finiſhed all his inſtructions, he thought fit to give them, and orders he enjoined them, relating to that work; as where they ſhould go, what they ſhould ſay, how they ſhould behave, and what treatment they ſhould meet with; and had given them all proper advice and encouragement, *he departed thence*, from the place where he then was:

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[p] Shemot Rabba Paraſh. 32. fol. 135. 3.

[q] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 34. 2. Kidduſhin, fol. 41. 2. 42. 1. & 43. 1. Bava Metzia, fol. 96. 1.

[r] R. Iſaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. §. 14. p. 404.

[s] Miſn. Zebachim, c. 1, §. 1. 2. 3. 4. & 4. 6. & 6. 7. & 7. 1, 2, 3, 4.

[t] Hilchot Nedarim, c. 8. §. 10.

[u] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 63, 2. & 64. 1.

he did not deſiſt either from the miniſtry of the word, or from working of miracles, but went out into other parts of the country, *to teach and to preach in their cities:* meaning either in the cities of the *Jews*, or in the cities of his diſciples; and theſe, either the cities they belonged to, from whence they came, namely, the cities of *Galilee*; for the diſciples were *Galileans*, and in which parts Chriſt now was; or elſe the cities where he ſent them to preach firſt, and then came himſelf, and confirmed their doctrine by his own miniſtry and miracles.

Ver. 2. *Now when John had heard in the priſon*, &c.] The perſon here ſpoken of, is *John* the *Baptiſt*, the forerunner of Chriſt, who was now in the priſon of *Machærus*; being put there by *Herod*, for his reproving him for taking *Herodias*, his brother *Philip*'s wife; and whilſt he was there, an account was brought him by his own diſciples, ſee *Luke* vii. 18. of *the works of Chriſt*, the miracles he wrought; as the healing of the centurion's ſervant, the raiſing from the dead the widow's ſon of *Naim*, and the like: upon hearing of which, *he ſent two of his diſciples*, who might be the moſt prejudiced againſt Chriſt, becauſe of the increaſe of his followers, and the decreaſe of their maſter's; and becauſe he did not live ſuch an auſtere life as *John* did; and who, notwithſtanding all that they had heard, and their maſter had told them of Jeſus, were not eaſily perſuaded that he was the true Meſſiah. Moreover, two of them were ſent, both becauſe it was more honourable to Chriſt, and that they might be proper witneſſes of what they ſaw and heard; and ſince it was not ſo much for himſelf, as for the ſake of his diſciples, that theſe meſſengers were ſent.

Ver. 3. *And ſaid unto him*, &c.] By the diſciples he ſent: this was the meſſage they came with, and this the queſtion they were to aſk, and did, *art thou he that ſhould come?* A *periphraſis* of the *Meſſiah*, well known to the *Jews*; for he had been ſpoken of frequently in the prophecies of the Old Teſtament, as the *Shiloh*, the Redeemer, the Prophet, and King that ſhould come; particularly, by this circumlocution, reference ſeems to be had to *Hab*. ii. 3. *It ſhall ſurely come*, כי בא יבא, which may be rendered, *for he that cometh*, or *is to come, ſhall come.* So that the queſtion in plain terms is, whether he was the *Meſſiah? John* could not be ignorant of this, who had ſeen the Spirit of God deſcending on him at his baptiſm, heard a voice from heaven, declaring him the ſon of God; and had ſo often pointed him out to others, and had born frequent teſtimonies that he was the Lamb of God, and Bridegroom of his church: wherefore this queſtion was put, not upon his own account, but his diſciples, that they might have from the mouth of Chriſt a full and ſatisfactory anſwer, which would remove all their doubts and ſcruples, and attach them to Chriſt, now he was about to die, and leave them, than which nothing was more deſirable to him. Though ſome have thought, that *John*'s faith was ſomewhat ſlackened; and through his long impriſonment, he began to doubt whether he was the *Meſſiah* or no: and others have been of opinion, as particularly Dr. *Lightfoot*, that the reaſon of this meſſage was, neither the ignorance and unbelief of *John*, or his diſciples; but that *John*, with the reſt of the *Jews*, having a notion of a temporal kingdom, and hearing of the mighty works of Chriſt, wonders that he himſelf was not delivered out of priſon by him, grows impatient upon it, and aſks, if he was the Meſſiah? And if he was, why did he ſuffer his forerunner and chief miniſter, to lie in priſon? *or do we look for another*, to releaſe me, and ſet up this kingdom?

Ver. 4. *Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto them*, &c.] Not by an expreſs declaration, that he was the Meſſiah that was to come, and they were not to look for any other; but he bids them *go, and ſhew John again, thoſe things which ye do hear and ſee.* Chriſt would have them go back to *John* in priſon, and relate to him the doctrines which they had heard preached by him to the poor; and the miracles which they had ſeen with their own eyes, then wrought by him; as well as many others, which were atteſted to them by credible witneſſes; for there were at that time about Chriſt, that had infirmities, plagues, and evil ſpirits, and that were blind, and he inſtantly cured them in their preſence; ſee *Luke* vii. 21.

Ver. 5. *The blind receive their ſight*, &c.] Our Lord here, has reference to ſeveral prophecies concerning the Meſſiah, in *Iſa*. xxxv. 6. and lxi. 1. and which having their accompliſhment in him, *John* and his diſciples might eaſily and ſtrongly conclude, that he was he that was to come, and that they ſhould not look for another. The ſeveral things here mentioned, were not all done at this time, but were what theſe diſciples had ſufficient and authentic evidence of; ſight was reſtored to the blind before them then; and no doubt they were informed of the two blind men, that had their eyes opened, *Matt*. ix. 30. *and the lame walk*; as did the man ſick of the palſy, who was brought to him on a bed, carried by four men, but went away himſelf, with his bed upon his ſhoulders, *Matt*. ix. 2, 6, 7. *the lepers are cleanſed*; as the poor man was, that was full of leproſy, and who was cured by Chriſt, by touching him, *Matt*. viii. 3. *and the deaf hear*; as did the man, into whoſe ears Chriſt put his fingers and ſaid, *Ephphatha*, be opened, *Mark* vii. 33, 34, 35. *and the dead are raiſed*; as were *Jairus*'s daughter, *Matt*. ix. 18. and the widow's ſon of *Naim*, *Luke* vii. 15. *and the poor have the Goſpel preached unto them:* by *the poor* are meant, either the preachers of the Goſpel; for ſo the words may be rendered, *the poor preach the Goſpel:* and ſuch were the apoſtles of Chriſt; they were poor with reſpect to the things of this world; they were chiefly fiſhermen; and, with reſpect to human literature, they were unlearned men, had no ſtock or furniture of acquired learning, and were mean, abject, and contemptible, in the ſight and opinion of men; and yet Chriſt called, qualified, and ſent them forth to preach the Goſpel. Or elſe, the hearers of it are deſigned; who were alſo the poor of this world, made a very low figure in life, and had but a ſmall ſhare of knowledge and underſtanding, and ſo were deſpiſed, and reckoned as curſed by the *Scribes* and *Phariſees:* or they were ſuch, who were poor in ſpirit, or ſpiritually poor; who ſaw their ſpiritual poverty, bewailed and acknowledged it, and ſought after the true riches of grace, and glory in Chriſt. Now theſe, as they had the Goſpel preached to them more fully and clearly, with more power and authority, and ſo as it never was before or ſince, ſo they *received* it, as *Tremellius* from the *Syriac* reads the text, readily and willingly, joyfully and gladly, with faith and love; and were, as it may be alſo rendered, *evangelized* by it, or thrown into a goſpel mould and frame: which may be ſaid to be done, when a man has a ſpirit of liberty, in oppoſition to a ſpirit of bondage; when he lives by faith on Chriſt alone; when his comforts don't ſpring from his works, but from Chriſt; when the love and grace of God influence his repentance and obedience; when a man has a ſpirit of meekneſs and of love to the ſaints, is of a forbearing and forgiving ſpirit; when he is deſirous of performing all duties both to God and man, and yet depends upon none of them, but upon Chriſt alone, for ſalvation.

Ver. 6. *And bleſſed is he whoſoever ſhall not be offended in me.*] The *Jews* were offended at Chriſt's parentage and birth, at the poverty of his parents, and at the manner of his birth, by a virgin; and at the place of his birth, which they thought to be *Galilee*; at his education, becauſe he had not learnt letters, and was brought up to a mechanic employment; at his mean appearance in his publick miniſtry, in his own perſon, and in his attendants; his company and audience being the poorer ſort, the more ignorant, and who had been looſe and ſcandalous perſons, publicans and ſinners; at the doctrines he preached, particularly, which reſpected his own deity and eternity, the diſtinguiſhing grace of God, and living by faith upon his fleſh and blood. The diſciples of *John* alſo were offended in him, becauſe he and his diſciples did not faſt, and lead ſuch an auſtere life as they and their maſter did; becauſe of the meanneſs and obſcurity of Chriſt's kingdom; the impriſonment of *John*, and the many reproaches, afflictions, and perſecutions, which did, and were likely to attend a profeſſion of Chriſt: this our Lord knew, and had a peculiar reſpect to them in theſe words; but happy are thoſe perſons, who notwithſtanding all theſe difficulties and diſcouragements, are ſo far from ſtumbling at Chriſt, and falling from him, that they heartily receive him and believe in him, make a profeſſion of him, and hold it faſt; greatly love, highly value, and eſteem him, and are willing to part with all, and bear all for his ſake: theſe are bleſſed, notwithſtanding all their ſufferings for him even now; for they have ſpiritual peace, joy, and comfort in their ſouls, and ſhall be happy in the full enjoyment of him to all eternity.

Ver. 7. *And as they departed*, &c.] That is, the meſſengers of *John*, *Luke* vii. 24. when they returned to their maſter, to give an account to him of what they had heard and ſeen, *Jeſus began to ſay unto the multitudes concerning John*; he took this opportunity before the whole company, who had heard what paſſed in converſation between him and the diſciples of *John*, to ſay ſome things concerning his character and miniſtry: and which he did, partly to rectify and remove any wrong opinion they might have conceived of him, from this meſſage of his, as if he had retracted his former ſentiments concerning Chriſt, at leaſt was wavering and doubtful about him; and partly, to put them in mind of their former zeal and attachment to *John*'s miniſtry, when they went out in large bodies to attend upon it, and to revive a good opinion of him; and ſignifies, that they would do well to aſk themſelves, what views they had in attending on him, and how they came to grow indifferent to ſo great a man: and Chriſt, by giving an account of his character and office, confirms his own Meſſiahſhip; and this commendation of *John*, he choſe to enter into, after the departure of his meſſengers, leſt what he ſaid of him, ſhould be interpreted as mere flattery: *what went ye out in the wilderneſs to ſee?* This refers to *Matt.* iii. 5. where we read, that great numbers from *Jeruſalem*, *Judea*, and the country round about *Jordan*, went out into the wilderneſs of *Judea*, where *John* came preaching, to hear him, and be baptized by him; and our Lord aſks, what was it that led ſuch multitudes of them into the wilderneſs? What did they expect to ſee there? *A reed ſhaken with the wind?* This may either refer to *John*'s geſture in preaching, who might wave to and fro as a reed does, when ſhaken by the wind; and Chriſt's queſtion is, did ye go out only to ſee and obſerve the preacher's geſture, to ſee him move his body to and fro? Was it not to hear his doctrine, and receive benefit for your ſouls? And did you not? Wherefore, you ought ſtill to retain a valuable reſpect for him. Or this may regard their opinion of him; and the ſenſe of the interrogation is, when you firſt went out to him, did you take him to be an unſtable, inconſtant man? Like a reed ſhaken with every wind! If you did, you were miſtaken; he was firm and ſtable in his ſentiments and miniſtry, his preaching was not yea and nay, his doctrine was all of a piece; he ſtood to it, that he was not the Meſſiah, but his forerunner; the teſtimony he bore was always alike, conſiſtent with himſelf, and he is the ſame man now he ever was. The *Jews* uſe this compariſon of a man to a reed, in a ſenſe juſt the reverſe, and make it to ſignify conſtancy, and not inconſtancy, as well as tenderneſs, in oppoſition to roughneſs, ſeverity, and ſtubborneſs. "Let a man, "ſay they [w], be always רך כקנה, *tender as a reed*, "and let him not be hard and ſtubborn as a cedar: "when the four winds of the world go out, the "reed goes and comes with them; and when the "winds are ſtill, the reed ſtands in its place." So they obſerve [x], that it is ſaid, that *the Lord ſhall ſmite Iſrael, as a reed is ſhaken in the water*, 1 *Kings* xiv. 15. which they interpret by way of bleſſing. "As a reed, ſay they, ſtands in a place of water, "its body waves about, and its roots are many; "and though all the winds in the world come and "blow upon it, they *can't move it out of its place*, "but it goes and comes with them; and when the "winds are ſtill, the reed ſtands in its place."

Ver. 8. *But what went ye out for to ſee?* &c.] Since it can't be thought it was to ſee the reeds in the wilderneſs blow to and fro by the wind, or a man like one of them, either in geſture or doctrine; was it to ſee *a man clothed in ſoft raiment?* In raiment made of ſoft materials, as fine wool, cotton, ſilk, *&c.* ſuch as *Mecænas* wore, and who was therefore called *Malacinus* [y]: one finely dreſſed, and richly apparelled, draws the eyes of perſons to him; but ſuch an one is not to be expected in a wilderneſs: and if the *Jews* went out to ſee ſuch a perſon, they were greatly diſappointed; for *John*'s raiment was of camel's hair, undreſſed, and he had a leathern girdle about his loins; and as for his diet, it was locuſts and wild honey: no, *behold they that wear ſoft clothing*, or as *Luke* ſays, are *gorgeouſly apparelled*; to which he adds, *and live delicately*, *are in king's houſes*, or *courts*; not in a deſert, where *John* came preaching, nor in a priſon, where he now was: he was no light, inconſtant, flattering perſon, as generally courtiers are; had he, he would not have been in a priſon; it was for his uprightneſs and faithfulneſs, in reproving *Herod* the king, that he was in ſuch a place and condition. Thus from his very garb and diet, his character is vindicated from the charge of levity and change.

Ver. 9. *But what went ye out for to ſee?* &c.] Since it was not any thing ſo mean as a ſhaking reed, or ſo grand as a man in gay clothing, pray what was it you went out to ſee? *A prophet?* This was the truth of the matter, they expected to ſee a prophet, and they believed he was one; this was the common

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[w] Derech Eretz, fol. 18. 1.

[x] T. Bab. Taanith. fol. 20. 1.

[y] Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 5. c. 18.

mon voice of the people; all held *John* to be a prophet. This made *Herod* afraid to put him to death, and the *Phariſees* to ſpeak againſt his baptiſm: now, though this was giving him a great character, to believe and own him to be a prophet, yet it did not come up to his full character. *Yea, I ſay unto you, and more than a prophet:* when they ſaw him, they ſaw not only a prophet, but one that was greater, and more excellent than any of the prophets that went before him: they propheſied of the Meſſiah at a diſtance, and in words not ſo clear, and eaſy to be underſtood; they ſpoke of him as to come, but he pointed him out with his finger, and declared that he was come; he ſaw him himſelf, and ſhewed him to others; he ſaw the Spirit of God deſcending on him, and he himſelf baptized him; his office, as the harbinger of Chriſt, and the adminiſtrator of the ordinance of baptiſm to him, gave him a preference to all the prophets; and was ſuch an one, as never any man was veſted with but himſelf.

Ver. 10. *For this is he of whom it is written,* &c.] *Mal.* iii. 1. *Behold I ſend my meſſenger before thy face, which ſhall prepare thy way before thee.* That theſe words belong לעולם הבא, to the world to come, or the times of the Meſſiah, that is, the goſpel diſpenſation, the *Jews*[z] themſelves own; but as to the particular perſon meant by the *meſſenger*, or *angel*, becauſe they are not willing to acknowledge the right perſon, are at the utmoſt loſs. *Jarchi* makes him to be the angel of death, who is to deſtroy the wicked; *Aben Ezra* conjectures it may be *Meſſiah* the ſon of *Joſeph*, who they fancy will come before *Meſſiah* the ſon of *David*. *Kimchi* thinks an angel from heaven is deſigned; and *Abarbinel Malachi* himſelf: but the more ancient ſenſe of the ſynagogue was, that the ſame perſon is meant, as in ch. iv. 5. under the name of *Elijah* the prophet; and ſome have thought, that *Elijah* the *Tiſhbite* himſelf, is intended; though others think, that ſome great prophet of equal degree with him, and who is called by his name, is what the prophecy has regard unto[a]; which laſt, is the true ſenſe of the paſſage: nor ſhould it be once called in queſtion, when our Lord himſelf has applied it to *John* the *Baptiſt*; to whom the things ſaid in it, perfectly agree. He was an *angel*, not by nature, but by office; a *meſſenger* ſent by God, *before the face* of the Meſſiah; ſix months before him: ſuch a ſpace of time he was born before him; and ſuch a ſpace of time he entered on his publick miniſtry before him; and *prepared* his *way before* him, by preaching the doctrine of repentance, adminiſtring the ordinance of baptiſm, pointing at the *Meſſiah*, and exhorting perſons to believe on him. All which, proves him to be, what Chriſt ſays he was, *more than a prophet*.

Ver. 11. *Verily I ſay unto you,* &c.] What Chriſt had before ſaid, he proved from a teſtimony of ſcripture; what he was about to ſay, depending on his word, he aſſeverates in the moſt ſolemn manner; *among them that are born of women, there hath not riſen a greater than John the Baptiſt.* The phraſe, *them that are born of women*, is a *periphraſis*, of men born into the world by ordinary generation; ſee *Job* xiv. 1. and the ſenſe is, that of all the prophets that have been in the world, ſince the beginning of it, *Moſes* himſelf not excepted, there has not been raiſed up by God, a greater prophet than *John*, the firſt adminiſtrator of baptiſm; were but conſidered, the uncommoneſs of his birth, his being filled with the Holy Ghoſt from his mother's womb, his exemplary life, the excellency of his doctrine; and eſpecially, his work and office, as the harbinger of Chriſt, and the preparer of his ways. *Notwithſtanding, he that is leaſt in the kingdom of heaven, is greater than he*; which is to be underſtood, not of Chriſt, who was younger in age, and a junior preacher, and leſs in the eſteem of the *Phariſees*, being greater than he, in nature and office; nor of the ſaints in heaven, where he that was leaſt, the meaneſt, and moſt abject, when on earth, is more happy than *John*, who was then in priſon; nor of all the believers under the goſpel diſpenſation; but of the apoſtles of Chriſt, and the leaſt among them, who were then the kingdom of heaven, or the viſible goſpel church ſtate. Theſe had a better opportunity of converſing with Chriſt, and of ſeeing and hearing the things they did, than *John* had; they had the power of performing miracles, which *John* had not; were immediately ſent forth by Chriſt, to preach the Goſpel, and had a clearer inſight into the truths of it, than *John*; eſpecially, after the Holy Ghoſt was in ſuch an extraordinary manner poured forth upon them, on the day of *Pentecoſt*: particularly after the death and reſurrection of Chriſt, they were able to preach him, not only as come in the fleſh, but as having ſuffered and died, and obtained eternal redemption; they could ſpeak of his blood being ſhed, of his righteouſneſs being wrought out, and of his ſacrifice and ſatisfaction as made, which *John* could not; and beſides, were more ſucceſsful in the converſion of ſinners, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, than ever he was. The compariſon does not lie ſo much between their perſons, as their ſeveral different degrees of light and doctrine.

Ver. 12. *And from the days of John the Baptiſt until now*, &c.] From the time that he began to preach, to the then preſent time, *the kingdom of heaven*, the Goſpel, and the miniſtry of it, firſt by *John*, then by Chriſt and his apoſtles, *ſuffereth violence*; or *comes with force*, and power upon the ſouls of men: it was attended with the demonſtration of the Spirit, and of power; as appeared by its being the means of quickening perſons that were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins; enlightning the blind; cauſing the deaf to hear; melting and ſoftning hearts of ſtone; making, of enemies, friends to God and Chriſt; turning men from the power of ſatan unto God; ſetting at liberty ſuch as were ſlaves and vaſſals, to their own corruptions; and, in a word, in being the power of God unto ſalvation, to many ſouls: and which was further ſeen, in the manner it did all this; ſuddenly, ſecretly, powerfully, and effectually, and yet not againſt the wills of men; and by ſuch inſtruments as the apoſtles were, poor, ſinful, mortal men; deſpiſed by the world, and attended with oppoſition and perſecution: or *ſuffers violence*; which may be underſtood, either of the vaſt numbers, that preſſed and crouded to hear the Goſpel preached: great numbers followed *John*, when he firſt began to preach, and baptize; ſtill a greater number followed Chriſt, ſome to hear his doctrine, others to ſee his miracles, others to behold his perſon, others out of ſelfiſh ends; and ſome behaved rudely and indecently: or of the ardour and fervency of ſpirit, which appeared in ſome, to the miniſtry of *John* and Chriſt, and in their deſires and expectations of the kingdom of the Meſſiah: or of the Goſpel's ſuffering violence by the perſecutions of its enemies, oppoſing and contradicting it, reproaching it, intimidating the profeſſors of it, and ſeeking to take away the life of Chriſt, the great ſubject of it: *and the*

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[z] Bemidbar Rabba, §. 15. fol. 219. 4.

[a] Vid. Pocock in Mal. iii. 1.

*violent take it by force*; meaning either publicans, and harlots, and *Gentile* ſinners; who might be thought to be a ſort of intruders: or rather the ſame perſons, as being powerfully wrought upon under the miniſtry of the Goſpel; who were under violent apprehenſions of wrath and vengeance, of their loſt and undone ſtate and condition by nature; were violently in love with Chriſt, and eagerly deſirous of ſalvation by him, and communion with him; and had their affections ſet upon the things of another world: theſe having the Goſpel preached to them, which is a declaration of God's love to ſinners, a proclamation of peace and pardon, and a publication of righteouſneſs and life by Chriſt, they greedily catched at it, and embraced it.

Ver. 13. *For all the prophets and the law propheſied until John.*] Theſe words are to be conſidered in connexion with ver. 11. and are a further proof of *John*'s being greater than any of the prophets; becauſe all the inſpired writers and prophets, who were before him, propheſied of the Meſſiah as to come; and either ſpoke of him in obſcure terms, or repreſented him under dark ſhadows and figures: whereas *John* ſpake of him as already come, and in plain terms, and directed to his very perſon; and ſince his time, there have been no prophecies concerning the Meſſiah and his kingdom; viſion and prophecy are now ſealed up; all which are acknowledged by the *Jews* themſelves, who [b] ſay, כל הנביאים כולן לא נתנבאו אלא לימות המשיח, *all the prophets did not propheſy but to, or of the days of the Meſſiah.* This was the ſubject, and theſe the limits of their prophecies; for they own [c], that “ from the day that the temple was deſtroyed, “ בטילה נבואה מן הנביאי, *prophecy was taken* “ *away from the prophets.*” Since that time, they confeſs they have had no prophet [d], and that they are not able to obſerve their ſigns.

Ver. 14. *And if ye will receive it*, &c.] The words carry in them ſome ſuſpicion of unbelief and hardneſs of heart, as though they would not receive it: however, whether they would or no, it was a certain truth, that *this* ſame perſon, *John* the *Baptiſt*, *is Elias, which was for to come*; who was appointed by God to come, and was propheſied of, *Mal.* iv. 5. that he ſhould come; and even according to the doctrine of the *Scribes* and *Rabbins*, he was expected to come before the *Meſſiah*; only they in general thought, that *Elijah* the *Tiſhbite*, in perſon, was meant; though ſome, as before obſerved [e], were of opinion, that ſome great prophet, equal to *Elijah*, and endued with the ſame ſpirit, is intended; and which is true of *John the Baptiſt*, who came *in the ſpirit* and *power* of *Elias*, *Luke* i. 17. And, as it was uſual with the *Jews* [f], to call *Phinehas* by the name of *Elias*, and *Elias Phinehas*, becauſe of his zeal for the Lord of hoſts; for the ſame reaſon may *John* be called by the ſame name, there being a great reſemblance between *Elias* and him; in their temper and diſpoſition; in their manner of clothing, and auſtere way of living; in their very great piety and holineſs; in their courage and integrity, in reproving vice; and in their zeal and uſefulneſs in the cauſe of God, and true religion: in reſpect to which, Chriſt muſt be here underſtood, when he affirms *John* to be *Elias*; not *Elias* in perſon, but he that was intended by *Elias*, that was ſaid ſhould come: hence here is no contradiction to the words of the *Baptiſt*, in *John* i. 21. when he ſays, that he was not *Elias*; for the *Jews*, who put the queſtion to him, whether he was *Elias*, or no? meant whether he was *Elias* in perſon, *Elias* the *Tiſhbite*, or no; and ſo *John* underſtood them, and very honeſtly and ſincerely replies, he was not: but he does not deny that he was intended by this *Elias*, that was propheſied ſhould come; yea, he ſays ſuch things as might induce them to believe he was that perſon; hence, Chriſt, and he, ſay nothing contrary to, and irreconcileable, as the *Jew* [g] ſuggeſts, with each other.

Ver. 15. *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.*] A way of ſpeaking uſed by Chriſt, when any thing ſerious, and of great importance, was delivered; and which required attention, and was not eaſily underſtood: and ſuch were the ſeveral things he had mentioned in this context; as that *John* was more than a prophet, more excellent than all the prophets; that the law and prophets were now at an end, and that *John* was *Elias*; which things, if rightly underſtood, would ſerve greatly to ſettle their judgment, with reſpect to himſelf as the Meſſiah: but his words imply, that every one had not ſpiritual ears and underſtandings, to hear and take in things of ſuch an high nature, and excellent uſe; none but thoſe to whom they were given; and ſuch ought to attend to them, and ſeriouſly weigh and conſider the importance of them. The phraſe is to be met with in *Jewiſh* writings, where it is thus expreſſed [h]; “ *He that hears let him hear, and he* “ *that underſtandeth let him underſtand*;” ſee *Matt.* xxiv. 14.

Ver. 16. *But whereunto ſhall I liken this generation?* &c.] The men of that age, the ſtubborn and perverſe *Jews*; who were pleaſed with nothing, with no man's miniſtry, neither with *John*'s, nor with Chriſt's, but found fault with whatever they heard, or ſaw done: *it is like unto children ſitting in the markets, and calling to their fellows*: that is, the caſe of ſuch perſons, may be fitly repreſented by children in a publick market, calling to their companions, to pipe or mourn with them, and who are ſo moroſe and ſullen as to do neither: for the men of that generation, are not the good natured children, that called to their fellows, and were willing to join in innocent diverſions and exerciſes; but rather *John* the *Baptiſt*, Chriſt and his diſciples, who may be compared to *children*, for their harmleſneſs and ſimplicity; and are repreſented as *ſitting in markets*, places of concourſe, where much people met together; which may intend the ſynagogues and temple, and other publick places, which they made uſe of to publiſh their doctrines in, to preach to, and exhort the people; and as *calling to their fellows*, to their cotemporaries, to thoſe of their own nation, by the external miniſtry of the word.

Ver. 17. *And ſaying, we have piped unto you, and ye have not danced*, &c.] The alluſion is to *Jewiſh* children, who having ſeen their parents and friends at their feſtivals and weddings, ſome play upon the pipe, and others dance to them, mimicked the ſame in their diverſions; and alſo having obſerved at funerals, the mourning women, making their doleful ditties, and others anſwering to them, acted the part of theſe perſons, expecting their fellows would make their reſponſes, but did not: hence the complaint, *we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented.* The different characters of *John* and Chriſt, are here ſet forth, by *piping* and *mourning*. The character and miniſtry of Chriſt and his diſciples, by *piping*; by which is meant, the clear, comfortable, and joyful miniſtry of the Goſpel; which is delightful muſic to a ſenſible ſinner; and may be compared to it, for diſtinction of ſounds, harmony, and agreement, being charming and delightful; its notes are all grace, mercy, love, liberty, peace, pardon, righteouſneſs, and free ſalvation; and it is very powerful and engaging, it quickens and animates, attracts, allures and charms. The character and miniſtry of *John*, is ſignified by *mourning*: his life was a very auſtere one; he and his diſciples faſted oft; he appeared in a very coarſe habit; his ſpeech was rough, his voice thundering; his doctrine was the doctrine of repentance, and he uſed very ſevere threatenings, in caſe of impenitence: on the other hand, by the *fellows* to whom they piped, or miniſtred, in their different miniſtrations, are meant, the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*; who were neither affected to, nor with, either of them: as for *John*, he was too auſtere for them; they did not like his garb, nor his diet; nor did his doctrine or baptiſm pleaſe them; nor were they wrought upon, or brought to repentance by his miniſtry; they did not lament, weep, or ſhed one tear, but ſat unmoved, like ſtocks and ſtones, under thoſe awful ſtriking diſcourſes, on mournful ſubjects, delivered by him: nor were they pleaſed with the free conduct, and pleaſant converſation of Chriſt; nor did they dance, or rejoice, at the good news and glad tidings of grace and ſalvation, which were brought by him: of ſuch froward, peeviſh ſpirits they were, that neither *John*, nor Chriſt, could pleaſe them: they were a true picture and emblem of many perſons, who like neither law nor Goſpel, but are moroſe, ſullen, and quarrelſome, let them hear what they will; as *Solomon* ſays, *If a wiſe man contendeth with a fooliſh man, whether he rage or laugh, there is no reſt*, *Prov.* xxix. 9. Upon which the *Talmudiſts* [i] comment, and illuſtrate it in this manner, and produce a proverbial ſaying, much like this in the text. "Says God, I was angry with *Ahaz*, "and I delivered him into the hands of the kings "of *Damaſcus*; he ſacrificed and burnt incenſe to "their Gods, 2 *Chron.* xxviii. 22. I played with "*Amaziah*, and I gave the kings of *Edom* into his "hands; he brought their Gods and worſhipped "them, 2 *Chron.* xxv. 14. Says *R. Papa*, this is "what men ſay, or it is a common proverb, "בכיי ליה למר דלא ידע חייכי ליה למר דלא ידע, "*they weep to a man who takes no notice of it, they* "*laugh to a man who does not obſerve it*; woe to "that man, who knows not the difference between "good and evil."

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[b] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 34. 2. Sabbat, fol. 63. 1. Sanhedrim, fol. 99. 1.

[c] T. Bava Bathra, fol. 12. 1.

[d] Abarbinel in Dan. fol 63. 4.

[e] Vid. Pocock. not. in porta Moſis, p. 219.

[f] Baal Hatturim, in Num. xxv. 12. Kimchi in 1 Chron. ix. 20. Targum Jon. in Exod. vi. 18.

[g] R. Iſaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 1. c. 39. & par. 2. c. 15.

[h] Zohar in Num. fol. 60. 3.

Ver. 18. *For John came neither eating nor drinking*, &c.] This and the following verſe, are an explanation of the foregoing *parable*; and this ſhews, that *John* and his diſciples, are the perſons that mourned, of which his auſtere life was a proof: for when he *came*, being ſent of God, and appeared as a publick preacher, he was *neither eating nor drinking*; not that he did not eat or drink at all, otherwiſe he could not have lived, and diſcharged his office: but he eat ſparingly, very little; and what he did eat and drink, was not the common food and drink of men; he neither eat bread, nor drank wine, but lived upon locuſts and wild honey; he excuſed all invitations to people's houſes, and ſhun'd all feaſts and entertainments; he abſtained from all free and ſociable converſation with men, in eating and drinking: and though the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, pretended to much abſtinence and frequent faſtings, yet they did not care to follow his very ſevere way of living, and lament, in anſwer to his mournful ditty; but in a calumniating way, *they ſay he hath a devil*; is a demoniack, a madman, one that is unſociable and melancholy; under a deluſion of ſatan, and influenced by him to abſtain from proper food and company of men, under a pretence of religion.

Ver. 19. *The Son of man came eating and drinking*, &c.] Meaning himſelf, who eat and drank as men uſually do, lived in the common way of life, was free and ſociable, went to feaſts, entertainments, and weddings, when he was invited; and was affable, courteous, and friendly in his deportment, to all men; *and they ſay, behold a man gluttonous*, a voracious man, an epicurean, one that indulges his appetite to a very great degree, and in a ſcandalous manner; *a wine-biber*, a common tipler, one that drinks to exceſs; whom the *Rabbins* call [k], גרגרן, who is one they ſay, that drinks up his cup at one draught; one that is given to wine, and is greedy of it: *a friend of publicans and ſinners*; ſuch as are openly and notoriouſly wicked; and loves their company, for the ſake of tipling with them; and encourages them in their revelling and drunkenneſs; a very black charge this! *But wiſdom is juſtified of her children*; either the wiſdom of God, in making uſe of miniſters of a different diſpoſition and deportment, whereby ſome are gained, and others left inexcuſable: or the Goſpel, in which there is ſuch a diſplay of divine wiſdom, which is vindicated from the charge of licentiouſneſs, by the agreeable lives and converſations of the children of God: or rather Chriſt himſelf, who is the wiſdom of God; and in whom are hid all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge; who, however he may be traduced by ignorant and malicious men, yet will be acquitted from all ſuch charges, as here inſinuated, by all the true ſons of wiſdom; or by ſuch, who are made wiſe unto ſalvation. We may learn from hence, that no ſort of preachers and preaching, will pleaſe ſome men; that the beſt of Goſpel miniſters may be reproached as libertines, or madmen; and that they will be ſooner, or later, juſtified and cleared from all ſuch aſperſions.

Ver. 20. *Then began he to upbraid the cities*, &c.] When he had ſent forth his diſciples to preach, and had been in theſe ſeveral cities hereafter mentioned himſelf, and had taught and preached in them, and confirmed his doctrine by many wonderful works; when he had obſerved how ill they had uſed both *John* and himſelf, repreſenting the one as having a devil, and the other as a licentious perſon; when they could not be pleaſed with the miniſtry of the one, nor of the other, he very ſeaſonably and righteouſly, began to reproach them with their ungenerous treatment of him, their ingratitude to him, their unbelief in him, the hardneſs and impenitence of their hearts; which could not be moved to repent of their evil ways, and believe in him, and acknowledge him as the Meſſiah, by all the inſtructions he gave them, and miracles he wrought among them: for the cities he has a view to, were ſuch, *wherein moſt of his mighty works were done*; the moſt for number, and the greateſt in their kind; as particularly at *Capernaum*; where he cured the centurion's ſervant, recovered *Peter*'s wife's mother from a fever, healed the man ſick of a palſy, raiſed *Jairus*'s daughter from the dead, made whole the woman that had a bloody iſſue, opened the eyes of two blind men, and caſt out a devil from a dumb man, poſſeſſed with one: all theſe, and more, he did in this one city, and therefore he might juſtly upbraid them, *becauſe they repented not*: not becauſe they did not commend him, and ſpeak well of his works, for he ſought not his own glory, but their good: all he did was, in order to bring men to repentance of their ſins, and faith in himſelf, that they might be ſaved.

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[i] T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 103. 1.

[k] T. Bab. Peſachim, fol. 86. 2. Betza, fol. 25. 2.

Ver. 21. *Wo unto thee Chorazin*, &c.] Though many of Chriſt's mighty works were done in this place, yet mention is made of it no where elſe, but here; whether it was a ſingle city, or a country, is not eaſy to determine: the word, חורשין, *Choraſin*, ſignifying *woody places*, Dr. *Lightfoot* [l] conjectures, it might include *Cana*, in which Chriſt wrought his firſt miracle, and a ſmall adjacent country, ſituated in a wood, and be ſo called from thence; and *Origen* [m] reads it, χωρα Ζιν, *the region of Zin: wo unto thee Bethſaida.* This was the city of *Andrew* and *Peter*, *John* i. 44. ſee the note there; ſo that as bad as it was, ſome perſons were called out of it by the grace of God, and to the high office of apoſtleſhip; and which makes that grace in ſuch the more diſtinguiſhing: *for if the mighty works which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in ſackcloth and aſhes.* Theſe words are to be underſtood in a popular ſenſe, as *Grotius* obſerves, and expreſs what was probable, according to an human judgment of things; and the meaning is, that if the inhabitants of *Tyre* and *Sidon*, had had the advantages of Chriſt's miniſtry, and of ſeeing his miracles, as the inhabitants of *Chorazin* and *Bethſaida* had, it looks very likely, or one would be ready to conclude, eſpecially from many coming out of theſe parts, to attend on Chriſt's miniſtry, *Mark* iii. 8. and from the converſion of ſome of them in after times, *Acts* xxi. 3, 4. they would have repented of their ſins; at leaſt, in an external way, ſignified by *ſackcloth* and *aſhes*, which were outward ſigns of repentance; ſee *Iſa.* lviii. 5. *Jer.* vi. 26. And which, if it had been only performed in ſuch a manner, by the inhabitants of *Chorazin* and *Bethſaida*, would have ſaved them from temporal judgments, which their ſins now called for. The words are an hyperbolical exaggeration of the wickedneſs of thoſe cities, like to *Ezek.* iii. 5, 6, 7. ſhewing, that they were worſe than the *Tyrians* and *Sidonians*; an heatheniſh and idolatrous people, who lived very profligate and diſſolute lives, in all intemperance, luxury and impiety; and therefore would be puniſhed in a ſeverer way: neither this paſſage, nor what follows, can be any proof of God's giving ſufficient grace to all men alike, which in ſome is effectual to converſion, and in others not, but of the contrary; ſince the men of *Tyre* and *Sidon* had not the ſame means, or the ſame grace, as the inhabitants of the other cities, if the mighty works done among them, are to be called ſo; or that man has a power to repent of himſelf, in a ſpiritual and evangelical way; or that outward means, as doctrines and miracles, are ſufficient to produce ſuch a repentance, without efficacious and unfruſtrable grace; ſince only an outward repentance is here ſuppoſed, ſuch as that of *Ahab*, and of the *Ninevites*.

Ver. 22. *But I ſay unto you*, &c.] What may be depended upon as true, and which ſhall certainly come to paſs, however the inhabitants of theſe cities might flatter themſelves; or in whatſoever light they might look upon their neighbours, the *Tyrians* and *Sidonians*; and fancy themſelves to be the favourites of heaven, and theſe as the moſt execrable of creatures; *it ſhall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you.* Their puniſhment in another world, will be more mild and moderate; they will not have ſuch ſevere ſtings of conſcience, nor have reaſon to make ſuch bitter reflections on themſelves, as thoſe will, who have had the advantages of a Goſpel revelation: all ſins are not alike, nor will the puniſhment of them be the ſame; there will be degrees of torments in hell, and which the juſtice of God requires. Theſe words ſuppoſe, that the men of *Tyre* and *Sidon* will be puniſhed, for their many abominable ſins, committed againſt the law and light of nature; but that the inhabitants of *Chorazin* and *Bethſaida*, having rejected the *Meſſiah*, and the doctrines of the Goſpel, againſt all the evidence of miracles, and convictions of their own minds, and probably, ſinned the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt; as their ſins are aggravated, their condemnation will be the greater, and their puniſhment the more intolerable.

Ver. 23. *And thou Capernaum*, &c.] This city is ſingled out from all the reſt, and ſpoken to particularly, becauſe of its peculiar advantages: *which art exalted unto heaven*; which has reſpect to the very great privileges this place enjoyed, it being the city where Chriſt choſe to dwell, and for a time fixed his abode in; where he firſt began to preach, and where ſuch a train of miracles were done; a particular enumeration of which, has been before given: as alſo it may refer to the ſituation of the place, which was very high and lofty, ſo that it ſeemed to reach unto heaven; for the account that *R. Benjamin Tudelenſis* [n] gives of it is, that "*Capernaum*, which is, by interpretation, *the village of* " *comfort*, at firſt ſight looks to be, מקום על כרמלי, " *a place higher than mount Carmel.*" And *Nonnus* on *John* vi. 59. calls it, βαθυκρηπιδι καφαρναυμ, which the interpreter renders, the land of *Capernaum founded on high.* But notwithſtanding all this, *ſhalt be brought down to hell*; meaning, it ſhould be attended with very humbling providences, be reduced to a very low condition, ſee *Iſa.* xiv. 15. be deſtroyed and laid waſte, as a city, as it was in the times of *Veſpaſian*; and the inhabitants of it, not only puniſhed with temporal, but everlaſting deſtruction; *for if the mighty works which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.* The ſenſe of theſe words, is the ſame with that of ver. 22. only this may be obſerved, that whereas *Capernaum* was ſuperior in privileges and advantages, than the other cities, and yet acted the vile and ungrateful part it did; ſo that its impenitence and unbelief, were the more aggravated; hence a ſtill viler ſett of men are pitched upon, even the men of *Sodom*, to make the compariſon of them with: for as wicked as the men of that place were, who were ſo infamous for their unnatural luſts; yet if they had enjoyed ſuch a miniſtry as Chriſt's, and had had ſuch miracles wrought among them, for the atteſtation of the doctrines taught them, in all human probability, they would have repented of their flagitious crimes; at leaſt in an external way, in ſuch a manner as to have eſcaped that dreadful judgment, which laid their city, and ſeveral adjacent ones in aſhes; and ſo would have continued a city until this day. The phraſe *remained*, is *Jewiſh*, and is uſed of *Sodom* by the *Rabbins*, who ſay [o], that "*Abraham* was *ninety nine* " years of age when he was circumciſed, and then " was the overthrow of *Sodom*; which was *fifty one* " years, after the generation of the diviſion (of the " people and languages,) and near *fifty two* years; " but *Zoar remained* one year, אחר ישוב סדום, " *after*

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[l] Chorogr. Cent. in Matth. p. 84. Vol. 2.

[m] Philocalia, p. 109.

[n] Itinerarium, p. 37.

[o] Juchaſin, fol. 8. 1.

“ *after Sodom remained.*” According to the *Jews*, it ſtood but fifty-two years at moſt [p]: and they have a notion, that *Sodom* and *Gomorrha* will be built again in the future ſtate [q], or world to come, the times of the Meſſiah.

Ver. 24. *But I ſay unto you*, &c.] *Capernaum*, and the inhabitants thereof, as before, to *Chorazin* and *Bethſaida*. *It ſhall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom, in the day of judgment, than for thee*: tho' the puniſhment of the men of *Sodom* will be very great, their iniquities being horridly dreadful and enormous, yet more eaſy to be born than the vengeance, which, in the laſt and general judgment, will fall upon ſuch, who have had the means of grace, and have deſpiſed them; eſpecially ſuch as had the perſonal preſence, miniſtry, and miracles of Chriſt among them, as the *Capernaites* had. Such a way of expreſſing and ſetting forth the ſeverer puniſhment of others, by that of *Sodom*, is not unuſual in the Old Teſtament; ſee *Lam.* iv. 6. nor in *Jewiſh* writers, who ſay [r], that “ the *Iſraelites* were fit
“ for, or deſerved, לעונש יותר חמור מעונש סדום,
“ *a far more heavy puniſhment, than the puniſhment of*
“ *Sodom*; becauſe they abounded with prophets,
“ riſing early, and ſending them, but they did not
“ hearken; whereas *Sodom* had no hands ſtayed
“ on her, or prophets to warn them.”

Ver. 25. *At that time Jeſus anſwered, and ſaid*, &c.] The *time* referr'd to is, when the diſciples returned to him, and gave him an account of the ſucceſs of their miniſtry, *Luke* x. 21. who ſay nothing of the converſion of ſinners, but of the ſpirits being ſubject to them; and may alſo refer to the ſeveral things ſpoken of in the context: it was at that time when Chriſt ſpoke to the multitude about *John*, and the excellency of his miniſtry, which yet was ineffectual to great numbers, who for a while attended on it; and when he took notice to the people, how he himſelf, as well as *John*, was rejected and vilified by the *Phariſees*, and received by publicans and ſinners; and when he upbraided *Chorazin*, *Bethſaida*, and *Capernaum*, for their impenitence and unbelief: taking occaſion from hence, he *anſwered and ſaid*; an *Hebrew* way of ſpeaking, uſed when nothing goes before, to which what is ſaid can be an anſwer; ſee *Job* iii. 2. *I thank thee, O father, Lord of heaven and earth*. This is an addreſs to God, by way of thankſgiving; glorifying and praiſing him, confeſſing and acknowledging his wiſdom, power, grace, and goodneſs, diſcovered in the things he after mentions: ſo far was he from being diſcouraged and dejected at the poor ſucceſs of the ſeventy; at his ill treatment by the *Phariſees*; and at the general impenitence and unbelief of the cities, where he preached, and wrought his miracles; that he is abundantly thankful, and admires the diſtinguiſhing grace of God in the calling of a few in thoſe places. This addreſs is made to God as a *father*, as his father, his own father; for he was the only-begotten of him, and dearly beloved by him: this epithet he makes uſe of, to ſhew the near relation he ſtood in to him, and the freedom he could uſe with him: he alſo addreſſes him as *the Lord of heaven and earth*; he being the maker, upholder, and governor of both, and which he fills with his preſence; the one is his throne, and the other is his footſtool. This he mentions to ſhew the ſovereignty of his father, in the converſion of men; and that it was not for want of power in him, that there were no more wrought upon under the miniſtry of *John*, himſelf, and his diſciples. The things he expreſſes his thankfulneſs for, follow; *becauſe thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe and prudent*. The *things* he means, are the doctrines of the Goſpel; ſuch as reſpect himſelf, his perſon, as God, and the ſon of God; his office, as Meſſiah, Redeemer, and Saviour; and the bleſſings of grace, righteouſneſs, and ſalvation by him. The perſons from whom theſe things were hid, are *the wiſe and prudent*; in things worldly, natural, and civil; men of great parts and learning, of a large compaſs of knowledge, having a conſiderable ſhare of ſagacity, penetration, and wiſdom; or, at leaſt, who were wiſe and prudent in their own conceits, as were the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, and the ſchools of *Hillell* and *Shammai*, the two famous doctors of that day: and indeed the people of the *Jews* in common were ſo; who thus applaud themſelves at the eating of the paſſover every year, and ſay, כלנו חכמים כלנו נבונים כלנו יודעים את התורה, *we are all wiſe, we are all prudent, we all underſtand the law* [s]; the ſame is elſewhere [t] ſaid, of all *Iſrael*; in their opinion they were ſo, yet the things of the Goſpel are hidden from them. God may be ſaid to *hide* theſe things, when either he does not afford the outward revelation of the Goſpel; or, if he does, it is given forth in parables; or he does not give along with it the light of his ſpirit and grace, but leaves men to their own darkneſs and blindneſs; ſo that they cannot ſee, perceive, and underſtand the beauty, glory, excellency, and ſuitableneſs of the doctrines of it. Now when Chriſt confeſſes this, or gives thanks to God for it, it is a declaration that God has done ſo, and denotes his acquieſcence in it; and is not properly a thankſgiving for that; but rather, that foraſmuch as he has thought fit, in his infinite wiſdom, to take ſuch a method, he has been pleaſed to make a revelation of theſe things to others: *and haſt revealed them unto babes*; fooliſh ones, comparatively ſpeaking, who have not thoſe natural parts, learning, and knowledge others have, that wiſdom and prudence in worldly and civil things; and are ſo in their own account, and in the eſteem of the world; and who are as babes, helpleſs, defenceleſs, and impotent of themſelves, to do, or ſay any thing that is ſpiritually good, and are ſenſible of the ſame: now to ſuch ſouls God reveals the covenant of his grace, Chriſt, and all the bleſſings of grace in him, the myſteries of the Goſpel, and the unſeen glories of another world. The veil of darkneſs and ignorance is removed from them; ſpiritual ſight is given them; theſe things are ſet before them; they ſee a glory and ſuitableneſs in them; their deſires are raiſed after them; their affections are ſet on them; their hearts are impreſſed with them; and they are helped to view their intereſt in them. The *Jews* themſelves have a notion, that in the days of the Meſſiah, children and babes ſhall have knowledge of divine things. “ Says *Simeon ben Jochai* [u], it is
“ not the pleaſure of God that wiſdom ſhould be
“ ſo revealed to the world; but when it is near the
“ days of the Meſſiah, even רביי דעלמא, *little*
“ *children*, or the *babes that are in the world*, ſhall
“ find out the hidden things of wiſdom, and know
“ thereby the ends, and the computations of times;
“ and at that time it ſhall be revealed to all:” and there is more truth in what they own elſewhere [w], than they themſelves are aware of, when they ſay, that “ from the day that the temple was deſtroyed,

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[p] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 11. 2. & Gloſſ. in ib. Jarchi in Gen. xix. 20.

[q] Shemot Rabba, §. 15. fol. 101. 3.

[r] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 82. 1.

[s] Haggada Shel Peſach, p. 5. Ed. Ritangel.

[t] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 135. 1.

[u] Zohar in Gen. fol. 74. 1.

[w] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 12. 2.

“ prophecy has been taken away from the prophets, and given לשוטים ולתינוקות, *to fools* “ *and babes*.”

Ver. 26. *Even ſo, father, for ſo it ſeemed good in thy ſight.*] Or *ſo is the good will*, or *pleaſure before thee*: thus, יהי רצון מלפניך, *let it be the good will before thee*, or *in thy ſight, O Lord*, is a phraſe often to be met with in the *Jews* forms of prayer[x]. Here the word deſigns the ſovereign counſel and purpoſe of God, to which, and to which only, our Lord refers the different diſpenſations of God towards the ſons of men: this is a reaſon which ought to ſatisfy every one, and is better than ten thouſand others that can be thought of, or deviſed by men. This difference among men, with reſpect to the Goſpel-revelation, cannot be owing to natural ſagacity, prudence, and penetration; for theſe things are with thoſe from whom it is hid; nor to any worthineſs in thoſe to whom it is revealed; for they are the poor, the baſe, the fooliſh things of this world, and even things that are not; nor to any foreſight of their making a better uſe and improvement of ſuch a revelation, but to the good-will and pleaſure of God only.

Ver. 27. *All things are delivered unto me of my father*, &c.] This is to be underſtood of Chriſt, as mediator; for, as God, nothing was delivered to him; he had all things, all perfections, power, and glory his father has; and is to be conſidered in the utmoſt extent: all perſons are delivered to him, angels and men; good angels are delivered to him, to be confirmed in him, as their head, and to be made uſe of by him; ſpirits, evil ſpirits, which were ſubject to his diſciples, are under him, and at his command, and diſpoſal; and their ſubjection to his diſciples, is owing to his power over them, which he communicated to them; all the elect of God are delivered to him, to be kept and ſaved by him; all the babes and little ones, to whom it was the father's will to reveal the myſteries of grace, were his care and charge; all power in heaven, and in earth, are given unto him; and all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge are hid with him, which are diſtributed to any of the ſons of men; all the bleſſings of grace, and the promiſes of the everlaſting covenant, and all the glory and happineſs of his people, are put into his hands: *and no man knoweth the ſon, but the father*; the tranſcendent glories and perfections of his nature, as the ſon of God; nor the whole of his work and office, as mediator; or all that is committed to his charge, as ſuch; all that he was to do, and ſuffer, for his people; all that he had done for them, and ſhould communicate to, and beſtow upon them. *Neither knoweth any man the father, ſave the ſon*; his eſſence and glory, his mind and will, his purpoſes and decrees, his counſels and covenant; the grace and love of his heart to his choſen people; what he has prepared and laid up for them, and will make them partakers of to all eternity; *and he to whomſover the ſon will reveal him*; both himſelf, and his father, and the grace and glory of each, which he does by his Spirit; who is a Spirit of wiſdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; and which entirely depends on his own ſovereign will and pleaſure.

Ver. 28. *Come unto me*, &c.] Chriſt having ſignified, that the knowledge of God, and the myſteries of grace, is only to be come at thro' him; and that he has all things relating to the peace, comfort, happineſs, and ſalvation of men in his hands, kindly invites and encourages ſouls to *come* unto him for the ſame: by which is meant, not a local coming, or a coming to hear him preach; for ſo his hearers, to whom he more immediately directed his ſpeech, were come already; and many of them did, as multitudes may, and do, in this ſenſe, come to Chriſt, who never knew him, nor receive any ſpiritual benefit by him: nor is it a bare coming under the ordinances of Chriſt, ſubmiſſion to baptiſm, or an attendance at the Lord's ſupper, the latter of which was not yet inſtituted; and both may be performed by men, who are not yet come to Chriſt: but it is to be underſtood of believing in Chriſt, the going out of the ſoul to him, in the exerciſe of grace on him, of deſire after him, love to him, faith and hope in him: believing in Chriſt, and coming to him, are terms ſynonymous, *John* vi. 35. Thoſe who come to Chriſt aright, come as ſinners, to a full, ſuitable, able, and willing Saviour; venture their ſouls upon him, and truſt in him for righteouſneſs, life, and ſalvation, which they are encouraged to do, by this kind invitation; which ſhews his willingneſs to ſave, and his readineſs to give relief to diſtreſſed minds. The perſons invited, are not *all* the individuals of mankind, but with a reſtriction, *all ye that labour, and are heavy laden*; meaning, not theſe who are labouring in the ſervice of ſin and ſatan, are laden with iniquity, and inſenſible of it: theſe are not weary of ſin, nor burden'd with it; nor do they want, or deſire, any reſt for their ſouls: but ſuch who groan, being burdened with the guilt of ſin upon their conſciences, and are preſſed down with the inſupportable yoke of the law, and the load of human traditions; and have been labouring till they are weary, in order to obtain peace of conſcience, and reſt for their ſouls, by the obſervance of theſe things, but in vain. Theſe are encouraged to come to him, lay down their burdens at his feet, look to, and lay hold by faith on his perſon, blood, righteouſneſs, and ſacrifice; when they ſhould enjoy that true ſpiritual conſolation, which could never be attained to by the works of the law. *And I will give you reſt*; ſpiritual reſt here, peace of conſcience, eaſe of mind, tranquillity of ſoul, through an application of pardoning grace, a view of free juſtification by the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and full atonement of ſin by his ſacrifice; and eternal reſt hereafter, in *Abraham*'s boſom, in the arms of Jeſus, in perfect and uninterrupted communion with Father, Son, and Spirit. The *Jews* ſay[y], that מנוחת תורה, *the law is reſt*; and ſo explain *Gen.* xlix. 15. *Pſ.* xxiii. 2. *Dan.* xii. 13. of it: but a truly ſenſible ſinner enjoys no reſt, but in Chriſt; it is like *Noah*'s dove, which could find no reſt for the ſoles of its feet, until it returned to the ark; and they themſelves expect perfect reſt in the days of the Meſſiah, and call his world מנוחה, *reſt*[z].

Ver. 29. *Take my yoke upon you*, &c.] The phraſe is *Rabbinical*. The *Jewiſh* doctors often ſpeak[a] of עול מלכות שמים, *the yoke of the kingdom of heaven*, and of perſons taking it upon them; and which they exhort to, and expreſs in much ſuch language as here[b]; קבילו עלייכו עול מלכותא קדישא, *take upon you the yoke of the holy kingdom*, every day. They diſtinguiſh this from the yoke of the law, and ſay[c], “ a man muſt firſt take upon him the *yoke* “ of the kingdom of heaven, and after that take “ upon him the *yoke* of the commandment.” Their ſenſe I take to be this, that a man muſt firſt make a profeſſion of his faith in the God of *Iſrael*, and then live conformably to his law: agreeable to this, Chriſt exhorts ſuch perſons who come to him for reſt and happineſs, to profeſs their faith in him, to embrace the doctrines of the Goſpel, to ſubmit to his ordinances, and to walk according to thoſe laws, commands, and orders, which he, as king of ſaints, has made, and requires obedience to: ſo thoſe who come to him for life, and believe in him, as the Saviour of their ſouls, tho' they are not to truſt in, and depend upon any duties performed by them; yet they are not to ſit ſtill, or lay aſide the performance of good works, or live a licentious courſe of life, but are always to be doing the will and work of their Lord. And this he calls *his yoke*, in diſtinction from the yoke of the law of *Moſes*, and of the traditions of the elders. *And learn of me, for I am meek, and lowly in heart:* reſpect ſeems to be had to *Zech*. ix. 9. where ſuch characters as theſe are given of the Meſſiah. The meekneſs, humility, and lowlineſs of Chriſt appear in his aſſumption of human nature; in his ſubjection to his father; in the whole of his deportment and converſation among men; in his ſubmiſſion to the ordinance of baptiſm; in the whole courſe of his obedience to God, and in his ſufferings and death: and he is to be imitated herein, by all his followers, who may learn many excellent things from his example, as well as from his doctrine; and particularly, that whereas, tho' he was ſo great a perſon, yet condeſcended to perform every duty with readineſs and chearfulneſs, his diſciples ſhould not think it below them to conform to every ordinance of his, to every branch of his will; for he has ſet them an example, that they ſhould tread in his ſteps, and walk even as he has walked. There never was ſuch an inſtance of humility, and lowlineſs of mind, as Chriſt; nor is there any example ſo worthy of our imitation as his. The *Jews* have a ſaying [d], "for "ever let a man ענוותו כהילל, *be meek as Hillell*, "and let him not be wrathful as *Shammai*:" which two men were preſidents of their univerſities about the times of Chriſt. But our Lord ſays, *learn of me*, not of *Hillell*, or any of your doctors, *and ye ſhall find reſt unto your ſouls*; referring to *Jer*. vi. 16. and which ſhews the reſt he ſpeaks of, in the preceding verſe, to be not a corporal, but a ſpiritual one; and which is to be enjoyed *in*, though not *for* the obſervance of Chriſt's commands; whoſe *ways are ways of pleaſantneſs, and all* whoſe *paths are peace.*

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[x] Seder Tephillot, fol. 4. 2 & 5. 1. & paſſim. Ed. Amſterdam.

[y] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 39. 3.

[z] Ib. fol. 150. 2.

[a] T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 4. 1. Bab. Beracot, fol. 61. 2. Zohar in Lev. fol. 46. 4. Caphtor, fol. 44. 2. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 2, 2.

[b] Zohar in Num. fol. 51. 2. Caphtor, fol. 48. 2.

[c] Miſn. Beracot, c. 2. §. 2. T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 4. 2.

Ver. 30. *For my yoke is eaſy, and my burden is light.*] Chriſt calls a profeſſion of faith in him, and ſubjection to his ordinances, a *yoke*, in alluſion to the law of *Moſes*, and in diſtinction from it; and a *burden*, with reſpect to the very heavy ones the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* laid upon the ſhoulders of the people, obliging them to a ſtrict obſervance of them; tho' of a different nature from either of them; *for his commandments are not grievous*, hard and heavy to be born, as theirs were, but *eaſy and light*: not that they are ſo to unregenerate men, or are eaſily performed by the ſtrength of nature, and power of mens free-will; but they are good and amiable, and lovely in their own nature, and are chearfully complied with, and abundance of ſpiritual pleaſure and delight is enjoyed in them by believers, when they have the preſence of God, the aſſiſtance of his ſpirit, and the diſcoveries of his love. Moreover, the commands of Chriſt, and the ordinances of the Goſpel, ar eſo in compariſon of the law of *Moſes*; which required perfect obedience, but gave no ſtrength to perform, and threatned with condemnation and death, in caſe of the leaſt failure; and of the numerous, and ſome very ſevere rites and uſages of the ceremonial law; and of the bulky and heavy traditions of the elders, and ordinances of men.

## CHAP. XII.

Ver. 1. AT *that time Jeſus went on the ſabbath-day thro' the corn*, &c.] That is, the corn-fields, as the other Evangeliſts expreſs it. It being on a ſabbath-day, it is very probable, that Chriſt and his diſciples were going to ſome publick place of worſhip, the way to which lay through ſome fields of corn, which were now ripe: for *Luke* ſays, it was on *the ſecond ſabbath after the firſt*, or rather *the firſt ſabbath after the ſecond*; that is, the firſt ſabbath after the ſecond day of the paſſover, when the ſheaf of the firſt-fruit was offered, and harveſt was begun. *And his diſciples were an hungred*; it being in the morning before they had broke their faſt; and this circumſtance is mentioned, to ſhew the reaſon of the following action, and to excuſe it: at which the *Phariſees* were ſo much offended, and of which they accuſed them, as having done what was very criminal: *and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat*; *Luke* adds, *rubbing them in their hands*; and ſo here in the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions, 'tis rendered, *they began to rub*: as they paſſed along, they plucked off the ears of corn, either barley or wheat, and rubbed them in their hands, to get the grain clear of the huſk, or beard, and eat them; contenting themſelves with ſuch mean and unprepared food, when the *Jews* on that day fed on the beſt of dainties [e].

Ver. 2. *But when the Phariſees ſaw it*, &c.] Who went along with him, or followed him, being employed to make obſervation on his words and actions, *they ſaid unto him*; *Luke* ſays, *unto them*, the diſciples: it ſeems, they took notice of this action both to Chriſt and his diſciples, and firſt ſpoke of it to the one, and then to the other, or to both together: *behold thy diſciples do that which it is not lawful to do upon the ſabbath-day!* they mention it with aſtoniſhment, and indignation. What they refer to, is not their walking on the ſabbath-day: this they might do, according to their canons, provided they did not exceed two thouſand cubits, which were a ſabbath-day's journey [f]: nor was it their paſſing thro' the corn-fields; though, according to them [g], "it was not lawful for a man to viſit his gardens, "ושדותיו, *or his fields*, on the ſabbath-day, to ſee "what they want, or how the fruits grow; for "ſuch walking is to do his own pleaſure." But this they knew was not the caſe of Chriſt, and his diſciples, who were not proprietors of theſe fields: nor was it merely their plucking the ears of corn, and rubbing and eating them, which were not their own, but another man's; for this, according to the law, in *Deut*. xxiii. 25. was lawful to be done: but what offended the *Phariſees* was, that it was done on a ſabbath-day, it being, as they interpret it, a ſervile work, and all one as reaping; though, in the law juſt mentioned, it is manifeſtly diſtinguſhed from it. Their rule is [h], "he that reaps (on the ſab-"bath-day) ever ſo little, is guilty (of ſtoning) הוא."

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[d] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 30. 2.

[e] Vid. Maimon. Hilch. Sabbat, c. 30. §. 7, 8, 9, 10.

[f] Ib. c. 27. §. 1.

[g] R. Moſes Kotzenſis Mitzvot Tora prec. neg. 65.

[h] Maimon. Hilch. Sabbat, c. 8. §. 3. & 7. 1.

" ותולש תולדה קוצר הוא, and *plucking of ears of* " *corn is a derivative of reaping*;" and is all one as it's primitive, and puniſhable with the ſame kind of death, if done preſumptuouſly: ſo *Philo* the *Jew* obſerves [i], that the reſt of the ſabbath not only reached to men, bond and free, and to beaſts, but even to trees, and plants; and that ȣ ερνος ȣ κλαδου, αλλ' ȣδε πεταλον εφειται τεμειν, *it was not lawful to cut a plant, or branch, or ſo much as a leaf*, on a ſabbath-day: and it may be what might make this offence of the diſciples the more henious, was, that they plucked theſe ears, and eat them, and ſo broke their faſt before morning-prayer; for a man might not eat any thing on a ſabbath-day until morning-prayers were ended in the ſynagogue, nor indeed on any other day; for they uſed not to eat bread till after they had offered the daily ſacrifice; which was about the third hour of the day, or nine o'clock in the morning; nor did they eat till the fourth hour, or ten o'clock [k].

Ver. 3. *But he ſaid unto them, have ye not read*, &c.] If they had not read the ſcriptures, they were very unfit perſons either to be teachers, or cenſurers of others, and muſt have been very ſlothful and negligent; and if they had, they could not but have obſerved the caſe of *David*, which Chriſt produces in vindication of his diſciples: *what David did when he was an hungred*; which was the caſe of the diſciples, and is therefore mentioned; it being alſo the circumſtance which could, and did excuſe what was done by *David* and his men: and the *Jews* themſelves own, that in caſe of hunger the ſhew-bread might be eaten, by thoſe that were not prieſts; not only that which was removed from the table, but that which was upon it; yea, even when there was none to put in its room [l]; and that *David* was in the utmoſt diſtreſs, and therefore deſired it, and it was granted him on that account. They repreſent him as thus ſaying to the prieſt [m], "when he found " there was none but ſhew-bread, give it me, that we " may not die with hunger; שספק נפשות דוחה שבת, " *for danger of life drives away the ſabbath*;" which perfectly agrees with our Lord's argument, and juſtifies the apoſtles conduct: and this was not a ſingle fact of *David*'s, but of others alſo; *and they that were with him*; for tho' in 1 *Sam*. xxi. 1. he is ſaid to be *alone, and no man with him*; yet this muſt be underſtood either comparatively, having but very few with him, and which were as none, conſidering his dignity; or thus, though none came with him to *Ahimelech*, pretending to the prieſt, he had a ſecret affair of the king's to tranſact; and therefore had left his ſervants in a certain place, and deſires bread for himſelf and them; concerning whom, the prieſt and he diſcourſes, as may be ſeen in the place referr'd to: ſo that tho' no man was with him at the prieſt's houſe, yet there were ſome with him, and who partook with him in eating of the ſhew-bread.

Ver. 4. *How he entred into the houſe of God*, &c.] Not the temple, which was not then built; but the tabernacle, which was then at *Nob*, the city of the prieſt's, and which probably adjoined to *Ahimelech*'s houſe: *and did eat the ſhew-bread*; for that this is meant by the hallowed bread, in 1 *Sam*. xxi. 6. is certain; though *R. Joſeph Kimchi* [n] thinks it was the bread of the thank-offering; to which *R. Levi ben Gerſom* [o] ſeems to incline: but the general ſenſe of the *Jewiſh* doctors [p] is, that it was the ſhew-bread; and which is very clear from that text, and is rightly affirmed by Chriſt; *which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the prieſts*; ſee *Lev*. xxiv. 9. and ſo the *Jews* ſay that this bread אסור לזרים, *is forbidden to ſtrangers* [q]; that is, to any but the prieſts, which, after the burning of the frankincenſe, was divided equally among them: that courſe of prieſts that came into the ſervice had ſix cakes, and that which went out ſix; tho' the high-prieſt had a right to half himſelf, but he did not uſe to take it, it being judged not to his honour to do ſo [r]. No hint is here given, nor in the hiſtory, in 1 *Sam*. xxi. that it was on the ſabbath-day that *David* came to *Ahimelech*, and eat the ſhew-bread; but this is obſerved, and diſputed, by the *Jewiſh* writers. Some indeed are in a doubt about it; but others [s] readily give into it, that it was on the ſabbath-day, which he choſe to flee in, for the greater ſafety and preſervation of his life: and indeed it ſeems reaſonable it ſhould be on that day; ſince on that day only the ſhew-bread was removed from the table, and other loaves put in the room. One of their writers [t] ſays, " that ſhew-bread was not to be eaten, but on " the day, and night of the ſabbath day, and " on the going out of the ſabbath-day; and on " the going out of the ſabbath *David* came there." Now our Lord's argument ſtands thus, that if *David*, a holy, good man, and the men that were with him, who were men of religion and conſcience, when in great diſtreſs, through hunger, eat of the ſhew-bread, which was unlawful for any to eat of but prieſts, the high-prieſt himſelf aſſenting to it; then it could not be criminal in his diſciples, when an hungred, to pluck, rub, and eat a few ears of corn, which were lawful for any man to eat, even tho' it was on the ſabbath-day: and for the further vindication of them, he adds,

Ver. 5. *Or have ye not read in the law*, &c.] *Numb*. xxviii. 9. by which law the prieſts were obliged, every ſabbath-day, to offer up two lambs for a burnt-offering; to which were annexed many ſervile works, as killing the ſacrifice, flaying it, cutting it in pieces, and laying it on the altar, cutting of wood, and putting that in order, and kindling the fire: from all which, it might be obſerved, *how, that on the ſabbath-days, the prieſts in the temple profane the ſabbath, and are blameleſs*. There were many things, which, according to the *Jewiſh* canons, the prieſts might do on the ſabbath-day; particularly they might ſlay the ſacrifice: it was a rule with them, דחתה שחוטה את שבת, *that ſlaying drives away the ſabbath* [u]. They might alſo knead, make, and bake the ſhew-bread on the ſabbath-day: their general rule was, as *R. Akiba* ſays, that what was poſſible to be done on the evening of the ſabbath, did not drive away the ſabbath; but what was not poſſible to be done on the ſabbath-eve, did drive away the ſabbath [w]: ſo they might kill the paſſover, ſprinkle its blood, wipe its inwards, and burn the fat on the ſabbath-day [x], with many other things. What exculpated theſe men, was, that what they did was done *in the temple*, and for the ſervice of it, upon which an emphaſis is put; and agrees with their canons, which ſay, that there is no prohibition in the ſanctuary; איסור שבות במקדש התר הוא, *that which is forbidden*

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[i] De Vita Moſis, l. 2. p. 657. [k] Vid. Targum in Eccl. x. 17. Maimon. Hilch. Tephilla, c. 6. §. 4. [l] R. David Kimchi in 1 Sam. xxi. 5. [m] Laniado Cli Jaker, fol. 227. 2. [n] Apud R. David Kimchi in 1 Sam. xxi. 6. [o] In ib. [p] T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 95. 2. R. David Kimchi, Abarbinel & Laniado in 1 Sam. xxi. 6. [q] Laniado & Abarbinel in ib. [r] Maimon. Hilch. Tamidin, c. 4. §. 12. 14. [s] Bemidbar Rabba Paraſh 23. fol. 231. 9. Laniado Cli Jaker, fol. 226. 4. & 227. 2, 3, 4. & Jelammedenu in ib. [t] R. Iſaiah in 1 Sam. xxi. 5. [u] T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 72. 2. [w] Miſn. Menachot, c. 11. §. 3. [x] Miſn. Peſachim, c. 6. §. 1. Maimon. Peſach. c. 1. §. 18.

*bidden to be done on the ſabbath, is lawful to be done in the ſanctuary*[y]: and whereas it might be objected to the diſciples of Chriſt, that they were not prieſts; and what they did was not in the temple, but in the fields; to this it is replied, in the following words;

Ver. 6. *But I ſay unto you,* &c.] Who Chriſt knew would be ready to object, as above, and therefore prevents them, by ſaying, *that in this place is one greater than the temple*; meaning himſelf, who was the Lord and Proprietor of the temple, and in his human nature the antitype of it; ſee *John* ii. 19. and was infinitely more ſacred than that. Some copies read μειζον, *ſomething greater*; referring either to the human nature of Chriſt, in which the Godhead dwells bodily, and ſo infinitely greater than the temple; or to the health of his diſciples, which was in danger, thro' hunger; or to the miniſtry of the apoſtles, which, by ſatisfying nature, they were more capable of performing; either of which was of more moment than the ſacrifices and ſervice of the temple. Chriſt's argument is, that if the temple, and the ſervice of it, excuſed the prieſts from blame, in doing things in it on the ſabbath-day, which otherwiſe might not be done; then much more might his preſence, who was greater than the temple, excuſe his diſciples from blame in this action of rubbing and eating the ears of corn; which was done to ſatisfy hunger, and to render them the more capable of performing their miniſterial function; and which was of more importance than the ſervice of the prieſts.

Ver. 7. *But if ye had known what this meaneth,* &c.] The paſſage of ſcripture in *Hoſ.* vi. 6. *I will have mercy, and not ſacrifice*; of the ſenſe of which, ſee the note on ch. ix. 13. *ye would not have condemned the guiltleſs.* Our Lord taxes the *Phariſees* both with ignorance of the ſcriptures, in which they pretended to be very knowing, and took upon them to be the interpreters of; and with inhumanity, for condemning innocent perſons, the apoſtles, for rubbing a few ears of corn, for the refreſhment of nature; which they would never have done, had they underſtood the word, and will of God; who prefers acts of humanity, compaſſion, and mercy, to the obſervance of rites and ceremonies; or had they the common affections of human nature, and thoſe bowels of compaſſion which one man ought to ſhew to another.

Ver. 8. *For the ſon of man is Lord even of the ſabbath-day.*] By *the ſon of man* is meant, not any man, as ſome have thought; for no mere man is Lord of any law, moral or ritual, natural or poſitive; or has a power of diſpoſing of it, and diſpenſing with it at pleaſure; but Chriſt himſelf; which is the conſtant ſenſe of this phraſe in the New Teſtament, and is a character of the Meſſiah in the Old, *Dan.* vii. 13. who, as he was the inſtitutor of the ſabbath among the *Jews*, that being a ritual, and of mere poſitive inſtitution, could diſpenſe with it, and even abrogate it at his pleaſure. The *Jews* ſo far agree to this, that he that commanded the law of the ſabbath, could diſpenſe with it: they ſay[z], that "the day on which *Jericho* was taken was the ſabbath-day; and that tho' they ſlew and burnt on the ſabbath-day, מי שצוה על השבת צוה לחלל שבת, *he that commanded the obſervation of the ſabbath, commanded the prophanation of it.*" And ſince Chriſt is greater than the temple, and has all the perfections of the divine nature in him, is equal to the father in power and glory; and even as mediator, has all power in heaven and earth given him; ſo as he is Lord of all other things, he is of the ſabbath, and has a power of diſpenſing with it, and even of aboliſhing it; ſee *Col.* ii. 16, 17. and ſince the Lord of the ſabbath, had a power of diſpenſing with it, and made uſe of it in the caſes of *David* and his men, and of the prieſts in the temple formerly; the *Phariſees* ought not to think it ſtrange, that the ſon of man, who is eqaully Lord of the ſabbath, diſpenſed with it in his diſciples now.

Ver. 9. *And when he was departed thence,* &c.] From the corn fields, where the diſciples had plucked the ears of corn, and this converſation paſſed between Chriſt and the *Phariſees* about the violation of the ſabbath, *he went into their ſynagogue*; not on the ſame ſabbath-day, as one might be led to conclude from the account of this Evangeliſt, but *on another ſabbath*, as *Luke* expreſſes it, ch. vi. 6. He might indeed directly go into one of their ſynagogues the ſame day, where he and his diſciples ſeem to have been going, and ſtay in the city the week following; and then, as it is ſaid in *Mark* iii. 1. *he entered again into the ſynagogue*; not being afraid of the *Phariſees*, who ſought an advantage againſt him; nor deterr'd by them from doing good to men; and willing to take another opportunity of expoſing their ignorance and malice.

Ver. 10. *And behold, there was a man which had his hand withered,* &c.] Or *dry*; the juices were dried up, the nerves and ſinews contracted, ſo that it was of no manner of uſe to him: *Luke* ſays, it was his right hand, which was ſo much the worſe; and means not only his hand, but the whole arm. Such a caſe is mentioned in the *Talmud*[a], "it happened to one, שיבשה זרועו, *that his arm was dry*, or withered." *Jerom* ſays[b], in the Goſpel which the *Nazarenes* and *Hebionites* uſed, this man is ſaid to be a plaiſterer, and ſo might poſſibly come by his misfortune thro' his buſineſs; and being a man that got his bread by his hand-labour, the caſe was the more affecting. This account is introduced with a *behold*; it being remarkable that ſuch a caſe ſhould offer ſo opportunely, of ſhewing his divine power in healing ſuch a diſorder; and of his authority, as the ſon of man, over the ſabbath; and of putting to ſilence his enemies, the *Phariſees*: and who, upon ſeeing ſuch an object, put the following queſtion to him; *and they aſked him, ſaying, is it lawful to heal on the ſabbath-day?* and which was put, not for information ſake, as willing to be inſtructed in this point; for their determinations were, that healing was not lawful on ſuch a day; nor were any means to be made uſe of for that purpoſe: if a man received a cure accidentally, it was very well; but no methods were to be taken with intention: as for inſtance[c]; "if a man had an ailment in his throat, he might not gargle it with oil, but he might ſwallow a large quantity of oil, ואם נתרפא נתרפא, *and if he was healed, he was healed*, (*i. e.* it was very well, it was no breach of the ſabbath) they may not chew maſtick, nor rub the teeth with ſpice, on the ſabbath-day, בזמן שמתכוין לרפואה, *when it is intended for healing*; but if it is intended for the ſavour of his mouth, it is free." There are ſeveral things they allowed might be done on the ſabbath; but then they did not reckon them to come under the notion of healing. "Three[d] things *R. Iſhmael bar Joſe* ſaid he had heard from *R.*

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[y] Ib. §. 16. & Hilchot Sabbat, c. 21. §. 27.

[z] R. David Kimchi in Joſh. vi. 11.

[a] T. Hieroſ. Yoma, fol. 40. 1.

[b] In loc.

[c] Maimon. Hilchot Sabbat, c. 21. §. 24.

[d] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 84. 1. Vid. Miſn. Yoma, c. 8. §. 7.

“ *Matthia ben Charaſh*; they might let blood for the ſtrangury on the ſabbath-day; one that was bit by a mad dog, they might give him hog's liver to eat; and he that had an ailment in his mouth, they might put ſpice to it on the ſabbath-day: but the wiſe men ſay of theſe, that there is not in them משום רפואה, *any thing of medicine.*” Indeed, in caſe of extreme danger of life they did admit of the uſe of medicine, by the preſcription of a phyſician [e]. “Danger of life drives away the ſabbath; wherefore, if there is any danger in a ſick perſon, it is lawful to kindle a fire for him, *&c.* and they may kill, and bake, and boil: and though there may be no apparent danger, only a doubt of danger; as when one phyſician ſays there is a neceſſity, and another phyſician ſays there's none, they may profane the ſabbath for him.” Hence it is very clear with what view the *Phariſees* aſked Chriſt this queſtion; and that it was, as the Evangeliſt ſays, *that they might accuſe him*; either of cruelty and weakneſs, ſhould he anſwer in the negative, that either he was not able to heal the poor man before him, or wanted compaſſion; or ſhould he anſwer in the affirmative, as they expected, and act upon it, then they might have wherewith to charge him before the *ſanhedrim* as a violater of the ſabbath, and of their canons concerning it.

Ver. 11. *And he ſaid unto them*, &c.] Well knowing their intentions, and alſo their uſages and cuſtoms, which he was able to produce and object to them; in which, thro' covetouſneſs, they ſhewed more regard to their beaſts, than they did humanity to their fellow-creatures: *what man ſhall there be among you, that ſhall have one ſheep, and if it fall into a pit on the ſabbath-day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out?* Chriſt appeals to them in a caſe which was uſually done among them, and which, without delay, no man would ſcruple to do; tho' their preſent rule of direction, in ſuch a caſe, is this [f]: “if a beaſt fall into a ditch, or a pool of water, if food can be given it, where it is, they feed it till the going out of the ſabbath; but if not, bolſters and pillows may be brought, and put under it, and if it can come out, it may come out:” and which is elſewhere [g] a little differently expreſſed; “if a beaſt fall into a ditch, or pool of water, it is forbidden a man to bring it out with his hand; but if he can give it food where it is, it may be fed till the going out of the ſabbath:” which ſeems to have been made ſince the times of Chriſt, and in oppoſition to this obſervation of his.

Ver. 12. *How much then is a man better than a ſheep?* &c.] As a rational creature muſt be better, and more excellent, than an irrational one, more care is to be taken of, and more mercy ſhewn unto, the one, than the other: even the health of a man is preferable to the life of a beaſt; and if it is lawful to give food to a beaſt, and make uſe of means for its relief, and for the lifting it up out of a ditch, when fallen into it on the ſabbath-day; *wherefore it is lawful to do well on the ſabbath-days*, to men; to do acts of beneficence and humanity to them, among which muſt be reckoned healing of diſeaſes and infirmities: and particularly, if it is lawful to take a ſheep out of a ditch on the ſabbath-day, it muſt be right to reſtore to a man the uſe of his hand on ſuch a day; and eſpecially to one that gets his bread by his hand-labour, as it is very likely this man did. This was ſuch a ſtrong way of arguing, that the *Jews* could not well object to it; and it appears, that they were confounded and put to ſilence; for, as *Mark* obſerves, *they held their peace:* and indeed they allow of every thing to be done where life is in danger, tho' not otherwiſe: they ſay [h], “they may take care of the preſervation of life on the ſabbath; and if he is prepared for it, lo! this is praiſe-worthy, and there's no need to take a licence from the *ſanhedrim:* as when a man ſees a child fallen into the ſea, he may ſpread a net, and bring him out; and if he is prepared for it, lo! this is praiſe-worthy, and there is no need to take a licence from the *ſanhedrim*, tho' he was fiſhing: if he ſees a child fallen into a ditch, he may rake into the mud, and bring him out; and if he is prepared for it, lo! this is praiſe-worthy, and there is no need to take a licence from the *ſanhedrim*, though he had ſet a ladder ready.” It is ſaid of *Hillell* [i], that “he ſat by a window to hear the words of the living God, from the mouth of *Shemaia* and *Abtalion*; and they ſay that that day was the evening of the ſabbath, and the winter ſolſtice, and the ſnow deſcended from heaven; and when the pillar of the morning aſcended, (when it was day-light) *Shemaia* ſaid to *Abtalion*, brother *Abtalion*, all other days the houſe is light, but to-day it is dark, perhaps 'tis a cloudy day: they lift up their eyes, and ſaw the form of a man at the window; they went up, and found upon him ſnow the heighth of three cubits; they broke thro' and delivered him; and they waſhed him, and anointed him, and ſet him over againſt his dwelling, and ſaid, very worthy is this man להלל עליו את שבת *to profane the ſabbath for him.*” And if it was lawful to dig a man out of the ſnow, and do theſe ſeveral things for him on the ſabbath-day, why not cure a man of a withered hand, and eſpecially when done by a word ſpeaking, and without any labour?

Ver. 13. *Then ſaith he to the man*, &c.] That is, after *he had looked round about upon them*, to obſerve their countenances; and what anſwer they would make to his arguments; *and with anger* for their inhumanity and cruelty; *being grieved for the hardneſs of their hearts*, *i. e.* their unmercifulneſs to their fellow-creatures, and the ſtupidity and blindneſs of their minds, being ignorant of the ſcriptures, and of the ſabbath, the nature, uſe, and Lord of it; which things are obſerved by the Evangeliſt *Mark*; then, in a commanding authoritative way, almighty power going along with his word, he ſays to the man who ſtood forth before him, and the *Phariſees*, *ſtretch forth thine hand*, which was before contracted and ſhrivel'd up; *and he ſtretched it forth* with all the eaſe imaginable, and was not only able to do this, but to make uſe of it any way; *for it was reſtored whole like as the other*; his left hand, which had never been damaged. This was an inſtance of Chriſt's power; a proof of the lawfulneſs of healing on the ſabbath-day; and a rebuke to the *Phariſees* for their cruelty and uncharitableneſs. This man was an emblem of the inability of men to do any thing that is ſpiritually good, and of the power and efficacy of divine grace to enable perſons to ſtretch out their hands, and do things which they of themſelves are not equal to.

Ver. 14. *Then the Phariſees went out*, &c.] Of the ſynagogue, being, as *Luke* ſays, *filled with madneſs*, at the unanſwerableneſs of his arguments; and becauſe of the violation of the ſabbath, as they they thought; and, moſt of all, becauſe of the miracle wrought by him; and which was ſo glaring a proof of his being Lord of the ſabbath, and could not fail of creating him eſteem among the people: *and held a counſel againſt him, how they might deſtroy him. Mark* ſays, the counſel was held by them with the *Herodians*; of whom, ſee the note on *Matt.* xxii. 16. who, tho' they differed from them both in religion and politicks, yet might be thought very proper perſons to adviſe with about this matter; and eſpecially, as they might have a greater intereſt at court, than they had. Nor did they ſcruple to enter into ſuch a conſultation, tho' on the ſabbath-day, and about the taking away of the life of an innocent perſon; which ſhews what ſeared conſciences, and hard hearts they had, and how full of hypocriſy they were.

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[e] Kotſenſis Mitzvot Tora pr. neg. 65. Maimon. in Miſn. Sabbat, c. 18. §. 3.

[f] Maimon. Hilchot Sabbat, c. 25. §. 26.

[g] Kotſenſis Mitzvot Tora pr. neg. 65.

[h] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 84. 2.

[i] Ib. fol. 35. 2.

Ver. 15. *But when Jeſus knew it*, &c.] Their conſultation againſt him, as he did, not by any diſcovery made to him by men, but as the omniſcient God; *he withdrew himſelf from thence*; from the ſynagogue and city, where he was, to the ſea of *Galilee*, and his diſciples with him, as *Mark* obſerves; not through fear, but becauſe his time was not yet come, that he muſt ſuffer and die for his people; he had ſome other work to do firſt, and therefore rightly and wiſely provides for his ſafety. *And great multitudes followed him*; from *Galilee, Judea, Jeruſalem, Idumea*, and from beyond *Jordan*; and were joined by another multitude of people, who came from about *Tyre* and *Sidon*, as *Mark* relates; ſo that his departure was not ſo very private; nor was he forſaken by the common people, tho' the *Phariſees* were ſo offended with him. *And he healed them all*; that ſtood in need of healing, as many as had plagues and unclean ſpirits; practiſing agreeable to his doctrine, that it was lawful to do good on the ſabbath-day, and to heal the bodies, as well as the ſouls of men.

Ver. 16. *And charged them that they ſhould not make him known.*] This charge was given, either to the multitude that followed him, and were healed by him, that when they returned to the reſpective places from whence they came, they would not make it known to his enemies, where he was, and what he had done to them; being neither deſirous of popular applauſe and glory, nor willing to provoke them more, nor to fall into their hands as yet; or elſe, as *Mark* ſeems to intimate, to the unclean ſpirits, that they would not declare who he was, the ſon of God, they confeſſed him to be: and very likely it was given to both, and that they ſhould neither tell where he was, nor who he was; and this charge was a very ſevere one; for the word ſignifies a charge with threatnings, ſhould they not obſerve his orders.

Ver. 17. *That it might be fulfilled which was ſpoken by Eſaias the prophet, ſaying.*] *Iſ.* xlii. 1, 2, 3, 4. not that Chriſt gave the above charge with this view, that this paſſage in *Iſaiah* might have its accompliſhment: but this is an obſervation of the *Evangeliſt*, that what was now done by Chriſt, by his private departure from the *Phariſees*, being unwilling to irritate them more; by his preaching to the *Idumeans, Tyrians*, and *Sidonians*; by healing their diſeaſes, and ſhunning all oſtentation and popular applauſe; and prohibiting to tell who and where he was, was a fulfilling of this prophecy; in which the holy Spirit foreknowing the diſpoſition and actions of Chriſt, predicted them: which, when conſidered, muſt be looked upon as a very large proof of the truth of his being the Meſſiah. For that this prophecy belongs to the Meſſiah, is owned by the *Jews* themſelves[k].

Ver. 18. *Behold, my ſervant whom I have choſen*, &c.] Theſe are the words of God the father, ſpeaking to the church, concerning Chriſt, as mediator; who, as ſuch, is God's *ſervant*, employed by him, and obedient to him, in the work of man's ſalvation; and is a righteous, faithful, prudent, and diligent one; whom he, from all eternity, had *choſen* to this ſervice, and in the fulneſs of time ſent him to do it, and ſupported and upheld him in it; for 'tis *whom I uphold*, in the *Hebrew* text. *My beloved, in whom my ſoul is well pleaſed*; who always was the object of his love, not only as his own and only-begotten ſon, but as in his office-capacity, as mediator; in regard to which he was his *elect*, as it is in *Iſaiah*; and, as ſuch, he was always delighted in his perſon, well-pleaſed with his office, and the diſcharge of it; and which he declared more than once by a voice from heaven, as at his baptiſm, and at his transfiguration on the mount: *I will put my ſpirit upon him*; as he did without meaſure, whereby he was abundantly qualified for his whole work, and particularly for preaching the Goſpel, being richly anointed with gifts and graces, above his fellows; of which the deſcent of the holy Spirit upon him, as a dove, at his baptiſm, which immediately preceded his public miniſtry, was a ſymbol. *And he ſhall ſhew judgment unto the Gentiles*; meaning, not the general judgment, at the laſt day, which is committed to him; nor the laws of juſtice and equity; but the Goſpel, which is the produce of the God of judgment; beſt informs the judgment of men about the buſineſs of ſalvation; gives an account of the righteous procedure of God in juſtifying ſinners, by the righteouſneſs of his ſon; and teaches men to live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly: this Chriſt brought forth, and ſhewed, at this time, to the Heathens, the *Idumeans, Tyrians*, and *Sidonians*; who flocked unto him; whereby this part of the prophecy had its fulfilment: in the *Hebrew* 'tis, *he ſhall bring forth*; that is, out of his heart and mouth, and is the ſame as *ſhew* here.

Ver. 19. *He ſhall not ſtrive*, &c.] Or *contend* in a wrangling way, as the diſputers of this world do about words to no profit, and for the ſake of victory only, and popular applauſe, but ſhall chuſe rather to withdraw, than to carry on a controverſy to a great length, to little purpoſe; or, as men litigate a point in a court of judicature, where one is plaintiff, and the other defendant. In the *Hebrew* text it is, *he ſhall not cry*; he ſhall not act the part of a plaintiff; he ſhall not complain, or bring in any charge, or accuſation againſt any, but chuſe rather to ſuffer wrong, than to contend: thus צעקה ſignifies ſuch a cry, as is a complaint of injuſtice, *Iſ.* v. 7. and צועק, a plaintiff, one that brings an action againſt another[l]: but Chriſt did not ſo, he would not accuſe to the father, nor complain againſt his moſt implacable enemies, but left that to *Moſes*, in whom they truſted; *nor cry*, or, as in the *Hebrew* text, *lift up*; that is, his voice, in a clamorous way, uſing reviling and opprobrious language, or menaces and threatnings; but, on the contrary, he ſilently put up all abuſes, and patiently bore every affront, and behaved peaceably, quietly, committing himſelf and cauſe to a righteous God. *Neither ſhall any man hear his voice in the ſtreets*; or, as in the *Hebrew* text, *nor cauſe his voice to be heard in the ſtreet*: the ſenſe is the ſame, and the meaning is, that he ſought not worldly honour, popular applauſe, and to be ſeen of men; he did nothing in an oſtentatious way, ſaid nothing in his own commendation, was never heard to praiſe himſelf, and choſe that others ſhould be ſilent concerning him: for this does not ſo much regard the lowneſs of his voice, as if that was not ſo ſonorous as to be heard without doors, when he preached within, as his modeſt mein and ſuitable deportment; nor the places where he uſually miniſtred, which was ſometimes in the ſtreet, as well as in an houſe, or on a mountain, or by the ſea-ſide, or in the temple, and the ſynagogues. The *Ethiopic* verſion here is very wrong, *no man ſhall hear his voice in the ſynagogues*; for his voice was often heard there.

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[k] Targum & Kimchi in loc. Abarbinel Maſhmia Jeſhua, fol. 9. 1, 2. & 10. 1, 2. & 21. 2. & in Iſ. fol. 64. 3, 4. R. Iſaac Chizzuk Emuna, p. 299.

[l] Vid. Cocc. Heb. Lex. in rad. צעק.

Ver. 20. *A bruiſed reed ſhall he not break*, &c.] Various are the thoughts of interpreters, about what is meant by this, and by *the ſmoaking flax ſhall he not quench*. Some think the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* are deſigned, whoſe power Chriſt could eaſily cruſh, and their wrath and fury reſtrain, but would not, till the time of his vengeance was come. Others, that the publicans and ſinners are intended, of whoſe converſion and ſalvation there were more hope than of the Scribes and Phariſees; and which Chriſt greatly ſought after, and therefore cheriſhed and encouraged them in his miniſtry and converſation. Some are of opinion, that ſuch who have fallen into ſin, and are under great decays of grace, are meant, whom Chriſt has compaſſion on, ſuccours, and reſtores: but rather young converts, ſuch as are under firſt awakenings, are here pointed at; who, like to a *bruiſed reed*, or *broken* one, one that is in ſome meaſure broke, near being broken to pieces, are wounded in their ſpirits, have their hearts broken and contrite, under a ſenſe of their ſinfulneſs, vileneſs, weakneſs, and unworthineſs; whom Chriſt is ſo far from breaking and deſtroying, that he binds up their broken hearts, heals their wounds, and reſtores comforts to them: and who are like to *ſmoaking flax*, or, as the *Syriac* reads it, שרגא דמטפטף, *a ſmoaking lamp*; to which the *Arabic* and *Perſic* verſions agree; meaning the wick of the lamp, which being juſt lighted, ſeems ready to go out, having ſcarce any light, only a little fire in it, which makes it ſmoke: ſo theſe have but little light of knowledge, faith, and comfort, and a great deal of darkneſs and infirmity; only there's ſome warmth in their affections, which go upwards *like pillars of ſmoke, perfumed with frankincenſe*; and ſuch Chriſt is ſo far from neglecting, and putting out, that he blows up the ſparks of grace into a flame, and never utterly leaves the work, *till he ſends forth judgment* into *victory*; that is, till he ſends forth the Goſpel into their hearts, accompanied with his mighty power, in the light and comfort of it; which informs their judgments, enlightens their underſtandings, bows their wills, raiſes their affections, ſanctifies their ſouls, works effectually in them, under the influence of his ſpirit and grace, to the carrying on of the work of grace in them to the end; and making them victorious over all their enemies, and more than conquerors, thro' him that has loved them. The *Targum* of *Jonathan* paraphraſes the words thus; "the meek, who are as a bruiſed reed, " he will not break; and the poor, who are as an " obſcure lamp, he will not quench."

Ver. 21. *And in his name ſhall the Gentiles truſt.*] The former part of the text is omitted, *he ſhall not fail, nor be diſcouraged, till he have ſet judgment in the earth*; but is inſerted in *Munſter's Hebrew* Goſpel; and which ſome underſtand of the bruiſed reed, and ſmoaking flax, and others of Chriſt; the latter ſenſe is to be preferr'd. The paſſage, here cited, is ſomewhat different in *Iſaiah*; for there it is, *and the iſles ſhall wait for his law*; but the difference, at leaſt, in ſenſe, is not ſo great as it may appear at firſt ſight: for, איים, as *Grotius* obſerves, does not always ſignify *iſlands*, but nations, and countries, that are upon the continent, *Gen.* x. 5. and ſo may be rightly rendered here, the *Gentiles*, or *nations*; and by *the name* of Chriſt is meant his Goſpel: ſee *Acts* ix. 15. which *Iſaiah* calls his *law*; that is, his doctrine, the doctrine of righteouſneſs, life, and ſalvation by him, which is the ground and foundation of hope, and truſt in him; and they that wait for it, may be truly ſaid to hope, or truſt in it. This began to have its accompliſhment in the *Idumeans*, *Tyrians*, and *Sidonians*, now attending on the miniſtry of Chriſt; and has had a greater accompliſhment ſince; the Goſpel having been preached in the Gentile world, both upon the main land, and in the iſles afar off; whereby multitudes have been brought to hope, and believe in Chriſt, as their ſaviour and redeemer.

Ver. 22. *Then was brought unto him one poſſeſſed with a devil*, &c.] About this time, or ſome little time after, when he was returned from the ſea of *Galilee*, and was come into a certain houſe; ſee *Mark* iii. 19. *Matt.* xii. 46. and xiii. 1. ſome perſons brought him a demoniack, in compaſſion to the poſſeſſed man, and being perſuaded of the power of Chriſt to heal him, by the late cures he had performed. A like inſtance we have in ch. ix. 32, 33, 34. and *Luke* xi. 14, 15. which had a like effect upon the people, and was cavilled at by the *Phariſees* in much the ſame way; and which cavils were anſwered in much the ſame words; and yet the caſe is not the ſame; for that man was only dumb, but this both *blind and dumb*; not by birth, or thro' the defect of nature, or by any natural diſtemper that had attended him, but thro' the malice of ſatan, by divine permiſſion; his blindneſs, and dumbneſs, were the effects of his being poſſeſſed with a devil, who had deprived him of his ſight, and ſpeech. The word rendered *dumb*, ſignifies both deaf and dumb, and anſwers to the *Hebrew* word חרש, which ſometimes[m] is uſed of a deaf man only, who can ſpeak, but not hear; and often of one that can neither ſpeak, nor hear; which is the caſe of ſuch as are born deaf: it ſeems as if this man could hear, tho' he could not ſpeak; ſince no mention is made of his want of hearing, or of Chriſt's reſtoring it to him; for it follows, *and he healed him, inſomuch that the blind and dumb, both ſpake and ſaw.* This he did, not by making uſe of medicines, but by a word ſpeaking, diſpoſſeſſing ſatan; ſo that the cauſe of blindneſs and dumbneſs being removed, the effects ceaſed, and the man was reſtored to his ſight, and ſpeech, as before. He had his ſight to behold his ſaviour, and a tongue to praiſe his name: ſo when men are turned from ſatan unto God, and are delivered from his thraldom and bondage, they are brought into marvellous light, and put into a capacity of ſhewing forth the praiſes of God.

Ver. 23. *And all the people were amazed*, &c.] At the cure; it was ſuch an inſtance of divine power, and ſo glaring a proof, that the perſon who wrought it was more than a man, and muſt be the Meſſiah. This is to be underſtood of the greater part of the people, not of every individual, and of the common people only; for it had a different effect upon the *Phariſees*, as hereafter appears; but in theſe it not only produced admiration, but conviction, faith, and confeſſion: *and ſaid, is not this the ſon of David?* or the *Meſſiah*; for בן דוד, *the ſon of David* is a character of the Meſſiah, well known among the *Jews*; ſee the note on *Matt.* i. 1. becauſe he was promiſed to *David*, was to be raiſed up of his ſeed, and to ſpring from his loins. This queſtion they put, not as doubting of it, but as inclining at leaſt, to believe it, if not as expreſſing their certainty of it: and is, as if they had ſaid, who can this perſon be but the true Meſſiah, that has wrought ſuch a miracle as this? for from his miracles they rightly concluded who he was; tho' the *Jews* ſince, in order to deprive *Jeſus* of this true characteriſtic of the Meſſiah, deny that miracles are to be performed by him [n].

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[m] Maimon. & Bartenora in Miſn. Trumot, c. 1. §. 2.

Ver. 24. *But when the Phariſees heard it*, &c.] Very probably not the ſame that went out, and held a council againſt Chriſt to deſtroy him, ver. 14. but others that were come from *Judea* and *Jeruſalem*, and were with him in the houſe, and ſaw the miracle: theſe, when they heard what the people ſaid, and how ready they were to believe, and own Jeſus to be the Meſſiah, in order to prevent it, being filled with envy and malice, *they ſaid, this* fellow *doth not caſt out devils but by Beelzebub, the prince of devils.* They could not deny the miracle, or that it was one; but to deprive him of the glory of it, and even reproach him for it, and to bring him into contempt with the people, they not only ſpeak of him in a ſcornful manner, ȣτος, *this* ſorry man, *this* vile fellow; but aſcribe the miracle he wrought to familiarity with the devil, to diabolical influence and ſkill in magic art: they pretended he was in confederacy with ſatan, and was carrying on his intereſt; and therefore that he might gain credit and reputation, the prince of devils ſuffered the inferior ones to remove at his word: and of theſe their anceſtors, the *Jews* have learnt to fix this vile imputation, and blaſphemous piece of ſlander upon Chriſt; who, they ſay [o], brought enchantments, or witchcrafts, out of *Egypt*, in the cuttings of his fleſh, whereby he performed the things he did. Concerning *Beelzebub*, ſee the note on ch. x. 25. here called *the prince of devils*; it being a prevailing notion among the *Jews*, that there is one devil who is the head of all the reſt, and who is by them ſometimes called *Aſmodeus*: they ſay [p], when *Solomon* ſinned againſt the Lord, he ſent to him אשמדאי מלכא דשידי, *Aſmodeus the king of the devils*, and drove him from his throne, and ſo elſewhere [q]: and ſometimes *Samael*, who is ſtiled [r] *Samael* the prince, מלכא דשדים, *the king of devils*; and the angel *Samael*, the wicked, ראש כל השטנים, *the head of all the ſatans*, or devils [s]: and we often read [t] of שר הגיהנם, *the prince of hell*; by whom the ſame is meant, as here, by *Beelzebub*; for if any one devil is more wicked, odious, and execrable than the reſt, the chief of them may be thought to be ſo; for which reaſon he is here mentioned.

Ver. 25. *And Jeſus knew their thoughts*, &c.] He not only heard their blaſphemous words, but were privy to their ſecret thoughts; he knew their vile malicious intentions and deſigns, with what view they expreſſed themſelves in this manner, on purpoſe to reproach him, and ſet the people againſt him, contrary to the inward light of their minds, and dictates of their conſciences; who muſt, and did know the contrary of what they ſaid: and regarding the inward frame of their minds, as well as their words, and which is a proof of his omniſcience, and ſo of his deity, and conſequently of his Meſſiahſhip, *ſaid unto them* the following parables, as *Mark* calls them, ch. iii. 23. or proverbial expreſſions: *every kingdom divided againſt itſelf is brought to deſolation*; a government, in which there is a diſagreement between the chiefs of it, and the body of the people, or where one part is oppoſed to the other, or in which a civil and inteſtine war is begun and proſecuted, cannot continue in any comfortable ſituation, and flouriſhing ſtate, but muſt come to nothing: this is a maxim that has been ſo often fatally verified, that no one will doubt the truth of it; and the ſame holds true of leſſer communities, of cities, and families: *and every city, or houſe, divided againſt itſelf, ſhall not ſtand.* If citizens fall out with their magiſtrates, or one with another, and turn out, and disfranchiſe each other; and if the heads of families, and the reſpective branches thereof, quarrel with, and divide from one another, a diſſolution of the whole muſt enſue; and the ſame may be ſaid of the kingdom and government of ſatan. Theſe, 'tis very likely, were common ſayings among the *Jews*, and they might be very eaſily underſtood by them; and are very appoſitely produced by Chriſt to illuſtrate the preſent caſe, and confute the vile and blaſphemous ſuggeſtions of the *Phariſees*: a proverbial expreſſion, much like to theſe, is to be read in the writings of the *Jews*, כל בית שיש בו מחלוקת סופו ליחרב *every houſe, in which there is a diviſion, at the end ſhall come to deſolation* [u].

Ver. 26. *And if ſatan caſt out ſatan*, &c.] That is, if *ſatan*, the ſame with *Beelzebub*, caſts out the reſt of the *ſatans*, or other devils, of which he is the prince and head, *he is divided againſt himſelf*; he acts contrary to his own intereſt, which is to keep poſſeſſion of the bodies and ſouls of men; and conſequently it muſt, in courſe, be ſubverſive of his power and dominion: *how ſhall then his kingdom ſtand?* he'll never be able to maintain his authority, and keep up the ſhew of a government, as he does: for theſe words ſuggeſt, that there is a form of government among the devils, who are united in one body, under one head; and whoſe unity and concord is their greateſt ſtrength, as in all other governments. Our Lord's argument, and which is his firſt, for others follow, is, that ſince ſatan, who is ſo cunning and crafty, can never be thought to act ſuch an oppoſite part to himſelf, ſo ſubverſive of his kingdom and government; and which would give ſo much credit to Chriſt, and ſerve ſo much to ſtrengthen his intereſt, as to aſſiſt him in the caſting out of devils; the weakneſs, and maliciouſneſs of ſuch a ſuggeſtion, muſt be clear and evident to all.

Ver. 27. *And if I by Beelzebub caſt out devils*, &c.] As the *Phariſees* aſſerted, and would have the people believe; for this is not allowed, only for argument ſake ſuppoſed: *by whom do your children caſt them out?* meaning not the apoſtles and diſciples of Chriſt, the children of the *Jews*, to whom Chriſt gave a power of caſting out devils, and who had exerciſed it in his name; and therefore argues, if they in his name caſt out devils, why could he not do it himſelf, without the help of ſatan; wherefore theſe would be judges againſt them: but, no doubt, the *Phariſees* had no better opinion of the diſciples, and of their ejection of devils, than of Chriſt;

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[n] Maimon. Hilch. Melacim, c. 11. §. 3. [o] T. Hieroſ. Sabbat, fol. 13. 4. T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 104. 2. [p] Targum in Eccl. i. 12. [q] T. Bab. Peſach, fol. 110. 1. Gittin, fol. 68. 1. & Raziel, fol. 41. 2. [r] Zohar in Deut. fol. 120. 3. [s] Debarim Rabba, fol. 245. 3. [t] T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 52. 1. Imre Binah in Zohar in Gen. fol. 22. 3. [u] Derech Eretz, c. 5.

wherefore, it is not likely, that our Lord ſhould argue with them from hence: but rather, he means ſome among themſelves, who pretended to have a power of exorciſing and ejecting of devils, either in the name of *Jeſus*, as ſome of them did, *Mark* ix. 38. *Acts* xix. 13, 14. or in the name of their kings, righteous men, prophets and patriarchs, as *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob* [w]; and which practice, perhaps, they took up and made pretenſions to, in imitation of Chriſt and his apoſtles; ſo as Chriſt healed men poſſeſſed of devils, they alſo affected to do the ſame. A ſtory is reported [x], "Concerning *Ben Talmion*, that a miracle was wrought by *R. Eleazar bar Joſe*, who healed a king's daughter at *Rome*, in whoſe body the devil entered, whoſe name was *Ben Talmion*; and they brought him (the *Jew*) to the king's treaſury, to take what he would, but he would take nothing from thence, but letters, in which were written the decrees they had decreed againſt *Iſrael*; and when he found them, he tore them to pieces, and there he ſaw the veſſels of the houſe of the ſanctuary, in the treaſury." Now ſince the *Jews* pretended to do theſe things, Chriſt aſks them, by whom they caſt out devils? Whether by the Spirit of God, or by *Beelzebub?* They would doubtleſs ſay by the former, and not the latter, which would ſhew their great partiality; for admitting that the like actions were done by them, as by him, why not by the ſame power? Why ſhould their ejection of devils be aſcribed to God, and his to *Beelzebub? Therefore they ſhall be your judges*; who will riſe up againſt you, and condemn you one day, for this unequal judgment you now paſs; and which was juſt the reverſe of the true ſtate of the caſe: for he caſt out devils by the Spirit of God, which they imputed to the aſſiſtance of *Beelzebub*; their children caſt out devils, or pretended to do ſo, and it was by the help of ſatan; and yet they aſcribed it to a divine power, even though they made uſe of the name of ſatan, under that of *Beelzebub*, or *Aſmodeus*, in their exorciſing, of which take the following form [y]. "By the authority of the glorious and fearful name, I adjure thee *Aſmodeus*, *king of the devils*, and all thy company, *&c.* that ye hurt not, nor put in fear, nor trouble ſuch an one, the ſon of ſuch an one; but that ye help him, and ſuſtain him (or deliver him) out of every diſtreſs and anguiſh, and from every evil thing, and from all diſeaſes, that enter into the two hundred and forty eight members, *&c.*"

Ver. 28. *But if I caſt out devils by the Spirit of God*, &c.] As it was certain he did, from the nature, uſe, and deſign of ſuch miracles; and it could not be reaſonably thought, that ſatan would aſſiſt in what was ſo very oppoſite to his kingdom and intereſt, and was ſo ſerviceable to the cauſe and glory of Chriſt. All the three perſons had an hand in the miracles of the Meſſiah; they were done by Chriſt, in his Father's name, and by the power of the Spirit of God; from which, the following inference may be juſtly deduced, *then the kingdom of God is come unto you*: meaning, either the Meſſiah himſelf; or rather, his kingdom, the Goſpel diſpenſation, which both Chriſt and *John*, had declared to be at hand; of which, the performing of miracles, particularly the caſting out of devils, whereby the kingdom of ſatan was ſo much weakened, was a clear proof.

Ver. 29. *Or elſe, how can any one enter into a ſtrong man's houſe*, &c.] This is another argument of Chriſt's, proving that his caſting out of devils, could not be by ſatan, but by the Spirit of God; for if he did not act by any ſuperior power to ſatan's, and ſuch by which he was able to maſter, overcome, and bind him, he could never *ſpoil his goods*, as he did; or diſpoſſeſs devils out of the bodies, or ſouls of men: juſt as if a man ſhould enter into another man's houſe, who is ſtrong and robuſt, with a deſign to ſpoil his goods, who would never make uſe of the man himſelf to do it, and can never be thought to effect it, unleſs he has a power ſuperior to his, and uſes it; *except he firſt bind the ſtrong man, and then he will ſpoil his houſe*: by the *ſtrong man*, is meant the devil, ſee *Iſa.* xlix. 24, 25. who is powerful and mighty, as appears from his nature, being an angel, though a fallen one, excelling in ſtrength human creatures; from his names, ſuch as the roaring lion, the great red dragon, leviathan, *&c.* from the extent of his dominion, here called *his houſe*; which reaches to the whole poſſe of devils, and world of men; whence he is called the prince of the power of the air, and the prince of this world, and the God of it; and from his works and actions, in and over the bodies and eſtates of men, by divine permiſſion; which might be exemplified in the caſe of *Job*, and the demoniacks in the time of Chriſt; and in and over the ſouls of men, not only over wicked men, but men under a ſhew of religion, as antichriſt and his followers; yea, ſaints themſelves, and even over *Adam* in a ſtate of innocence: but Chriſt is ſtronger than he, and attacked him, and diſpoſſeſſed him of the bodies of men; and reſtraining him from doing them any hurt, enters into the ſouls of men, dethrones him, and leads him captive, who led others; and keeps him from doing them any damage; as he will in the latter day *bind* him and ſhut him up in priſon a thouſand years: and alſo *ſpoils his goods*, or *veſſels*, and *his houſe*; the palace of ſatan, by taking bodies and ſouls out of his poſſeſſion; by awakening the conſcience, enlightening the mind, working upon the affections, ſubduing the will, and implanting principles of grace and holineſs in the heart; and ſo making it a fit habitation for God, which ſpoils it for the devil: in all which, ſatan can never be thought to have any hand; and therefore the ſuggeſtion that Chriſt caſts out devils by his aſſiſtance, even out of the bodies of men, has no ſhew of reaſon in it.

Ver. 30. *He that is not with me, is againſt me*, &c.] Theſe words chiefly refer to ſatan, and are a further proof, that Chriſt did not caſt out devils by him; ſince they two are as much oppoſites, as can poſſibly be: ſatan is not on the ſide of Chriſt, but an adverſary to him; there is an original, and implacable enmity, between the ſerpent and the ſeed of the woman; there's an open war between them, and therefore one can't be thought to lend aſſiſtance to the other. They were concerned in different things, had different views and intereſts, and ſo took different methods; *and he that gathereth not with me, ſcattereth*: Chriſt is the good ſhepherd, that gathers his ſheep to himſelf, and into his fold, by the external miniſtry of the word, and internal efficacy of his grace; ſatan is the wolf, that catches and ſcatters the ſheep, and ſeeks to kill and deſtroy them: and ſince there is ſuch an open war proclaimed and carried on between Chriſt and the devil, none ought to be neutral; whoever is not on the ſide of Chriſt, is reckoned as an enemy; and whoever is not concerned by prayer or preaching, or other means to gather ſouls to his word and ordinances,

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[w] Juſtin Martyr, adv. Tryphon. p. 311.

[x] In Gloſſ. in T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 57. 1. Meilah, fol. 17. 2.

[y] Raziel, fol. 41. 2.

nances, and to his church, and to himſelf, is deemed by him a ſcatterer of them.

Ver. 31. *Wherefore I ſay unto you*, &c.] This ſhews, that what follows is occaſioned by what the *Phariſees* had ſaid, concerning the miracles of Chriſt; imputing them to diabolical influence and aſſiſtance, when they were done by the Spirit of God, of which they themſelves were conſcious; *all manner of ſin and blaſphemy ſhall be forgiven unto men:* not unto all men, for there are ſome, who, as they are never truly convinced of ſin, and brought to repentance for it, ſo they never have the remiſſion of it; but to ſuch to whom God of his free grace has promiſed, and for whom he has provided this bleſſing, in the covenant of his grace; for whom the blood of Chriſt was ſhed, for the remiſſion of their ſins; and who, by the Spirit of God, are made ſenſible of them, and have repentance unto life given them, and faith in Chriſt, by which they receive the forgiveneſs of them: the ſenſe is, that all kind of ſin, whether committed more immediately againſt God, or man, the firſt or ſecond table of the law, or againſt any of the divine precepts; be they ſins ſmall or great, ſecret or open, ſins of heart, lip, or life, or attended with whatſoever aggravating circumſtances; and all kind of blaſphemy, or evil ſpeaking of men, or of angels, or of the name of God, but what is hereafter excepted, there is forgiveneſs of in the grace of God, through the blood of Chriſt, even for all ſorts of men and ſinners whatever. The *Jews* have a ſaying [z], "that God pardons all ſins, "חוץ מן הזמה, *except laſciviouſneſs.*" But this is not excepted by Chriſt, only what follows, *but the blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt, ſhall not be forgiven unto men:* by which is meant, not every ignorant denial of, and oppoſition to his deity and perſonality; nor all reſiſtance of him in the external miniſtry of the word; nor every ſin that is knowingly and wilfully committed; but it is a deſpiteful uſage of the Spirit of grace, an oppoſing, contradicting, and denying the operations wrought, or doctrines revealed by him, againſt a man's own light and conſcience, out of wilful and obſtinate malice, on purpoſe to leſſen the glory of God, and gratify his own luſts: ſuch was the ſin of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*; who, though they knew the miracles of Chriſt were wrought by the Spirit of God, yet maliciouſly and obſtinately imputed them to the devil, with a view to obſcure the glory of Chriſt, and indulge their own wicked paſſions and reſentments againſt him; which ſin was unpardonable at that preſent time, as well as under that diſpenſation then to come, when the Spirit of God was poured down in a more plenteous manner.

Ver. 32. *And whoſoever ſpeaketh a word againſt the Son of man*, &c.] By whom is meant, not any man, as *Grotius* thought, but the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, ſo often called *the Son of man*, on account of his human nature, in which he appeared in great meanneſs and obſcurity. Now many might, through ignorance of him, thinking him to be a mere man, and taking up with common fame, ſpeak evil of him, deny him to be the Meſſiah, reproach him for the meanneſs of his parentage and education, and for the freedom of his converſation with publicans and ſinners; and do many things contrary to his name, as *Saul*, whilſt a *Phariſee* did, and thought he ought to do; and yet be afterwards convinced of their miſtakes, and be brought to a ſenſe and acknowledgment of them, and obtain pardoning grace and mercy, as *Saul* did, though a blaſphemer; and who is an inſtance of what is here promiſed, *it ſhall be forgiven him*; through the grace of God, the blood and mediation of Chriſt, under the application of the bleſſed Spirit. *But whoſoever ſpeaketh againſt the Holy Ghoſt*, in the ſenſe before declared, *it ſhall not be forgiven him:* not becauſe the Holy Ghoſt is greater than Chriſt; or for want of efficacy in the blood of Chriſt; or becauſe God cannot pardon it; but becauſe ſuch perſons wilfully, maliciouſly, and obſtinately oppoſe the Spirit of God, without whom there can be no application of pardon made; and remain in hardneſs of heart, are given up to a reprobate mind, and die in impenitence and unbelief, and ſo there's no forgiveneſs for them, *neither in this world, nor in the world to come*; that is, they ſhall never be forgiven, ſee *Mark* iii. 29. The diſtinction here uſed, does not refer to a common one among the *Jews*, of the *Jewiſh* ſtate and the times of the Meſſiah; but to the preſent ſtate of life, and that which will be after, or upon death: and it does not ſuppoſe there may be forgiveneſs of other ſins, though not of this, in the other world; but ſtrikes at a notion the *Jews* had, that there are ſome ſins, which repentance and the day of atonement expiate in this life; but there are others, which repentance and the day of atonement do not expiate; and theſe a man's death expiates, or makes atonement for [a]. The form of confeſſion uſed by ſick perſons is the following [b]; "I confeſs before thee, O Lord our God, and the God of our fathers, that my cure is in thy hands, and my death is in thy hands; if it be thy good pleaſure, heal me with a perfect healing: but if I die, תהא מיתתי סליחה, *let my death be for the pardon*, forgiveneſs, and atonement of all the ſins, iniquities, and tranſgreſſions, which I have ſinned, acted perverſely in, and tranſgreſſed before thee; and give me my portion in paradiſe, and juſtify me *in the world to come*, which is hidden for the righteous." But the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt is ſuch, as is not forgiven, neither before, nor at, nor after death, nor by it: all ſins that are forgiven, are forgiven in this world, and that perfectly, and at once; and all that are forgiven in this world, there will be a manifeſtation and declaration of the pardon of them in another; but ſuch ſins as are not forgiven here, there will be no declaration of the pardon of them hereafter. In ſhort, the ſenſe is, that the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt never has forgiveneſs; it is not pardoned now, and conſequently there will be no declaration of the pardon of it hereafter. The *Jews* uſe the phraſe in the ſame ſenſe [c]; a certain ſick man ſaid to his ſon, "give me water, and ſuch certain food; but if not, I'll not *forgive thee, neither in this world, nor in the world to come.*" That is, I'll never forgive thee.

Ver. 33. *Either make the tree good, and his fruit good*, &c.] That is, either aſſert them both good, or *elſe make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt:* ſay they are both evil, for the contrary cannot be affirmed with any conſiſtency and propriety: the matter is eaſy to be determined, *for the tree is known by his fruit*; fruit will diſcover what a tree is, and accordingly judgment may be made. No man will ſay a tree is good, and its fruit corrupt; or ſay, that a tree is corrupt, and its fruit good: theſe are glaring contradictions, and can never be reconciled. The caſe Chriſt here puts, is a very eaſy and familiar one, and is obvious to common ſenſe: the application of it may be made, either to the foregoing inſtance of Chriſt's caſting out devils, which the *Jews* aſcribed to the help of ſatan; and then the ſenſe is, either ſay I am a good man, and do good works, or that I am an evil man, and do evil works: to ſay that I do good works, as the caſting out of devils, muſt be allowed to be, and yet am an evil man, and do this under ſatanical influence, is as great an inconſiſtency, as to ſay that a corrupt tree brings forth good fruit; either therefore condemn theſe miracles as evil actions, done by confederacy with ſatan; or if you will allow them to be good ones, as you do, aſcribe them to the Spirit of God; for theſe things may as eaſily be determined, as the cauſe by its effect, or as a tree is known by its fruit: or elſe this may be applied unto the *Phariſees*, who, though wicked men, pretended to do good works; and though they ſet up for men of religion and holineſs, yet did evil things, as their words and actions teſtified; particularly, the blaſphemy juſt now uttered by them, charging the miracles of Chriſt as done by the aſſiſtance of the devil, which diſcovered the malignity and rottenneſs of their hearts: and the meaning of Chriſt is, that they would either both ſay, and do, that which is right and good; or relinquiſh their pretenſions to the character of good and religious men: nothing can be concluded from hence in favour of free-will, or a power in the creature to make himſelf good; for the word *make*, here ſignifies to *ſay*, *affirm*, *aſſert*, and the like; ſee *John* v. 18. and viii. 53. and x. 33. Though it may be fairly inferred from hence, that a man muſt firſt be a good man, e'er he can perform good works, truly and properly ſo called; and that theſe are fruits and evidences of the inward real goodneſs of a man; which muſt be underſtood not of a few ſingle actions, but of the common, conſtant ſeries and courſe of life.

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[z] Tanchuma apud Buxtorf. Heb. Florileg. p. 126.

[a] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 86. 1.

[b] Seder Tephillot, fol. 333. 2. Ed. Baſil. Vid. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 60. 1.

[c] Sepher Chaſidim, *num.* 234.

Ver. 34. *O generation of vipers*, &c.] Though they boaſted of their being the ſeed of *Abraham*, yet their immediate anceſtors were no other than vipers, deceitful, hurtful, poiſonous creatures; and they were exactly like them: for though they made a fair ſhew in the fleſh, and outwardly appeared righteous, yet were inwardly full of the poiſon of wickedneſs, envy and malice; and which their peſtilential breath, their blaſphemy againſt the Spirit, fully diſcovered; and gave juſt cauſe and reaſon for ſo ſevere a reproof, and ſuch reſentment, as here made by Chriſt. *How can ye, being evil, ſpeak good things?* This is not to be expected, nor is it commonly and conſtantly done; an evil man may ſometimes ſpeak good things, or which ſeem to be ſo; but theſe are not his common talk; as he is, ſo, for the moſt part, is his language; his ſpeech bewrays him: and ſince theſe men were by nature evil, were deſtitute of the Spirit and grace of God, had no good thing in them, how ſhould any good thing come out of them? And ſince they were ſo full of wickedneſs, ſpite and malice, it is no wonder that they belched out ſuch blaſphemous expreſſions concerning the miracles of Chriſt; *for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth ſpeaketh*: a phraſe much like this is uſed by the *Septuagint*, in *Eccleſ.* ii. 15. *I ſpoke abundance*, or *much in my heart*; διοτι ο αφρων εκ περισσευματος λαλει, *for the fool out of abundance ſpeaketh*: as there is abundance of folly in him, there is much delivered out by him; and where there is abundance of wickedneſs in the heart, if the grace of God is wanting to reſtrain it, much of it will come out by the lips; as is a man's heart, ordinarily is his language.

Ver. 35. *A good man, out of the good treaſure of the heart*, &c.] *A good man*, is a regenerated man, one that is renewed by the Spirit of God, a believer in Chriſt, a ſincere lover of him, and one that follows him, whereſoever he goes, and who has the grace of God implanted in him: for *the good treaſure of the heart*, is not what he is naturally poſſeſſed of, but what is put into him; and is no other than the ſuperabundant grace of God, or that grace for grace, which he has received out of Chriſt's fulneſs, and the rich experience of it he is bleſſed with: and may well be called a *treaſure*; for as a treaſure is a collection of riches, ſo this conſiſts of various graces, each of which is more precious than gold, ſilver, and precious ſtones; a *good* one, both from the quality and quantity of it; and *of the heart*, though this is left out in many copies, from the ſeat and ſubject of it; and out of this the gracious man *bringeth forth good things*; tells his experience, ſpeaks of what God has done for his ſoul; ſays many things to the glory of the grace of God; of the perſon, offices, blood, righteouſneſs, and fulneſs of Chriſt; and of the operations and influences of the bleſſed Spirit; and which are pleaſant, profitable, uſeful, and edifying to the ſaints: *and an evil man, out of the evil treaſure bringeth forth evil things*. The *evil man*, is a man as he was born; who is wholly fleſh, carnal, and in a ſtate of nature; deſtitute of the Spirit, and having no principle of grace in him: *the evil treaſure*, is the corruption of his nature, the deſperate wickedneſs of his heart, and thoſe ſwarms of luſts, and all manner of ſin that dwell there; from whence are continually proceeding evil and corrupt communications, which not only defile himſelf, but others; and among the reſt, not only vain words and unprofitable talk, but blaſphemies againſt God, Chriſt, and the bleſſed Spirit; all which men will be accountable for another day.

Ver. 36. *But I ſay unto you*, &c.] This form of ſpeaking is uſed, the more ſtrongly to aſſeverate the truth of what is after ſaid; and the rather, becauſe men are apt to indulge a liberty with their tongues; fancying no great crime is committed, when only words are ſpoken, and no facts done; *that every idle word that a man ſhall ſpeak, they ſhall give account thereof in the day of judgment*. By an *idle word* is meant, what the *Jews* call, שוחה קלה, *light converſation*, and דבר ביטל, *vain diſcourſe*, as the *Hebrew* Goſpel of *Munſter* reads it here; frothy language, unprofitable talk, which, though it does not directly hurt God or man, yet is of no uſe to ſpeaker or hearer; and yet even this, in the laſt general and awful judgment, if not forgiven, and repented of, muſt be accounted for; and much more ſuch horrid blaſphemies the *Phariſees* had vented againſt Chriſt, and the Spirit of Chriſt. The *Jews* [d] have a ſaying pretty much like this, "That even, על שוחה קלה, *for any light converſation*, which paſſes between a man and his wife, "he ſhall *be brought to judgment*."

Ver. 37. *For by thy words thou ſhalt be juſtified*, &c.] *Theophylact* ſeems to take theſe words to be a paſſage of Scripture cited by Chriſt, in proof of what he had ſaid, but does not point to any; nor is any ſuch Scripture to be found. They are rather proverbial expreſſions, in common uſe among the *Jews*; or refer to the uſual methods of proceeding in courts of judicature, upon the acknowledgments and confeſſions of perſons. "Says *Reſh Lakiſh* [e], "ſuch an one and ſuch an one, they juſtify; and "ſuch an one and ſuch an one, they condemn. *R.* "*Eliezer* replies, מדבריהן נזדכה פלוני, *by their* "*words*

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[d] R. Jonah apud L. Capell. in loc.

[e] T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 30. 1.

“ *words ſuch an one and ſuch an one, are juſtified.*” The *Gloſs* upon it is, “ upon hearing the differ- “ ence there is between them, and between their “ words, they are juſtified.” Our Lord's meaning is, that not only works and actions, but words of all ſorts, will come into account in the day of judgment, and will be evidences for, or againſt a man, to acquit or condemn him: *and by thy words thou ſhalt be condemned*; according to theſe, the ſentence of juſtification, or of condemnation, will be pronounced; as theſe will appear to be evidences for, or againſt a man's being in a ſtate of grace and righteouſneſs: thus for inſtance, a man that has ſpoken for Chriſt, and has freely confeſſed that all his hope of juſtification before God, and acceptance with him, is ſolely upon the account of the righteouſneſs of Chriſt imputed; ſuch a man will be declared a juſtified man, according to the tenour of his own words: on the other hand, a man that has ſpoken hard ſpeeches againſt Chriſt, and his righteouſneſs; declaring he has no dependance on it, expects no juſtification by it; he'll be convinced of theſe ungodly ſayings, and out of his own mouth will be condemned. Some have thought, that Chriſt here ſtrikes at a notion which obtained among the *Jews*, that little or no account would be taken of a man's words in the day of judgment, provided his life and actions were good, and regular; but whatever were the ſentiments of the *Phariſees*, or of any of Chriſt's preſent hearers, it is certain, that it is the opinion of *Jewiſh* writers, that words, as well as actions, will be accounted for hereafter: they ſay [f], “ When a man dies, he lifts up his eyes “ and ſees two come to him, and write before “ him all that he has done in this world, “ וכל כה דאפיק מן פומיה, *and all that has proceed-* “ *ed out of his mouth*, ויהיב דינא על כלא, *and he* “ *gives an account for all*; and a little after, “ כל אינון מלין, *all the words* of a man in this “ world, are prepared before him, and not one of “ them loſt; and in the hour he goes to his grave, “ they are all ſet before him.”

Ver. 38. *Then certain of the Scribes and Phariſees anſwered*, &c.] Not the ſame that charged him with caſting out devils, by the prince of devils; but others, that were preſent, as appears from *Luke* xi. 16. and who do not take upon them, to make a proper reply to what he had ſaid, or return an anſwer to that, but addreſs him on another account; being willing to divert the diſcourſe, and try what they could do with him in another, and more gentle and crafty way; *ſaying, maſter*, not fellow, magician, *Samaritan*, thou that haſt a devil, and caſts out devils by *Beelzebub*, and art a devil, and *Beelzebub* himſelf; but doctor, teacher, allowing him, at leaſt, in a flattering way, that he was an inſtructer of mankind, though they would not own him to be a prophet, unleſs he could give ſuch ſigns, as would make it appear he was one; hence they ſay, *we would ſee a ſign from thee:* that is, a ſign from heaven, as they deſired at another time, *Matt.* xvi. 1. and, as *Luke* ſays, they did now, ch. xi. 16. they had ſeen a ſign from him on earth, in the cure of the man that had a withered hand; and another, in diſpoſſeſſing the devil out of the man, that was blind and dumb; but theſe they looked upon rather as ſigns from hell, and done by confederacy with the devil; and therefore deſire, or rather in an imperious way, demand one from heaven, where they thought ſatan had not ſuch power, as on earth; and where there could not be ſuch colluſion and deception, as they wickedly imagined were in this laſt action: they ſeem to require ſome ſuch things to be done, as were on mount *Sinai*, at the giving of the law, when there were thunders and lightenings, and a thick cloud, and the voice of a trumpet, and ſome viſible appearances of the divine majeſty; and intimate, that if ſomething of this kind was done, if there was any viſible and miraculous appearance in the heavens, produced by him, they ſhould believe him to be the prophet that was ſpoken of, and the true Meſſiah; but if not, ſhould give no credit to him: however, this is to be learned from hence, that the *Jews*, in Chriſt's time, expected ſigns and wonders to be wrought by the Meſſiah, in proof of his being ſo, though now they reject them as needleſs [g].

Ver. 39. *But he anſwered and ſaid unto them*, &c.] Not to the *Phariſees*, who were unworthy of an anſwer from him; having, in ſuch an imperious manner, and with a ſole view to tempt him, and after ſuch miracles were wrought by him, required of him a ſign from heaven; but to the multitude, the throng of people gathered thick together on this occaſion, ſee ver. 45. and *Luke* xi. 29. he turns himſelf from the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, to the common people, and ſays to them concerning the former, *an evil and adulterous generation*; not only in a ſpiritual ſenſe, being degenerated from the faith, religion, and piety of their anceſtors; but literally, which appeared not only in their poligamy, and frequent divorces on trivial occaſions, but by criminal converſation with other women; ſee *John* viii. 9. and this, with the *Jews* themſelves, is a character of the generation in which the Meſſiah comes: for they ſay [h], “ that juſt when the Meſ- “ ſiah comes, or in the age the Son of *David* comes, “ *impudence ſhall be increaſed*, corn and wine ſhall “ be dear, the government ſhall be hereticks, “ וועד יהיה לזנות, *and the ſynagogue ſhall become a* “ *brothel houſe.*” Their meaning is, that the chief magiſtrates ſhould be *Sadducees*, and thoſe that pretended to religion and holineſs, would be adulterers, which was now the caſe. Their writings [i] frequently ſpeak of the increaſe and abounding of adulteries, under the ſecond temple, and about this time; which obliged *Jochanan ben Zaccai* and the *Sanhedrim*, to leave off the uſe of the bitter waters. *Seeketh after a ſign*; this is perfectly *Talmudic* language, the language of the *Jews* [k]. “ The diſ- “ ciples of *R. Joſe ben Kiſmai*, aſked him, when “ the Son of *David* came? He replied, I am “ afraid, leſt תבקשו ממני אות, *ye ſhould ſeek of* “ *me a ſign*; they ſay unto him, we will not *ſeek of* “ *thee a ſign.*” This the *Jews* ſought of Chriſt, time after time; not content with one, ſought another, though ſuch wonderful ones were wrought, which moſt fully demonſtrated him to be the *Meſſiah*; and therefore he would not indulge this temper in them; but declared, that *there ſhall no ſign be given to it, but the ſign of the prophet Jonas.* Not that no miracles ſhould afterwards be wrought among them; for, after this, many wondrous works were done by Chriſt; but no ſuch ſigns ſhould be given they deſired, not one from heaven; but one particularly ſhould be given them, out of the earth, and ſhould be, not for their conviction, but condemnation; and would ſeem very much like that which was done to the prophet *Jonas*, or *Jonah*; for ſo is his name in the *Hebrew* language, the other being the *Greek* termination of it.

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[f] Zohar in Num. fol. 53. 2.

[g] Maimon. Hilch. Melachim, c. 11. §. 3.

[h] Miſn. Sota, c. 9. §. 15. T. Bab. Sanhed. fol. 97. 1.

[i] Miſn. Sota, c. 9. §. 9. & Maimon. Hilch. Sota, c. 3. §. 19.

[k] T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 98. 1. ſo מבקש סימן, *ſeeketh a ſign*, Shemot Rabba, Paraſh. 9. fol. 97. 2.

Ver. 40. *For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly*, &c.] Or *in the belly of a great fiſh*, as is ſaid, *Jonah* i. 17. for that it was a whale, is not there ſaid, nor is it certain it was; nor from the ſmallneſs of its ſwallow, is it thought probable it ſhould; nor does the word here uſed, neceſſarily imply one, but ſome large fiſh; nor are there whales in the *Phenician* ſea: it might be a kind of a ſea dog, called *Carcharias*, and ſometimes *Lamia*, or *Lamma*, from its vaſt ſwallow; in which whole men, even in coats of mail, have been found. However, be it what it will, *Jonas* was three days and three nights in the belly of it; which agrees with the account in the abovementioned place, and is the ſign Chriſt ſpeaks of in the foregoing verſe; and a very great ſign and miracle it was, that being ſwallowed down by ſuch a fiſh, he ſhould remain in the belly of it three days and three nights, as one dead; for, without a miracle, he could not have lived an hour; and on the third day, as one raiſed from the dead, be caſt out of it upon the dry land; which was a very eminent type of the death, burial, and reſurrection of Chriſt, as appears by what follows. The *Jews* reckon up ſeveral wonders or miracles in this caſe of *Jonah*'s; as that a fiſh was prepared to ſwallow him up, and he not drowned in the ſea; and that this was prepared for him from the creation of the world; that he ſhould be three days and three nights in the fiſh's belly, and be alive; and that he ſhould retain his ſenſes and his underſtanding, ſo as to be able to pray: they repreſent him alſo as if he was in the ſtate of the dead [l], and that the fiſh itſelf was dead, and was quickened again. According to *Joſephus*, after he had been carried 250 miles, in the *Helleſpont* of the *Euxine* ſea, he was caſt aſhore [m]. *So ſhall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth*. That Chriſt means himſelf by the *Son of man*, there is no reaſon to doubt; and his being laid in a tomb, dug out of a rock, is ſufficient to anſwer this phraſe, *the heart of the earth*, in diſtinction from the ſurface of it; but ſome difficulty ariſes, about the time of his continuing there, and the prediction here made agreeable to the type: for it was on the ſixth day of the week, we commonly call *Friday*, towards the cloſe, on the day of the preparation for the ſabbath, and when the ſabbath drew on, that the body of Chriſt was laid in the ſepulchre; where it lay all the next day, which was the ſabbath of the *Jews*, and what we commonly call *Saturday*; and early on the firſt of the week, uſually called *Sunday*, or the Lord's day, he roſe from the dead; ſo that he was but one whole day, and part of two, in the grave. To ſolve this difficulty, and ſet the matter in a clear light, let it be obſerved, that the three days and three nights, mean three natural days, conſiſting of day and night, or twenty four hours, and are what the *Greeks* call νυχθημερα, *night-days*; but the *Jews* have no other way of expreſſing them, but as here; and with them it is a well known rule, and uſed on all occaſions, as in the computation of their feaſts and times of mourning, in the obſervance of the paſſover, circumciſion, and divers purifications, that מקצת היום ככולו, *a part of a day is as the whole* [n]: and ſo, whatever was done before ſun-ſetting, or after, if but an hour, or ever ſo ſmall a time, before or after it, it was reckoned as the whole preceding, or following day; and whether this was in the night-part, or day-part of the night-day, or natural day, it mattered not, it was accounted as the whole night-day: by this rule, the caſe here is eaſily adjuſted; Chriſt was laid in the grave towards the cloſe of the ſixth day, a little before ſun-ſetting, and this being a part of the night-day preceding, is reckoned as the whole; he continued there the whole night-day following, being the ſeventh day; and roſe again early on the day, which being after ſun-ſetting, though it might be even before ſun-riſing, yet being a part of the night-day following, is to be eſteemed as the whole; and thus the Son of man was to be, and was three days and three nights in the grave; and which was very eaſy to be underſtood by the *Jews*; and it is a queſtion, whether *Jonas* was longer in the belly of the fiſh.

Ver. 41. *The men of Nineveh ſhall riſe in judgment*, &c.] Alluding either to the cuſtom and practice of witneſſes, who riſe up from their ſeats, and ſtand, when they give in their teſtimonies in a court of judicature; or elſe, referring to the time of the general reſurrection from the dead, at the laſt day, when theſe men ſhall riſe from the dead, and ſtand in judgment *with this generation*; ſhall riſe when they do, and ſtand before the judgment-ſeat together, and be againſt them, *and ſhall condemn them*; not as judges of them, but by their example and practices, which will be brought above-board, and obſerved as an aggravation of the guilt and condemnation of the *Jews*: ſo the lives and converſations of the ſaints condemn the wicked now, and will do hereafter: in this ſenſe the word is uſed in the *Talmud* [o]; where having related how *Hillell*, though a poor man, and *R. Eleazar*, though a rich man, ſtudied in the law, and *Joſeph*, though youthful, gay, and beautiful, withſtood the importunities of his miſtreſs, 'tis obſerved; that *Hillell*, מחייב, *condemned* the poor; and *R. Eleazer ben Harſum* condemned the rich; and *Joſeph* condemned the wicked: in like manner, the *Ninevites* will condemn the *Jews*, *becauſe they repented at the preaching of Jonas*; a mere man, a ſingle prophet, a ſtranger to theſe men, who only preached, and wrought no miracle among them, and his ſtay with them was very ſhort; whereas the men of this generation had the Son of God *ſent* to them, had the miniſtry of his apoſtles, and of *John* the *Baptiſt*, and a variety of miracles wrought among them; and all this for a ſeries and courſe of years, and yet remained impenitent: the chief aggravation of their impenitence, and what made it the more aſtoniſhing was, that ſo great a perſon was in the midſt of them; *and behold, a greater than Jonas is here*; meaning himſelf, who was greater in perſon, office, doctrine, miracles, life, obedience, ſufferings, death, and reſurrection from the dead. The *Ninevites*, though a Heatheniſh people, having but forty days allowed them to repent in, upon *Jonas*'s preaching, repented immediately; whereas the *Jews*, though God's profeſſing people, and having forty years, from Chriſt's reſurrection, allowed them to repent in, yet did not at all; and though the repentance of the *Ninevites* was but an external one, in duſt and aſhes, yet it was what ſecured them from temporal ruin; as the *Jews* would have been ſaved from the deſtruction that came upon their temple, city and nation, had they repented, but as they did.

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[l] R. David Kimchi & Jarchi, in Jonah i. 17. & ii. 1. Zohar in Exod. fol. 20. 3. & 78. 3.

[m] Antiqu. l. 9. c. 18.

[n] T. Hieroſ. Peſach. fol. 31. 2. T. Bab. Moed. Katon, fol. 16. 2. 17. 2. 19. 2. & 20. 2. Bechorot. fol. 20. 2. & 21. 1. Nidda, fol. 33. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Ebel, c. 7. § 1, 2, 3. Aben Ezra in Lev. xii. 3.

[o] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 35. 2.

Ver. 42. *The queen of the ſouth*, &c.] Called the queen of *Sheba*, 1 *Kings* x. 1. *Sheba* was one of the ſons of *Joktan*, a grandchild of *Arphaxad*, who ſettled in the ſouthern parts of *Arabia*: hence this queen is called the queen of the ſouth. *Sheba*, is by the *Targumiſt* [p], called *Zemargad*, and this queen, the queen of *Zemargad*: ſhe goes by different names. According to ſome, her name was *Maqueda* [q], and, as others ſay, *Balkis* [r]: a *Jewiſh* chronologer [s] tells us, that the queen of *Sheba*, who is called *Nicolaa*, of the kingdom of *Jaman*, or the ſouth, came to *Solomon*, to hear his wiſdom, and gave him much riches: and *Joſephus* [t] calls her, *Nicaulis*, queen of *Egypt* and *Ethiopia*; of whom it is here ſaid, that ſhe *ſhall riſe up in the judgment with this generation, and ſhall condemn it*: the meaning is, as before; that ſhe ſhall riſe from the dead, and ſtand as a witneſs againſt that generation at the day of judgment, and, by her example and practices, which will then be produced, condemn them, or aggravate their condemnation: *for ſhe came from the uttermoſt parts of the earth*; an hyperbolical expreſſion, meaning a great way off, from a far country, a very diſtant part of the world from *Jeruſalem*, לשמוע חכמת שלמה, *to hear the wiſdom of Solomon*; the very phraſe uſed by the above *Jewiſh* [u] writer. *And behold, a greater than Solomon is here*; one that was infinitely greater than *Solomon* was, in every thing; ſo particularly in that, in which he excelled others, and on the account of which, the queen of the ſouth came unto him, namely, wiſdom: for he is the wiſdom of God, in whom are hid all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge. The *Jews* themſelves [w] own, that the king, meaning the Meſſiah, that ſhall be raiſed up of the ſeed of *David*, בעל חכמה יהיה יתר משלמה, *ſhall be a greater maſter of wiſdom*, or *wiſer than Solomon*. Now what an aggravation of the condemnation of the *Jews* will this be another day, that a *Gentile* woman, living in a foreign and diſtant land, ſhould, upon the fame of the wiſdom of *Solomon*, leave her own kingdom and country, and come to *Jeruſalem*, to hear his wiſe diſcourſes about things natural, civil, and moral; and yet the *Jews*, who had a greater than *Solomon* in the midſt of them, and had no need to take much pains to come to the ſight and hearing of him, yet rejected him as the Meſſiah, blaſphemed his miracles, and deſpiſed his miniſtry; though it was concerned about things of a ſpiritual and evangelic nature, and the eternal welfare of immortal ſouls.

Ver. 43. *When the unclean ſpirit is gone out of a man*, &c.] By *the unclean* ſpirit, is meant ſatan, the old ſerpent, the devil; who by the *Jews*, is wont to be called as here, רוח מסאבא, *the unclean ſpirit* [x]; and that, becauſe he is by ſin become ſo, though he was not ſo originally; is the cauſe of uncleanneſs in men, and delights in unclean perſons, places, and things: his *going out of a man*, is not to be underſtood of his being diſpoſſeſſed of the bodies of men; nor of the ejection of him, and his going by force, through the power of divine grace, out of the ſouls of men; but either of his leaving the *Jews* for a while, in ſome ſort, whilſt Chriſt and the Goſpel continued among them; and of his going out of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*; not really, but putting on another form, appearing as an angel of light, and under the guiſe of holineſs and righteouſneſs: and ſo he may be ſaid to go out of men, when any outward reformation is made in them; and they take up a profeſſion of religion, though deſtitute of the grace of God: *he walketh through dry places*; referring to a prevailing notion, that unclean ſpirits walk in, and haunt, deſert and deſolate places; and may have regard to the *Gentiles*, among whom ſatan might go, ſeeking reſt and ſatisfaction among them, in their idolatries and other wickedneſs, till he was there alſo diſturbed by the Goſpel ſent among them: or by theſe *dry places* may be meant the ſaints, whom he takes his walks among, in order, by tempting, to diſtreſs them, being ſecure of phariſaical perſons: and theſe may be ſo called, not for what they are in themſelves; not becauſe the ſun of righteouſneſs ſhines upon them; or becauſe thirſty and deſirous of divine and ſpiritual things; much leſs as if they had no moiſture, ſince they have a well of living water in them, and are watered by the Lord; or were unfruitful, as dry places uſually are; but for what they were to the unclean ſpirit, there being nothing in their grace, and the exerciſe of it, and in their ſpiritual performances, grateful to him; nothing to quench his thirſt, and ſatisfy his ſinful appetite; nor were there in them the mire and dirt of iniquity to roll in, as in unregenerate perſons: wherefore he is repreſented, as *ſeeking reſt, and findeth none*: his view in walking in theſe places, or among ſuch perſons, is reſt; not the reſt of the ſaints, he ſeeks their diſturbance, but his own reſt; which is to do all the miſchief he can, by ſtirring up corruption, tempting to ſin, and diſcouraging the exerciſe of grace; but is not able to do ſo much miſchief he would, and ſo can't find the reſt he ſeeks for, nor ſatisfy his envious, ſpiteful, and malicious temper: and this being his caſe, it follows,

Ver. 44. *Then he ſaid, I will return into my houſe*, &c.] Into the land of *Judea*, particularly into the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, outward profeſſors of religion; who, notwithſtanding their outward reformation, and great pretenſions to holineſs, are ſatan's houſe ſtill: he has a property in them, a claim upon them; and tho' he ſays, *from whence I came out*, yet he never really, and properly quitted it, only ſeemingly, and in appearance; and therefore his returning is only throwing off the guiſe, and reaſſuming his former character, as a vicious and unclean ſpirit. *And when he is come, he findeth it empty*; not empty of ſin: this puts me in mind of a paſſage in the *Miſna* [y], where it is ſaid, that on a faſt-day, "when they ſtand in prayer, they cauſe to "deſcend, or go before the ark, an old man, who "is uſed (to prayer,) whoſe children, וביתו ריקם, "*and his houſe, are empty*, ſo that his heart is per"fect in prayer," or entirely at leiſure for it. The commentators [z] on that phraſe, *his houſe is empty*, note, that he was empty of ſin, and free from it, and one concerning whom an evil report had not gone forth from his youth: but ſuch was not this houſe; it was empty of God, of the true knowledge of him, of the fear of him, and love to him; of Chriſt, of faith in him, affection for him, and hope on him; of the Spirit of God, and of his graces, and of ſpiritual, internal religion, and powerful godlineſs. *Swept*; not with the Spirit of grace convincing of ſin, righteouſneſs, and judgment; but with the beſom of an outward reformation: *and garniſhed*; not with internal grace, which makes ſaints all glorious within; but with ſecret luſts and corruptions, which rendered it an agreeable habitation for this unclean ſpirit; and at moſt, with ſome ſhew of morality, a little negative holineſs, or abſtinence from outward acts of ſin, an obſervance of ſome external rites and ceremonies, and a few hypocritical performances of faſting and prayer; which ſatan can very well bear with, ſo long as the heart is empty of ſpiritual grace, and till an opportunity offers of throwing off all appearance of good.

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[p] In 1 Chron. i. 9. & 2 Chron. ix. 1. [q] Ludolph. Hiſt. Æthiop. l. 2. c. 3. & not. in Claud. Confeſſ. §. 1. [r] Pocock. Specimen Hiſt. Arab. p. 59. [s] Juchaſin, fol. 136. 1. [t] Antiqu. l. 8. c. 2. [u] Juchaſin, ib. [w] Maimon, Hilchot. Teſhuba, c. 9. §. 2. [x] Zohar in Gen. fol. 77. 2. [y] Taanith, c. 2. §. 2. [z] Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

Ver. 45. *Then goeth he, and taketh with himſelf ſeven other ſpirits,* &c.] This is ſaid in alluſion to, and in imitation of the ſeven ſpirits before the throne; or may denote a large number of devils, ſeven being a number of perfection; or elſe the various corruptions of a man's heart, the ſwarms of internal luſts which are there ſtirred up by ſatan; *more wicked than himſelf,* as theſe are more pernicious to man, than the devil himſelf: *and they enter in and dwell there*; that is, though they were there before, now they exert and ſhew themſelves, and ſuch men appear to be under the power and government of them; when leaving their ſeeming religion and holineſs, they return like the dog to the vomit, and the ſwine to the wallowing in the mire. *And the laſt ſtate of that man is worſe than the firſt*; he becomes more wicked than ever he was, before he made pretenſions to religion; as ſuch apoſtates generally are more extravagant in ſinning, and are ſeldom or ever recovered by repentance, and their laſt end is eternal damnation; ſee 2 *Pet.* ii. 20, 21, 22. *even ſo ſhall it be alſo unto this wicked generation.* This parable fitly ſuited them, the *Scribes* and *Phariſees,* and the men of that generation, from whom in ſome meaſure the unclean ſpirit might be ſaid to depart through the doctrine, and miracles of Chriſt, to go into the *Gentile* world; but being followed there with the preaching of the Goſpel by the apoſtles, returns to the *Jews,* and fills them with more malice, blaſphemy, and blindneſs, than ever, which iſſued in their utter ruin and deſtruction; of which this parable may be juſtly thought to be prophetical.

Ver. 46. *While he yet talked to the people,* &c.] Upon theſe ſubjects, which ſo nearly concerned the *Scribes* and *Phariſees,* and which could not fail of drawing upon him their reſentment and ill-will. *Behold his mother and his brethren:* by *his mother* is meant *Mary*; but who are *his brethren,* is not ſo eaſy to ſay: ſome are of opinion, that *Joſeph* had children by *Mary,* who are here meant; but it is more generally believed, that theſe were either the ſons of *Joſeph* by a former wife, whoſe name is ſaid to be *Eſcha*; or rather, *Mary*'s ſiſter's ſons, the wife of *Cleophas,* the couſin-germans of Chriſt, it being uſual with the *Jews* to call ſuch kindred brethren; and ſo they might be *James, Joſes, Simon,* and *Judas:* theſe *ſtood without*; for Chriſt was within doors, not in a ſynagogue, as *Piſcator* thought, but in an houſe; ſee ch. xiii. 1. and his mother and brethren ſtood without doors, either becauſe they could not get in for the throng of the people; or becauſe they would not, it not being proper to make all within acquainted with what they had to ſay to him: *deſiring to ſpeak with him*; not with a pure view to interrupt him in his work, or to divert him from it, leſt he ſhould over-ſpend himſelf; nor from a principle of ambition and vain glory, to ſhew that they were related to him, and that he was at their beck and command; but rather, to obſerve unto him the danger he expoſed himſelf to, by the freedom he took with the *Phariſees* in his diſcourſes, and probably to acquaint him with ſome conſpiracies formed againſt him.

Ver. 47. *Then one ſaid unto him,* &c.] Either one of his auditors, or, as the *Ethiopic* verſion has it, one *of his diſciples:* the other *Evangeliſts* intimate, that more than one acquainted him with it; which is eaſily reconciled: for, upon his mother and brethren calling to him, as *Mark* ſays they did; firſt one and then another, and more, might apprize him of it, and eſpecially as he did not immediately go out unto them. *Behold, thy mother and thy brethren ſtand without, deſiring to ſpeak with thee:* whether this meſſage was carried at the requeſt of the mother and brethren of Chriſt, and delivered in a ſimple manner, and with an honeſt intention; or whether it was officiouſly done, and with a deſign to interrupt him, and to try him, whether he would prefer his natural relations, and their ſociety and converſation, to the ſpiritual work in which he was engaged, in doing good to the ſouls of men, is not certain; the latter ſeems probable, from the following words, and conduct of Chriſt. Some copies read, *deſiring to ſee thee.*

Ver. 48. *But he anſwered and ſaid unto him that told him,* &c.] Of his mother and brethren being without doors, deſiring, and waiting to ſpeak to him, *Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?* Theſe queſtions are put, not as if he himſelf was ignorant who were his mother or his brethren; or as ſuggeſting as if he had none; or, as denying that theſe were in ſuch a relation to him; or, as caſting any ſlight upon them; or as intending to teach men diſreſpect to parents and kindred, according to the fleſh; but as diſpleaſed with the man, or men, for interrupting him in his work; and to let them know, that the buſineſs of his heavenly Father, was preferred by him to any his natural relations could have with him; and that he might have an opportunity of pointing out, who were his relations in a ſpiritual ſenſe.

Ver. 49. *And he ſtretched forth his hand towards his diſciples,* &c.] By whom are meant, not only the twelve, but all others preſent, who truly believed in him, both men and women; and who might ſit near him and together, and whom, by this motion of his hand, he pointed out as his ſpiritual relations, to the multitude that ſat round him: *and ſaid, behold my mother, and my brethren*; in whoſe hearts he was formed, and who were the children of God by adopting grace, and ſo his brethren; and were as dear to him, as his mother and brethren. It is reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that when he ſaid, *behold my mother,* and, as in the following verſe, *ſiſter*; he might ſtretch forth his hand particularly, toward the pious and religious women that believed in him, and miniſtered to him of their ſubſtance, who might be now preſent; ſuch as *Mary Magdalene, Joanna* the wife of *Chuza, Herod*'s ſteward, and *Suſanna,* and others; ſince theſe are mentioned by *Luke* in the ſame *chapter,* in which this paſſage ſtands in his Goſpel; and when he ſaid, *behold my brethren,* he might point directly to the twelve, and the reſt of the men that believed in him, and followed him.

Ver. 50. *For whoſoever ſhall do the will of my Father,* &c.] This is not to be underſtood of a perfect obedience to the will of God, revealed in his righteous law; for ſince this cannot be performed by any mere man, no one could be in ſuch a ſpiritual relation to Chriſt: but of the obedience of faith to the will of God, revealed in the Goſpel; which is to believe in Chriſt, and have everlaſting life; ſee *John* vi. 40. This is the will of Chriſt's Father, *which is in heaven,* and which is good news from heaven, to ſinners on earth; and which Chriſt came down from heaven to do, and to declare to the children of men: ſuch as *hear the word of God* *and do it*, as *Luke* ſays, ch. viii. 21. that is, hear the Goſpel, underſtand and believe it, and become obedient to the faith of it; theſe are in this near manner related to Chriſt, evidentially and openly, as well as thoſe who were now preſent: *the ſame is my brother, and ſiſter, and mother*; as dear to me, as ſuch are to thoſe, to whom they ſtood thus related in the fleſh: and theſe natural relations, ſerve to convey ſome ideas of that relation, union, nearneſs, and communion, there are between Chriſt an his people; all theſe relative characters may be obſerved in the book of *Solomon's Song*, to which ou Lord may be reaſonably thought to have reſpect ſee *Cant.* iii. 11. and iv. 9, 10, 12. and v. 1, 2. anc viii. 1.

## CHAP. XIII.

Ver. 1. THE *ſame day Jeſus went out of the houſe*, &c.] Where he had been preaching, and working miracles: where this houſe was, is not certain; it ſeems to have been in one of the cities of *Galilee*, probably *Capernaum*, ſince that was by the ſea coaſt: the reaſon of his going out of the houſe was, either to converſe with his mother and brethren, as they deſired; or to withdraw himſelf from company, and take ſome refreſhment by the ſea-ſide; or becauſe it would not hold the people, and therefore he quitted it for a more convenient place. The time he went out of it, was the ſame day he had caſt the devil out of the man blind and dumb, and had delivered himſelf ſo freely concerning the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, who had blaſphemouſly aſcribed that miracle to the aſſiſtance of ſatan; and the ſame day his mother and brethren came to ſee him, and ſpeak to him. *And ſat by the ſea-ſide*; either as weary, and for his refreſhment, or in order to preach to the people; for, *Mark* ſays, *he began again to teach by the ſea-ſide*, ch. iv. 1. This was the ſea of *Galilee*, ſometimes called the ſea of *Tiberias*.

Ver. 2. *And great multitudes were gathered unto him*, &c.] Some on one account, and ſome on another; ſome to ſee his perſon, others his miracles; ſome for healing for their bodies, and others for their ſouls; ſome for the loaves, and others to hear him preach; and of theſe there were ſeveral ſorts, as the following parable ſhews. *So that he went into a ſhip*; both for his own advantage, that he might not be crouded, and preſſed by the people, and have more room, and a freer air to ſpeak in, and for theirs, that they might both ſee and hear him better. *And ſat, and the whole multitude ſtood on the ſhore*; as was the then cuſtom of the *Jewiſh* doctors and hearers, the one to ſit, and the other to ſtand. See the note on ch. v. 1. Chriſt ſat upon the deck of the ſhip; or perhaps this ſhip was no other than an open boat, which was put to ſea, ſome little diſtance from the ſhore; upon which the people ſtood in great numbers, with much convenience and attention.

Ver. 3. *And he ſpake many things unto them in parables*, &c.] For the parables of the ſower, and the different ſorts of ground the ſeed fell in, of the wheat and tares, of the grain of muſtard-ſeed, of the leaven in three meaſures of meal, of the treaſure hid in a field, of the pearl of great price, of the net caſt into the ſea, and of the houſholder, were all delivered at this time. This way of ſpeaking by parables was much in uſe among the eaſtern nations, and particularly the *Jews*. *R. Meir* was very famous among them for this way of teaching: they ſay[a], "that when *R. Meir* died בטלו מושלי משלים, "*they that were ſkilled in, and uſed parables, ceaſed*." The commentators[b] on this paſſage ſay, "that he preached a third part tradition, and a "third part myſtical diſcourſe, ותילתא מתלי, *and* "*a third part parables*:" which method of diſcourſing was judged both pleaſant and profitable, and what ſerved to raiſe the attention of the hearer, and to fix what was delivered the more firmly in their minds: what was our Lord's reaſon for uſing them, may be ſeen in ver. 13. he begins with the parable of the ſower. The deſign of which is to ſet forth the nature of the word of God, the work and buſineſs of the miniſters of it, the different ſucceſs of the preaching of it, and the fruitfulneſs of it; and to ſhew when it is truly received, and the various degrees of fruit it produces; that the efficacy of it depends on the grace of God, which makes the heart good, and fit to receive it; and how few they be which hear the word to any ſpiritual advantage and benefit; and how far perſons may go in hearing, and yet fall ſhort of the grace of God; and therefore no dependance is to be had on the external hearing of the word. *Behold, a ſower went forth to ſow*; *Luke* adds, *his ſeed*; as does alſo *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel here; and *Mark* introduces the parable thus, *hearken, behold*; it being a matter of great importance and concern, which is expreſſed by this parable, it deſerves the moſt diligent attention. By *the ſower*, is meant *the ſon of man*, as may be learnt from the explanation of another parable, ver. 37. which is Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, who is often ſo called on account of his human nature; and may the rather be thought to be intended here, ſince the ſeed he ſowed is called *his ſeed*; meaning the Goſpel, of which he is the author, publiſher, ſum and ſubſtance; and ſince he is, by way of eminency, called ὁ σπειρων, *the ſower*; which muſt be underſtood of him as a prophet, or preacher of the word, who was eminently ſent of God, and richly qualified for ſuch an office, and was moſt diligent in it, and yet his ſucceſs was but ſmall. Indeed, every miniſter of the Goſpel may be called a ſower, who bears precious ſeed, ſows ſpiritual things, and though in tears, he ſhall not return empty, but ſhall reap in joy, and bring his ſheaves with him. This ſower *went forth* from his own houſe to his field; which, as applied to Chriſt, may intend his incarnation, his coming into this world by the aſſumption of human nature, his appearance in the publick miniſtry, in the land of *Judea*, and his going forth ſtill in his miniſters, and by his Spirit, in the preaching of the Goſpel; and, as applied to the preachers of the word, may be explained of their commiſſion, of their being ſent, and of their going forth into the field of the world, preaching the Goſpel every where. The end of the ſower's going forth is *to ſow his ſeed*: *by his ſeed* is meant the word, the word of God; ſee *Mark* iv. 14. *Luke* viii. 11. ſo called, becauſe of the choiceneſs and excellency of it in its ſelf, that grain which is reſerved for ſeed being uſually the beſt of the kind; and becauſe of its ſmallneſs, it being mean and contemptible in the eyes of thoſe, who know not the nature of it; and becauſe of the generative virtue it has, tho' not without a divine influence.

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[a] Miſn. Sota, c. 9. §. 15.

[b] Jarchi & Bartenora in ib. e Talmud. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 38. 2.

Nor does it bring forth fruit, unleſs it is ſown in the heart, as ſeed in the earth; where its operation is ſecret, its growth and increaſe gradual, and its fruitfulneſs different. By *ſowing*, is meant, preaching; which, as ſowing, requires knowledge and ſkill, and an open and liberal hand; keeping back nothing that is profitable, a declaring the ſame doctrine in one place as another; and deſigns a conſtant miniſtration of it, notwithſtanding all diſcouragements, and a patient waiting for ſucceſs.

Ver. 4. *And when he ſowed*, &c.] Or, *as he ſowed*, as the other *Evangeliſts*; that is, *whilſt he was ſowing, ſome ſeeds fell*; either out of his hand, or out of the cart drawn by oxen: hence the [c] *Talmudiſts* diſtinguiſh between מפולת יד, *the falling of the hand*, or what falls out of the hand, and מפולת שוורים, *the falling of the oxen*, or what falls from them; where the Gloſs is, "in ſome places they ſow the "grain with the hand; and in other places they put "the ſeed on a cart full of holes, and oxen draw "the cart on the ploughed land, and it falls upon "it." *By the way-ſide*; by the common road, or private paths, which led thro' corn-fields, in which Chriſt and his diſciples walked, ch. xii. 1. and which being beaten and trodden hard, the ſeed muſt lie open on it, and ſo be liable to be trampled upon by men, or devoured by the fowls of the air; and deſigns ſuch hearers as are careleſs, negligent, and inattentive, who hear without underſtanding, judgment, and affection; ſee ver. 19. *and the fowls came and devoured them*; the other Evangeliſts ſay, *the fowls of the air*; and ſo the *Vulgate Latin*, and *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel, and ſome copies; and mean the devils; ſo called, becauſe their habitation is in the air; hence they are ſaid to be *the power of the air*: and becauſe of their ravenous and devouring nature, their ſwiftneſs to do miſchief, and their flocking in multitudes, where the word is preached, to hinder its uſefulneſs, as fowls do, where ſeed is ſowing. Satan, and his principalities, and powers, rove about in the air, come down on earth, and ſeek whom they may devour, and often mix themſelves in religious aſſemblies, to do what miſchief they can; ſee *Job* i. 6, 7.

Ver. 5. *Some fell upon ſtony places*, &c.] Such a place as the *Jews* call חולסית, a barren, ſtony place, a place from whence, they ſay, they take ſtones, and בית סלע, and which אינו ראוי לזריעה, *is not fit for ſowing*[d]; and ſuch were thoſe places and ſpots of ground, that ſome of theſe ſeeds fell upon; and deſign ſuch hearers, in whom the natural hardneſs of their hearts continues, and who remain unbroken by the word, and are without any true ſenſe of ſin, and repentance for it. *Where they had not much earth*; to cover them and take root in: this is expreſſive of ſuch perſons who have ſlight convictions of ſin, and awakenings of the natural conſcience; ſome little, light, and ſpeculative notions of the word, in the underſtanding and judgment; ſome flaſhes of natural affection for it, and outward expreſſions of delight and pleaſure in it; ſome ſhew of grace, and a form of godlineſs, but no real heart-work. *And forthwith they ſprung up, becauſe they had no deepneſs of earth*; to ſtrike their roots downwards: and thro' the reflection of the heat, upon the rocks and ſtones, they quickly broke thro' the thin ſurface of the earth over them, and appeared above ground before the uſual time of the ſpringing up of ſeed: which may not only denote the immediate reception of the word by theſe hearers, and their quick aſſent to it; but their ſudden and haſty profeſſion of it, without taking due time to conſider the nature and importance thereof; and the ſeeming chearfulneſs in which they did both receive and profeſs it; though it was only outward and hypocritical, and more on account of the manner of preaching it, than the word itſelf, and thro' a ſelfiſh principle in them; and did not ariſe from any real experience of the power of it on their ſouls, or true ſpiritual pleaſure in it: nor could it be otherwiſe, ſince their ſtony hearts were not taken away, nor hearts of fleſh given them; wherefore the word had no place in them, and made no real impreſſion on them; they remained dead in treſpaſſes and ſins; the word was not the ſavour of life unto life unto them, or the Spirit that giveth life; they did not become living and lively ſtones; they continued as inſenſible as ever of their ſtate and condition by nature, of the exceeding ſinfulneſs of ſin, of the danger they were in, and of their need of Chriſt, and ſalvation by him; they were as hard, and obdurate, and as inflexible, as ever, without any real contrition for ſin, or meltings of ſoul thro' the influence of the love and grace of God; and as backward as ever to ſubmit to the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, being ſtout-hearted, and far from it; and being no more cordially willing to be ſubject to the ſceptre of his kingdom, or to ſerve him in righteouſneſs and holineſs, than they ever were; for the word falling upon them, made no change in them; their hearts were as hard as ever, notwithſtanding the ſeeming and haſty reception of it; tho' they did not refuſe to hearken to the word externally, did not put away the ſhoulder, or ſtop their ears, yet their hearts were ſtill like an adamant ſtone: nothing but the mighty power of God, and his efficacious grace, can break the rocky heart in pieces; or give an heart of fleſh, a ſenſible, ſoft, and flexible one, with which a man truly repents of ſin, believes in Chriſt, and becomes ſubject to him.

Ver. 6. *And when the ſun was up*, &c.] Some time, and its heat was increaſing, and it began to ſhine out hot, and beat with ſome vehemency and ſtrength; which may denote ſome ſore temptation, or ſevere affliction, or fiery trial of perſecution and tribulation; ſee ver. 21. for this is not to be underſtood of the glorious light of the Goſpel, which, tho' very comfortable and refreſhing, as well as illuminating to good men, is very diſtreſſing and tormenting to carnal minds; they cannot bear its truths and doctrines; this is the fire which comes out of the mouth of God's faithful witneſſes, and torments them that dwell on the earth, and devours their enemies, *Rev.* xi. 5—10. And it, moreover, like the ſun, has different effects on different objects; as the ſun hardens clay, and melts wax, ſo the Goſpel is to the hardening of ſome, and ſoftening of others; to the one it is the ſavour of life unto life, and to the other the ſavour of death unto death; but this cannot be intended, becauſe the word by theſe hearers is firſt received with joy. Nor is Chriſt the ſun of righteouſneſs meant, who ariſes with healing in his wings, and gives grace and glory to his people; but the ſun of perſecution and affliction, in which ſenſe the metaphor is uſed, in *Cant.* i. 6. the heat of which the church patiently bore, tho' ſhe was made black with it: but theſe hearers think it ſtrange that ſuch a fiery trial ſhould befal them; wherefore, as they take up their profeſſion in haſte, they as quickly drop it; ſee *Rev.* vii. 16. *They were ſcorched, and becauſe they had not root, they withered away*; they were offended with what they met with, for the ſake of Chriſt, and the profeſſion of his word; and therefore, not being rooted in him, nor in the love of God, nor having the root of the matter, true grace, in themſelves, or, as *Luke* ſays, *lacked moiſture*, of divine grace, of the dews and waterings of it, fell away finally and totally. This is no inſtance of the apoſtacy of real ſaints, or any proof of true believers falling away finally and totally; ſince theſe were not rooted, and grounded in the everlaſting and unchangeable love of God, were not intereſted in it, or were partakers of the effects of it; had they been ſo, they could never have been ſeparated from it; tribulation, diſtreſs, and perſecution could never have done it; none of theſe would ever have moved them; had they had the love of God ſhed abroad in their hearts, they would have gloried in tribulation: nor were they united to Chriſt, rooted and built up in him; had they, they would have continued to have derived life and nouriſhment from him; in him the life of believers is hid, and becauſe he lives they live alſo; as long as there is life in the root, the branches will not die; he is the root that bears the branches, the root of the righteous that yields fruit, and is never moved: nor had theſe the truth of grace, which is an incorruptible ſeed, a well of living water ſpringing up to everlaſting life; had they, they could never have withered away; to ſuch God gives more grace, he himſelf is as the dew unto them, and he waters them every moment.

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[c] T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 105. 2.

[d] T. Bab. Erachin, fol. 32. 1. & Gloſſ. in ib. & Bava Bathra, fol. 156. 2. & Gloſſ. in ib.

Ver. 7. *And ſome fell among thorns*, &c.] On a ſpot of ground which was full of the roots of thorns, and briars, which was not cleared of them as it ſhould be. We often read [e] of שדה שנתקוצה, *a field cleared of thorns*; but ſuch was not this piece of ground, it was over-run with them, not on the ſurface of the earth, but within it: for it follows, *and the thorns ſprung up*; naturally, being neither ſown nor planted; either before the ſeed, or, at leaſt, as ſoon; and however grew faſter and higher, *and choked them*; ſo that they came to nothing: hence the advice, *ſow not among thorns*, *Jer.* iv. 3. and a loſt kindneſs, or what is beſtowed in vain, is expreſſed in this proverbial manner [f], שקולה טיבותיך ושדיא אחיזרי, *thy beneficence is taken away, and caſt among thorns*: theſe point out ſuch hearers who ſeemed to be contrite, to have the fallow ground of their hearts broken up, their conſciences tender, and to have a true ſenſe of ſin, as well as to be outwardly reformed; and yet inwardly were full of the thorns of ſinful luſts, particularly of the cares of the world, the deceitfulneſs of riches, the luſts of other things, and the pleaſures of this life, which rendered the word uſeleſs and unfruitful; ſee ver. 22. all which are comparable to thorns: it is hardly poſſible to be in the midſt of, and meddle with theſe, without being ſcratched by them; they pierce, afflict, and wound, even where they have not their greateſt power and influence; and where they do prevail, and get the aſcendant, as they are fruitleſs themſelves, they make others ſo too; they choke the word, and make that, and all ordinances, and opportunities, uſeleſs, and unſerviceable. Thorns are a part of the earth's curſe for the ſin of man; and ſuch perſons in whom thorny cares and luſts prevail, as they are like unto the earth which beareth thorns, ſo as that, they are rejected, and nigh to curſing, whoſe end is to be burned in everlaſting flames of divine wrath and fury, *Heb.* vi. 8.

Ver. 8. *But others fell into good ground*, &c.] Not beaten and trodden by the feet of men, nor ſtony, nor thorny, but well broke up, manured, and tilled; which deſigns good, honeſt-hearted hearers, who become ſo by the ſpirit and grace of God; who hear with a ſpiritual underſtanding, experience, ſavour, and reliſh, what they hear; ſee ver. 23. *and brought forth fruit*, *ſome an hundred fold*, *ſome ſixty fold*, *ſome thirty fold*: ſome ſeeds produced an hundred, others ſixty, and others thirty. The firſt of theſe eſpecially was a large increaſe, but what was ſometimes had, and which *Iſaac* received in *Gerar*, in the land of the *Philiſtines*, *Gen.* xxvi. 12. and is what *Pliny* ſays [g] of *Byzacium*, a country of the *Lybiphœnicians*, that it yielded an hundred fold to its huſbandmen; and of ſuch fruitfulneſs was the land of *Iſrael*, of which the *Jewiſh* doctors ſay ſome things incredible: they tell us a ſtory [h] of "one "that ſowed a meaſure of vetches, or peaſe, "ועשה שלש מאות סאין, *and it produced three* "*hundred meaſures*; they ſay unto him, the Lord "hath begun to bleſs thee, *&c.*" Here, in the parable, theſe various increaſes intend the different degrees of fruitfulneſs in gracious ſouls; for tho' the fruits of grace, in believers, are of the ſame quality, yet not of the ſame quantity. Some believers are grown to a greater maturity than others; ſome are but little children, ſome are young men, ſome are fathers.

Ver. 9. *Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.*] Not externally only, but internally; he that has ears given him to hear, ſo as to underſtand, let him make uſe of them, and ſeriouſly conſider of, and diligently attend to the uſe and importance of this parable. It is a way of ſpeaking uſed by Chriſt, when any thing of moment was delivered, and not ſo eaſy to be underſtood, on purpoſe to quicken the attention of his auditors, and ſtir up in them a deſire of underſtanding what was ſaid; which effect this had upon his diſciples; ſee *Mark* iv. 10. *Luke* viii. 9.

Ver. 10. *And the diſciples came, and ſaid unto him*, &c.] Not the twelve only, but others that were about him, as *Mark* ſays, who alſo were his diſciples, and believed in him: theſe, when he was alone, came nearer to him, who, whilſt he was preaching to the people, were at ſome little diſtance from him, either in the ſhip, or on the ſhore, tho' within the hearing of him, and addreſſed him after this manner; *why ſpeakeſt thou unto them in parables?* not that this way of ſpeaking was new and ſurprizing to them; but becauſe it was not eaſily underſtood, eſpecially not by the common people, without an explanation, which, as yet, Chriſt had not given: and indeed the parable was not underſtood by the diſciples themſelves; who put this queſtion, not only for the ſake of the multitude, but for their own alſo, hoping to be favoured with the meaning of it.

Ver. 11. *He anſwered, and ſaid unto them*, &c.] Chriſt was always ready to give an anſwer to his enquiring diſciples, concerning his miniſtry, and his conduct in it; which ſhews great reſpect to them, and condeſcenſion in him: *becauſe it is given to you to know the myſteries of the kingdom of heaven*: by the *kingdom of heaven*, is meant the Goſpel, which treats of the kingdom of heaven, and of things pertaining to it; of the ſaints meetneſs for it, which is the regenerating and ſanctifying grace of the Spirit; and of their right unto it, which lies in the juſtifying righteouſneſs of Chriſt. The *myſteries* of it intend the ſublime doctrines thereof; ſuch as relate to the Trinity of perſons in the Godhead, to the incarnation of Chriſt, and the union of the two natures, human and divine, in him, eternal predeſtination, redemption by Chriſt, ſatisfaction by his ſacrifice, juſtification by his righteouſneſs, and pardon thro' his blood, the reſurrection from the dead, *&c.* things, tho' clearly revealed, yet may have difficulties attending them, and which are not very eaſily ſolved: now to know and underſtand the great truths of the Goſpel, ſpiritually, ſavingly, and experimentally, is not from nature, or to be acquired by mens induſtry, but is the gift of God's grace, flowing from his ſovereign will and pleaſure; a favour which the diſciples of Chriſt, as a choſen people, receive from the Lord, and which is denied others: *but to them it is not given*; to the wiſe and prudent, to the Scribes and Phariſees, to the multitude, to the bulk and generality of the people, to the reſt that were blinded. *Mark* calls them *them that are without*; who are not in the number of God's elect, nor within the covenant of grace, nor among the diſciples of Chriſt; referring to a common way of ſpeaking among the *Jews*, who uſed to call the Gentiles, all without their land, *they that are without*; and indeed all within themſelves that deſpiſed the rules and judgment of the wiſe men[i]: but Chriſt here calls the wiſe men themſelves ſuch. Now our Lord, who was privy to the ſecret and ſovereign diſpenſation of God, who, of his own will and pleaſure, had determined to give a ſpiritual and ſaving knowledge of divine things to ſome, and deny it to others, made this the rule of his conduct in his miniſtry; that is to ſay, he preached in parables to ſome without an explication, whilſt he ſpoke plainly to others; and, if in parables, yet gave them an interpretation, and an underſtanding of them.

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[e] Miſn. Sheviith, c. 4. §. 2. T. Hieroſ. Sheviith, fol. 34. 3. & 35. 1. T. Bab. Bechorot, fol. 34. 2.

[f] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 63. 2. Bava Kama, fol. 83. 1. Cetubot, fol. 53. 2. & Betza, fol. 29. 2.

[g] Nat. Hiſt. l. 5. c. 4.

[h] T. Hieroſ. Peah, fol. 20. 2.

Ver. 12. *For whoſoever hath, to him ſhall be given*, &c.] Whoever has the true grace of God implanted in him, has a ſaving knowledge of Chriſt, and a ſpiritual acquaintance with the doctrines of the Goſpel, ſhall have more grace given him; he ſhall grow in the knowledge of Chriſt, and the Spirit of truth ſhall lead him into all truth: *and he ſhall have more abundance*; of grace, light, knowledge, and experience: all grace ſhall be made to abound towards him; he ſhall be filled with all the fulneſs of God, and ſhall arrive to the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs of Chriſt; and his light ſhall ſhine more and more unto the perfect day. *But whoſoever hath not*; the truth of grace, nor a ſpiritual knowledge of Chriſt, nor any experience of the doctrines of the Goſpel, *from him ſhall be taken away, even that he hath*, or *that which he ſeemed to have*, as *Luke* expreſſes it; for every thing beſides true grace is a mere ſhow, and has no ſolidity in it; as natural parts, human learning, and a form of knowledge and of truth in the law, the national church-ſtate of the *Jews*, with all the outward privileges appertaining thereunto, all which may be here meant; and even ſpeculative notions of the Goſpel, the external gifts of the Spirit, the means of grace, the Goſpel of the kingdom of God, and the miniſtry of it, which in proceſs of time were wholly taken from theſe people.

Ver. 13. *Therefore ſpeak I to them in parables*, &c.] Becauſe it was the will and pleaſure of his father to give the knowledge of divine myſteries to ſome, and not to others; and becauſe even the outward good things they had, being wrongly uſed or abuſed, by them, would be taken away from them: *and becauſe they ſeeing, ſee not*: they ſaw Chriſt with their bodily eyes, but not with an eye of faith; they ſaw the miracles he did, but did not diſcern, at leaſt did not acknowledge the evidence of them, proving him to be the true Meſſiah. *And hearing, they hear not, neither do they underſtand*: they heard externally, but not internally; they heard the ſound of Chriſt's voice, but did not underſtand his words, even when he ſpake in the plaineſt and moſt intelligible manner; nor were they concerned to know the meaning of them: wherefore he ſpoke to them in this abſtruſe and parabolical way, that they might be what they really were, ſeers and not ſeers, hearers and not hearers, at leaſt not underſtanding ones; and that what he ſaid might remain ſealed and hidden to them, as the things contained in the ſealed book were to the *Jews* of old; the reaſon of which was, as a writer of theirs[k] ſays, and which agrees with our Lord's reaſon and conduct here, שהיו במשל וחידה, *becauſe they were in parable and riddle*.

Ver. 14. *And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Eſaias*, &c.] In ch. vi. 9, 10. *which ſaith*, which runs, or may be read thus, *by hearing ye ſhall hear, and ſhall not underſtand, and ſeeing ye ſhall ſee, and not perceive*. The words are a prophecy concerning the people of the *Jews*, which began to be accompliſhed in the times of *Iſaiah*; and were again fulfilled in the times of ſome after prophets; and had been in part fulfilled under the more plain and eaſy miniſtry of Chriſt; and was to have a further accompliſhment under this parabolical way of preaching; as it alſo was to have, and had, a yet further completion under the miniſtry of the apoſtles; ſee *Acts* xxviii. 26, 27. *Rom.* xi. 8. and the Judicial blindneſs here predicted was to go on among them, until the land of *Judea* was utterly deſtroyed by the *Romans*, and the cities and houſes thereof left without any inhabitants; all which accordingly came to paſs: for that this prophecy refers to the times of the Meſſiah, and to the people of the *Jews*, is clear from this one obſervation made by Chriſt himſelf, that *Eſaias* foretold thoſe things when he ſaw the glory of the Meſſiah, and ſpake of him, *John* xii. 40, 41. and becauſe it was to have, and had, its accompliſhment over and over again in that people, therefore the word αναπληρȣται, which may be rendered *is fulfilled again*, is made uſe of. The ſenſe of the prophecy is, with reſpect to the times of the Meſſiah, that the *Jews*, whilſt hearing the ſermons preached by him, whether with, or without parables, ſhould hear his voice, and the ſound of it, but not underſtand his words internally, ſpiritually, and experimentally; and whilſt they ſaw, with the eyes of their bodies, the miracles he wrought, they ſhould ſee the facts done, which could not be denied and gainſayed by them, but ſhould not take in the clear evidence, full proof, and certain demonſtration given thereby, of his Meſſiahſhip. In the prophecy of *Iſaiah*, the words run in the imperative, *hear ye, ſee ye*, &c. but are here rendered in the future, *ſhall hear, ſhall ſee*, &c. which rendering of the words is ſupported and eſtabliſhed by the verſion of the *Septuagint*, by the *Chaldee paraphraſe*, and by many *Jewiſh* commentators[l]; who allow, that the words in *Iſaiah* may be ſo underſtood, which is ſufficient to vindicate the citation of them, by the Evangeliſt, in this form of them.

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[i] Vid. T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 24. 2. & Gloſſ. in ib.

[k] Abarbinel in Iſ. 29, 11.

[l] In R. David Kimchi in Iſ. vi. 9.

Ver. 15. *For this peoples heart is waxed groſs*, &c.] Or *fat*, become ſtupid and ſottiſh, and without underſtanding; and ſo uncapable of taking in the true ſenſe and meaning of what they ſaw with their eyes, and heard with their ears; for they had their outward ſenſes of hearing and ſeeing, and yet their intellectual powers were ſtupified. *And their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have cloſed*; which is expreſſive of the blindneſs and hardneſs, which were partly brought upon themſelves by their own wilfulneſs and obſtinacy, againſt ſuch clear evidence as aroſe from the doctrine and miracles of Chriſt; and partly from the righteous judgment of God, giving them up, for their perverſeneſs, to judicial blindneſs and obduracy; ſee *John* xii. 40. and are in the prophet aſcribed to the miniſtry of the word; that being deſpiſed, was in righteous judgment, the ſavour of death unto death, unto them; and they under it, as clay, under the influence of the ſun, grew harder and harder by it, ſtopping their ears, and ſhutting their eyes againſt it: *leſt at any time they ſhould ſee with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and ſhould underſtand with their heart*; which may be underſtod either of God's intention, and view, in giving them up to judicial blindneſs, and hardneſs of heart, under ſuch miracles, and ſuch a miniſtry, as a puniſhment for their wilful contempt of them; that ſo they might never have any true ſight, hearing, and underſtanding of theſe things, and be turned from the evil of their ways, have repentance unto life, and remiſſion of ſins; which ſeems to be the ſenſe of the other Evangeliſts, *Mark* iv. 12. *Luke* viii. 10. *John* xii. 40. or, as if theſe people purpoſely ſtupified themſelves, ſtopped their ears, and pulled away the ſhoulder, and wilfully ſhut their eyes; fearing they ſhould receive ſome conviction, light, and knowledge, *and be converted* by the power and grace of God: *and I ſhould heal them*; or, as in *Mark*, *and their ſins ſhould be forgiven them*; for healing of diſeaſes, and forgiveneſs of ſins, are, in ſcripture-language, one and the ſame thing; and this ſenſe of the phraſe here, is juſtified by the *Chaldee paraphraſe*, which renders it, וישתבק להון, *and they be forgiven*, or *it be forgiven them*, and by a *Jewiſh* commentator on the place; who interprets healing, of the healing of the ſoul, and adds והיא הסליחה, *and this is pardon*[m].

Ver. 16. *But bleſſed are your eyes, for they ſee*, &c.] Which is to be underſtood both of corporal and intellectual ſight: it was their happineſs to ſee Chriſt in the fleſh, and converſe with him in perſon, be eye-witneſſes of his majeſty, and ſee with their own eyes the miracles performed by him, the proofs and atteſtations of thoſe doctrines they were to publiſh to all the world; and it was ſtill their greater happineſs, that they ſaw his glory, as the glory of the only-begotten of the father, full of grace and truth: many ſaw him in the fleſh, as they did, with their bodily eyes, but ſaw no beauty, nor comelineſs in him, nothing amiable and deſirable in him; but theſe ſaw his perſonal and tranſcendent glories, as the ſon of God, his fulneſs as mediator, his ſuitableneſs as a ſaviour and redeemer, and all the characters of the Meſſiah in him; and ſo believed, and were ſure that he was the Chriſt, the ſon of the living God: they ſaw Chriſt, not in the promiſe, as *Abraham*, and other patriarchs did; nor through types and ſhadows, as the ſaints of the Old Teſtament did; to them it was given to know and underſtand the myſteries of grace, reſpecting the perſon, offices, obedience, ſufferings, and death of Chriſt. *And your ears, for they hear*. This alſo muſt be underſtood of corporal and intellectual hearing, another branch of their preſent happineſs. They heard the words of truth from the lips of that great prophet, *Moſes* ſaid ſhould riſe up among them, like unto him, whom they ſhould hear: they heard, with their own ears, a voice from heaven, declaring him to be the beloved ſon of God, in whom he was well pleaſed. They heard the Goſpel preached by him, not only ſo as to be affected with it, and give their aſſent to it, but alſo to underſtand it ſpiritually, and experimentally, and to bring forth the fruit of it; and ſo were that ſort of hearers, ſignified by the good ground in the parable Chriſt had juſt delivered. The forms of ſpeech, in which the happineſs of the diſciples is here expreſſed, ſeem to be in common uſe with the *Jews*, when they would extol the peculiar attainments of a man, eſpecially in matters of wiſdom, knowledge, and underſtanding. Thus, it being told *R. Jochanan ben Zaccai* of ſome perſons that had expounded the work of *Mercavah*, that is, the beginning of *Ezekiel*'s prophecy, and the myſterious paſſages in it, and what befel them, expreſſed himſelf thus concerning them[n]; "bleſſed are you, and bleſſed are your "children, אשרי עיני שכך ראו, *and bleſſed are the* "*eyes that ſo ſee.*" And elſewhere[o] mention being made of a book of ſecrets delivered to *Solomon*, and which he had underſtanding of, 'tis ſaid, "אשרי עין שראה ואוזן ששמע, *bleſſed is the eye that* "*ſees, and the ear that hears*, and the heart that "underſtands, and cauſes to underſtand, the wiſ- "dom of it."

Ver. 17. *For verily I ſay unto you*, &c.] This is added for the further confirmation of what is before ſaid, concerning the happineſs of the diſciples, in ſeeing and hearing what they did: *that many prophets, and righteous men*; *Luke* ſays, ch. x. 24. *kings have deſired to ſee thoſe things which ye ſee, and have not ſeen them, and to hear thoſe things which ye hear, and have not heard them.* To ſee Chriſt in the fleſh, and have a clearer inſight into the knowledge of the myſteries of grace, were things very deſirable to men of the higheſt claſs in church and ſtate, and of the beſt characters, ſuch as *Abraham*, *John* viii. 56. *Jacob*, *Gen.* xlix. 18. *David*, *Pſ.* xiv. 7. *Solomon*, and the church in his time, *Cant.* viii. 1. *Iſaiah*, and the ſaints with him, *Iſ.* xxv. 9. with many others. Theſe indeed had a ſight of Chriſt, but a very diſtant one; they ſaw him afar off in the promiſes, and prophecies of him; and not very clearly, but through dark types and cloudy ſacrifices; whereas the diſciples ſaw him in perſon, heard him preach, took in the evidence of his miracles, and felt the power of his doctrines, and ſpiritually and ſavingly underſtood them. A way of ſpeaking, ſomewhat like this, ſtands in the *Talmud*[p]; "*Many* "have watched to expound in *Mercavah* (the begin- "ning of *Ezekiel*'s prophecy) ולא ראו אותה מימיהם, "*and have not ſeen it all their days.*"

Ver. 18. *Hear ye therefore the parable of the ſower.*] That is, the interpretation of the parable; for they had heard the parable before, and had deſired an explanation of it; which, tho' not mentioned by *Matthew*, is, by the other Evangeliſts, *Mark* iv. 10. *Luke* viii. 9. and ſince it was given to them to know the myſteries of the kingdom of heaven, therefore Chriſt calls upon them to atttend unto, and hear, ſo as to underſtand the ſpiritual meaning of this parable. *Mark* relates, that he moreover ſaid to his diſciples, at this time, *know ye not this parable?* Do ye not underſtand the meaning of it, ſo eaſy to be taken in? as it were reproving them for their dulneſs of hearing, notwithſtanding the grace given them, and the advantages they enjoyed: *how then will ye know all parables?* all that he had delivered, or was about to deliver at this time, or ſhould hereafter; which were of more difficult interpretation, and not ſo eaſy to be underſtood as this.

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[m] R. David Kimchi in loc.

[n] T. Bab, Chagiga, fol. 14. 2.

[o] Sepher Raziel, fol. 34. 1.

[p] T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 24. 2.

Ver. 19. *When any one heareth the word of the kingdom*, &c.] Hence it appears, that by the *ſeed* in the parable is meant the Goſpel, called *the word of the kingdom*; becauſe it treats of the king Meſſiah, of his perſon, office, and grace; and of his kingdom, and the adminiſtration of it by him, under the preſent diſpenſation; of the kingdom of grace ſaints enjoy now, and of the kingdom of heaven they ſhall enter into hereafter, thro' the grace and righteouſneſs of Chriſt. Now ſuch a hearer of this word is here deſcribed, who hears it accidentally, and only externally; hears the ſound of it with his ears, *and underſtandeth it not* with his heart. He is one that is careleſs and inattentive, negligent and forgetful; has ſome ſlight notions of things as he hears, but theſe paſs away as they come; his affections are not at all touched, nor his judgment informed by them, but remains as ſtupid, and as unconcerned as ever; his heart is not opened to attend to, and receive the word, but continues hard and obdurate; and is like the common and beaten road, that is trodden down by every one, and is not ſuſceptible of the ſeed, that falls upon it. *Then cometh the wicked one*, ſatan, the devil, *Mark* iv. 15. *Luke* viii. 12. who is, by way of eminency, ſo called, being the firſt creature that became wicked, and the worſt that is ſo; who is entirely and immutably wicked; whoſe whole work and employment lies in wickedneſs; and who was the original cauſe of the wickedneſs that is among men, and which he is continually inſtigating and promoting: ſo the *Jews* frequently call [q] *Samael*, by whom they mean the devil, *Samael*, הרשע, *the wicked.* This evil ſpirit, as ſoon as ever he obſerves one hearing the word, eſpecially that has not been uſed to attend, comes immediately, *and*, as he is hearing, *catcheth away that which is ſown in his heart*; not the grace of God, which being once implanted in the heart, can never be taken away by ſatan; but the word which was ſown, not in his underſtanding, in a ſpiritual ſenſe, nor even in his affections, ſo as to love it, delight, and take pleaſure in it; much leſs in his heart, ſo as to become the engrafted word able to ſave, or ſo as to believe in it, and in Chriſt revealed by it; but in his memory, and that but very ſlightly neither; for the heart ſometimes means the memory; ſee *Luke* ii. 51. Beſides, the word only fell *upon*, not *into* his heart, as into the good ground, as the metaphor in the parable ſhews; and it made no impreſſion, nor was it inwardly received, but as ſoon as ever dropped, was *catched* away by the enemy; not by frightening him out of it, by perſecution, as the ſtony ground hearer; nor by filling the mind with worldly cares, as the thorny ground hearer; but by various ſuggeſtions and temptations, darting in thoughts, preſenting objects, and ſo diverted his mind from the word, and fixed his attention elſewhere; which is done at once, at an unawares, ſecretly, and without any notice of the perſon himſelf; ſo that the word is entirely loſt to him, and he does not ſo much as remember the leaſt thing he has been hearing: *this is he which received the ſeed by the way-ſide*; ſuch an hearer is comparable to ſuch ground, on whom the word has no more effect, than ſeed ſown upon a common beaten path.

Ver. 20. *But he that received the ſeed into ſtony places*, &c.] Such a hearer, who is like to the ſtony ground on which the ſeed fell, is one that is not an accidental hearer of the word, as the former, but a ſettled, conſtant hearer of it; and not one that is careleſs and negligent, but diligent and attentive, and has ſome underſtanding of what he hears; *the ſame is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it*: he is one that not only conſtantly attends upon it, but he receives it; he gives an aſſent to it, he believes in it hiſtorically, makes a profeſſion of his faith in it, and holds it for a while, being under ſome convictions of the truth of it: and having ſome ſpeculative notions of it, and light in his underſtanding and judgment in it, he has ſome flaſhes of natural affection for it, and delivers ſome outward expreſſions of pleaſure and delight in it, like *Herod*, and the hearers of *John* the Baptiſt; but has no heart-work, and ſo is like to the rock and ſtony ground; the natural hardneſs of his heart continues, it remains unbroken by the word, without any true ſenſe of ſin, and repentance for it, and deſtitute of ſpiritual life, and of true faith, love, and joy: hence, as his profeſſion is taken up in haſte, immediately, upon a flaſh of affection, and a little head-knowledge, it does not laſt long, nor prove honourable.

Ver. 21. *Yet hath he not root in himſelf*, &c.] Nor in Chriſt; the word is not rooted in him, nor has he the root of the matter, or the truth of grace in him: *but dureth for a while*; a hearer of the word, a profeſſor of religion, ſhewing ſome outward reſpect to the word, and to the preachers of it: *for when tribulation or perſecution ariſeth, becauſe of the word*; which is often the caſe, and muſt be expected by thoſe who embrace the Goſpel, profeſs the name of Chriſt, and are willing to live godly in him. *Tribulation* may intend ſome leſſer and lighter troubles for the ſake of Chriſt, and his Goſpel; ſuch as the revilings and reproaches of men, loſs of character, and trade, *&c.* and *perſecution* may deſign ſomething more public and vehement; ſuch as confiſcation of goods, impriſonment, and danger of life, the moſt exquiſite tortures, and death in the moſt cruel form and ſhape; things very diſagreeable to fleſh and blood, and which can't be endured, and ſubmitted to, by perſons without a principle of grace, by one that has no root in himſelf. *Luke* calls this a time *of temptation*, or trial, as it is either way, both by private troubles, and more publick perſecutions: theſe try mens principles and profeſſions, and whether the truth of grace is in them or no; and where it is not in any perſon, *by and by he is offended*; at the croſs; he ſhrinks back from it, does not care to take it up, and follow Chriſt; but drops his religion, and the profeſſion of it; apoſtatizes, falls away, and comes to nothing.

Ver. 22. *He alſo that received ſeed among the thorns*, &c.] The hearer that is like to the thorny ground, on which the ſeed fell, *is he that heareth the word*; not a profane ſinner, nor a reviler of religion, or a perſecutor of the ſaints; but one that not only ſhews a love to the word, but who ſeems to have his heart broken under it, and by it, his conſcience tender, and his life outwardly reformed; one, who beſides his being a ſettled, diligent, underſtanding, and affectionate hearer of the word, and a believing receiver and profeſſor of it, ſeems

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[q] Sepher Bahir apud Zohar in Gen. fol. 27. 2. Debarim Rabba, fol. 145. 3.

to have a thorough work of grace upon him, to have the fallow ground of his heart ploughed up, and to be truly contrite; the thorns being under ground, and not yet to be ſeen, but afterwards appear: *and the care of this world*; not the care of another world, nor a care about ſpiritual things in this world, nor even a proper, laudable care of the things of this preſent life, but an anxious and immoderate care of them; which, as *thorns*, is very perplexing and diſtreſſing to the perſons themſelves, and is what is vain and fruitleſs. *And the deceitfulneſs of riches*; in oppoſition to ſome riches, the riches of grace and glory, which have no deceit in them: and not riches themſelves, bare worldly riches, but the deceitfulneſs of them, is here taken notice of; for riches often delude, and lead perſons out of the right way, out of God's way; cauſe them to err from the faith; they don't give the ſatisfaction they promiſe, and often don't continue, as is expected: and are as *thorns*, pungent to the owners of them, who pierce themſelves thro' with many ſorrows in acquiring and keeping them; and are frequently injurious to others, their fellow-creatures; and in the iſſue are uſeleſs and unprofitable, eſpecially with reſpect to the concerns of another world. *Mark* adds, *and the luſts of other things*; beſides riches; and *Luke* adds, and *pleaſures of this life*; meaning divers other worldly luſts and pleaſures, ſuch as the luſt of the fleſh, the luſt of the eyes, and the pride of life; which alſo, like *thorns*, are diſtracting and afflicting, ſooner or later; are vain, and unprofitable, and lead to deſtruction: and theſe are called *the pleaſures of this life*, in oppoſition to, and diſtinction from the pleaſures of that which is to come, which are real and laſting: the phraſe is *Jewiſh*[r]; “ ſays *R. Judah*, the prince, “ whoever takes upon him, תענוגי העולם הזה, “ *the pleaſures of this world*, to him are denied the “ pleaſures of the world to come: and whoever “ does not take upon him *the pleaſures of this world*, “ to him are given the pleaſures of the world to “ come.” Now theſe, all, and each of them, *choke the word*; by overſpreading all the powers and faculties of the ſoul, as thorns do a field; by overtopping the ſeed of the word, and by hiding it from the influences of the ſun of righteouſneſs, and rain of grace; and by attracting every thing in the heart to themſelves; and by bearing and preſſing down all thought, concern, and care for the uſe, fruitfulneſs, and increaſe of the word. *And he becometh unfruitful*; as in ſuch circumſtances he muſt needs be; or if there be any ſhew of fruit in outward reſpect to the word, in an hiſtorical faith of it, in an external profeſſion, and outward reformation, yet *brings not fruit to perfection*, as *Luke* ſays; theſe in proceſs of time ſhrivel up, wither away, and come to nothing.

Ver. 23. *But he that received ſeed into the good ground*, &c.] The hearer compared to good ground into which the ſeed fell, *is he that heareth the word, and underſtandeth it*; has a new and ſpiritual underſtanding given him, feels the power of it on his heart, enlightening and quickening him; has an application of it made to him by the Spirit of God, and can diſcern the worth and excellency of it, and diſtinguiſh it from all others; and, as *Mark* ſays, *receives it*; as the word of God, in faith, and with the love of it, and with all readineſs and meekneſs; and, as *Luke* obſerves, *keeps it*; holds it faſt againſt all oppoſition with great ſtruggling; will not part with it at any rate, nor depart from it in the leaſt, nor entertain any doubt about it; but abides by it, ſtands faſt in it, and is valiant for it: and this he does *in*, and with *an honeſt and good heart*; which no man naturally has; nor can any man make his heart ſo: this is the work of God, and is owing to his efficacious grace. This is an heart of fleſh, a new and right heart, and ſpirit; an heart to fear God, to love him, and to truſt in him; in which Chriſt dwells by faith; in which the Spirit of God has his temple; and in which every grace is implanted: and ſuch an one, as he hears with a ſtrict, and an honeſt intention, and in the exerciſe of grace; ſo he holds faſt the word he hears, underſtands and receives, with all faithfulneſs and honeſty: *which alſo beareth fruit and bringeth forth, ſome an hundred fold, ſome ſixty, and ſome thirty*: the fruit bore, and brought forth by ſuch an hearer, is the true fruit of grace and righteouſneſs, and is all from Chriſt, under the influences of the Spirit, thro' the word and ordinances, as means, and iſſues in the glory of God; and tho' not brought forth in the ſame quantity in all, yet is of the ſame quality; and is brought forth, as *Luke* ſays, *with patience*; conſtantly, and continually, in all ſeaſons, in old age, and even unto death; and is at laſt brought *to perfection*, holds, and remains unto the end.

Ver. 24. *Another parable put he forth unto them, ſaying*, &c.] Somewhat like the former, but with a different view: for whereas the deſign of the former was to ſhew the different ſorts of hearers that attend upon the miniſtry of the word, three parts in four being bad; this is to ſhew the difference of members in churches, ſome being comparable to good ſeed, and others to tares. *The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which ſowed good ſeed in his field*: by *the kingdom of heaven*, is not meant the ultimate glory of the ſaints in heaven, or the ſtate of happineſs in the other world; for there will be no tares there; nor the Goſpel, and the miniſtration of it, but the Goſpel-diſpenſation, and times, and kingdom of the Meſſiah; or rather the Goſpel viſible church-ſtate on earth, called a *kingdom*, of which Chriſt is king, and in which the ſaints are ſubject to him; where proper laws are made for the orderly government of it, and proper officers appointed to explain, and put thoſe laws in execution; and which conſiſts of various perſons, united under one head, and independant of any other government: and it is ſtiled the kingdom *of heaven*, in diſtinction from the kingdoms of this world; the ſubjects of it are, or ſhould be, heavenborn ſouls; the word, laws, and ordinances of it are from heaven; and there is ſome reſemblance between a Goſpel church-ſtate and heaven, and it is very near unto it, and is even the ſuburbs of it: or elſe the king Meſſiah himſelf is intended, who is compared *to a man*, a ſower; and ſo it is explained, ver. 37. *he that ſoweth the good ſeed is the ſon of man*; which is a name and title of the Meſſiah, by which he is called both in the Old and New Teſtament; who, tho' the ſeed of the woman, yet was the ſon of man, as of *Abraham*, and *David*; and which denotes the truth, and yet the infirmity of his human nature: he is the ſower that went about preaching the Goſpel of the kingdom, in the *Jewiſh* world, or throughout *Judea* and *Galilee*, in his own perſon; and who alſo, by the miniſtry of his apoſtles, ſowed the ſeed of the word in the ſeveral parts of the world, which was made effectual for the beginning of a good work of grace on the ſouls of many; for by *his field* is meant *the world*, as appears from ver. 38. and means either the whole world, in which both good and bad men live and dwell; and is the field Chriſt is the proprietor of, both by creation, as God, and by gift, as mediator: or the church, the viſible Goſpel church-ſtate throughout the world; which is as a field well tilled and manured; and is Chriſt's by gift, purchaſe, and grace: and by the *good ſeed* ſown in it, are meant *the children of the kingdom*; as is ſaid, ver. 38. ſuch as have a good work begun in them, and bring forth good fruit in their lives and converſations.

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[r] Abot R. Nathan, c. 28. Vid. Kimchi & Ben Melech in Pſ. xvi. 5. & Aben Ezra in Pſ. xix. 10.

Ver. 25. *But while men ſlept*, &c.] Good men, miniſters, and churches; whoſe caſe this ſometimes is to be aſleep in a ſpiritual ſenſe: and which ſleepineſs lies in a non-exerciſe of grace; in a ſluggiſhneſs to, and in duty; in a contentment in external exerciſes of religion; in luke-warmneſs about the cauſe of Chriſt; in an unconcernedneſs about ſins, of omiſſion and commiſſion; and in a willingneſs to continue in ſuch a ſtate: and which ariſes from a body of ſin and death; from worldly cares; wearineſs in ſpiritual duties; a ceſſation from ſpiritual exerciſes; an abſenting from ſpiritual company; oftentimes from outward eaſe, peace, and plenty; ſometimes from a long expectation of the bridegroom's coming, and the delay of it; and from its being a night-ſeaſon, a time of darkneſs and ſecurity: ſuch a caſe with the church, and good men, is very dangerous, as it expoſes to every ſin and ſnare; renders them liable to loſe the preſence of Chriſt, their livelineſs and comfort; and tends to poverty and leanneſs of ſoul: ſuch are in danger of being ſurprized with the midnight cry; and the churches are likely to be filled with hypocrites and hereticks: *his enemy came*; by whom is meant the devil, ver. 39. who is an enemy to Chriſt perſonal, and ſhewed himſelf to be ſo in his infancy, by ſtirring up *Herod* to ſeek his life; and, when grown up, by inſtigating the *Jews* to contrive his death; which they attempted by various methods, and which, at laſt, he compaſſed by *Judas*, and the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*: and alſo to Chriſt myſtical, to the church, and all true believers; whoſe adverſary he is, going about, like a roaring lion, ſeeking whom he may devour: the ſame came into the field, the world, and church in it; *and ſowed tares among the wheat*: by *the wheat*, is meant the ſame with the *good ſeed*, the children of God, true believers in Chriſt; who are comparable to wheat, for the choiceneſs of it, that being the choiceſt grain, ſo they are the choſen of God, and precious, and the excellent in the earth; and becauſe it dies before it riſes and ſprings up, ſo the ſaints do, and will do, both in a ſpiritual and corporal ſenſe; and becauſe of the purity and whiteneſs of it, ſo they are pure and white, being ſanctified by the Spirit, waſhed in the blood of Chriſt, and juſtified by his righteouſneſs; and becauſe of its ſubſtance, fulneſs, weight, and permanence, ſo they are filled from Chriſt's fulneſs, and with the fulneſs of God, and fruits of righteouſneſs, and remain, and can't be driven away as the chaff is, but continue to live, becauſe Chriſt their head lives; and becauſe of its gradual increaſe, ſo they increaſe in ſpiritual light, grace, and experience; and becauſe of the chaff that adheres to it, ſo ſin and corruption cleave to the ſaints in this life; and laſtly, becauſe it needs both the flail and the fan, ſo believers need chaſtiſements, afflictions, and corrections: by *the tares* ſown among them, are meant *the children of the wicked one*; ſatan, the enemy and adverſary, as in ver. 38. who are to be underſtood, not of profane ſinners; tho', theſe are the children of the devil; but of profeſſors of religion, men either of bad principles, or of bad lives and converſations; whom ſatan, by ſome means or another, gets into churches, and they become members thereof: at firſt they look like wheat, like true believers, have a ſhew of religion, a form of godlineſs, an appearance of grace, but are deſtitute of it; and prove tares, unfruitful, unprofitable, and of no account, yea hurtful, and whoſe end is to be burned. And *went his way*; ſomewhere elſe, to do more miſchief; and having done all he could at preſent here, undiſcovered; not taken notice of by miniſters and churches; they being all aſleep, and having loſt, in a great meaſure, the Spirit of diſcerning. The word ζιζανια, we render *tares*, and the *Ethiopic* verſion *thiſtles*, probably means the ſame the *Jewiſh* doctors call זונין, *Zunin*[s]; and which, they ſay, is a ſort of wheat, and not of a different kind from it; that when it is ſown it looks like wheat, and is ſown for it, but is changed in the earth, both as to its nature and form, and brings forth this kind. In the generation in which the flood was, they ſay[t], they ſowed wheat, and the earth brought forth זונין, ζιζανια, what we render *tares*, and bids fair to be what is here meant; and fitly expreſſes falſe profeſſors, nominal chriſtians, men of degenerate principles and practices: for not what we call *tares* or *vetches*, can be meant, which may be removed from the wheat without danger, but rather this degenerate wheat; or that wheat which is blaſted, and which may be obſerved ſometimes to grow upon the ſame root, and therefore can't be taken away, without rooting up the wheat alſo.

Ver. 26. *But when the blade was ſprung up*, &c.] That is, the blade of the wheat; which deſigns the taking up a profeſſion of religion on principles of grace, called a profeſſion of faith; and when right, it ſprings up from, and proceeds upon a work begun in the heart: and ſuch a profeſſion ought to be made by all that are partakers of the grace of God; and ought to be made both verbally, by a confeſſion of the mouth, and a declaration of the work of God upon the heart, and by deeds, by ſubmitting to the ordinances of the Goſpel; and ſhould be ſincere, and from the heart, and be viſible to men, and be held faſt unto the end, without wavering. *And brought forth fruit*; which intends not the converſion of ſinners, nor the performance of duties, nor the perfection of grace, but the firſt appearances of grace under a profeſſion; ſuch as ſorrow for ſin, after a godly ſort, fear and reverence of God, great humility, much ſelf-denial, ardent love to Chriſt, pantings and breathings after him, and communion with him, ſtrong affection for the people of God, ſome exerciſe of faith on Chriſt, zeal for his cauſe and intereſt, and a concern to honour and glorify God. *Then appeared the tares alſo.* They were not diſcernible for ſome time when they were firſt ſown; they looked like good ſeed when they firſt appeared among the people of God; they ſeemed to have the truth of grace, as others had; their blade of profeſſion, when it ſprung up, looked like that of true wheat; but were now diſcernible both by their unfruitfulneſs in their lives and converſations, and by their bad principles, which they now endeavoured to ſpread, to the hurt of the churches where they were: they always appeared to be what they were to God the ſearcher of hearts; but now, thro' the zeal of true converts, to which theſe oppoſed themſelves, and the fruitfulneſs of their lives, from which they were ſo very different, they became manifeſt to miniſters and churches.

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[s] Miſn. Kilaim, c. 1. §. 1. & Trumot, c. 2. §. 6. & Maimon. in ib. T. Hieroſ. Kilaim, fol. 26. 4. Maimon. Hilch. Kilaim, c. 3. §. 3.

[t] Bereſhit Rabba, §. 28. fol. 23. 4.

Ver. 27. *So the ſervants of the houſholder came,* &c.] Chriſt is *the houſholder*; the houſe of which he is maſter is the church, called the houſhold of God, the houſhold of faith, the family in heaven, and in earth; in which houſe he bears and ſuſtains many relations, as thoſe of a ſon, a prieſt, a maſter, or governor. By *the ſervants* that came to him, are meant, not civil magiſtrates, who have nothing to do in the affairs of churches; nor the angels, tho' theſe are miniſtring ſervants to Chriſt, and will be employed by him, in the cloſe of time, to gather up the tares, bind them in bundles, and caſt them into the fire; but the miniſters of the Goſpel, the ſervants of Chriſt, and of the moſt high God, who are made uſe of in planting, and ſowing, and weeding his field, the church: theſe obſerving the tares, and fearing the danger the wheat was in by them, as well as troubled and ſurprized at the appearance and growth of them, came to him, and ſpread the caſe before him in prayer; *and ſaid unto him, ſir, didſt thou not ſow good ſeed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?* Their manner of addreſs, calling him *ſir*, or lord, is expreſſive of their reverence of him, and obedience to him; and which is ſaid, not in word only, but in the ſincerity of their hearts, and under the influence of the Spirit of God. They aſcribe the field, the church, the good ſeed, converts that ſprung up in it, and the ſowing, or making of them ſuch, all to Chriſt, and not any of this kind, or any part of it to themſelves; though they were employed by him in tilling this field, in ſowing ſpiritual things to the ſaints, and were uſeful to them in their profeſſion of religion. Moreover, they intimate, that nothing but good could come from Chriſt; no bad ſeed, no tares could be of his ſowing; and declare their ignorance of the riſe of them; which ignorance was owing to their being aſleep, when the enemy ſowed them.

Ver. 28. *He ſaid unto them, an enemy has done this,* &c.] This is the anſwer of the houſholder to the queſtion of his ſervants. In the *Greek* text it is, *an enemy man*; and is ſo rendered in the ſeveral verſions; meaning, not that the enemy was a man; for he was the devil, as in ver. 39. but it is an *Hebraiſm*; ſuch as in *Eſth.* vii. 6. איש צר ואויב, *the man adverſary and enemy* is this wicked *Haman*; and ſignifies a certain enemy, and one indeed that is an implacable enemy to man. *The ſervants ſaid unto him, wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?* which words expreſs the concern of the miniſters of Chriſt for the true members of the church, comparable to wheat, leſt they ſhould receive any damage by the ill examples, and pernicious principles of evil men among them; alſo their deteſtation and abhorrence of men of wicked lives and erroneous principles; they can't bear them which are evil; likewiſe, they ſhew great regard to the glory of God, and intereſt of religion, and their readineſs to execute any orders Chriſt ſhould give them; but not willing to proceed of themſelves, aſk counſel and advice of him.

Ver. 29. *But he ſaid, nay,* &c.] The anſwer is in the negative; and which, if ſpoken to angels, is to be underſtood, that they ſhould not inflict puniſhments, or pour out their vials, as yet, on formal profeſſors, leſt the righteous ſhould ſhare in them; and if to magiſtrates, the ſenſe of it is, that they ſhould not perſecute with the ſword, or put men to death for heretical opinions; but if to miniſters of the word, which ſenſe I chuſe, the meaning is, that not every one ſuſpected to be a tare, or a nominal profeſſor, is to be removed from the communion of the church, becauſe there is often danger in ſo doing: *leſt while ye gather up the tares, ye root up alſo the wheat with them:* not that men of openly ſcandalous lives are to be tolerated in churches; they are to be withdrawn from, and put away; nor men of known, avowed, heretical principles; ſuch, after the firſt and ſecond admonition, are to be rejected: yet there may be ſuch in churches, not altogether agreeable in principle and practice, whoſe character and ſituation may be ſuch, that there is no removing them without offending ſome truly gracious, uſeful perſons, in whoſe affections they ſtand, who may be tempted, by ſuch a ſtep, to leave their communion; and ſo can't be done without a conſiderable prejudice to the church. The ſcope of the parable, and the deſign of our Lord in it, are chiefly to be attended to; which are to ſhew, that a pure and perfect church can't be expected in the preſent ſtate of things; and that ſaints ſhould not be immoderately uneaſy, but patiently bear ſuch exerciſes, until Chriſt's time is come to relieve them, when the tares and chaff ſhall be ſeparated from the wheat; when ſinners ſhall not ſtand in the congregation of the righteous, and there ſhall be no more a pricking briar, nor a grieving thorn in the houſe of *Iſrael*.

Ver. 30. *Let both grow together until the harveſt,* &c.] By *the harveſt*, is meant *the end of the world*, ver. 39. either of the *Jewiſh* world, the diſſolution of their church and ſtate, which was near; or of a man's life, which is the end of the world to him; or rather of this preſent world, the ſyſtem of the univerſe, of the material world, as to its preſent form and uſe, and of the inhabitants of it, and of time in it. Now the end of the world is compared to harveſt, becauſe the time of it is fixed and ſettled; tho' it is not known when it will be, yet it is as certain, as the time of harveſt; and becauſe as that is in the ſummer ſeaſon, in hot weather, ſo this will be a time of wrath, when the day of the Lord will burn like an oven; and as the harveſt-time is a time of hurry and labour, ſo will it be in the end of the world, eſpecially with the angels, who will be gathering the elect from the four winds, and all men, to appear before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt; and as at harveſt the corn is cut down, the fields cleared, and all brought home, ſo it will be at the end of the world; the ſickle will be thruſt in, and the earth reaped, the tares bound in bundles, and caſt into the fire, and the wheat gathered into the garner; and as the harveſt, as it falls out to be good or bad, is matter of joy or ſorrow, ſo will the end of the world be, joy to ſaints, who will then enter into the joy of their Lord, and be for ever with him, and ſorrow to the wicked, who will then go into everlaſting puniſhment. 'Till this time, wheat and tares are to *grow* together. The *wheat*, or true believers, *grow* in the exerciſe of grace, as of faith, hope, love, humility, &c. and in ſpiritual knowledge of the will of God, of the doctrines of Grace, and of Chriſt; which growth is owing to the dews of divine grace, to the ſun of righteouſneſs ſhining upon them, to the gracious influences of the bleſſed Spirit, and to the word and ordinances as means. The *tares*, or nominal profeſſors, may *grow* in riches, in credit, and reputation among men, and in ſpeculative knowledge; and oftentimes ſo it is, that they grow worſe and worſe, both in doctrinal and practical wickedneſs: when they are ordered to *grow together*, the meaning

ing is, not that their growth is equal, or of the ſame kind, nor in the ſame way, nor in the ſame things; but this only notes the time and duration of their growth: nor is this ſuffered and permitted, becauſe of any love God has unto them, or any delight in, or approbation of them; but either becauſe they are not fully ripe for ruin; or for the exerciſe of the ſaints, and for their temporal and ſpiritual good; for it is entirely a tender regard to the wheat, and not to the tares, that they are ordered to grow together. *And in the time of harveſt, I will ſay to the reapers*, the angels, ver. 39. *gather ye together firſt the tares*; that is, formal profeſſors, hypocrites, and hereticks; whom he will have removed out of his kingdom, his church, his field, in the world: and this order ſhews, that the angels will have a perfect and exact knowledge of theſe perſons; and that their work will be to ſeparate them from the righteous; when the churches will be pure, and without ſpot, or wrinkle: and this will be done firſt; that is, theſe wicked men will be firſt removed out of the church, before their more ſevere puniſhment takes place: *and bind them in bundles to burn them*; which denotes the power of angels over theſe perſons, the certainty and inevitableneſs of their ruin, their aſſociation together, and their deſtruction in company with one another; which will be an aggravation of their miſery, which is expreſſed by *burning* with fire; not material, but metaphorical; the wrath of God, which will be a conſuming fire, and be everlaſting and unquenchable. *But gather the wheat into my barn*; meaning the kingdom of heaven, which is as a garner or repoſitory, in which none but wheat is put, and where it is ſafe and lies together: ſo none but righteous, pure, and undefiled perſons, are admitted into heaven; and being there, they are ſafe, and out of the reach of all enemies; and what adds to their happineſs is, that they are together, enjoying all ſatiety and fulneſs; and are in Chriſt's barn, or garner, which he has made, and prepared for their reception. The gathering of them into it, deſigns the introduction of the ſaints into heaven by angels, as their ſouls at death, and both ſouls and bodies, at the laſt day, when their happineſs will be perfect and compleat.

Ver. 31. *Another parable put he forth unto them, ſaying*, &c.] As the former parable ſets forth the condition of the Goſpel church ſtate until the end of the world; this expreſſes the ſmall beginnings of it, and the large increaſe and growth of it, and its great uſefulneſs to the ſaints. *The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of muſtard ſeed, which a man took and ſowed in his field*; by *the kingdom of heaven* is meant, as before, the Goſpel diſpenſation, or the Goſpel church ſtate, and the miniſtry of the word, and adminiſtration of ordinances in it: by *the grain of muſtard ſeed*, either the Goſpel, or the people of God, or the grace of God in them; and by *the man that took and ſowed it*, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; and by *his field*, in which he ſowed it, the world, or his church throughout the world.

Ver. 32. *Which indeed is the leaſt of all ſeeds*, &c.] So muſtard with the *Jews* [v], is called מין זרעים, *a kind of ſeeds*; and being very ſmall, hence, כחרדל, *as a grain of muſtard*, is often uſed proverbially [w], for the leaſt thing, as it is by Chriſt, *Matt.* xvii. 20. *Luke* xvii. 6. Not but there are ſeeds leſſer than this; but the meaning is, that this is one of the leaſt of all ſeeds; or was the leaſt of ſeeds, which were commonly known in *Judea*; or the very leaſt which grew to the bigneſs this ſometimes did, and as here related. Now this is deſigned to expreſs the ſmall beginnings of the Goſpel diſpenſation, of the miniſtry of the word, of the grace of God in the hearts of his people, and of the ſmall number of them at firſt. The Goſpel, and the miniſtry of it, were like a grain of muſtard ſeed, little, mean, and contemptible; the author of it, Chriſt, was ſo to the *Jews*, in his birth, parentage, education, and outward appearance; the ſubject of it a crucified Chriſt, and ſalvation by him; and the doctrines out of the reach, and contrary to carnal reaſon; the preachers of it, were perſons of very mean and low life, few in number, weak, illiterate, and deſpicable, and the whole world againſt them; the circumſtances which attended the Goſpel, were very diſcouraging; it was charged with novelty, repreſented as contrary to common ſenſe, and the reaſon of mankind, and as opening a door to licentiouſneſs; and was followed with violent oppoſition and perſecution, wherever it went. The grace of God, which under the miniſtry of the word is implanted in the hearts of the Lord's people, is at firſt very ſmall, like a grain of muſtard ſeed; it is a day of ſmall things; faith in Chriſt is very weak and low, ſpiritual ſtrength ſmall, comfort little, experience of the love of God not large, light and knowledge in the doctrines of grace, but very obſcure and glimmering: the church of God, which ſprung up under the miniſtry of the word, and through the work of grace, upon the hearts of particular perſons, was like the ſmall grain of muſtard ſeed; the perſons of which it conſiſted, were but few in number, in Chriſt's time, and at his aſcenſion into heaven, and when the Goſpel was firſt preached among the *Gentiles*; and thoſe perſons which laid the foundation, and were at the beginning of the goſpel church ſtate, made a very contemptible figure, by reaſon of their outward poverty, and mean circumſtances in the world; and on account of the ſevere perſecutions which every where attended them; and alſo through the errors and hereſies introduced by evil men, that crept in among them. *But when it is grown, it is the greateſt among herbs, and becometh a tree. Luke* ſays, *a great tree*, ch. xiii. 19. for to ſuch a bigneſs did the muſtard-tree grow in the land of *Judea*, of which take the following inſtances [x]. "At *Shichin* "there was a muſtard-ſtalk, which had three "branches, and one of them was cut down, and "they covered a potter's booth with it; and found "in it, שלשת קבין של חרדל, *three kabs of muſtard ſeed* (elſewhere [y] it is ſaid, nine kabs.) Says "*R. Simeon ben Chelphetha*, I have one ſtalk of "muſtard ſeed in my field, and I go up to it, "כעולה בראש התאנה, *as one goes up to the top of* "*a fig-tree.*" And though the muſtard-tree grew to this height and bigneſs, it was reckoned among herbs, as here by Chriſt; for they ſay [z], "they "don't put muſtard in a field of fruits, but in a "field of herbs." All which ſerve to illuſtrate and confirm, the account here given by Chriſt, and alluded to; and which expreſſes the very large growth and increaſe of the Goſpel, and the miniſtry of it; of the grace of God in the heart, and of the church of Chriſt, and his intereſt in the world: of the Goſpel, and the miniſtry of it, as to its large ſpread in the world; which at firſt was confined to the *Jews*, but was afterwards publiſhed to the *Gentiles*, and carried through the whole world; and in ages ſince, has made a conſiderable progreſs, particularly at the reformation; and will make a much greater one, towards the end of time: and of the grace of God in the heart, which gradually increaſes to a full aſſurance of underſtanding of hope, and of faith, and to the meaſure of the ſtature of the fullneſs of Chriſt: and of the church of Chriſt, and his intereſt in the world; both as to the large numbers it did conſiſt of in the times of the apoſtles, and ſince, and will more eſpecially hereafter; for the church will fill the earth, and the kingdoms of the world, will become the church, and all nations of the earth will flock unto it; the people of the *Jews* in general will be converted, and the fulneſs of the *Gentiles* will be brought in: as alſo with reſpect to the figure it will make, through the great perſonages, the kings and princes of the earth, that will be in it; the great power and authority the ſaints will then have; the peace and proſperity that will be enjoyed by them; the ſpirituality, holineſs, righteouſneſs, love, and unity, there will be among them; as alſo the preſence of God and of the Lamb, they will be favoured with; all which glory and happineſs, will be brought about by a plentiful effuſion of the Spirit, and by the glorious appearance of Chriſt. *So that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof*: by *the birds of the air*, ſome think angels are meant, compared to *birds* for their harmleſneſs and innocence; for their readineſs and ſwiftneſs to do the will of God; and for their warbling notes and tuneful ſongs of praiſe; and who may be called birds *of the air*, or heaven, becauſe of their habitation: now theſe delight to be in the church, to be under the ſhadow of the Goſpel miniſtry, and to look into the myſteries of it. Though rather, the ſaints and people of God are intended, who in ſcripture, are ſometimes compared to particular birds; as to the eagle, the dove, and ſparrow; and to birds in general, becauſe timorous, weak, and defenceleſs, are expoſed to danger, and wonderfully delivered, and are very ſubject to wander and go aſtray; and becauſe of their chirpings, and ſinging ſongs of praiſe to their God and Redeemer; and to birds of the air or heaven, becauſe they are heaven-born ſouls, are partakers of the heavenly calling, and are preſſing for, and ſoaring aloft towards the high calling of God in Chriſt: now the Goſpel miniſtry, and the Goſpel church ſtate, are very uſeful to theſe; they *come* thereunto willingly, and chearfully, deliberately, and with dependance on the grace and ſtrength of Chriſt; humbly, under a ſenſe of their own unworthineſs, and yet with joy and thankfulneſs; heartily, and with their faces thitherwards, and they alſo *lodge* therein. This is what they deſire, and their hearts are ſet upon; here they determine to be, and it is their happineſs to be here; the ſhadow of Goſpel ordinances is very delightful, very refreſhing, and very fruitful to them, and under which ſaints dwell with great ſafety; and what a coming of theſe birds will there be hither, and a tabernacling of them herein, at the latter day! which are greatly deſigned in this part of the parable.

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[v] Miſn. Kilaim, c. 3. §. 2.

[w] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 31. 1. Megilla, fol. 28. 2. Nidda, fol. 66. 1.

[x] T. Hieroſ. Peah, fol. 20. 2.

[y] T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 111. 2.

[z] Miſn. Kilaim, c. 2. §. 8.

Ver. 33. *Another parable ſpake he unto them*, &c.] To the diſciples and the multitude, and which was of the ſame kind, to the ſame purpoſe, and relating to the ſame ſubject as the former; the ſpread of the Goſpel, and the increaſe of it in the world. *The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven.* The word *leaven*, is every where elſe uſed in a bad ſenſe; and either deſigns immorality, as malice and wickedneſs, or falſe doctrine, ſuch as that of the *Phariſees* and *Sadducees*: but here it ſeems to be taken in a good ſenſe, and the Goſpel to be compared unto it; not for its diſagreeable qualities, but on account of its ſmall quantity; 'tis a little leaven that leavens the whole lump, and may expreſs as the grain of muſtard ſeed does, the ſmall beginnings of the Goſpel, and its meanneſs in the eyes of men; and on account of its piercing, penetrating, and ſpreading nature; ſo the Goſpel reaches the conſcience, pierces the heart, enlightens the underſtanding, informs the judgment, raiſes and ſets the affections on right objects, ſubdues the will, and brings down all towering thoughts, to the obedience of Chriſt, in particular perſons; and has penetrated and made its way, under divine influence, through towns, cities, kingdoms, and nations: alſo on account of its heating, ſwelling, and aſſimilating nature; ſo the Goſpel, where it takes place, warms the affections, cauſes the heart to burn within, inſpires with zeal for God, and Chriſt, and the Goſpel; it ſwells and fills churches with ſuch as ſhall be ſaved, and aſſimilates the ſeveral perſons it operates in, makes them like one another, one bread, one body, having like precious faith, knowledge, and experience, though in a different degree. *Which a woman took and hid in three meaſures of meal.* By the *three meaſures of meal*, are meant the elect of God; who, becauſe of their nature and quality, are compared to *meal*, or fine flour; and that becauſe of that of which it is made, wheat, to a corn of which Chriſt is compared, *John* xii. 24. and by whoſe grace the ſaints are what they are, juſtified, regenerated, and ſanctified; and on account of the manner it becomes ſo, as by grinding the wheat, ſiſting it when ground, and ſeparating it from the bran; all which, may expreſs the firſt convictions in the conſcience of awakened ſinners, the grace of God in converſion, and the ſeparation of them from the reſt of the world, in effectual vocation; as alſo by reaſon of its choiceneſs, purity, and goodneſs, the ſaints being choſen of God and precious, and being pure and ſpotleſs, through the grace and righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and being highly valued, and had in great eſteem by him; and becauſe of their quantity, are compared to *three meaſures* of meal. The meaſure here deſigned, is the *Hebrew ſeah*, which held a gallon and a half, and three of theſe made an *ephah*; and which is often rendered by the [a] *Targumiſts*, תלת סאין, *three ſeahs*, or *meaſures*, the very phraſe here uſed; and the reaſon why *three* are particularly mentioned is, becauſe ſuch a quantity uſed to be fermented and kneaded by women at one time; ſee *Gen.* xviii. 6. and for the further illuſtration of this, take the following paſſage out of the *Talmud* [b]. “The wiſe men ſay, that three women may be employed in one lump of dough; one may knead it, another may make it into loaves, and another may bake it——and it is a tradition, בחיטין שלשת קבין, *that in wheat they uſe three kabs*, or *meaſures*, and in barley four *kabs*.” Theſe meaſures, as here uſed parabolically, may deſign the ſmall number of God's elect; and as ſome have thought, may have reſpect to the three then known parts of the world, where they were, or ſhould be: by *the woman* that took and hid the leaven in theſe meaſures, is meant, either the church, ſometimes compared to a woman in ſcripture, *Rev.* xii. 1. or the miniſters of the Goſpel, wiſdom's maidens; or rather, Jeſus Chriſt, the wiſdom of God; ſee *Prov.* ix. 1, 2, 3. and the reaſon why a woman is mentioned is, becauſe it was, with the *Jews*, the work of women to ferment the flour, knead the dough, and make the bread: and this action of taking and covering the leaven in the meal, may denote the power of Chriſt, in opening the heart, and putting in the Goſpel, which unleſs he takes in hand, and uſes, is ineffectual; as alſo the paſſiveneſs of men, under the firſt workings of the Spirit of Chriſt upon their ſouls, by the Goſpel; and likewiſe, the ſecret and inviſible power of divine grace, operating by the miniſtry of the word, upon the heart. *'Till the whole was leavened:* to be *leavened* by the Goſpel, is to be evangelized by it, to be brought into the life and liberty of it, to a Goſpel way of living by faith on Chriſt; to derive all peace, joy, and comfort from him, and not from any works of righteouſneſs; and to have a man's obedience influenced by the love of God, ſo as to do it chearfully, and without dependance on it. Now the Goſpel, where it has entrance and takes place, powerfully and effectually, continues to operate more or leſs, as the leaven in the meal, until the whole man, ſoul and body, all the faculties of the ſoul, and members of the body, are influenced by it; and will continue with power and efficacy in the world, and church, until all the elect of God are wrought upon by it, and are brought in. There is a late ingenious interpretation [c] of this parable, which, ſince the word *leaven* is elſewhere always uſed in a bad ſenſe, deſerves conſideration; according to which, this parable expreſſes not the ſpread of truth, but of error: by *the woman* is thought to be meant, the *Apocalyptic* woman, the woman ſpoken of in the *Revelations*, the whore of *Rome*, the mother of harlots; and the *leaven* which ſhe took, the leaven of falſe doctrine and diſcipline; by her *hiding* it, the private, ſecret, artful methods, falſe doctrines, and bad diſcipline were introduced, and the gradual progreſs thereof; and by the *three meaſures of meal*, the biſhops and doctors of the church, among whom this leaven was ſpread, and who was fermented with it; particularly thoſe three biſhops of *Rome* at firſt, *Soſymus*, *John* the faſter, and *Boniface* the *third*; which by degrees ſpread itſelf, until the whole Chriſtian world was affected with it; and for a long time lay hid and undiſcovered, till the Lord raiſed up *Wiclef*, *John Huſs*, *Jerom* of *Prague*, *Luther*, and other reformers. The reader may chuſe which interpretation he likes beſt.

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[a] Targum Onkelos & Jarchi, in Exod. xvi. 36. & Targum Jon. in Ruth ii. 17.

[b] T. Hieroſ. Peſachim, fol. 30. 2.

Ver. 34. *All theſe things ſpake Jeſus unto the multitude*, &c.] In the hearing of his diſciples, whilſt in the ſhip, the multitude being on the ſhore, *in parables*; in the four foregoing ones; *and without a parable ſpake he not unto them:* not that he never had preached but in a parabolical way unto them, or that he never did afterwards uſe any other way of ſpeaking; for it is certain, that both before and after, he delivered himſelf plainly, and without figures: but the meaning is, that in that ſermon, and at that time, he thought fit to make uſe of no other method, as appears from the many other parables he afterwards delivered; and though he explained the meaning of ſome of them to his diſciples, at their requeſt, yet he diſmiſſed the multitude without any explication of them.

Ver. 35. *That it might be fulfilled which was ſpoken by the prophet*, &c.] Not *Iſaiah*, as ſome copies in the times of *Jerom* read, but *Aſaph*, who is called *Aſaph the Seer*, 2 *Chron.* xxix. 30. which is all one as a prophet; viſion is one ſort of prophecy [d]; and there was ſuch a thing as propheſying with harps, pſalteries and cymbals, as well as in other ways, and with which *Aſaph* and his ſons are ſaid to prophecy, 1 *Chron.* xxv. 1, 2, 3. ſo that he is very rightly called a prophet by the *Evangeliſt*, who is cited, as *ſaying*, *Pſal.* lxxviii. 2. *I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter things which have been kept ſecret from the foundation of the world:* which *Pſalm*, though a hiſtory of the dealings of God with the people of *Iſrael*, and of the many deliverances wrought for them, yet as the [e] *Jewiſh* writers obſerve, contain many things in it, expreſſed in a parabolical and enigmatical way; ſuch as God's furniſhing a table in the wilderneſs, kindling a fire againſt *Jacob*, opening the doors of heaven, giving the corn of heaven, and angels food, and delivering his ſtrength into captivity; and beſides, the very hiſtorical facts recorded of the people of *Iſrael*, were types of things future under the Goſpel diſpenſation: now as *Aſaph*, by divine inſpiration, delivered theſe parables and dark ſayings, ſo Chriſt expreſſed the Goſpel, and the myſteries of it, in a parabolical way, which were hid in God, and under the ſhadows of the law; and ſo were kept ſecret from the beginning of the world, and from the multitude, though now made known to the apoſtles, and by them to others, according to the will of God.

Ver. 36. *Then Jeſus ſent the multitude away*, &c.] That his diſciples might have the opportunity of converſing with him alone, about the ſenſe of the parables he had delivered; and that he might inſtruct them by ſome others hereafter mentioned. *And went into the houſe*; left the ſhip in which he had been preaching to the multitude, came on ſhore, and returned to the houſe he came out of, ver. 1. *and his diſciples came to him*; and being alone, make an humble requeſt to him, *ſaying*, *declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field:* by which they mean, not a rehearſal of it, but an explication of the ſenſe and meaning of it: they aſk nothing about the parables of the muſtard ſeed and leaven, either becauſe they better underſtood them; or becauſe there were ſome things very remarkable and ſtriking in this, which made them very deſirous to be particularly informed of the ſeveral parts of it, and their meaning.

Ver. 37. *He anſwered and ſaid unto them*, &c.] Being very ready to anſwer their requeſt, and willing to communicate ſpiritual knowledge to them; thereby ſhewing great condeſcenſion, and humility in himſelf, and great affection to them: *he that ſoweth the good ſeed, is the Son of man*; he that is ſignified by the man that ſowed good ſeed in his field, is *the Son of man*; by whom he means himſelf, the ſeed of the woman, and the Son of *David*; who being anointed with the Holy Ghoſt without meaſure, went about *Judea* and *Galilee*, preaching the everlaſting Goſpel, to the converſion of ſinners, thereby making them good ſeed; though this may be underſtood of him, as including his apoſtles and miniſters, whom he makes uſe of as inſtruments for the good of ſouls, by preaching the Goſpel.

Ver. 38. *The field is the world*, &c.] That which is repreſented by *the field*, in which the good ſeed is ſown, is not only the land of *Judea*, where Chriſt preached in perſon, but the whole world, into which the apoſtles were afterwards ſent; or the church of Chriſt, in the ſeveral parts of the world: *the good ſeed are the children of the kingdom*; they which are deſigned by *the good ſeed*, are ſuch, for whom the kingdom of heaven is prepared, to whom it is bequeathed, and who are appointed to it; who are poſſeſſed of the kingdom of grace here, and are heirs of the kingdom of glory; and have both a meetneſs for it, and a right unto it, being the children of God by adoption, and that appearing by regeneration: *but the tares are the children of the wicked one:* the perſons intended by *the tares*, are ſuch profeſſors of religion, as both by their principles and practices, manifeſtly ſhew that they are of their father the devil; they reſemble and imitate him, and do his works; and plainly declare, that they were never born of God, and are in no better ſtate, though under a profeſſion, than openly profane and immoral perſons; and are more hurtful and ſcandalous to the intereſt of Chriſt, than ſuch are.

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[c] Vid. Teelman. Specimen Explic. Parabolarum, p. 64, 65, 66, 67, 68.

[d] R. David Kimchi, Shoraſh. rad. חזה.

[e] Aben Ezra & Kimchi in loc.

Ver. 39. *The enemy that ſowed them is the devil,* &c.] He that is deſigned by *the enemy*, who ſowed the tares in the field among the wheat, is no other than *the devil*; the enemy of Chriſt, of mankind in general, of God's elect in particular, and the accuſer of the brethren; and his getting of hypocrites and hereticks into churches, is no ſmall proof of his implacable enmity to Chriſt and his intereſt; and ſhews what an adverſary he is to the peace, comfort, and fruitfulneſs of the churches of Chriſt. *The harveſt is the end of the world*; that which is meant by *the harveſt*, until which time wheat and tares, good and bad men, under a profeſſion of religion, are to be together, is *the end of the world:* meaning either the day of wrath and vengeance upon the *Jewiſh* nation; when thoſe that truly believed in Chriſt were ſeparated from the reſt, and that hypocritical generation of men were utterly deſtroyed: or elſe the day of judgment, the great and laſt day, when the heavens and the earth, and all that is therein, ſhall be burnt up; when the righteous will enter into life, and the wicked go into everlaſting puniſhment: *and the reapers are the angels*; the perſons ſignified by *the reapers*, who ſhall put in the ſickle, cut down the tares, bind them in bundles, and caſt them into the fire, and who ſhall gather the wheat into the barn; that is, who ſhall be the executors of God's wrath, upon wicked profeſſors of religion, and who ſhall be the means of introducing the ſaints into the heavenly kingdom, are *the angels*; the holy and elect angels, who are the miniſters of Chriſt, and miniſtring ſervants to them, who are the heirs of ſalvation; and are oppoſite to all ſecret and open enemies of Chriſt, and his people; and will be employed in the end of time, againſt the wicked, and for the righteous.

Ver. 40. *As therefore the tares are gathered*, &c.] As it is repreſented in the parable, that in the time of harveſt, the tares ſhall be gathered out from the wheat firſt; and being bound in bundles, ſhall be *burnt in the fire*, prepared for that purpoſe, *ſo ſhall it be in the end of this world*; hypocritical and heretical men, and all formal profeſſors, ſhall be gathered out from among the ſaints, and the ſeveral churches, among whom they have been; and ſhall be together caſt into everlaſting burnings, prepared for the devil and his angels, whoſe children they are.

Ver. 41. *The Son of man ſhall ſend forth his angels,* &c.] Meaning himſelf, whoſe miniſters the angels are; who wait upon him, and are at his beck and command; even the thouſand thouſands that miniſter unto him; theſe will be ſent forth by his orders, into the ſeveral parts of the world, where he has any churches, or an intereſt; *and they ſhall gather out of his kingdom*; the Goſpel church, over which Chriſt is king, where he rules and governs in the hearts of his people; and who are chearfully and willingly obedient to his laws, under the influence of his Spirit and grace: but all who are in the viſible Goſpel church ſtate, are not ſuch; ſome are wicked and rebellious, and though they are ſuffered to continue, yet not always; for if not removed by cenſures and excommunications, they will be at laſt by angels; who will ſeparate them from the ſaints: *even all things that offend*; who are ſcandals to Chriſt, his church, and Goſpel, by their wicked principles, or infamous practices; and who give offence, not only to God, and his righteous law, but lay ſtumbling blocks in the way of the children of God, and are the authors of diviſions and offences among them: *and them that do iniquity*; that do nothing elſe but iniquity; and who, though they profeſs to be religious perſons, are ſecretly, or openly, workers of iniquity; and are even doing iniquity, in and whilſt they are profeſſing religion.

Ver. 42. *And ſhall caſt them into a furnace of fire,* &c.] Not a material, but a metaphorical one; denoting the wrath of God, which ſhall fall upon wicked men, and abide upon them to all eternity: which is ſometimes called hell-fire, ſometimes a lake which burns with fire and brimſtone; and here a furnace of fire, expreſſing the vehemency and intenſeneſs of divine wrath, which will be intolerable; in alluſion either to *Nebuchadnezzar*'s fiery furnace, or as ſome think, to the cuſtom of burning perſons alive in ſome countries; or rather, to the burning of chaff and ſtubble, and the ſtalks of any unprofitable things that grew in the field [f], for the heating of furnaces, and is the very language of the *Jews*, who uſed to compare hell to a furnace; ſo *Gen.* xv. 17. is paraphraſed by them [g]. “ And behold the ſun ſet, and there was darkneſs; “ and lo! *Abraham* ſaw until the ſeats were ſet, “ and the thrones caſt down; and lo! *hell*, which “ is prepared for the wicked in the world to come, “ כתנורא, *as a furnace*, which ſparks and flames “ of fire ſurrounded; דבגוה, *in the midſt of which*, “ the wicked fell, becauſe they rebelled againſt “ the law, in their life-time.” Which is expreſſed in much the ſame language, and conveys the ſame ideas as here; and no wonder is it that it follows, *there ſhall be wailing and gnaſhing of teeth*; declaring the remorſe of conſcience, the tortures of mind, the ſenſe of inexpreſſible pain, and puniſhment, the wicked ſhall feel; alſo their furious rage and black deſpair.

Ver. 43. *Then ſhall the righteous ſhine forth as the ſun,* &c.] The time referred to is, when the tares ſhall be ſeparated from the wheat; when they that offend and do iniquity, ſhall be gathered out of Chriſt's kingdom; when the wicked ſhall be caſt into hell: then the *righteous*, not who are ſo merely in their own apprehenſions, and in the judgment of others; nor by their obedience, legal or evangelical; but who are made ſo, by the righteouſneſs of Chriſt imputed to them: theſe, though they have been in this world loaded with reproaches, and attended with many afflictions and perſecutions; and have been deſpiſed for their poverty and meanneſs, and want of outward glory, honour, riches, and proſperity; ſhall now *ſhine forth* in the robe of Chriſt's righteouſneſs, in perfect holineſs of nature, in all felicity and proſperity of ſoul; and in the ſhining dazzling robes of glory, incorruption, and immortality, on their bodies; even *as the ſun*, having no ſpot in them, or upon them, and without any clouds of darkneſs: they will be as Chriſt himſelf the ſun of righteouſneſs, with whom, and in whoſe glory, they ſhall appear, both in ſoul and body, *in the kingdom of their Father*; meaning either the ſame with the kingdom of Chriſt, the Father's and his, being one and the ſame; or as diſtinct from Chriſt's, ſee ver. 41. the church, and the government of it in this world, in all ages of time, and eſpecially in the latter day, and during the thouſand years, Chriſt and his ſaints ſhall reign together, may be peculiarly called the kingdom of Chriſt; when it will be delivered to the Father, and God ſhall be all in all: ſo that the ultimate glory may, though not to the excluſion of the Son, be ſtiled the kingdom of the Father; of God, who is the Father of Chriſt and of his people; and which is obſerved, to aſſure the ſaints of their intereſt in it, right unto it, and certain enjoyment of it. Some copies read, *the kingdom of heaven*. Much the ſame images, here made uſe of, to ſet forth the glory of the ſaints, both in ſoul and body, in the world to come, are expreſſed by the *Jews*. "The "faces of *the righteous*, they ſay, [h] in time to come, "ſhall be, דומות לחמה, *like to the ſun*, and moon, "to the ſtars and planets, and lightenings, and "lilies, and to the lamp of the ſanctuary." And elſewhere [i] they obſerve, that "God, in time to "come, will beautify the body of *the righteous*, "as the beauty of the firſt man, when he entered "into paradiſe, according to *Iſa*. lviii. 11. and "that the ſoul, whilſt in its dignity, ſhall be ſuſtained with the ſuperior light, and be cloathed with "it; and when it ſhall enter into the body hereafter, it ſhall enter with that light; and then ſhall "the body *ſhine*, כזהר הרקיע, *as the brightneſs of* "*the firmament*; as is ſaid in *Dan*. xii. 3." And a little after [k] 'tis ſaid, that when "the ſoul goes out, "the body is left, which ſhall be there built again, "כנהרא דשמשא, *as the light of the ſun*, and as "the brightneſs of the firmament." *Who hath ears to hear, let him hear*; and ſeriouſly conſider of the ſeveral things ſaid in this parable, concerning the wheat and tares, the righteous and the wicked, as being matters of the greateſt moment and importance.

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[f] Miſn. Sabbat. c. 3. §. 1. & Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

[g] Hieroſ. Targum in Gen. xv. 17.

Ver. 44. *Again the kingdom of heaven is like unto treaſure*, &c.] By which is meant, not eternal life the incorruptible inheritance, riches of glory, treaſure in heaven; nor Chriſt, in whom are hid all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge, and all the riches of grace and glory; but the Goſpel, which is a treaſure conſiſting of rich truths, comparable to gold, ſilver, and precious ſtones; of the moſt valuable bleſſings, and of exceeding great, and precious promiſes; and reveals the riches of God, of Chriſt, and of the other world; and is a treaſure unſearchable, ſolid, ſatisfying, and laſting: this is ſaid to be *hid in a field*. The Goſpel was in ſome meaſure hid, under the former diſpenſation, from the Old Teſtament ſaints; and for a long time was hid from the *Gentile* world; and is entirely hid from them that are loſt, who are blinded by the god of this world; and even from the elect of God themſelves, before converſion: this is ſometimes ſaid to be hid in God, in his thoughts, counſels, and purpoſes, and in the covenant of his grace; and ſometimes in Chriſt, who is the ſtore-houſe of truth, as well as of grace; and may be thought to be hid under the *Moſaic* œconomy, in the types and ſhadows of the ceremonial law: but here *the field* means the ſcriptures, in which the Goſpel lies hid; and therefore theſe are to be ſearched into for it, as men ſeek and ſearch for ſilver and hid treaſures, by digging into mines, and in the bowels of the earth: *the which when a man hath found*; either with, or without the uſe of means, purpoſely attended to, in order to find it; ſuch as reading, hearing, prayer, and meditation: for ſometimes the Goſpel, and the ſpiritual ſaving knowledge of it, are found, and attained to, by perſons accidentally, with reſpect to themſelves, though providentially, with reſpect to God; when they had no deſire after it, or ſearched for it, and thought nothing about it; though by others it is come at, in a diligent uſe of the above means: *he hideth*; which is to be underſtood not in an ill ſenſe, as the man hid his talent in a napkin, and in the earth; but in a good ſenſe, and deſigns his care of it; his laying it up in his heart, that he might not loſe it, and that it might not be taken away from him: and *for joy thereof*; for the Goſpel when rightly underſtood, brings good tidings of great joy, to ſenſible ſinners; *goeth and ſelleth all that he hath, and buyeth the field*: which is not to be interpreted literally and properly; though a man that knows the worth and value of the bible, rather than be without one, would part with all his worldly ſubſtance for one; but figuratively, and denotes the willingneſs of ſuch ſouls, who are led into the glory, fulneſs, and excellency of the word of God, the ſcriptures of truth, and of the immenſe treaſure of the Goſpel therein, to part with all that has been, or is dear unto them; with their ſins, and ſelf-righteouſneſs; with their good names and characters; their worldly ſubſtance, and life itſelf, for the ſake of the Goſpel, and their profeſſion of it: and may alſo deſign the uſe of all means, to gain a larger degree of light and knowledge in the Goſpel. It ſeems by this parable, according to the *Jewiſh* laws, that not the finder of a treaſure in a field, but the owner of the field, had the propriety in it; when it ſhould ſeem rather, that it ought to be divided. Such that have ability and leiſure, may conſult a controverſy in *Philoſtratus* [l], between two perſons, the buyer and ſeller of a field; in which, after the purchaſe, a treaſure was found, when the ſeller claimed it as his; urging, that had he known of it, he would never have ſold him the field: the buyer, on the other hand, inſiſted on its being his property; alledging that all was his, which was contained in the land bought by him.

Ver. 45, 46. *Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man*, &c.] This parable may be underſtood of Chriſt's ſeeking, finding, and purchaſing his elect: for, certain it is, that he has ſought after them; which implies, that they were loſt and going aſtray; expreſſes his great love to them, value for them, and deſire after them; in doing which, he took much pains, and uſed much diligence: and certain it alſo is, that he finds them in redemption, and in effectual vocation; and that they are to him a pearl of great price; as very precious to God, ſo highly eſteemed of by Chriſt, as his portion, his inheritance, and his jewels. He has alſo parted with all he had for the ſake of theſe perſons; he became poor, emptied himſelf of every thing, even gave himſelf a ranſom for them, and ſo made a purchaſe of them, with the price of his own blood: though to this ſenſe it may be objected, that it does not ſeem ſo agreeable, that Chriſt ſhould be compared to a merchant man, which better ſuits with thoſe that deal with him, than as he is concerned with them; nor does he ſeek after any other than his elect: whereas this merchant man is ſaid to be *ſeeking goodly pearls*; any pearls that were ſo: nor is Chriſt's finding his elect, a chance buſineſs; nor have they any intrinſic excellency in them, to denominate them pearls, but by his grace. The more common interpretation of it is, that it deſigns a ſenſible ſinner, ſeeking after the true way of ſalvation, and finding Chriſt, and parting with all for him: ſuch a man is a ſpiritual merchant, who trades in foreign parts, and in things of worth and value; and ſuch an one ſeeks after a variety of things, which at firſt ſight ſeem *goodly*, in order to obtain ſalvation by; as civility, morality, a legal righteouſneſs, faſting, watchings, prayer, a profeſſion of religion, and a ſubmiſſion to external ordinances; but at length finds Chriſt, the *pearl of great price*: who is of an unſpeakable brightneſs and glory, of intrinſic worth and value; who is inriching to thoſe that poſſeſs him, and precious to them that believe; and of ſuch a price, that no valuable conſideration can be given for him: wherefore ſuch a ſoul, is willing to part with all for him; with ſinful ſelf, and righteous ſelf; and with the honours, riches, and profits of this world; and buy him, his grace and righteouſneſs, without money, and without price. Though I rather think, that in connexion and agreement with the other parables, this is to be underſtood of ſuch, who are ſeeking after knowledge in every branch of it, natural, moral, and ſpiritual; and ſo may be compared to a *merchant man, ſeeking goodly pearls*; and who find the Goſpel, and prefer it to every thing elſe. *Who when he had found one pearl of great price*: for ſuch who ſeek after wiſdom and knowledge in the uſe of proper means, are like merchant men, that trade abroad, and for things of value; and theſe, under divine direction, find in the ſcriptures, and through the miniſtry of the word, and by prayer and ſtudy, the truths of the everlaſting Goſpel, reſpecting Chriſt, his perſon, office, grace, and righteouſneſs; which are equal to, yea tranſcend a pearl of the higheſt price; for their original, coming from a far country, from heaven; for their brightneſs, clearneſs, and perſpicuity; for their ornament and glory; for their firmneſs and ſolidity; for their virtue and value, to them that know the worth of them; and ſuch will buy, but not ſell them; reckon all things but loſs and dung, in compariſon of them; and will contend for them, and ſtand faſt in them.

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[h] Vajikra Rabba, fol. 170. 1. Siphre apud Ceſeph Miſna in Maimon. Hilch. Teſhuba, c. 9.

[i] Midraſh hannealam apud Zohar in Gen. fol. 69. 1.

[k] Ib. fol. 70. 1. Vid. Midraſh Tillim. in Pſal. xi. apud Galatin. de Arcan. Cathol. ver. l. 12. c. 6. p. 712.

[l] De Vita Apollonii, lib. 2. c. 15.

Ver. 47. *Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net*, &c.] By which alſo is meant, the Goſpel, and the miniſtry of it. This may be compared to a net, for its meanneſs in the eſteem of men; being deſpicable, and of no account in the eyes of the world: and yet like a net, a piece of curious artifice and workmanſhip, being the produce of the grace of God; in which his manifold wiſdom is diſplayed, and is what angels deſire to look into: it is deſigned, and purpoſely contrived, for the gathering in of ſinners to Chriſt, and to his churches, though by accident, it has other uſes; ſuch as troubling of the world, as the net does the waters of the ſea, and drawing out the corruptions of the men of it, as that does weeds, ſtones, *&c.* and which, like a net, can do nothing of itſelf, unleſs caſt; and not then neither, unleſs ſucceeded with a divine bleſſing: *that was caſt into the ſea*; by *the ſea* is meant the world, ſo called, for the ſtorms and tempeſts of afflictions, and perſecutions the ſaints meet with, and for the continual troubles that are in it; for the reſtleſſneſs and inſtability of all things therein; for the dangers of it; and for its being the proper place and element of fiſhes, as the world is to the men of it. The caſting of it into the ſea, deſigns the opening of the Goſpel, and the unfolding the myſteries of it, and the preaching it in all the world; and ſuppoſes perſons qualified for it; ſuch were the patriarchs and prophets under the Old Teſtament; and particularly Chriſt, *John* the *Baptiſt*, and the apoſtles of Chriſt, and ſucceeding miniſters under the New Teſtament; and requires art, ſkill, and wiſdom, might and ſtrength, induſtry, diligence, and patience; and which is done at a venture, whether there are fiſh or no; and ſometimes ſucceeds, and ſometimes not: *and gathered of every kind*; the *Perſic* verſion adds, *of animals*; but much more agreeably *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel, and the *Vulgate Latin*, add, *of fiſhes*; and ſo ſome copies read. The preaching of the Goſpel, is the means of gathering ſouls to Chriſt, and into his churches; and thoſe that are gathered into a viſible Goſpel church ſtate, are of every kind, of all nations in the world, *Jews* and *Gentiles*; of all ranks and degrees of men, high and low, rich and poor, bond and free; of all ſorts of ſinners, and of men good and bad; ſome who have the truth of grace in them, and others that are only hypocrites; profeſs in words, and deny in works; have nothing more than a form of godlineſs, and a name to live, and are dead.

Ver. 48. *Which when it was full*, &c.] As the Goſpel, and the Goſpel church ſtate may be ſaid to be, when all the ends of the preaching of the word are anſwered; when all are called by the one, and into the other, that were deſigned to be called; when the fulneſs of the *Gentiles* ſhall be brought in, and all *Iſrael* ſhall be ſaved. *They drew to the ſhore*; which will be done, when the end of the world comes; then will an end be put to the Goſpel miniſtry, the net will be drawn to ſhore; the preaching of the Goſpel will ceaſe, and no more uſe be made of it: *and ſat down*; the miniſters of the word having done their work, enter into the joy of their Lord, and reſt from their labours: *and gathered the good into veſſels, but caſt the bad away*; as fiſhermen uſed to do; though this laſt office ſeems, by the application of the parable, to be what will be performed by angels; who, as many as they find to have a good work of grace wrought and finiſhed in their ſouls, they will gather into Chriſt's barn, into the everlaſting habitations, the manſions in Chriſt's Father's houſe, he is gone to prepare: but as for the bad, who ſhall appear to be deſtitute of the grace of God, and righteouſneſs of Chriſt, notwithſtanding their profeſſion of religion, they ſhall be rejected, as good for nothing, and ſhall be caſt into the lake which burns with fire and brimſtone.

Ver. 49. *So ſhall it be at the end of the world*, &c.] As the fiſherman, when he has drawn his net to ſhore, picks out the good fiſh, and puts them into proper veſſels, and caſts the dead, putrid, and uſeleſs fiſh away; ſo, at the cloſe of time, in the laſt day, *the angels ſhall come forth* out of heaven, from the preſence of God and Chriſt, and by his orders, as the judge of all the earth, *and ſever the wicked from the juſt*; with whom they have had not only civil converſation, but have been joined in a Goſpel church ſtate; but now theſe ungodly ſhall not ſtand in judgment with them; nor theſe ſinners, theſe hypocrites, in the congregation of the righteous: the one will be ſet at Chriſt's right hand, the other at his left; the one will go into life eternal, and the other into everlaſting puniſhment; and their ſeparation from one another will be for ever.

Ver. 50. *And ſhall caſt them into the furnace of fire*, &c.] See the note on ver. 42.

Ver. 51. *Jeſus ſaith unto them*, &c.] This is left out in the *Vulgate Latin*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, and in *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel, and in ſome *Greek* Exemplars; though it is neceſſary to the connexion and ſenſe of the words: *have ye underſtood all theſe things?* All the parables Chriſt had delivered, beſides thoſe he had given a particular explanation of; as of the muſtard ſeed, and leaven, of the treaſure hid in the field, the pearl of great price, and the net caſt into the ſea: Chriſt's putting this queſtion to the diſciples, ſhews that the things delivered, had ſome difficulty in them; that they were of moment and importance to be underſtood; and how concerned he was, that they ſhould underſtand them; and how ready he was to communicate the knowledge of them, which he knew would be uſeful to them in their after miniſtrations: *they ſay unto him, yea, Lord.* This anſwer, which was truly and faithfully made, is a proof of their cloſe and ſtrict attention to the words of Chriſt; the quickneſs of their underſtandings at that time, being in a very ſpecial manner opened and illuminated by Chriſt; and which he knew, when he put the queſtion to them; but was willing to have it owned and expreſſed by themſelves, that he might have the opportunity of ſaying what follows.

Ver. 52. *Then ſaid he unto them*, &c.] Since the diſciples had ſuch a clear underſtanding of the above parables, and were by them, and by other things, ſo well furniſhed to preach the myſteries of the kingdom of heaven to others, Chriſt ſtirs them up by the following parable, to a diligent exerciſe of their gifts, and to a large, free, and chearful communication of their knowledge to others. *Therefore every Scribe*; meaning not legal ones, *Scribes* in the law of *Moſes*, a ſort of letter-men, often mentioned by the Evangeliſts, and the ſame with the lawyers, who were converſant with the letter of the law, and only underſtood that; as for the kingdom of heaven, they were ſo far from being inſtructed unto it, that they ſhut it up, and would neither go in themſelves, nor ſuffer others; but evangelical *Scribes* are here meant, ſee *Matt.* xxiii. 34. the preachers of the everlaſting Goſpel, now every one of theſe, *which is inſtructed unto the kingdom of heaven*, as each of them be more or leſs; that is, underſtands the nature of the Goſpel church ſtate, the diſcipline, laws, and rules of Chriſt's houſe, the doctrines of the Goſpel, the way and things pertaining to the kingdom of heaven; as Chriſt and his righteouſneſs, and the regenerating and ſanctifying grace of the Spirit: ſuch an one, *is like unto a man that is an houſholder*; that has an houſhold or family under his care, as the miniſters of the Goſpel have, and which is the church of God; called the houſhold of God, the houſhold of faith, a ſpiritual houſe, and a family; conſiſting of fathers, young men, and children; of which indeed Chriſt is properly the houſholder and maſter, but Goſpel miniſters are deputies and ſtewards under him, and under him preſide over the houſhold, and have the government of it, provide food for it, and protect and defend it; all which require large gifts and abilities, great love and affection, both to Chriſt and his people; much wiſdom, prudence, and knowledge; and great faithfulneſs and integrity, courage and firmneſs of mind. *Which bringeth forth out of his treaſure, things new and old*: by *his treaſure* is meant, either Chriſt, who is the great treaſury and ſtore-houſe of grace and truth; from whence his miniſters receive all their gifts, grace, light, and knowledge; or the word of God, the Scriptures of truth, by which the men of God are thoroughly furniſhed for every good work; or the treaſure of the Goſpel, which is put into their earthen veſſels, into their own hearts, and that ſtock of Goſpel knowledge and experience they are bleſſed with; a large competency of which, is neceſſary to theſe houſholders; ſince they are to give out, not niggardly, but largely, and plentifully, and in great variety. The *Syriac* verſion reads it, מן סימתה, *out of his treaſures*, and ſo may include them all. *Things new and old*: not the new Goſpel and the old law, for the law is not old, nor the Goſpel new: the Goſpel is much older than the law, being hid in God, and ordained before the world was, to our glory; and was even promulgated, long before the law was on mount *Sinai*: nor things out of the Old and New Teſtament, for the New Teſtament was not yet in being; though 'tis right, and is the buſineſs of Goſpel preachers, to bring forth ſuch truths and doctrines, as are contained in both: rather truths that are old in themſelves, but newly diſcovered to them may be intended, and every new acquiſition of knowledge and experience, added to the former ſtock and fund: the phraſe ſeems to denote the plenty and variety of Goſpel proviſions, which the miniſters of it are to bring forth, ſuited to the various caſes of ſuch who are under their care. The alluſion is either to a good provider for his family, who lays up ſtores for them of all ſorts, and upon proper occaſions brings them forth for their relief; or to the people under the law, bringing their offerings out of the fruits, both of the old and new year; concerning which, take the following rule[m]. "All offerings, both of the congregation and of a private perſon, came from the land (of *Iſrael*) and "without the land, מן החדש ומן הישן, *from the new and from the old* (*i. e.* from the new and old ſtock, the increaſe of the new and old year) except the ſheaf of the firſt-fruits, and the two "wave loaves; for they come only from the new, "and from the land of *Iſrael*." The place where fruits of any kind were laid up, were called a treaſure; hence it is ſaid[n], the palm-tree has its fallen fruits, which they don't bring לאוצר, *into the treaſure*; and it produces dates, which they put into the treaſure: perhaps ſome reference is had to *Cant.* vii. 13. where mention is made of fruits new and old, and which the *Jewiſh* writers[o] interpret of the words of the *Scribes*, and of the words of the law; the fruits *new*, are the words and ſayings of the *Scribes*, their doctrines and deciſions; and the *old*, are the words of the law; and one that was well verſed in both theſe, was with them a well inſtructed *Scribe*. Unleſs the alluſion ſhould rather be thought to be to old and new wine, ſee *Luke* v. 37, 38, 39. it being uſual to call a wine-cellar a *treaſure*[p], in which all ſorts of wine were kept; and a well inſtructed *Scribe* is full of matter, and like *Elihu*, his belly is as wine that has no vent, and is ready to burſt like new bottles, *Job* xxxii. 19. and like *Jeremy*, he is weary of forbearing, and cannot ſtay, *Jer.* xx. 9. and, like *David*, his heart endites a good matter, and his tongue is as the pen of a ready writer, *Pſal.* xlv. 1.

Ver. 53. *And it came to paſs that when Jeſus had finiſhed theſe parables*, &c.] Which he ſpoke both to the multitude from the ſhip, and to his diſciples in the houſe, *he departed thence*; from the houſe in which he was, and the city of *Capernaum*, where he had ſome time been.

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[m] Miſn. Parah, c. 2. §. 1.
[n] Bemidbar Rabba, §. 3. fol. 180. 3.
[o] Targum in Cant. vii. 13. T. Bab. Erubim, fol. 21. 2. & Gloſſ. in ib.
[p] Bemidbar Rabba, §. 2. fol. 178. 2.

Ver. 54. *And when he was come into his own country*, &c.] Not where he was born, *Bethlehem*, for it is never obſerved, that he went thither; but where he was educated, and where his parents and near relations, according to the fleſh, lived; who had been ſome little time ago ſeeking for him, and deſirous of ſpeaking with him, even *Nazareth: he taught them in their ſynagogue*, it being the ſabbath-day; ſee *Mark* vi. 1. The *Vulgate Latin*, and all the Eaſtern verſions, the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic*, and *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel read, *in their ſynagogues*; but as *Nazareth* was ſo mean and obſcure a place, it is not likely that there ſhould be in it more ſynagogues than one; and of no more do we read in *Luke* iv. 16, 20, 28. where an account is given of Chriſt's preaching in this place before this time. *Inſomuch that they were aſtoniſhed*; at the doctrines he taught, which were new and unheard of to them; and were delivered in ſuch a graceful manner, and with ſo much power and authority; and alſo at the miracles he wrought, in confirmation of what he delivered; and ſaid, *whence hath this man this wiſdom and theſe mighty works?* They knew his education, how that he had not been put to ſchool, had never learned letters of men, or received any inſtructions from their learned doctors; and therefore could not imagine, how he came by ſuch ſublime and divine knowledge, and by what power he performed ſuch wonderful things; looking upon him to be a mere man, and a very mean, and contemptible one: not knowing that he was the wiſdom of God, and the power of God; which had they been acquainted with, there would have been no room, nor reaſon, for ſuch queſtions.

Ver. 55. *Is not this the carpenter's ſon*, &c.] Meaning *Joſeph*, who was by trade a carpenter, and whoſe ſon Jeſus was ſuppoſed to be; and who very probably was now dead, which may be the reaſon he is not mentioned by name. The *Greek* word here uſed, ſignifies any mechanic, or artificer. The *Syriac* expreſſes it by a word, which ſignifies both a carpenter and a blackſmith; and *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel renders it, בן נפחא, *the blackſmith's ſon.* But the generally received notion of the ancient Chriſtians is, that he was a carpenter, and that Jeſus was brought up to the ſame buſineſs, which lay in making plows and yokes[q]. This alſo appears, from the anſwer the Chriſtian ſchoolmaſter at *Antioch*, gave to *Libanius* the ſophiſter; who being big with expectation of *Julian* the apoſtate's getting the victory, aſked the ſchoolmaſter, what he thought the carpenter's ſon was doing? To which, after a ſhort pauſe, he replied; O ſophiſter! the Creator of all things, whom thou calleſt the carpenter's ſon, is making a coffin for *Julian*; who accordingly died in a few days after[r]. The *Jews* make mention of one *Abba Joſeph*, הבנאי, *the builder*, or carpenter[s]; but whether the ſame, is not certain. What they here ſay, was no doubt by way of deriſion and contempt; and yet the ſame phraſe is uſed by them of a perſon of great note and fame, for his wiſdom and knowledge: thus ſpeaking of a difficult point, they[t] ſay, "לית נגר ולא בר נגר, *no carpenter*, or ſmith, or a carpenter's ſon, can ſolve this; ſays *R. Sheſheth*, I am neither a carpenter, nor a carpenter's ſon, and I can ſolve it." The Gloſs upon it is, "a wiſe man, the ſon of a wiſe man." *Is not his mother called Mary?* Plain *Mary*, without any other title, or civil reſpect; a poor ſpinſtreſs, that got her bread by her hand labour: the *Jews* ſay[u], ſhe was a plaiter of women's hair, and treat her with the utmoſt ſcorn. *And his brethren*; not ſtrictly ſo, but either the ſons of *Joſeph* by a former wife; or *Mary*'s, or *Joſeph*'s brothers or ſiſters ſons, and ſo couſins to Chriſt; it being uſual with the *Jews*, to call ſuch, and even more diſtant relations, brethren: *James*; the ſon of *Alpheus*, or *Cleophas*, one of Chriſt's diſciples, *Matt.* x. 3. called the Lord's brother, *Gal.* i. 19. and the ſame that wrote the epiſtle that bears his name: *and Joſes*; or *Joſeph*, as the *Vulgate Latin*, and *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel read; and which two names are one and the ſame: hence, in *Talmudic* writings, we often read of *R. Joſe*, who is the ſame with *R. Joſeph*[w]: this *Joſes* is, by Dr. *Lightfoot*, conjectured to be the ſame with *Joſeph*, called *Barſabas*, who was put in nomination for apoſtleſhip, after the death of *Judas*, *Acts* i. 23. *And Simon*; or *Symeon*, the ſon of *Cleophas*, who is ſaid[x] to ſucceed *James*, as biſhop of *Jeruſalem*, and to be Chriſt's couſin, being ſon of *Cleophas*, the brother of *Joſeph*, the ſuppoſed father of Chriſt: *and Judas*; the ſame that is called *Lebbeus*, and *Thaddeus*, *Matt.* x. 3. and the brother of *James*, *Luke* vi. 16. and the ſame that wrote the epiſtle that goes by his name. The *Jews* ought not to have made theſe remarks, ſince many of their great doctors were of mean parentage; as *R. Zachariah* was a butcher's ſon[y], and *R. Jochanan* a blackſmith's ſon[z]; hence that advice of *R. Juda ben Bethira*[a], "take heed that ye do not reproach the ſons of the common people, for from them comes forth the law."

Ver. 56. *And his ſiſters*, &c.] Whoſe names, according to *Epiphanius*[b], were *Mary* and *Salome*; whom he ſuppoſes were the daughters of *Joſeph*, by a former wife; but rather of *Alpheus* or *Cleophas*. *Are they not all with us?* Lived in the ſame town with them, were well known by them, and familiar with them. *Whence then hath this man all theſe things?* His wiſdom and his mighty works; for ſince he had not them from any of their ſchools, and nurſeries of learning, from their learned doctors and wiſe men; and could not have received them from his parents, and near relations, they could not deviſe from whence he ſhould have them.

Ver. 57. *And they were offended in him*, &c.] It was a ſtumbling to them, how he came by his wiſdom and power; ſince he had not theſe things from men of learning, and could not have them from his relatives: and therefore, rather than believe he had them of himſelf, or from God, they choſe to indulge at leaſt a ſuſpicion, that he had them from the devil, and ſo were offended in him: or this offence was taken at the meanneſs of his birth, parentage, and education, though without reaſon; for if without the advantage of an education, without human literature, and the inſtructions of men, he was able to expound the Scriptures, preach ſuch doctrine, and deliver ſuch words of wiſdom, and confirm all this by miracles, and mighty works, they ought to have conſidered him as a divine perſon, and all this, as a demonſtration of it, and of his having a divine miſſion at leaſt, and of his being raiſed up by God for extraordinary purpoſes. *But Jeſus ſaid unto them*; being unmoved at their offence in him, and contempt of him, which was no other than what he expected: *a prophet is not without honour, ſave in his own country, and in his own houſe*; which ſeems to be a proverbial ſpeech in common uſe, though I have not met with it in *Jewiſh* writings; ſhewing, that a prophet, or any teacher, or preacher, generally ſpeaking, is more eſteemed among ſtrangers, who have no perſonal pique, nor prejudices againſt him, and who judge of him, not by what he has been, but by his preſent abilities, doctrine, and conduct, than among his countrymen; who are apt to think meanly of him, becauſe familiarly acquainted with him, and knew, if not his vices, yet his infirmities, and envy him any ſuperior degree of honour to them, he has attained unto. I ſay, generally ſpeaking, for this is not always the caſe on either ſide; ſometimes a prophet is affronted and abuſed in ſtrange places, as Chriſt himſelf was; and ſometimes is received with eſteem and applauſe among his countrymen, relations and acquaintance; but this is rare and uncommon; the proverb reſpects what is uſually and ordinarily done, and the truth of it is eaſy to be obſerved.

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[q] Juſtin Martyr. Dialog. cum Tryph. p. 316.

[r] Tripartit. Hiſt. l. 6. c. 44.

[s] Shemoth Rabba, §. 13. fol. 99. 2.

[t] T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 50. 2.

[u] T. Bab. Sabbat. fol. 104. 2. Chagiga, fol. 4. 2. Sanhedrim, fol. 67. 1.

[w] Vid. Juchaſin, fol. 61. & 62.

[x] Euſeb. Eccl. Hiſt. l. 3. c. 11.

[y] Miſn. Sota, c. 5. §. 1.

[z] T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 96. 1.

[a] Ib.

[b] Contr. Hæreſ. Tom. 2. l. 3. Hæreſ. 78. & lib. Ancorat.

Ver. 58. *And he did not many mighty works there*, &c.] Some he did, though not many; partly that they might be left inexcuſable, and partly that it might not be ſaid, he did not wiſh well to his own country: what he did, were not of the firſt claſs, and greateſt note; he only *laid his hands*, as *Mark* ſays, ch. vi. 5. *upon a few ſick folk, and healed them*; and yet theſe were ſuch as raiſed their wonder and aſtoniſhment, but did not command their faith; and were rather ſtumbling blocks unto them; ſuch were their prejudices, their unbelief, and the hardneſs of their hearts: and the reaſon indeed why he did no more was, *becauſe of their unbelief*. Theſe words in *Mark*, are joined with this expreſſion, *he marvelled*; ſhewing, that their continued unbelief in him, notwithſtanding his miniſtry and miracles among them, was matter of ſurprize to him; but here they are given as a reaſon, why he did no more mighty works among them: and which *Mark* ſays he could not do, not for want of power, or as if their unbelief was too mighty for him to overcome; but he would not, becauſe he judged them unworthy, and that it was not fit and convenient to perform any more, ſince they were offended with what was done; and that their condemnation might not be increaſed.

## CHAP. XIV.

Ver. 1. *AT that time Herod the tetrarch*, &c.] Not *Herod* the great, in whoſe reign Chriſt was born, and who ſlew the infants of *Bethlehem*, but his ſon; this was, as the *Jewiſh* chronologer [c] rightly obſerves, "*Herod Antipater*, "whom they call, טיסרקי, *the tetrarch*; the ſon "of *Herod* the firſt, and brother of *Archelaus*, and "the third king of the family of *Herod*." And though he is here called a *tetrarch*, he is in *Mark* vi. 14. called a king: the reaſon of his being ſtiled a *tetrarch* was this; his father *Herod* divided his large kingdom into four parts, and bequeathed them to his ſons, which was confirmed by the *Roman* ſenate: *Archelaus* reigned in *Judea* in his ſtead; upon whoſe deceaſe, that part was put under the care of a *Roman* governor; who, when *John* the *Baptiſt* began to preach, was *Pontius Pilate*; this ſame *Herod* here ſpoken of, being *tetrarch* of *Galilee*, which was the part aſſigned him; and his brother *Philip*, *tetrarch* of *Iturea*, and of the region of *Trachonitis*; and *Lyſanias*, *tetrarch* of *Abilene*, *Luke* iii. 1. the word *tetrarch*, ſignifying one that has the *fourth* part of government: and in *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel, he is called *one of the four princes*; and in the *Arabic* verſion, *a prince of the fourth part*; and in the *Perſic*, a *governour of the fourth part of the kingdom*. The *time* referred to, was after the death of *John* the *Baptiſt*; and when Chriſt had been for a good while, and in many places, preaching and working miracles; the particular inſtant which reſpect is had unto, is the ſending forth of the twelve diſciples, to preach and work miracles; and which might ſerve the more to ſpread the fame of Chriſt, and which reached the court of *Herod*; who, 'tis ſaid here, *heard of the fame of Jeſus*; what a wonderful preacher he was, and what mighty things were done by him.

Ver. 2. *And ſaid unto his ſervants*, &c.] Thoſe of his houſhold, his courtiers, with whom he more familiarly converſed; to theſe he expreſſed his fears, that it might be true what was ſuggeſted by the people, and he was ready to believe it himſelf; *this is John the Baptiſt*: ſome copies add, *whom I have beheaded*, as in *Mark* vi. 16. the guilt of which action roſe in his mind, lay heavy on him, and filled him with horror and a thouſand fears: *he is riſen from the dead*; which if he was a *Sadducee*, as he is thought to be, by comparing *Matt*. xvi. 6. with *Mark* viii. 15. was directly contrary to his former ſentiments, and was extorted from him by his guilty conſcience; who now fears, what before he did not believe; and what he fears, he affirms; concluding that *John* was raiſed from the dead, to give proof of his innocence, and to revenge his death on him: *and therefore mighty works do ſhew themſelves in him*, or *are wrought by him*; for though he wrought no miracles in his life-time, yet, according to a vulgar notion, that after death men are endued with a greater power, *Herod* thought this to be the caſe; or that he was poſſeſſed of greater power, on purpoſe to puniſh him for the murder of him; and that theſe miracles which were wrought by him, were convincing proofs of the truth of his reſurrection, and of what he was able to do to him, and what he might righteouſly expect from him.

Ver. 3. *For Herod had laid hold on John*, &c.] By his ſervants, whom he ſent to apprehend him: *and bound him*; laid him in chains, as if he was a malefactor: *and put him in priſon*; in the caſtle of *Machærus* [d], *for Herodias's ſake*; who was angry with him, had a bitter quarrel againſt him, and by whoſe inſtigation all this was done; who was *his brother Philip's wife*. This *Herodias*, was the daughter of *Ariſtobulus*, ſon to *Herod* the great [e], and brother to *Philip*, and to this *Herod*; ſo that ſhe was niece to them both; and firſt married the one, and then the other, whilſt the former was living. *Philip* and this *Herod*, were both ſons of *Herod* the great, but not by the ſame woman; *Philip* was born of *Cleopatra* of *Jeruſalem*, and *Herod Antipas*, of *Malthace* a *Samaritan* [f]; ſo that *Philip* was his brother by his father's ſide, but not by his mother's; the Evangeliſt *Mark* adds, *for he had married her*: the caſe was this, *Herod* being ſent for to *Rome*, called at his brother *Philip*'s by the way, where he fell into an amorous intrigue with his wife, and agreed, upon his return, to take her with him and marry her; as he accordingly did, and divorced his own wife, who was daughter of *Aretas*, king of *Arabia Petræa*; which occaſioned a war between *Herod* and his wife's father, in which the former was beaten [g].

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[c] David Ganz. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 25. 2. and ſo in Juchaſin, fol. 142. 2.
[d] Joſeph. Antiqu. l. 18. c. 7.
[e] Ib. c. 6.
[f] Ib. de Bello Jud. l. 1. c. 28. §. 7.

Ver. 4. *For John ſaid unto him*, &c.] *John* having heard of this inceſtuous marriage, went to *Herod*, and reproved him to his face for it; and, as *Luke* ſays, *for all the evils* he *had done*, ch. xiii. 19. for he was a very wicked man, and guilty of many flagitious crimes: *John*, in ſo doing, ſhewed his zeal for holineſs, his hatred of ſin, his courage and faithfulneſs in reproving thus freely, ſo great a man; and made it manifeſt, that he came in the ſpirit of *Elijah*: what he ſaid to him was, *it is not lawful for thee to have her*, being forbidden, *Levit.* xviii. 16. for though by another law it was right to marry a brother's wife, after his deceaſe, when he left no iſſue, yet this was not the caſe here; *Philip* was now living, and, had he been dead, ſuch a marriage would have been unlawful, becauſe there was iſſue; ſhe had a daughter, who afterwards is ſaid to dance before *Herod*; and beſides, he himſelf had another wife, whom he put away; ſo that his ſin was a very aggravated and complicated one: lying with a brother's wife, was one of thoſe ſins which, according to the *Jewiſh* [h] canons, deſerved cutting off, or death by the hand of God. *Joſephus* [i] gives another reaſon of the impriſonment and death of *John*, that *Herod* feared that the people of the *Jews*, through his means, would be moved to ſedition, and revolt from his government; which might be what *Herodias* ſuggeſted to him, or what he gave out himſelf, to cover the true cauſe of his proceedings: but the true reaſon is, what is here given, and is to be confirmed by the teſtimony of *Jewiſh* writers. One of their chronologers [k] delivers the account in theſe expreſs words: "*Herod* "*Antipater* was a very wicked and pernicious man, "many of the wiſe men of *Iſrael* he ſlew with "the ſword; *and he took to wife, his brother Philip*'s *wife*, whilſt he was living; and becauſe "*John* the high-prieſt (for ſo through miſtake they "call him) הוכיחו על זה, *reproved him for this*; "(ſee *Luke* iii. 19.) he ſlew him with the ſword "with many of the wiſe men of *Iſrael*." And, ſays their hiſtorian [l], "alſo he, *Herod*, ſlew *John*, "becauſe he ſaid unto him, it is forbidden thee to "take the wife of *Philip*, and he ſlew him; this "is that *John* that practiſed baptiſm."

Ver. 5. *And when he would have put him to death*, &c.] As ſoon as he apprehended him, and put him into priſon; being provoked by his reproving him, and being ſtirred up by *Herodias*, who was greatly incenſed and enraged, and would have killed him herſelf, but could not, being hindered by *Herod*: who, though he had a good will and ſtrong inclination to take away his life, yet what with fearing the terror of his own conſcience, and the reverence and reſpect he had for *John*, as a good man; and eſpecially for the reaſon here given, he did not do it, for *he feared the multitude*: not God, but the multitude; and theſe, not only the large number of people that attended on *John*'s miniſtry, and were baptized by him, and became his diſciples, but the generality of the people, the whole body of the *Jewiſh* nation. So God is pleaſed often times, to reſtrain the wickedneſs of princes, by the fear of their ſubjects: *becauſe they counted him as a prophet*; a holy good man, and who was ſent of God; they reſpected him as ſuch, believing him to be a true, and real prophet, and treated him with honour and reverence, ſuitable to his character; wherefore *Herod* was afraid, ſhould he take away his life, that the people would mutiny, riſe up againſt him, and revolt from him. In what eſteem *John* was with the people of the *Jews* in general, may be learned from the character *Joſephus* gives of him, as a good man; who ſtirred up the *Jews* to the practice of virtue, eſpecially piety and juſtice; which made the common people fond of him, and his doctrine; and who were of opinion, that the defeat of *Herod*'s army which followed the death of *John*, was a juſt judgment of God upon him for it [m].

Ver. 6. *But when Herod's birth-day was kept*, &c.] The birth-days of princes, both of their coming into the world, and acceſſion to the throne of government, were kept by the *Gentiles*; as by the *Egyptians*, *Gen.* xl. 20. and by the [n] *Perſians*, and *Romans* [o], and other nations, but not by the *Jews*; who reckon theſe among the feaſts of idolaters. "Theſe, ſay they [p], are the feaſts of ido-"laters; the *Calends*, and the *Saturnalia*, the time "kept in memory of ſubduing a kingdom (or "when a king takes poſſeſſion of it, the day of his "acceſſion) ויום גנוסיא של מלכים, *and the birth-"day of kings*, (when they are made and crowned, "the day of coronation) and the day of birth, and "the day of death." And it is a queſtion, whether this day, that was kept, was the day of *Herod*'s natural birth, or of his civil government, being his acceſſion, or coronation day: and it might alſo be a queſtion, whether it was the then preſent *Herod*'s birth-day, or whether it was not his father *Herod*'s, was it not that *Mark* ſays, ch. vi. 21. it was his birth-day; ſince it is the latter the *poet* [q] refers to, as kept by the *Jews*, when he ſays, *At cùm Herodis venere dies*; and the old *Scholiaſt* upon him obſerves, that "*Herod* reigned over the *Jews* in "*Syria*, in the times of *Auguſtus*; therefore the "*Herodians* kept *Herod*'s birth-day, as alſo the "ſabbath, on which day they ſet up candles "in the windows lighted, and encircled with vio-"lets." This they did, believing him to be the Meſſiah: and it is further to be obſerved, that the word here uſed, is ſaid [r] to be proper to the dead, and not to the living; and that he that uſes it of the living, ſpeaks very inaccurately: but however, it was a feſtival, and a time of great mirth and jollity; and a proper opportunity offered to *Herodias*, to execute her malicious deſigns againſt *John* the *Baptiſt*; for at this time, *the daughter of Herodias danced before them*: in the original text it is, *in the midſt*, in the middle of the hall; or in the midſt of the company, the lords, high captains, and chief eſtates of *Galilee*, for whom *Herod* made a ſupper, *Mark* vi. 21. and the *Syriac* renders it, קדם סמיכא, *before the gueſts*. Muſick and dancing, were uſual at ſuch entertainments, they were the common appendages of a feaſt [s]: the daughter of *Herodias*, who danced before the company for their diverſion, whether alone, or with others, was very probably *Salome* [t], whom ſhe had by her former huſband; and therefore is called, not the daughter of *Herod*, but of *Herodias*: *and pleaſed Herod*; and as *Mark* adds, *and them that ſat with him*; ſo that the pleaſure he had, did not ariſe merely from the reſpect and honour ſhown to him and his birthday, by her appearing with ſo much chearfulneſs on this occaſion before him; who had taken her father's wife from him, and defiled her mother; but from the airs, geſtures, and motions of the lady in dancing; which were ſo extreamly fine and regular, that ſhe gave wonderful ſatisfaction and delight to *Herod*, and the whole company.

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[g] Joſeph. Antiqu. l. 18. c. 6. [h] Miſn. Ceritot, c. 1. §. 1. [i] Antiqu. l. 18. c. 6. [k] Ganz. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 25. 2. [l] Joſeph. Gorionides, l. 5. c. 45. [m] Antiqu. l. 18. c. 6. [n] Herodot. l. 1. c. 133. & 9. c. 109. [o] Plin. Ep. l. 10. ep. 61. [p] Miſn. Avoda Zara, c. 1. §. 3. [q] Perſius, Satyr. 5. prope finem. [r] Ammonius, περὶ ὁμοίων, &c. in lit. Γ. [s] Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 2. c. 25. [t] Joſeph. Antiqu. l. 18. c. 6.

Ver. 7. *Whereupon he promiſed with an oath*, &c.] On account of her fine dancing, and being extreamly pleaſed with it himſelf; and the more, that it gave ſuch pleaſure to the whole court: he firſt promiſed her, *to give her whatſoever ſhe would aſk*; and then repeating it, he confirmed it with an oath; adding, as *Mark* ſays, that he would give it her, even *to the half of his kingdom*: a way of ſpeaking uſed by princes, when they give full power to perſons, to aſk what they will of them; and to expreſs their great munificence and liberality; ſignifying, let it be ever ſo great, or coſt what it will, though as much as half a kingdom comes to, it ſhall be granted; ſee *Eſth.* v. 3, 6. A very fooliſh promiſe, and a raſh oath theſe, which were made upon ſuch a conſideration, as only a fine dance. If ſhe, as *Theophylact* obſerves, had aſked for his head, would he have given it her? And if he ſwore by his head, which was a common form of ſwearing with the *Jews*[u], ſhe very appoſitely, though unjuſtly, as Dr. *Lightfoot* obſerves, anſwers to him; as you have ſwore by your head, give me *John Baptiſt*'s head.

Ver. 8. *And ſhe being before inſtructed of her mother*, &c.] What requeſt to make; for as *Mark* ſays, *ſhe went forth* to her mother immediately, as ſoon as ſhe had received the king's promiſe, and took advice of her, what ſhe ſhould aſk; who bid her aſk for the head of *John* the *Baptiſt*; and accordingly ſhe went in, *ſtraightway with haſte unto the king*, as the ſame *Evangeliſt* obſerves, to take him at his word, and whilſt he was in the mood; being urged and haſtened on by her mother, who was eager to ſatisfy her revenge on *John*; and ſaid, *give me here John Baptiſt's head in a charger*: ſhe deſires his head, and this to be brought to her in a large diſh, that her mother might be ſure of his death; and have an opportunity of inſulting that mouth and tongue, that had ſpoke againſt her inceſtuous marriage: and ſhe deſires to have it given *here*, in that very place, at that very time, where, and while the company was together, who were witneſſes of the king's promiſe and oath; and this ſhe did, leſt when the feſtival was over, and he was out of his cups, he ſhould repent of his folly and raſhneſs. The mother and daughter ſeem to be much alike, both for laſciviouſneſs, revenge, and cruelty: and if what the hiſtorian ſays[w] be true, that this ſame perſon *Salome*, the daughter of *Herodias*, as ſhe walked over a river which was frozen in the winter ſeaſon, the ice broke, and ſhe fell in, and the pieces of ice cut off her head; the *lex talionis*, the law of retaliation, was righteouſly executed on her.

Ver. 9. *And the king was ſorry*, &c.] As he might be upon many accounts; partly on account of *John*, for whom, notwithſtanding his freedom in reproving him, he had a reſpect; and partly on his own account, his conſcience dictating to him, that it was an evil action, and would leave a brand of perpetual infamy upon him; as alſo on account of the people, who were ſo much affected to *John*, leſt they ſhould make an inſurrection, and rebel againſt him; and likewiſe, becauſe it was reckoned an ill omen with the *Romans*, to take away life on that day they received their own; and therefore carefully abſtained, on ſuch days, from executions. *Nevertheleſs for his oath's ſake*; that he might not be guilty of perjury, choſe rather to commit murder; though it would have been no iniquity in him, to have acted contrary to ſuch a raſh promiſe, and wicked oath; which would have been better to have been broke, than kept: *and them which ſat with him at meat*; leſt he ſhould be thought by them fickle and inconſtant, and not a man of his word, and who had no regard to an oath: or it may be, they, either to curry favour with *Herodias*, or out of ill-will they might bear to *John*; or in great reſpect to the damſel, who had ſo well pleaſed them with her dancing; inſtead of diſſuading him from it, preſſed him much to perform his promiſe: and therefore, *he commanded it to be given her*; in the form and manner ſhe requeſted it. Some have thought, that the whole of this affair was a concerted ſcheme; and that *Herod* himſelf was in it, though he pretended to be ſorry and uneaſy, having fixed on this ſeaſon as a convenient time for it; and choſe to have it done in this way, and in ſo publick a manner, to leſſen the odium of it; or otherwiſe, it is not eaſy to account for his extravagant promiſe, and his punctual performance of it.

Ver. 10. *And he ſent*, &c.] *An executioner*, as in *Mark* vi. 27. where the *Latin* word *ſpeculator*, or as it is ſometimes written *ſpiculator*, is uſed; and is the name of an officer concerned in executions, and particularly in beheading of perſons; and ſo is uſed by *Latin* writers. "In a civil war, ſays[x] *Seneca*, a ſervant hid his maſter that was proſcribed; and when he had fitted his rings for himſelf, and put on his cloaths, he met *ſpeculatoribus*, the *ſpeculators*; he told them he deſired nothing, but that they would perform their orders, and immediately ſtretched out his neck." And the ſame writer elſewhere[y] ſpeaks, of a ſoldier that was condemned by *Piſo*, on ſuſpicion of murdering his fellow ſoldier; "Who was had without the camp, and as ſoon as he ſtretched out his neck, he, who was thought to be killed, ſuddenly appeared; upon which the centurion that had the management of the execution, ordered *ſpeculatorem*, the *ſpeculator*, to put up his ſword, and returned the condemned perſon to *Piſo*." The word is alſo uſed by the *Jewiſh* doctors, and in the ſame ſenſe; take the following inſtance among many[z]. "*R. Iſhmael* ſaid to *R. Simeon ben Gamaliel* (when they were both apprehended in order to be executed) brother, there was a man ready to receive his blow, and they intreated, לאספקלטור, *the ſpeculator*: one ſaid, I am a prieſt, the ſon of an high-prieſt, ſlay me firſt, that I may'nt ſee the death of my companion; and the other ſaid to him, I am a prince, the ſon of a prince, ſlay me firſt, that I may not ſee the death of my companion: he replied unto them, caſt lots; and they caſt lots, and the lot fell on *R. Simeon ben Gamaliel*; immediately he took a ſword, *and cut off his head*." And as this word is often uſed by them[a] for an executioner, ſo ספקולא, *ſpecula* is often made mention of by them[b], as a ſort of puniſhment by death: and ſuch an officer was ſent by *Herod*, to inflict this puniſhment upon *John*; who accordingly executed it, *and beheaded John in the priſon*; that is, of *Machærus*, where he lay, without giving him a hearing, or allowing him to ſpeak for himſelf, or with his friends: and which was done in this private manner, partly for diſpatch, and partly on account of the people; who it might have been feared, had the execution been publick and known, would have roſe and reſcued him.

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[u] Miſn. Sanhedrim, c. 3. §. 2. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 3. 1. Derech Eretz, c. 6. fol. 18. 2.

[w] Nicephorus, Hiſt. l. 1. c. 20.

[x] De beneficiis, l. 3. c. 25.

[y] De ira, l. 1. c. 16. Vid. Julium Firmicum l. 8. c. 26. & Florum, l. 4. c. 7. & Suetonium in vit. Caligul. c. 52. Octav. Auguſt. c. 74. & Claud. c. 35. Tertullian. de Corona, c. 1.

[z] Abot R. Nathan, c. 38. fol. 9. 1.

[a] Vid. Targum Jon. in Gen. xxxvii. 36. & xxxix. 1. & Targ. Sheni in Eſth. v. 2. Jarchi in Exod. iv. 11. T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 108. 1. & Gloſſ. in ib.

Ver. 11. *And his head was brought in a charger*, &c.] By the executioner that cut it off, to *Herod*, whilſt he and his gueſts were at table; by which it ſhould ſeem, that the priſon was very near; and it is not improbable, that it was the caſtle of *Machærus*, that *Herod* made this entertainment in: *and given to the damſel*; the daughter of *Herodias*, who, by her mother's inſtigation, had aſked it, and who received it out of the hands of *Herod* himſelf; or however, it was delivered to her by his orders: *and ſhe brought it to her mother*; who had put her upon it, than which, nothing could be a more agreeable diſh to her; and who, as *Jerom* ſays[c], becauſe ſhe could not bear truth, that tongue which ſpoke truth; ſhe plucked out, and pierced it through and through with a needle, as *Fulvia* did *Cicero*'s: but this triumph over the faithful reprover of her, and *Herod*'s vices, did not laſt long; for quickly after this, they were ſtript of their honours and riches, and deprived of the kingdom, and baniſhed to *Lyons* in *France*, where they died[d]. A *Jewiſh* chronologer ſays[e], *Herod* was driven out of the land by *Tiberius*, and fled to *Spain*, and died there.

Ver. 12. *And his diſciples came*, &c.] To the priſon where his body was left, and to which they had liberty of recourſe before; ſee *Matt.* xi. 2. and very probably, upon hearing what was done, might apply to *Herod*, as *Joſeph* of *Arimathea* did to *Pilate*, for the body of *Jeſus*; who might, as he did, give them leave to take it: *and took up the body and buried it*. *Theophylact* ſays, his body was buried in *Baſte Ceſaræa*, and that his head was firſt repoſited in *Emeſeſa*. This was the laſt office of love to their maſter, and was done in reſpect and gratitude to him, and to ſhew that they ſtill abode by his doctrine; and was what decency and the belief of the reſurrection of the dead, as well as the will of God, require ſhould be done: *and went and told Jeſus*; that their maſter was dead, what kind of death he ſuffered, and by what means it was brought about; and how that they had interred him; and what *Herod* alſo had ſaid of Jeſus, that he was *John* riſen from the dead. Their coming to Chriſt, and informing him of all this ſhew, that they were taught by their maſter to reſpect him as the Meſſiah, and believe in him, and adhere to him; and it is very likely that they continued with him.

Ver. 13. *When Jeſus heard of it*, &c.] Of the death of *John*, and of the cruel uſage he had met with; and particularly, that his fame had reached the court of *Herod*, and that he was talked of there, and ſaid by *Herod* himſelf to be *John* the *Baptiſt*, that was riſen from the dead; *he departed thence by ſhip, into a deſert place apart*; to avoid *Herod*, though not through fear of death; but becauſe his time was not yet come: which may teach us, that it is lawful to ſhun dangers, when there is an opportunity; which may be done, without betraying truth, or ſacrificing a good conſcience. The other Evangeliſts *Mark* and *Luke*, aſſign another reaſon of this departure of Chriſt's, that it was upon the return of his diſciples to him from their embaſſy; when having given him an account of what they had done, and taught, he judged it proper they ſhould retire, and get ſome refreſhment and reſt; and both may very well be thought to be the reaſons of this receſs. At the ſame time that *John*'s diſciples brought him the news of their maſter's death, Chriſt's diſciples return to him, with the account of the ſucceſs of their miniſtry; who might not only be weary, and want refreſhment, but be diſcouraged in their minds, at this inſtance of cruelty; wherefore Chriſt thought it neceſſary to retire, partly for his own ſafety, and partly for their eaſe; and that he might have an opportunity of fortifying their minds againſt all trials and perſecutions they were to meet with: the place from whence he departed, was either *Capernaum*, his own country and city, or *Nazareth*, where we have lately heard of him; or ſome other place in *Galilee*, where he was, when *John*'s diſciples came to him: the place whither he went, was *a deſert place*; and as *Luke* ſays, *belonging to the city called Bethſaida*, the city of *Andrew* and *Peter*, which lay on the other ſide of the ſea of *Galilee*, or *Tiberias*; over which he went by ſhip, *John* vi. 1. *And when the people had heard thereof*; of his departure, and whither he went, *they followed him on foot out of their cities*; ſuch as *Nazareth*, *Capernaum*, *Tiberias*, and others; and paſſing the bridge at *Jordan*, as Dr. *Lightfoot* obſerves, they outwent the ſhip, and got thither before them, as *Mark* relates. This ſhewed their great affection and zeal for Chriſt, and their diligence in attending on him.

Ver. 14. *And Jeſus went forth*, &c.] Either from the mountain where he ſate with his diſciples, *John* vi. 3. or out of the deſert, where he had retired for ſecrecy; or out of the ſhip, which ſeems beſt, the company having got thither before his landing: *and ſaw a great multitude*; for there were about five thouſand men, beſide women and children, ver. 21. *and was moved with compaſſion toward them*: partly on account of their bodily infirmities, which were very many and great; and partly on account of the bad ſituation they were in, through want of ſpiritual paſtors to feed them with the bread of life; for *Mark* gives this as the reaſon, moving his compaſſion, *becauſe they were as ſheep, not having a ſhepherd*: all which, ſhews the truth of Chriſt's human nature; proves him to be a merciful high-prieſt, and one truly concerned for both the bodies and ſouls of men: *and he healed their ſick*; which they brought along with them, and that without the uſe of any medicine, by a word ſpeaking: ſo that as the former phraſe gives proof of his humanity, this atteſts his divinity: but this was not all he did, he not only healed their bodies, but he taught them the doctrines of the Goſpel; and ſpake to them concerning the kingdom of God, for the good of their ſouls, as the other Evangeliſts relate.

Ver. 15. *And when it was evening*, &c.] *Mark* ſays, *when the day was now far ſpent*; and *Luke*, *when the day began to wear away*; it was upon the decline of the day. The *Jews*, as *Grotius* rightly obſerves, had two evenings; the one began when the ſun declined at noon, and the other at ſun-ſetting: now it was the former of theſe, and not the latter, that was now come; for after this, you read of another evening that was come, ver. 23. between which two evenings Chriſt made the multitude to ſit down, and he fed them in a miraculous manner; and the diſciples reaſon for the diſmiſſion of the multitude, that they might go into the neighbouring villages, and buy proviſions, ſhews that it could not be the laſt, but the firſt of theſe evenings, that is here meant. *His diſciples came to him*; the twelve, whom he had left in that part of the deſert he retired to; or on the mount, where he had ſate down with them for their reſt and refreſhment: *ſaying, this is a deſert place*; where no food was to be had; where were no houſes of entertainment, *and the time is now paſt*; not the time of the day, but of dining: the uſual dinner-time was paſt, which, with the *Jews*, was the fifth hour of the day, and anſwers to eleven o'clock with us, or at fartheſt ſix; which, with us, is twelve at noon; concerning which, the *Jewiſh* doctors thus diſpute [f]. "The "firſt hour, is the time of eating for the *Lydians*, "or *Cannibals*; the ſecond for thieves, the third "for heirs, the fourth for workmen, and the fifth "for every man: but does not *R. Papa* ſay, that "the fourth is the time of dining for every man? "But if ſo, if the fourth is the time for every "man, the fifth is for workmen, and the ſixth for "the diſciples of the wiſe men." Which is elſewhere [g] delivered with ſome little variation, thus; "the firſt hour, is the time of eating for *Lydians*; "the ſecond, for thieves; the third, for heirs; the "fourth, for workmen; the fifth, for ſcholars; "and the ſixth, for every man: but does not *R. "Papa* ſay, *&c.*" But ſuppoſing the uſual time of dining to be at the fartheſt, at the ſixth hour, at twelve o'clock, this time muſt be elapſed, ſince the firſt evening was commenced; ſo that the reaſoning of the diſciples is very juſt, *ſend the multitude away.* Chriſt was preaching to them, the diſciples move that he would break off his diſcourſe, and diſmiſs them: in the ſynagogue, the manner of diſmiſſing the people was, by reading the הפטרה, or *diſmiſſion*, which was ſome paſſage out of the prophetic writings. *That they may go into the villages, and buy themſelves victuals*; the little towns which lay neareſt the deſert, where they might be ſupplied with ſuitable proviſions.

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[b] Bereſhit Rab. §. 79. fol. 69. 3. Vajikra Rab. §. 24. fol. 165. 2. & Bemidbar Rab. §. 7. fol. 187. 4.

[c] Adv. Ruffin. Tom. 2. fol. 82. K.

[d] Joſeph. Antiqu. l. 18. c. 8.

[e] Ganz. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 25. 2.

Ver. 16. *But Jeſus ſaid unto them*, &c.] The diſciples, *they need not depart*; meaning ſo long as he was with them, who had power enough to provide a ſufficient meal for them, as well as by a word ſpeaking, to heal their diſeaſes; however, to try their faith, and make way for the working of the following miracle, he ſays to them, *give ye them to eat*; ſuch proviſions as you have along with you.

Ver. 17. *And they ſay unto him*, &c.] In order to excuſe themſelves, and to ſhew the impoſſibility of feeding ſuch a large number of people; *we have here but five loaves*; and theſe barley ones, coarſe bread; *and two fiſhes*; ſmall ones, which were dried and ſalted, and fit for preſent eating; which they either brought along with them for their own refreſhment, or rather, were brought thither by a boy to ſell, as is uſual where a great concourſe of people are got together: theſe words ſeem to be ſpoken by *Andrew*, *Simon Peter*'s brother; who added, *but what are they among ſo many?* ſee *John* vi. 8, 9. not thinking of the power of Chriſt, who was able to multiply, and make this proviſion a ſufficiency for the whole company.

Ver. 18. *He ſaid, bring them hither to me.*] The loaves and the fiſhes, ſignifying that they were ſufficient; or that he would make them ſo: this he he ſaid, to try their faith in him, their obedience to him, and their liberality to others: and indeed, the beſt way to have an increaſe of temporal ſupplies, is to bring what we have, and put it into Chriſt's hands; whereby not only good is done to others, but that with an overplus is returned to the giver.

Ver. 19. *And he commanded the multitude to ſit down on the graſs*, &c.] The other Evangeliſts ſay, that he ordered the diſciples to cauſe the people to ſit down; both no doubt were done: the multitude were commanded to ſit down by Chriſt, which, without his orders, they would never have done; and the diſciples were enjoined to place them in form, by companies, in ranks, by hundreds and by fifties, that their number might be the better taken, and the food more orderly diſtributed by the apoſtles: *and took the five loaves and the two fiſhes*; into his hands, lifting them up, that they might be ſeen by the whole company; and they be fully convinced of the miracle going to be wrought by him: *and looking up to heaven*; to his Father in heaven, who is the Father of mercies; and from whom, every mercy and bleſſing of life comes; and giving thanks to him for the ſame, as was uſually done by him, *he bleſſed* the five loaves and the two fiſhes; *and brake* the loaves, and divided the fiſhes; *and gave the loaves*, and fiſhes alſo, *to the diſciples, and the diſciples to the multitude*; who were the miniſters and ſervants of Chriſt, employed by him in this manner, for the more orderly and quick diſpatch of this buſineſs: and which was an emblem of their ſpiritual work and office; who received all their food from Chriſt, which they diſtributed to the churches, and fed them with.

Ver. 20. *And they did all eat*, &c.] Chriſt and his twelve diſciples, and the five thouſand men, with the women and children, of the five loaves and two fiſhes; every one had their portion, *and were filled*; they were ſatisfied, they had a full meal, they had enough, and to ſpare; ſee 2 *Chron.* xxxi. 10. which the *Targumiſt* paraphraſes thus. "And *Azariah* ſaid unto him, who was appointed "chief over the houſe of *Zadok*, and ſaid, from "the time that they began to ſeparate the offering, "to bring it into the ſanctuary of the Lord, "אכלין ושבעין, *we have eat and are filled*, and "have *left much*; for *the word of the Lord* hath "bleſſed his people, and what is left, lo! it is this "plenty of good." The *Jews* uſed not to reckon it a meal, unleſs a man was filled, and account it an ill ſign, if nothing was left: but here was fulneſs, and more left than what was firſt had; which was gathered up, either for the uſe of the poor, or reſerved for after ſervice; teaching us liberality to the needy, and frugality, not to waſte that which is left. *And they took up of the fragments that remained, twelve baſkets full*; according to the number of the diſciples, every man had his baſket full. It may be enquired, where they could have ſo many baſkets in the wilderneſs? It is not likely, that every one of the apoſtles had a baſket with him; it is indeed not improbable, but that they might be furniſhed with them from ſome in the company, who might bring proviſions with them, either for their own uſe, or to ſell; ſee *John* vi. 9. but perhaps the reaſon why they were ſo eaſily ſupplied with ſuch a number of baſkets in a deſert place, might be a cuſtom which the *Jews* [h] had of carrying baſkets with hay and ſtraw, in commemoration of what they did in *Egypt*; when they were obliged to carry bricks in baſkets, and to go about and pick up ſtraw in baſkets to make bricks; hence the [l] Epigrammatiſt calls a *Jew*, *ciſtifer*, a *baſket-bearer*, or *carrier*; and *Juvenal* [k] laughs at theſe people, as if all their houſhold goods lay in a baſket, and a little hay, or ſtraw: it is ſaid of *R. Simeon*, that when he went to the ſchool, שקיל צנא, *he carried a baſket* on his ſhoulders [l]; the Gloſs ſuggeſts, it was to ſit upon; but a baſket is not very proper for a ſeat; very likely it was for the above reaſon: ſuch a cuſtom will account for it, how ſuch a number of baſkets could be come at in the wilderneſs.

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[f] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 11. 1.

[g] T. Bab. Peſachim, fol. 12. 2.

[h] Nicholas de Lyra, in Pſal. lxxxi. 6.

Ver. 21. *And they that had eaten were about five thouſand men*, &c.] The word *about*, is omitted in the *Vulgate Latin*, in *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel, and in the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions, which expreſsly ſay there were ſo many. A large number indeed, to be fed with five loaves and two fiſhes! *beſides women and children*; who were not taken into the account, though they all eat, and were filled, it not being uſual with the *Jews*, to number their women; and who might be near as large a number as the men: for generally there is a very great concourſe of the female ſex, and of children, where any thing extraordinary, or out of the way, is to be ſeen or heard; and of this ſort, was a large number of Chriſt's audience, who only came out of curioſity, or for one ſiniſter end or another.

Ver. 22. *And ſtraightway Jeſus conſtrained his diſciples*, &c.] As ſoon as ever he had wrought the above miracle, and perceived that the people were ſo convinced by it, of his being the Meſſiah, that they were determined, whether he would or no, to ſet him up for a temporal king, to deliver them from the *Roman* yoke; which they doubted not he was able to do, who could feed ſo large a number, with ſuch a ſmall quantity of proviſion; ſee *John* vi. 14, 15. and knowing alſo, that his diſciples had imbibed the ſame notion of a temporal kingdom, were very fond of it, and big with expectation thereof; and would have readily encouraged the populace, and joined with them in ſuch an action: wherefore, in all haſte he hurried them away, obliged them to depart, leſt any ſtep ſhould be taken, which might be of dangerous conſequence to them, and the people: it looks as if the diſciples were bent upon the ſame thing, and that it was with much difficulty and reluctance, they were brought off of it. Chriſt was forced to uſe his power and authority, and order them directly *to get into a ſhip*; very likely, the ſame they came over in; *and to go before him unto the other ſide* of the lake of *Tiberias*, or ſea of *Galilee*, over-againſt *Bethſaida*, to *Capernaum*, or the land of *Genneſerat*; *while he ſent the multitudes away*: who would not ſo eaſily have been prevailed upon to have departed, if Chriſt had not firſt ſhipped off his diſciples; for had he withdrawn himſelf, and left his diſciples with them, they would have been in hopes of his return, and would have continued in a body with them, in expectation of it; and therefore, the better to diſperſe them, and prevent their deſigns, he ſends away his diſciples before him.

Ver. 23. *And when he had ſent the multitudes away*, &c.] Had ordered them at leaſt to go away; for, it ſeems, according to *John* vi. 22. that they did not in general diſperſe: there was a large body of them that continued upon the ſpot all night, expecting his return; in which being diſappointed, they took ſhipping, and came to *Capernaum*. *He went up into a mountain apart to pray*; perhaps the ſame he went up to before, and from whence he came down, *John* vi. 3. This he choſe as a proper place for prayer, where he could be retired, and alone, have his thoughts free, and as man, pour out his ſoul to his Father, on his own account, and on the behalf of others; and particularly, he might be concerned about this notion of a temporal kingdom, that his diſciples and others were ſo fond of; and pray that his diſciples might be convinced of their miſtake, and that the people might be hindered from proſecuting their deſigns. His going up into a mountain, and praying there, were quite contrary to the canons of the *Jews*; which forbid praying in places ever ſo little raiſed. "Let not a man ſtand " ſay they [m], במקום גבוה, *in an high place*, and " pray, but in a low place and pray; as it is ſaid, " *Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord*, " *Pſal.* cxxx. 1. 'Tis a tradition, that a man may " not ſtand, neither upon a throne, nor upon a " footſtool, nor in any high place and pray, be" cauſe there are no high places before God." This rule is delivered by *Maimonides* [n], in this form: " A man may not ſtand in a place that is three " hands high, or more, and pray, neither upon a " bed, nor upon a ſeat, nor upon a throne." But Chriſt did not look upon himſelf obliged, by theſe traditions of the elders; but choſe ſuch places, whether high or low, which were moſt private and retired. *And when evening was come*; when it was now dark, *John* vi. 17. when the ſecond evening was come and ended; ſee ver. 15. and it was properly night, *he was there alone*; in the mountain, where he continued the greateſt part of the night, even until the fourth watch.

Ver. 24. *But the ſhip was now in the midſt of the ſea*, &c.] That is, the ſhip in which the diſciples were put into, to go on the other ſide, had by this time got into the midſt of the ſea: the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions ſay, it was *many furlongs from land*; and the *Arabic* expreſsly ſays, *about twenty-five furlongs*; which account ſeems to be taken from *John* vi. 19. but this was not all, it was not only at ſuch a diſtance from land, but was *toſſed with waves*; up and down, and in danger of being overſet, and the paſſengers loſt: *for the wind was againſt them*; which beat the waves with ſuch violence againſt them, that they were in the utmoſt danger of their lives, and not able to get forward; and what was worſt of all, and moſt diſcouraging to the diſciples, Chriſt was not with them. The ſhip in which the diſciples were, was an emblem of the church of Chriſt, and of its ſtate and condition in this world: this world is like a ſea, for its largeneſs, and the abundance of nations and people in it, compared to many waters, *Rev.* xvii. 15. and for the tumultuouſneſs of its inhabitants; the wicked being like a troubled ſea, which cannot reſt, continually caſting up the mire and dirt of ſin, to the diſhonour of God, and the grief of his people; and for its fickleneſs and inconſtancy, changes and war being continually in it: now the church of Chriſt is like a ſhip in this troubleſome ſea; where the true diſciples and followers of Chriſt, are ſelected together; and are preſerved from the pollutions of the world, and from the danger to which the men of it are expoſed, being in their ſins, and liable to the wrath and curſe of God, and eternal damnation; which they that are in Chriſt, and members of his body, are ſecure

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[l] Nubere: nupſiſti, Gellia, Ciſtifero. Martial. Epigram. l. 5. ep. 17.

[k] Judæis: quorum Cophinus fœnumque ſupellex. Juvenal. Satyr. 3. cum dedit ille locum, Cophino, fœnoque relicto. ib. Satyr. 6.

[l] T. Bab. Nedarim, fol. 49. 2.

[m] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 10. 2. Piſke Toſaph. in ib. art. 52. T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 4. 4. Kotſenſis Mitzvot Tora precept. Affirm. 19. Midraſh Kohelet, fol. 70. 3.

[n] Hilch. Tephillah. c. 5. §. 7.

from; the port or haven to which they are bound, is heaven and eternal happineſs; theirs and Chriſt's Father's houſe, where are many manſions provided for them; and where they long to be, and hope, and believe, e'er long they ſhall arrive unto; and hope is as an anchor of their ſoul, ſure and ſtedfaſt: but in the mean while, whilſt they are ſailing through the ſea of this world, they are often, as the church of old, toſſed with tempeſts, and not comforted, *Iſa*. lv. 11. with the tempeſts of ſatan's temptations, the ſtorms of the world's perſecutions, and with the winds of error and falſe doctrine; and then is it moſt uncomfortable to them, when Chriſt is not with them, which was the caſe of the diſciples here.

Ver. 25. *And in the fourth watch of the night*, &c.] This is ſaid, according to the diviſion of the night into four watches, by the *Jews*; who [o] ſay, that "there are four watches in the night, and four "watches in the day." It is true indeed, that it is diſputed among them, whether there were four watches, or only three in the night: ſome ſay there were four, others ſay there were but three [p]; not but that theſe made a diviſion of the night into four parts, the three firſt of which, they thought were properly the watches of the night, and the fourth was the morning. The firſt watch began at ſix o'clock in the evening, and laſted till nine; the ſecond began at nine, and ended at twelve, which was midnight; the third began at twelve, and cloſed at three; the fourth began at three, and ended at ſix in the morning. But ſince ſome [q] *Jewiſh* writers are ſo poſitive for the diviſion of the night into three watches only, and a watch is with them called [r], the third part of the night; and it is dubious with ſome, whether the *Jewiſh* diviſion is here referred to; and ſince it is ſo clear a point, that the *Romans* [s] divided their night into four watches, and their writers ſpeak not only of the firſt, ſecond, and third watches, but alſo of the fourth watch [t]; it is thought by ſome, that the Evangeliſt ſpeaks after the *Roman* manner: but however, certain it is, that within this period, probably at the beginning of it, after three o'clock in the morning, Chriſt came to his diſciples, when they had been almoſt all the night at ſea, toſſed with waves, and in great danger. *Jeſus went unto them*; from the mountain where he had been praying, the greateſt part of the night, to the ſea-ſide, and ſo upon the waters to them; for it follows, *walking upon the ſea*; as on dry land: though it was ſo ſtormy and boiſterous, that the diſciples, though in a ſhip, were in the utmoſt danger, yet he upon the waves, was in none at all; by which action he ſhewed himſelf to be the Lord of the ſea, and to be truly and properly God; whoſe character is, that he *treadeth upon the waves of the ſea*, *Job* ix. 8.

Ver. 26. *And when the diſciples ſaw him walking on the ſea*, &c.] It being now morning, and perhaps might have moon-light; and beſides, there is always more light upon the water than land; they were able to diſcern ſomething like a man, walking upon the ſurface of the ſea, but had not light enough to diſtinguiſh what, or who it was; and, moreover, had no thought of Chriſt, or expectation of ſeeing him; and the appearance of a man walking upon the waters being ſo unuſual, and aſtoniſhing, *they were troubled*, *ſaying it is a ſpirit*: a nocturnal apparition, a dæmon in human form. The *Jews*, eſpecially the ſect of the *Phariſees*, had a notion, from whom the diſciples might have theirs, of ſpirits, apparitions, and dæmons, being to be ſeen in the night: hence that rule [u], "it is "forbidden a man to ſalute his friend in the night, "for we are careful, leſt שר חוא, *it ſhould be a* "*dæmon*." They ſay a great many things of one, לילית, *Lilith*, that has its name from, לילח, *the night*, a ſhe dæmon, that uſed to appear in the night, with an human face, and carry off young children, and kill them. Some ſuch frightful notions had poſſeſſed the minds of the diſciples: *and they cried out for fear*; as perſons in the utmoſt conſternation, in the greateſt danger, and in want of help: the fear of ſpirits, ariſes from the uncommoneſs of their appearance; from their ſuperiority to men in power and ſtrength; from the enmity there is between men and evil ſpirits; and from a general notion of their doing hurt and miſchief: hence, dæmons are, by the *Jews*, called, מזיקין, *hurtful*, or *hurting*, all their ſtudy being to do hurt to men; and the ſame word is here uſed in *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel: add to all this, that the fear of the diſciples might be increaſed, through a vulgar notion among ſea-faring men, that ſuch ſights are ominous, and portend evil to ſailors; and they might the more eaſily be induced to give credit to this, and fear, ſince they were already in ſuch imminent danger.

Ver. 27. *But ſtraightway Jeſus ſpake unto them*, &c.] Directly, the very moment, as ſoon as ever they cried out, and he perceived the conſternation they were in, as one truly affected towards them, and concerned for their welfare; he called out aloud unto them, not coming with any intention to fright them, but to ſave them; *ſaying*, *be of good cheer, it is I, be not afraid*; take heart, be of good courage, don't be affrighted at my appearance, from whom you have nothing to fear; nor be afraid of the ſtorm and tempeſt in which you are, I'll deliver you; for it is I, your Maſter, Saviour, and Redeemer, and not any hurtful ſpirit; who am able to ſave you, and am come for that purpoſe. Chriſt may be ſometimes near his people, and they not know him; as the Lord was in the place where *Jacob* was, and he knew it not, *Gen*. xxviii. 16. and as Chriſt was ſtanding by *Mary Magdalene* at the ſepulchre, and ſhe took him to be the gardener: and for want of a diſtinct knowledge of Chriſt in his perſon, offices, and grace, perſons have wrong apprehenſions of him, and are filled with dread and fears, concluding they have no intereſt in him; that he is a Saviour, but not of them; that their ſins are ſo many, and of ſuch a dye, and attended with ſuch aggravating circumſtances, that though he is able to ſave them, he never can be willing to receive ſuch vile ſinners as they are: but when Chriſt makes himſelf known unto them, as the able and willing Saviour, and their Saviour and Redeemer, then, inſtead of dreading him as a judge, their fears vaniſh, their faith increaſes, and they are ready to do any thing he ſhall order them; as *Peter* ſays in the next verſe, who was willing to come to Chriſt on the water, when he knew who he was, if he was but pleaſed to bid him come.

Ver. 28. *And Peter anſwered him and ſaid*, &c.] Who knew his voice, and was ready to believe it might be Chriſt; and having more courage, and being more forward than the reſt of the diſciples, ventured to ſpeak to him; ſaying, *Lord, if it be*

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[o] T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 2. 4. Echa Rabbati, fol. 54. 4. [p] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 3. 1, 2. [q] Jarchi & Kimchi in Jud. vii. 19. & in Pſal. cxix. 147. [r] Gloſſ. in T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 2. 1. [s] Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 4. c. 20. [t] Liv. Hiſt. l. 36. c. 24. [u] T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 3. 1. Sanhedrim, fol. 44. 1.

*thou*; for he was not fully aſſured that it was he: he might conſider that nocturnal apparitions are deceitful, and that ſatan can transform himſelf into an angel of light, and could put on the appearance, and mimick the voice of Chriſt; wherefore, to try whether it was a ſpectre, or really Chriſt, he ſays, *bid me come unto thee on the water*; thereby expreſſing great love and affection to Chriſt, being willing to come to him, though through danger, through ſtorms and tempeſts; and alſo his ſtrong faith in him, ſuppoſing it to be he; who, he knew, was as able to ſupport his body on the water, as his own; and yet much modeſty, ſubmiſſion, and dependance; not willing to take a ſtep without his order.

Ver. 29. *And he ſaid, come*, &c.] This he ſaid, partly to aſſure them who he was; for had he denied him, he and the reſt might have concluded, it was none of Jeſus; and partly to commend his love, and confirm his faith, by giving a further inſtance of his power, in enabling him to walk upon the water, as he did: *and when Peter was come down out of the ſhip*; as he immediately did, having orders from Chriſt; and being by this ſecond ſpeech fully convinced it was he, *he walked on the water*; a little way, being ſupported and enabled by the power of Chriſt; for this was an extraordinary and miraculous action: for if it was ſo in Chriſt, it was much more ſo in *Peter*: Chriſt walked upon the water by his own power, as God; *Peter* walked upon the water, being held up by the power of Chriſt. The *Jews*[w] indeed, call ſwimming, השיטה על פני המים, *walking upon the face of the waters*: hence we read of a ſwimmer's veſſel, which is explained to be what men make to learn in it, how לשוט על פני המים, *to go or walk upon the face of the waters*[x]: but then this is not going upon them upright, but prone, or lying along upon the ſurface of the waters, which was not *Peter*'s caſe; he did not, as at another time, caſt himſelf into the ſea, and ſwim to Chriſt; ſee *John* xxi. 7. but as ſoon as he came down from the ſhip, ſtanding upright, he walked upon the waters, *to go to Jeſus*; not merely for walking ſake, but for the ſake of Chriſt, he dearly loved; that he might be with him, and be ſtill more confirmed of the truth of its being he, and not a ſpirit.

Ver. 30. *But when he ſaw the wind boiſterous*, &c.] Or *ſtrong*, blowing hard againſt him, and raiſing up the waves, which beat with great violence upon him, *he was afraid*; though Chriſt was ſo nigh him, and he had had ſuch an inſtance of his power in bearing him up, cauſing him to walk upon the waters thus far; which ſhews, that his faith was imperfect: *and beginning to ſink*; through fear, and the violence of the wind and waves, juſt ready to be immerſed, and go down to the bottom of the ſea, *he cried*; being in a great fright and much danger, and with great importunity and eagerneſs, *ſaying, Lord, ſave me*; I'm juſt going, I ſhall certainly periſh elſe; ſtill having ſo much faith in Chriſt, that he was able to ſave him in the laſt extremity.

Ver. 31. *And immediately Jeſus ſtretched forth his hand*, &c.] The *Syriac* reads it, וברשעתה, *and in that very moment*; for his caſe required immediate aſſiſtance, and Chriſt readily gave it; he reached out his hand at once, being juſt by him, *and caught him*; as he was ſinking to the bottom, and lifted him up, and ſet him on his feet upon the water, and enabled him to walk with him to the ſhip; but not without reproving him for the weakneſs of his faith, *and ſaid unto him, O thou of little faith*: he does not ſay, O thou unbeliever! or, O thou who haſt no faith! for ſome faith he had, though but ſmall: of this phraſe, ſee the note on ch. vi. 30. *Wherefore didſt thou doubt?* waver, fluctuate, or waſt divided, between faith and fear. He was worthy of reproof, ſince he had had the order of Chriſt to come to him upon the water; and an experience of his power in ſupporting him thus far; and was now ſo near unto him, that he had no room to doubt, whether it was he or no, nor of his power to preſerve him.

Ver. 32. *And when they were come into the ſhip*, &c.] Chriſt and *Peter*. The *Arabic* and *Perſic* verſions, and *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel read, *when he aſcended*, or *was come into the ſhip*; but there's no doubt but *Peter* went with him into it, though the following effect, is only to be aſcribed to Chriſt's coming into the ſhip, and not to *Peter*'s: *the wind ceaſed*; from blowing with that fury and violence it did before, and there was a perfect calm; which gave equal proof of the divine power of Chriſt, as his walking upon the ſea: he walked upon the ſea whilſt the wind was blowing hard, and the waves were tumultuous; he comes into the ſhip, and all is calm; both winds and ſea obey him, who is Lord of both.

Ver. 33. *Then they that were in the ſhip*, &c.] Not only the reſt of the diſciples, who remained in it, whilſt *Peter* came forth out of it, to walk upon the ſea, to go to Chriſt; but the mariners alſo, the owners of the veſſel, and their ſervants that managed it, *came and worſhipped him*: not merely in a civil, but in a religious way; being convinced by what they ſaw, that he muſt be truly and properly God, and worthy of adoration; *ſaying, of a truth, thou art the Son of God*: not by creation, as angels and men, nor by office, as magiſtrates, but by nature; being of the ſame eſſence, perfections, and power, with God, his Father: and which theſe actions of his now done, as well as many others, are full atteſtations of; as his walking upon the ſea, cauſing *Peter* to do ſo too, ſaving him when ſinking, and ſtilling the wind and waves upon his entrance into the veſſel; all which being obſerved by the diſciples and mariners, drew out this confeſſion upon full conviction from them, that he was a divine perſon, and the proper object of worſhip.

Ver. 34. *And when they were gone over*, &c.] That is, *the ſea*, as *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel adds, the ſea of *Tiberias*, or *Galilee*; *they came into the land of Geneſaret*; the ſame with *Cinnereth*, or *Chinnereth*, or *Cinnerot*, *Numb.* xxxiv. 11. *Deut.* iii. 17. *Joſh.* xi. 2. and xii. 3. and xiii. 27. 1 *Kings* xv. 20. in all which places, the *Chaldee paraphraſe* renders it by גינוסר, *Ginuſar*, the ſame word that is uſed in *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel here: it was a country in *Galilee*, in the tribe of *Napthali*[y], bordering upon a lake, called the lake of *Geneſaret*; taking its name from the country, or the country from the lake: it was exceeding fruitful, full of gardens and orchards; hence we often read in the *Talmud*[z], of פירות גנוסר, *the fruits of Genuſar*, or *Geneſaret*, which are ſaid to be exceeding ſweet: and it is ſaid to[a] be a country in the land of *Iſrael*, in which were many gardens; and by others[b], a place in the land of *Galilee* (as it was) whoſe fruits were large and good; and was, as *Joſephus* ſays[c], thirty furlongs long and twenty broad. And thus the ſaints, after a long and troubleſome paſſage over the ſea of this world, arrive at laſt, ſafe at their deſired haven, and enter upon a moſt delightful country, a paradiſe, a garden of pleaſure; where all delicious fruits and deſireable things are enjoyed, even pleaſures for evermore; where they ſhall be led to fountains of living waters, into fulneſs of joy; where all troubles will ceaſe, and tears will be wiped away; and when they will have leiſure and capacity to reflect upon all they have met with in their dangerous, and difficult voyage; and will admire the wonderful grace of God, which has been with them; and his divine power, which has appeared for them, and ſupported them, and brought them ſafe to eternal glory; and they will aſcribe greatneſs to Chriſt, as the Son of God, and for ever worſhip him as the eternal Jehovah, who has done ſuch great things for them, as none but God can do.

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[w] R. David Kimchi, Sepher Shoraſh. rad. שחה.

[x] R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel moed, fol. 78. 1.

[y] Targum Jon. in Deut. xxxiii. 23.

[z] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 44. 1. Erubim, fol. 30. 1. & Peſachim, fol. 8. 2. Vid. Jarchi in Iſa. xxviii. 1. & Kimchi in Joſh. xi. 2. & in 1 Kings xv. 20.

[a] Maimon. in Miſn. Maaſerot, c. 3. §. 7.

[b] Bartenora, in ib.

[c] De Bello Jud. l. 3. c. 35.

Ver. 35. *And when the men of the place had knowledge of him*, &c.] Not merely by report, but by face, having ſeen, and heard him before; ſee *Luke* v. 1. *They ſent out into all that country round about, and brought unto him all that were diſeaſed*; which not only expreſſes their faith in him, that he was able to heal all their ſick and diſeaſed, were they ever ſo many; but alſo their affectionate regard to their fellow-creatures and countrymen; and their care and diligence in ſending meſſengers about to their reſpective cities, towns, and villages, and which muſt be attended with expence: for they neither ſpared coſt nor pains, to do good to their country; in all which, they ſet an example worthy of imitation.

Ver. 36. *And beſought him that they might only touch the hem of his garment*, &c.] As the woman with the bloody iſſue did, ch. ix. 20. This they deſired, partly to ſhow the ſtrength of their faith in him, that they doubted not of a cure, could they be admitted ſo near his perſon; and partly, to ſignify the ſenſe of their unworthineſs, to be in another way taken notice of by him, either by ſpeaking to them, or putting his hands on them: *and as many as touched, were made perfectly whole*. Chriſt condeſcended to this their requeſt, and perfectly cured all ſuch of their diſeaſes, of whatever kind they were, who in the exerciſe of faith, touched the hem of his garment, the fringe he wore, in compliance with the ceremonial law, *Numb*. xv. 38, 39. *Deut*. xxii. 12.

## CHAP. XV.

Ver. 1. THEN *came to Jeſus Scribes and Phariſees*, &c.] After he had wrought ſo many miracles, particularly that of feeding five thouſand men, beſides women and children, with five loaves and two fiſhes; the fame of which had reached *Jeruſalem*, and occaſioned much talk there about him: the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, who were his inveterate enemies, hearing thereof, came to him, where he was, in *Galilee*, to know the truth of theſe things, to converſe with him, and to watch, and obſerve, what he ſaid and did; *which were of Jeruſalem, ſaying*. There were *Scribes* and *Phariſees* throughout the land, but thoſe of *Jeruſalem* were the chief; they were men of the greateſt learning and abilities, and were more expert in their religion and cuſtoms: theſe were either ſent by the *Sanhedrim* at *Jeruſalem*, or came of themſelves; taking upon them a greater power, and authority of examining, correcting, directing, and adviſing.

Ver. 2. *Why do thy diſciples tranſgreſs the tradition of the elders?* &c.] Having obſerved, for ſome little time, the conduct of Chriſt and his diſciples, they thought proper to take no notice of him as yet, but of them; and of them, not as tranſgreſſing any command of God, but of men; not being able to charge them with any breach of the law of God: and could they have done this with any ſhew of truth, yet they might chuſe rather to accuſe them of breaking the rules of the elders; by whom they mean, not the elders of the preſent *Sanhedrim*, but *Hillell* and *Shammai*, the two heads of their famous ſchools, and other ancient doctors; from whom were delivered by one to another, certain rules and laws of their own deviſing, which had no foundation in the word of God; and of theſe the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* were more tenacious, than of the Scriptures; and indeed they preferred them before them: moſt extravagant are their praiſes and commendations of theſe unwritten traditions; thus they ſay [a], "Know then, that *the* "*words of the Scribes* are more lovely than the "words of the law; for, ſays *R. Tarphon*, if a man "does not read, he only tranſgreſſes an affirmative; "but if he tranſgreſſes the words of the ſchool of "*Hillell*, he is guilty of death, becauſe he hath "broke down a hedge, and a ſerpent ſhall bite "him. 'Tis a tradition of *R. Iſhmael*, the words "of the law have in them both prohibition and "permiſſion; ſome of them are light, and ſome "heavy, but *the words of the Scribes* are all of "them heavy—חמורים דברי זקנים, *weightier* "*are the words of the elders*, than the words of the "prophets." And elſewhere [e], this advice is given; "My ſon, attend to *the words of the Scribes*, "more than to the words of the law; for in the "words of the law, are affirmatives and negatives; but the words of the *Scribes*— "כל העובר על דברי סופרים, *every one that* "*tranſgreſſes the words of the Scribes*, is guilty of "death." This is what they charge the diſciples with here, and could they have had their wills, would have put them to death for it: the particular tradition, they accuſe them with the breach of, follows, *for they waſh not their hands when they eat bread*; common bread, an ordinary meal: for, for eating of holy things, more than bare waſhing was required, even an immerſion of them in water; but the hands were to be waſhed before eating common food, whether they were known to be defiled or no: *bread* is particularly mentioned, as including all ſorts of food, and as diſtinct from fruit; for, for eating of common fruit, there was no need of waſhing of hands; he that waſhed his hands for eating fruit, was reckoned an oſtentatious man [f]: who were the firſt authors of this tradition, 'tis not certain; 'tis ſaid [g], that "*Hillell* and *Shammai* de- "creed, על טהרות ידים, *concerning the purifica-* "*tion of the hands*; *R. Joſe ben R. Bon*, in the "name of *R. Levi* ſays, ſo was the tradition be- "fore, but they forgot it; and theſe two ſtood "up, and agreed with the mind of the former "ones." However, it is a certain point, that "the waſhing of the hands, and the dipping of "them, are, מדברי סופרים, *from the words of the* "*Scribes* [h]." The breach of this rule was reckoned equal to the moſt flagitious crimes [i]: *R. Joſe*

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[a] T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 3. 2. [e] T. Bab. Erubim, fol. 21. 2. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 4. 2. [f] Miſn. Chagiga, c. 2. §. 5, 6. Maimon. Præfat. ad Tract. Yadaim, & Hilch. Beracot, c. 6. §. 3. [g] T. Hieroſ. Sabbat, fol. 3. 4. [h] Maimon. Hilch. Mikvaot, c. 11. §. 1. [i] T. Bab. Sota, fol. 4. 2.

“ ſays, whoever eats bread without waſhing of “ hands, is as if he lay with a whore: and, ſays *R.* “ *Eleazer*, whoever deſpiſeth waſhing of hands, “ ſhall be rooted out of the world.” And elſewhere it is ſaid by them [k], that “ he that bleſſeth “ (food) with defiled hands, is guilty of death.” And again [l], “ whoever does not waſh his hands as “ is fitting, although he is puniſhed above, he “ ſhall be puniſhed below.” And to fright people into an obſervance of this tradition, they talk of *Shibta*, a ſort of an evil ſpirit, that hurts ſuch as eat without waſhing their hands: they ſay, he ſits upon their hands, and upon their bread, and leaves ſomething behind, which is very dangerous [m]; and it is recorded [n], to the praiſe of *R. Akiba*, that he choſe rather to die, than to tranſgreſs this tradition; for being in priſon, and in want of water, what little he had, he waſhed his hands with it, inſtead of drinking it. *Eleazar ben Chanac*, was excommunicated for deſpiſing the tradition concerning waſhing of hands; and when he died, the *Sanhedrim* ſent and put a great ſtone upon his coffin, to ſhew, that he that died in his excommunication, the *Sanhedrim* ſtoned his coffin [o]: but of this, ſee more in the note on *Mark* vii. 3.

Ver. 3. *But he anſwered and ſaid unto them*, &c.] Taking no notice of the tradition about eating bread without waſhing the hands, whether it was right or wrong; it being at moſt but an human tradition, of no moment and importance, whether it was broke or kept: he makes a very juſt recrimination, by putting another queſtion to them, *why do you alſo tranſgreſs the commandment of God by your tradition?* ſuggeſting, that if his diſciples were guilty, they were not ſo guilty as they themſelves were; that his diſciples, at moſt, were but guilty of the breach of an human precept, whereas they were guilty of the breach of a divine command; and that it was ſtrange, that men who were ſo ſcrupulous of breaking, and bore ſo hard on ſuch as did tranſgreſs the traditions of the elders, could allow themſelves to tranſgreſs the commandments of God; yea, to do this by, and while they were obſerving their own traditions: and which obſervation, carries a full acquittance of the diſciples from blame; for, if by keeping the traditions of the elders, they broke the commands of God, it was a very good reaſon why they ſhould not obſerve them.

Ver. 4. *For God commanded, ſaying*, &c.] That he might not be thought to ſuggeſt this without any foundation, he gives them an inſtance, wherein a command of God was tranſgreſſed, by the obſervance of their tradition: the command he refers to, ſtands in *Exod.* xx. 12. and is this; *Honour thy father and mother*. This was a plain command of God, written with his own hand, and delivered by *Moſes* to them; it was of a moral nature, and of eternal obligation: and to be underſtood, not merely of that high eſteem parents are to be had in by their children, and of the reſpectful language and geſture to be uſed towards them, and of the chearful obedience to be yielded to them; but alſo of honouring them with their ſubſtance, feeding, clothing, and ſupplying them with the neceſſaries of life, when they ſtand in need thereof; which is but their reaſonable ſervice, for all the care, expence, and trouble they have been at, in bringing them up in the world: nor did the *Jews* deny this to be the duty of children to their parents, and own it to be the ſenſe of the commandment: they ſay [p], that this is the weightieſt commandment among the weighty ones, even this, the honouring of father and mother; and aſk, “ What is this honour? “ To which is replied, he muſt give him food, “ drink, and cloathing; buckle his ſhoes, and “ lead him in, and bring him out.” They indeed lay down this as a rule, and it ſeems a very equitable one [q]; that, “ when a man's father has any “ money, or ſubſtance, he muſt be ſupported out “ of that; but if he has none, he muſt ſupport “ him out of his own.” But then, as will be ſeen hereafter, they made void this command of God, and their own explications of it, by ſome other tradition. Moreover, Chriſt obſerves, that it is ſaid, *Exod.* xxii. 17. *And he that curſeth father or mother, let him die the death*; temporal and eternal: and which is a poſitive command of God, made as a fence for the former; and is to be underſtood, not only of giving abuſive language to parents, but of ſlighting, as the *Hebrew* word ſignifies, and neglecting them, taking no notice of them, when needy and in diſtreſs, to ſupply their wants. Now theſe commands of God, Chriſt ſhews the *Jews* tranſgreſſed by their tradition, as appears from the following verſes.

Ver. 5, 6. *But ye ſay, whoſoever ſhall ſay to his father or mother*, &c.] That is, it was a tradition of theirs, that if a man ſhould ſay to his father and mother, when poor and in diſtreſs, and made application to him for ſuſtenance, *it is a gift, by whatſoever thou mighteſt be profited by me, and honour not his father, or his mother, he ſhall be free*: or, as *Mark* expreſſes it, *it is Corban, that is to ſay a gift, by whatſoever thou mighteſt be profited by me, he ſhall be free, and ye ſuffer him no more to do ought for his father or mother*. For the underſtanding of this tradition, let it be obſerved, that the word *Corban* ſignifies a gift, or offering, which was devoted to ſacred uſe; and was unalienable, and could not be converted to any other uſe; and that this word was uſed among the *Jews*, from hence, as the form of an oath, or vow; and therefore, when any one ſaid *Corban*, it was all one, as if he ſwore by *Corban*; or as if he had ſaid, let it be as *Corban*, as unalienable as *Corban*: by which oath, or vow, the uſe of that which was ſpoken of, whether it reſpected a man's ſelf, or others, was reſtrained and prohibited: the rule was [r] this, קרבן כאומר כקרבן הוא אסור, *if a man ſaid Corban, it was as if he ſaid as Corban, and it was forbidden*; and if he uſed the words *Conem*, *Conach*, and *Conas*, which they call [s] the ſurnames of *Corban*, and were no other than corruptions of it, it was all one as if he had ſaid *Corban* itſelf. There are many inſtances of this kind of vows, and the form of them in their oral law [t], or book of traditions; “ If any one ſhould ſay, “ קונם שאני נהנה, *Conem* (or *Corban*) *whatſoever* “ *I might be profited by the* ſons of *Noah*, it is free “ of an *Iſraelite*, and forbidden of a *Gentile*; if he “ ſhould ſay, *whatſoever I might be profited* by the “ ſeed of *Abraham*, it is forbidden of an *Iſraelite*, “ and is free of a *Gentile*——if any one ſhould ſay, “ קונם שאני נהנה לערלים, *Conem* (or *Corban*) “ *whatſoever I might be profited by the uncircumciſed*, “ it is free of the uncircumciſed of *Iſrael*, and “ forbidden of the circumciſed of the *Gentiles*; if “ he ſays *Conem* (or *Corban*) *whatſoever I might be* “ *profited by the circumciſed*, it is forbidden of the “ circumciſed of *Iſrael*, and free of the circum-

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[k] Zohar in Deut. fol. 107. 3.

[l] Ib. in Gen. fol. 60. 2.

[m] Gloſſ. in T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 77. 2. Taanith, fol. 20. 2. & Cholin, fol. 107. 2.

[n] T. B. Erubim, fol. 21. 2.

[o] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 19. 1.

[p] T. Hieroſ. Kiddushin, fol. 61. 2.

[q] Piſke Toſeph. ad T. Bab. Kiddushin, art. 61.

[r] T. Hieroſ. Nedarim, fol. 37. 1. Miſn. Nedarim, c. 1. §. 4. Maimon. Hilch. Nedarim, c. 1. §. 7.

[s] Miſn. Nedarim, c. 1. §. 1, 2. Maimon. Hilch. Nedarim, c. 1. §. 16.

[t] Miſn. Nedarim, c. 3. §. 11.

“ ciſed of the *Gentiles.*” Again [u], “ if any one ſays to his friend, קונם שאני נהנה לך, *Conem* (or *Corban*) *whatſoever thou mighteſt be profited by me, &c.*” which is exactly the ſame form as here, unleſs it ſhould be rather rendered, *whatſoever I might be profited by thee:* once more [w], “ if a married woman ſhould ſay to her huſband, קונם שאני נהנית לאבא ולאביך, *Conem* (or *Corban*) *whatſoever I might be profited by my father, or thy father*, &c.” Let theſe inſtances ſuffice: the plain and evident ſenſe of the tradition before us, is this; that when, upon application being made to a man by his parents, for ſupport and ſuſtenance, he makes a vow in ſuch form as this, *Corban, whatſoever thou mighteſt be profited by me*; that is, whatſoever profit or advantage thou mighteſt have, or expect to have from me, let it be as *Corban*, as a gift devoted to God, that can never be revoked and converted to another uſe; or, in other words, I vow and proteſt thou ſhalt'ſt never have any profit from me, not a penny, nor a penny-worth of mine. Now, when a man had made ſuch an impious vow as this, according to this tradition, it was to ſtand firm and good, and he was not to honour his father or mother, or do any thing for them by way of relief: ſo that our Lord might juſtly obſerve upon it as he does; *thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect, by your tradition:* for if ſuch a vow was valid, and a man was obliged to abide by it, according to the tradition of the elders, and not honour his father and mother, as the law of God requires; 'tis a plain caſe, that the command of God was made void by this tradition: nay, they expreſsly ſay [x], that נדרים חלות על דברי מצוה, *vows fall upon things of a* (divine) *commandment*, as well as upon things in a man's power, and that he is bound by them; ſo that without ſin he can't do what the law commands; inſomuch, that if a man vows a vow, and that it may be ratified, a command muſt be made void, his vow muſt ſtand, and the command be abrogated. So truly and juſtly does Chriſt charge them with making the command of God of none effect, by their tradition. It is indeed diſputed by the doctors, and at laſt allowed, that ſuch a vow might be diſſolved by a wiſe man, for the honour of parents [y]. “ *R. Eliezer* ſays, they open to a man, (*i. e.* the door of repentance, and diſſolve his vow) for the honour of his father and his mother, but the wiſe men forbid *it*. Says *R. Tzadok*, if they open to him for the honour of his father and mother, they will open to him for the honour of God, and if ſo, there will be no vows: however, the wiſe men agreed with *R. Eliezer* in the affair between a man and his parents, that they ſhould open to him for the honour of them.” And this could be done only by a wiſe man; and very probably this laſt decree was made on account of this juſt reproof of Chriſt's, being aſhamed any longer to countenance ſo vile a practice; and even, according to this determination, the vow ſtood firm till diſſolved by one of their doctors: ſo that notwithſtanding, Chriſt's argument is good, and the inſtance full to prove that for which he brought it: for the above reaſon it may be, it is, that this tradition Chriſt refers to is not now extant; but that there was ſuch an one in Chriſt's time, is certain, he would never have aſſerted it elſe; and had it not been true, the *Phariſees* would have been able to have refuted him, and forward enough to have done it: and that ſuch vows were ſometimes made, and which were not to be reſcinded, is clear from the following fact [z]. “ It happened to one in *Bethhoron*, שהיה אביו מודר הימנו הנאה, *whoſe father was excluded, by a vow, from receiving any profit from him*; and he married his ſon, and ſaid to his friend, a court and a dinner are given to thee by gift; but they are not to be made uſe of by thee, but with this condition, that my father may come and eat with us at dinner;” which was a device to have his father at dinner, and yet ſecure his vow. Upon the whole, the ſenſe of this paſſage is, not that a man excuſed himſelf to his parents, according to this tradition, by ſaying, that his ſubſtance, either in whole, or in part, was *Corban*, or devoted to the ſervice of God, and therefore they could expect no profit, or relief, from him; but that he vowed that what he had ſhould be as *Corban*, and they ſhould be never the better for it: ſo that a man ſo vowing might give nothing to the ſervice of God, but keep his whole ſubſtance to himſelf; which he might make uſe of for his own benefit, and for the benefit of others, but not for his father and mother; who, after ſuch a vow made, were to receive no benefit by it, unleſs reſcinded by a wiſe man; and which ſeems to be an explanation of it, made after the times of Chriſt.

Ver. 7. *Ye hypocrites*, &c.] After our Lord had given ſo full a proof of their making void the commandments of God by their traditions, he might very juſtly, as he does, call them hypocrites; who pretended to ſo much religion and holineſs, and yet ſcrupled not, upon occaſion, to ſet aſide a divine command; who affected ſo much ſanctity, as to be diſpleaſed with the diſciples, for not complying with an order of their elders, when they themſelves made no account of a divine precept; and plainly ſhewed they had more regard to men than God, and to the precepts of men, than to the commands of God, and to approve themſelves to men more than to God; and that they ſought the praiſe and applauſe of men, and not the honour which comes from God; and that their religion lay in mere rituals and externals, and thoſe of mens deviſing, and not in the ſpritual worſhip and ſervice of God. Nor can it be thought that Chriſt, in calling them hypocrites, bears too hard upon them; when one of their own doctors, who lived not very diſtant from this age, ſays [a] of the men of *Jeruſalem*, that “ if the hypocrites of the world were divided into ten parts, nine of them would belong to *Jeruſalem*, and one to the reſt of the world.” *Well did Eſaias prophecy of you, ſaying*, in ch. xxix. 13. which prophecy, though it was directed to, and ſuited with many in that generation in which the prophet lived, yet had a further view to the *Jews* in after-times: their own writers [b] acknowledge, that the whole prophecy is ſpoken of that nation; for by *Ariel* they underſtand the altar at *Jeruſalem*, the city in which *David* dwelt.

Ver. 8. *This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth*, &c.] The preface to theſe words, or the form in which they are introduced by the prophet; *wherefore the Lord ſaid*, is left out in this citation, being unneceſſary here, tho' of the greateſt importance there; partly to ſhew, that what was about to be ſaid, was not the prophet's own words, but the words of the Lord, of which the *Jews* in Chriſt's time made no doubt; and partly to give a reaſon why that judicial blindneſs, threatened in the context, ſhould be inflicted on them, which is no part of Chriſt's deſign here; but which is only to ſhew, that the deſcription here given, exactly agrees with them, and ſo proves, and confirms the character he gives of them as hypocrites. They approached the ordinances of God, and drew nigh to him, and attended him in outward worſhip; they prayed unto him publickly, and conſtantly, in the ſtreets, in the ſynagogues, and temple, and with much ſeeming devotion and ſanctity: *and honoureth me with their lips:* they owned him to be their creator, and preſerver; they made their boaſt of him, and of their knowledge of him, as the one only living, and true God, and as the God of *Iſrael*; they brought their ſacrifices of praiſe and thankſgiving, even the fruit of their lips, unto him, for their many peculiar mercies, privileges, and favours, as a nation, church, and people, and with much ſeeming ſincerity and affection. *But their heart is far from me*; they had no true love to God, nor faith in him, nor fear of him; they were not at all concerned for his preſence with them, or for communion with him, or for his honour and glory; their hearts were in the world, and after their covetouſneſs; they made religion a tool to their ſecular purpoſes, ſuppoſed gain to be godlineſs, ſought the applauſe of men, and contented themſelves with bodily exerciſe; having no regard to internal religion, powerful godlineſs, or where their hearts were, ſo be it, their bodies were preſented to God in public worſhip; and what they did, it was to be ſeen and approved of men, not caring what the ſearcher of hearts knew concerning them, or what he required of them.

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[u] Miſn. Nedarim, c 8. §. 7. Vid. c. 11. §. 3, 4. [w] Ib. c. 11. §. 11. [x] Maimon. Hilch. Nedarim, c. 3. §. 1, 6, 7, 9. [y] Miſn. Nedarim, c. 9. §. 1. [z] Ib. c. 5. §. 6. [a] R. Nathan in Rabba, §. 1. [b] Abarbinel, Jarchi, Kimchi, & Aben Ezra.

Ver. 9. *But in vain do they worſhip me,* &c.] In the *Hebrew* text it is, *their fear towards me*; which is rightly expreſſed here by *worſhip*; for the fear of God often intends the whole worſhip of God, both external and internal: here it only ſignifies external worſhip, which theſe men only attended to. They prayed in the ſynagogues, read, and, in their way, expounded the books of *Moſes*, and the prophets, to the people, diligently obſerved the rituals of the ceremonial law, brought their offerings and ſacrifices to the temple, and neglected nothing appertaining to the outward ſervice of it; and yet it was all *in vain*, and to no purpoſe; ſince the heart was wanting, no grace there, they acted from wrong principles, and with wrong views; their worſhip was merely outward, formal, and cuſtomary; and beſides, they added doctrines and traditions of their own inventing and deviſing. The phraſe, *in vain*, is not in the text in *Iſaiah*: ſome have thought that it was not originally in *Matthew*, but inſerted by ſome other hand, to make the ſenſe more complete. *Grotius* thinks there was a various reading, which is followed by the *Septuagint*, and the Evangeliſt; and that inſtead of ותהי, *and is*, it was ותהו, the ſame with לתהו, *in vain*; but there is no need to ſuppoſe either of theſe: Chriſt, who made this citation, either added it himſelf for the clearer illuſtration of the paſſage, and as being entirely agreeable to the ſenſe of it, and which it required, for the true underſtanding of it; or he might have in his view another paſſage of the ſame prophet, ſpeaking of the ſame people, and upon the ſame ſubject, *Iſ.* i. 11, 13. and from thence take the phraſe, and, for explanation-ſake, join it to the paſſage here. It follows, *teaching for doctrines the commandments of men*; that is, teaching the people to obſerve the traditions of the elders, the decrees and determinations of the doctors, as if they were doctrines delivered by God himſelf; or, inſtead of the doctrines contained in the bible, which lay neglected by them, they obtruded on them the orders and injunctions of men. In the text in *Iſaiah*, are only theſe words, *taught by the precept of men*; and which relate to their fear and worſhip of God; and which is here interpreted of their teachers teaching them it, and that explained of the commandments of men; as if, inſtead of, מלמדה, *taught*, it had been read, מלמדים, *teaching*. The *Jews* have no reaſon to quarrel with this conſtruction and ſenſe, ſince their *Targum* paraphraſes it thus; *and their fear before me is*, כתפקידת גברין מלפין, *according to the commandment of men that teach:* and a noted commentator[c] of theirs has this remark on the text, *their fear towards me* is not with a perfect heart, but *by the commandment* האנשים המלמדים אותם, *of the men that teach them.*

Ver. 10. *And he called the multitude,* &c.] Having ſilenced the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, and judging it not worth his while to ſay any more to men ſo obſtinate and perverſe; who were not open to conviction, nor would attend to any argument or reaſon, tho' ever ſo clear and ſtrong, againſt their darling notions; he leaves them, as both diſliking them, and deſpairing of them, and calls to the common people; who, thro' their great veneration for theſe men, upon their coming withdrew, and ſtood at a diſtance; nor indeed would they admit them very near unto them, leſt they ſhould be polluted by them: Chriſt, I ſay, calls to theſe to come nearer to him, hoping better of them, and knowing that they were more tractable, and teachable; and that there were ſome among them, that were to be brought off of their former principles and prejudices, to embrace him, and the truths delivered by him: *and ſaid unto them, hear and underſtand*; this he ſaid, partly by way of reflection upon the learned *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, who, with all their learning, could not hear him ſo as to underſtand him; and partly to excite the attention of the multitude to what he had to ſay; as alſo to ſhew, that barely to hear with the outward hearing of the ear, will be of no ſervice, unleſs what is heard is underſtood; and that the way to underſtand, is to hear.

Ver. 11. *Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth the man,* &c.] No ſort of meats, or drinks, or whatever is proper food for men, or manner of eating and drinking them, when moderately uſed, defile a man, or render him loathſome and odious in the ſight of God. This is directly oppoſite to the notions of the *Jews*, who ſay[d], that "forbidden meats "are unclean themſelves, ומטמאין הגוף והנפש, "*and defile both body and ſoul.*" The firſt food of man was herbs; after the flood he had an allowance of the fleſh of beaſts, without diſtinction; under the *Levitical* diſpenſation, a difference of meats was enjoined to be obſerved; the laws reſpecting that diſtinction are now aboliſhed, and not binding on us under the Goſpel-diſpenſation. Some ſcruples, about ſome of theſe things, did ariſe among the firſt chriſtians; but in proceſs of time theſe difficulties were got over: nor is there any religion in abſtinence from any ſort of food; men, indeed, on a *phyſical* account, ought to be careful what they eat and drink, but not on a religious one; moderation in all ought to uſed; and whatever is eat, or drank, ſhould be received with thankfulneſs, and done to the glory of God, and then no defilement can ariſe from hence: *but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man.* 'Tis ſin, and that only, which takes its riſe from the heart, lies in thought, and is either expreſſed by the mouth, or performed by ſome outward action, which defiles the man, and renders him loathſome, abominable, and odious in the ſight of God. The heart is the ſource of all evil; the pollution of it is very early, and very general, reaching to all the powers and faculties of the ſoul; which ſhews the ignorance of ſome, and folly of others, that talk of, and truſt to the goodneſs of their hearts; and alſo the neceſſity of new hearts and right ſpirits being formed and created; and that the ſinful thoughts of the heart, and the luſts thereof, are defiling to men; and that they are ſinful in God's account, and abominable in his ſight; that they are loathſome to ſenſible ſinners, and are to be repented of, and forſaken by them; and need the pardoning grace of God, or otherwiſe will be brought into judgment. Sinful words, which, thro' the abundance of wickedneſs in the heart, come out of the mouth, have the ſame influence and effect: words are of a defiling nature; with theſe men pollute both themſelves and others: the tongue, tho' a little member, defiles the whole body; and evil and corrupt communication proceeding out of the mouth, corrupts the beſt of manners, and renders men loathſome to God, and liable to his awful judgment. And this is the nature of all ſinful actions; they are what God can take no pleaſure in; they are diſagreeable to a ſenſible mind; they leave a ſtain, which can never be removed by any thing the creature can do; nothing ſhort of the blood of Chriſt can cleanſe from it; and inaſmuch as they are frequently committed, there's need of continual application to it. Theſe are now the things men ſhould be concerned about, as of a defiling nature; and not about meats and drinks, and the manner of uſing them, whether with hands waſhed, or unwaſhed.

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[c] R. Sol. Jarchi in Iſ. xxix. 13.

[d] Tzeror Hammor, *fol.* 142. 1.

Ver. 12. *Then came his diſciples, and ſaid unto him,* &c.] That is, after he had diſmiſſed the people, and was come into a private houſe; ſee *Mark* vii. 17. his diſciples came to him, being alone, full of concern, for what he had ſaid to the *Phariſees*, and before all the people; and not ſo well underſtanding it themſelves. *Knoweſt thou that the Phariſees were offended after they heard this ſaying?* that they ſet aſide the commandments of God, by obſerving the traditions of the elders; or that they were hypocrites; and that the prophecy of *Iſaiah*, which deſcribes ſuch perſons, belonged to them; or that not what goes into, but what comes out of a man, defiles him: which ever it was they have reſpect unto, or it may be to the whole, they ſeem to wiſh Chriſt had not ſaid it; becauſe the *Phariſees* were, as they thought, grieved and troubled at it, as being contrary to true religion and piety; and leſt they ſhould be ſo ſtumbled, as no more to attend, and ſo all hopes of bringing them over to the faith of Chriſt be loſt; and chiefly, becauſe they perceived they were made exceeding angry, and were highly provoked, ſo that they might fear that both Chriſt, and they themſelves, would feel the effects of their wrath and rage; and perhaps it was with ſome ſuch view, that he would take ſome prudential ſtep that he might not fall into their hands, that they acquaint him with it.

Ver. 13. *But he anſwered, and ſaid,* &c.] As being unconcerned at their rage, and having nothing to fear from them; and being well ſatisfied, that what he had ſaid was right, and would produce proper effects, he gave his diſciples this for anſwer: *every plant which my heavenly father hath not planted, ſhall be rooted up*; which may be underſtood either of things, or of perſons: it may have regard to doctrines and ordinances; and the meaning be, that whatever doctrine is not delivered by God, or whatever ordinance is not inſtituted by him; whatever is not of heaven, but of man, of man's deviſing, and of human impoſition, as the traditions of the elders, muſt be oppoſed and rejected; and ſooner or later will be utterly rooted up, and deſtroyed; as will all the falſe notions, corrupt worſhip, and errors, and hereſies of men, in God's own time: or it may reſpect perſons. There are ſome plants, which are planted by Chriſt's father, which is in heaven; theſe are the elect of God, who are trees of righteouſneſs, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified. Theſe are planted by the river of God's love, in the perſon of Chriſt, in the likeneſs of his death and reſurrection; they are tranſplanted out of a ſtate of nature, are ingrafted into Chriſt, have the graces of the Spirit implanted in their ſouls, and are themſelves planted in the courts of the Lord, in a Goſpel church-ſtate; and being water'd with the dews of grace, appear to be choice plants, plants of renown, pleaſant ones, very fruitful, and which ſhall never periſh, or be rooted, and plucked up: but there are others, like theſe *Phariſees*, hyprocrites, formal profeſſors, and hereticks, who pretend to much religion and holineſs, make a ſhew of the leaves of profeſſion, but have not the fruit of grace; theſe get into churches, and are outwardly and miniſterially planted there; but being never rooted in Chriſt, nor partake of his grace, in time they wither, and die away; or perſecution ariſing becauſe of the word, or truth being diſpenſed in ſo clear and glaring a light, that they cannot bear it; they are offended with it, and ſo are detected, diſcovered, and rooted up: and it is neceſſary that truth ſhould be freely ſpoken, as it was here by Chriſt, that ſuch plants might be rooted out; for theſe words are ſaid by Chriſt, in juſtification of his conduct. So the *Jews* ſpeak of God, as a planter, and of rooting up what he does not like. "The holy, bleſſed God, ſay they[e], *plants* trees in this world; if they proſper, it's well; if they do not proſper, אעקר לון, *he roots them up*, and plants them even many times." And elſewhere 'tis ſaid[f], "let the maſter of the vineyard come, and conſume its thorns: the Gloſs on it is, the holy, bleſſed God; for the vineyard of the Lord of hoſts, is the houſe of *Iſrael*, and he will conſume, and take away the thorns of the vineyard."

Ver. 14. *Let them alone,* &c.] Have nothing to ſay, or do with them; don't mind their anger and reſentment, their reproaches and reflections, nor trouble yourſelves at the offence they have taken; if they'll go, let them go; they are a worthleſs generation of men, who are not to be regarded, hearkened to, nor to be pleaſed; it matters not what they ſay of me, and of my doctrine: *they be blind leaders of the blind*; the people that hearken to them, and are followers of them, are *blind*, as to any true ſenſe of themſelves, their ſtate, and condition by nature; as to any ſpiritual, ſaving knowledge of God; as to any acquaintance with the Meſſiah, and the method of ſalvation by him; as to the Spirit of God, and the work of grace, regeneration, and ſanctification upon the ſoul; as to the ſcriptures of truth, and doctrines of the Goſpel; and the *leaders* of them were as *blind* as they: by whom are meant the Scribes and Phariſees, the learned doctors and rabbins of the *Jewiſh* nation; who thought themſelves very wiſe and knowing, yet they were blind alſo; and none more than they. It was an old tradition[g] among the *Jews*, "that there ſhould be *blind* "*teachers* at the time when God ſhould have his "tabernacle among them." This was predicted, in *Iſ.* xlii. 19. and all ſuch leaders and teachers are blind, who, notwithſtanding their natural abilities, and acquired parts, are in a ſtate of unregeneracy; and have nothing more than what they have from nature, or have attained to at ſchool; and as apparently all ſuch are, who lead men from Chriſt, to mere morality, and to a dependance upon their own righteouſneſs for juſtification, which was the darling principle of the blind leaders in the text. *And if the blind lead the blind, both ſhall fall into the ditch*; of ignorance and error, immorality and prophaneneſs, diſtreſs, if not deſpair, temporal ruin and deſtruction; which was notoriouſly verified in the *Jewiſh* people, and their guides; and of eternal damnation, the lake which burns with fire and brimſtone; what elſe can be expected?

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[e] Zohar in Gen. fol. 105. 3.

[f] T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 83. 2.

Ver. 15. *Then anſwered Peter*, &c.] *Mark* ſays, *his diſciples aſked him concerning the parable*; which might be by the mouth of *Peter*; who, probably, being the eldeſt man, and very forward to ſpeak, was generally their ſpokeſman; and who, at this time, might be requeſted, by the reſt, to aſk the meaning of the parable, which had given offence to the *Phariſees*, and was not clearly underſtood by them; which he accordingly did: *and ſaid unto him, declare unto us this parable*; that not what goes into the mouth, but what comes out of it, defiles the man; which, tho' expreſſed in very plain words, and eaſy to be underſtood, yet did not appear clear to their underſtandings; and ſeemed to be contrary, not only to the traditions of the elders, but to the laws of God, reſpecting the difference of clean and unclean meats; and therefore call it a *parable*, and deſire an explanation of it.

Ver. 16. *And Jeſus ſaid*, &c.] As wondering at, and as being diſpleaſed with, and as reproving them for their dulneſs and ignorance: *are ye alſo yet without underſtanding?* you, my diſciples, as well as the Scribes and Phariſees; you, who have been with me ſo long, who have heard ſo many diſcourſes from me, who for ſo long a time have been inſtructed by me, both in private, and in public; and yet do not underſtand what is ſo plain and eaſy, that has nothing of difficulty in it, but what might eaſily be accounted for.

Ver. 17. *Do not ye underſtand*, &c.] You muſt underſtand, you can't be ſo ignorant, *that whatſoever entreth in at the mouth, goeth into the belly, and is caſt out into the draught?* that is, that whatſoever food a man takes in at his mouth, he ſwallows down, and it is received into his ſtomach; which, having performed its office, the groſſer parts go down into the belly, and paſſing thro' the bowels, are evacuated into the vault, or privy, *purging all meats*, as *Mark* ſays; for that only receives the filth and excrementitious matter; ſo that what is left in the body is pure, wholeſome, and nouriſhing: nor can any part of what goes into a man defile him, becauſe it only enters into the body, and paſſes thro' it; and, as *Mark* ſays, *entreth not into the heart*, which is the ſeat of moral impurity; ſo that no moral pollution can be contracted by eating any ſort of food, even tho' it ſhould not be clean itſelf, nor be eaten with clean hands.

Ver. 18. *But thoſe things which proceed out of the mouth*, &c.] Meaning not material things, as ſpittle, vomit, *&c.* but, as it follows, which *come forth from the heart*; are firſt conceived and formed there, and then come forth from thence, and are expreſſed by the mouth; as all idle words, fooliſh talking, filthy jeſting, unſavoury communication, and every word that is rotten and corrupt, or which is done in the life and converſation; *and they defile the man:* the heart is the corrupt fountain from whence all moral defilement flows; and ſinful words and actions are the impure ſtreams, which ſpring from thence, and increaſe the moral pollution of human nature.

Ver. 19. *For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts*, &c.] Of God, of Chriſt, of the Spirit, of fellow-creatures, and of all ſorts of wickedneſs. The thoughts of ſin are evil, are to be hated, forſaken, and for which men are accountable to God. All wicked imaginations, carnal reaſonings, luſtful deſires, and malicious contrivances, are here included; which take their riſe from, and are deviſed, and forged, in the corrupt heart of man. *Murders*; inveterate hatred of mens perſons, malice prepenſe, ſchemes to take away life, all angry and wrathful words, and actual effuſion of man's blood. *Adulteries*; uncleanneſs committed between married perſons, both in thought, and deed: *fornications*; unlawful copulations of perſons in a ſingle ſtate: *thefts*; taking away from others by force or fraud, what is their right and property: *falſe witneſs*; ſwearing falſely, or exhibiting a falſe teſtimony to the hurt of his neighbour, either his name, perſon, or eſtate: *blaſphemies*; evil ſpeakings of God or men. To which *Mark* adds *covetouſneſs*; a greedy and inſatiable deſire after the things of the world, or the neighbour's goods: *wickedneſs*; doing hurt and miſchief to fellow-creatures: *deceit*; in words and actions, in trade and converſation: *laſciviouſneſs*; all manner of uncleanneſs, and unnatural luſts: *an evil eye*; of envy and covetouſneſs: the vitioſity, or corruption of nature, is, by the *Jews*[h], called רע עין, *the evil eye: pride*; in heart and life, in dreſs and geſture; and *fooliſhneſs*; expreſſed in talk and conduct.

Ver. 20. *Theſe are the things which defile a man*, &c.] Theſe are filthy in themſelves, and muſt pollute all in whom they are; they bring a defilement on the whole man, both body and ſoul, faſten guilt upon him, and expoſe him to everlaſting puniſhment: *but to eat with unwaſhen hands defileth not a man:* ſhould a man neglect to waſh his hands before eating a common meal, this need give him no uneaſineſs; he contracts no filth to his ſoul hereby, nor any guilt to his conſcience; nor does he break any law of God; nor is he liable to any penalty for ſuch an omiſſion. This is a trifling matter, and merits no regard; but the things before mentioned are in their nature evil: they are contrary to the law of God; they are abominable in his ſight; they render men loathſome and odious to the divine being; and expoſe them to ſhame and ruin; and it is only the blood of Chriſt can cleanſe them from the pollution and guilt of them, and ſecure them from that puniſhment they deſerve.

Ver. 21. *Then Jeſus went thence*, &c.] From the land of *Genneſaret*, after he had ſilenced the *Phariſees*, as to the charge brought by them againſt his diſciples; and when he had reproved them for their hypocriſy and wickedneſs, in making void the commands of God by their traditions; and had explained ſome difficult and parabolical ſayings he had made uſe of to his diſciples, he then left that country, and departed very privately: either to ſhun the multitude, for the ſake of retirement; or to avoid any ſnares the Scribes and Phariſees might be laying for him, who muſt be greatly galled with his free diſcourſe, and ſtrong arguments: *and departed into the coaſts of Tyre and Sidon*; two principal cities of *Phœnicia*: not that he went into theſe places themſelves, but into ſome places that border'd upon them; for as he ordered his diſciples not to go in the way of the Gentiles, ſo neither did he himſelf.

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[g] Midraſh Tillim in Pſ. cxlvi. apud Grotium in loc.

[h] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 141. 3.

Ver. 22. *And behold a woman of Canaan*, &c.] That is, of *Phœnicia*, which was called *Canaan*; ſo *Shaul*, the ſon of a *Canaantiſh* woman, is, by the *Septuagint* in *Exod.* vi. 15. called the ſon of a *Phœnician*; and the kings of *Canaan* are, by the ſame interpreters in *Joſ.* v. 1. called kings of *Phœnicia*: hence this woman is by *Mark* ſaid to be a *Greek*, that is, a Gentile, as the *Jews* uſed to call all of another nation, and a *Syro-phœnician*, being a native of *Phœnicia*, called *Syro-phœnicia*; becauſe it bordered upon *Syria*, and had been formerly a part of it, by conqueſt: ſo *Cadmus*, who is reported to have firſt brought letters from *Phœnicia* to *Greece*, is called [1] a *Syro-phœnician* merchant. *Came out of the ſame coaſts*; being an inhabitant, it is very likely, either of *Tyre* or *Sidon*: this ſhews that Chriſt did not go into theſe places, but only to the borders of them, ſince ſhe is ſaid to come out of them to him; who, having heard of him, and the miraculous cures wrought by him, and being informed that he was near, at ſuch a place, as the *Perſic* verſion ſays, *ſuddenly came forth out of a corner*; and the *Ethiopic* reads it, *out of the mountains thereof*; and made to the houſe where he was privately retired, and would have hid himſelf, as *Mark* ſuggeſts, *and cried unto him*; with a loud voice, with much vehemency, being in great diſtreſs, *ſaying, have mercy on me*; meaning, by curing her daughter, with whoſe caſe ſhe was ſo much affected, that ſhe made it, as it were, her own: *O Lord, thou ſon of David.* The firſt of theſe characters expreſſes her faith in his power, dominion, and goverment, that all perſons and things, and ſo all diſeaſes were at his command, and controul; and that being Lord of all, he could remove them at his pleaſure: the other ſhews her knowledge and belief of him, as the Meſſiah, that being a name by which he was uſually known by the *Jews*; ſee the note on *Matt.* i. 1. and which ſhe, tho' a Gentile, might come at the knowledge of, either thro' being a proſelyte to the *Jewiſh* religion, or thro' a general report which might reach, eſpecially the neighbouring nations, that the *Jews* expected a wonderful deliverer to ariſe among them, under this character of the ſon of *David*; and from what ſhe had heard of him, ſhe concluded he muſt be the perſon. *My daughter is grievouſly vexed with a devil*; which had took poſſeſſion of her, and moſt grievouſly afflicted her: and her requeſt to him was, that he would caſt him out of her; believing he had power ſo to do, without ſeeing or touching her, only by a word ſpeaking: her faith was like that of the centurion's.

Ver. 23. *But he anſwered her not a word*, &c.] Not that he did not hear her, or that he deſpiſed either her perſon or petition, or that he was not moved with it; but to continue her importunity, and try her faith, and make it manifeſt: for like reaſons the Lord does not always, and immediately, anſwer the requeſts of his people. This giving her no anſwer, either that he would, or would not help her, carried in it a tacit repulſe of her, and a denial of aſſiſtance to her; and it ſeems as if ſhe did for a while deſiſt from her application to him, and betook herſelf to his diſciples to plead with him for her: *and his diſciples came*; to the houſe where he was; who, it ſeems by this, had been elſewhere; *and beſought him, ſaying, ſend her away*; not in any ſhape, with any ſort of anſwer, without curing her daughter, or without a promiſe of a cure; no, they deſired ſhe might be diſmiſſed, with a grant of her requeſt, to her entire ſatisfaction, as appears from Chriſt's anſwer: the reaſon they give is, *for ſhe crieth after us*; not only becauſe ſhe was troubleſome to them, was importunate with them, and would take no denial from them: ſhe followed them wherever they went; there was no getting rid of her: but alſo, becauſe her caſe was ſo moving, was delivered in ſuch an affecting manner, and her cries were ſo piercing, that they could not bear them; and therefore intreat him, that he would relieve, and diſmiſs her.

Ver. 24. *But he anſwered, and ſaid*, &c.] To his diſciples, who knew how limited their commiſſion was, that they were not to go into the way of the Gentiles, not to preach to them, nor perform miracles among them; and therefore could not reaſonably expect that either the woman, or they, on her behalf, ſhould ſucceed in this matter. *I am not ſent, but to the loſt ſheep of the houſe of Iſrael*; as a prieſt, or as a ſaviour and redeemer, he was ſent to make ſatisfaction and atonement for the ſins of all God's elect, and to obtain eternal redemption and ſalvation for all of them, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*; but as a prophet, in the diſcharge of his own perſonal miniſtry, he was ſent by his father only to the *Jews*; he was the *miniſter of the circumciſion*, *Rom.* xv. 8. that is, a miniſter to the circumciſed *Jews*; he was ſent only to preach the Goſpel to them, and work miracles among them, in proof of his Meſſiahſhip; and upon their rejection of him, then his apoſtles were to be ſent among the Gentiles; but he himſelf was ſent only to the *Jews*, here ſtiled *the loſt ſheep of the houſe of Iſrael*: by *the houſe of Iſrael*, is meant the whole body of the *Jewiſh* nation, ſo called from *Iſrael*, the name of *Jacob* their father, from whom they ſprung; and by the *loſt ſheep* of that houſe, are more eſpecially deſigned the elect of God among them: for though all the individuals of that houſe were *loſt* perſons, conſidered in *Adam*, and in themſelves, as the reſt of mankind, and Chriſt, in the external miniſtry of the word, was ſent to preach to them all; yet the elect of God are only *ſheep*: they are the ſheep of Chriſt, of his paſture, and of his hand, whom he has the particular care and charge of; and who, in their nature-ſtate, are loſt and ſtraying, and could never find their way, or recover themſelves from their loſt ſtate in *Adam*, and by their own tranſgreſſions; but he came to ſeek, and to ſave them, and to theſe his miniſtry was powerful and efficacious.

Ver. 25. *Then came ſhe and worſhipped him*, &c.] She followed the diſciples into the houſe; and perceiving another repulſe by Chriſt's anſwer to them, ſhe puſhes on, thro' all diſcouragements; her faith grows ſtronger, and her importunity greater: ſhe had called Chriſt Lord, and the ſon of *David* before, but now ſhe worſhips him as God: *Saying, Lord help me*; a ſhort petition, but what fully and fitly expreſſed her caſe: the object ſhe prays unto, is the *Lord*, by which ſhe owns his ſovereignty, dominion, and power: the requeſt ſhe makes is for *help*, ſignifying that her caſe required it; that it was ſuch, that ſhe could not help herſelf, nor any creature help her, only he, which ſhe firmly believed; and tho' it was her daughter, and not ſhe herſelf, that was ſo miſerably afflicted; yet ſuch was her ſympathy, love, and affection to her, that ſhe makes the caſe her own, and calls helping her daughter, helping herſelf; for her daughter being relieved, ſhe would be made eaſy.

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[1] Lucian. Dialog. Deor. Concil. §. 2.

Ver. 26. *But he anſwered, and ſaid*, &c.] To the woman, as the *Perſic* verſion reads it, and the ſenſe requires: *it is not meet to take the childrens bread, and to caſt it to dogs*; which he ſaid, to try her faith the more, and make it appear the more illuſtrious; and that not ſo much from his own ſenſe of things, as in the language of the *Jewiſh* people, and which ſhe might not be a ſtranger to. By *the children*, are meant the *Jews*, to whom the adoption belong'd; who, as a nation and people, were the children of God in a large ſenſe; being diſtinguiſhed by many bleſſings and favours, which others had not, and being under the more peculiar care and notice of God; not that all of them were the children of God by ſpecial grace: by *the bread*, which belong'd to them, is meant the external miniſtry of the word, and the miracles of Chriſt wrought among them; and particularly ſuch outward favours which related to the good of the bodies of men, by healing their diſeaſes, and diſpoſſeſſing them of devils: and by *the dogs* are deſigned the Gentiles, ſo called by the *Jews* in a way of contempt, becauſe of their ignorance, idolatry, and impurity. Chriſt here ſpeaks not his own mind, as if he reproached the Gentiles, and held them in ſcorn and contempt, but uſes the common dialect of the people; and which, this woman, living upon the borders of the *Iſraelitiſh* nation, was acquainted with; ſo that it was not ſo ſhocking and ſurprizing, or quite ſo diſcouraging, as it would otherwiſe have been. The *Jewiſh* doctors ſay [k], that the idolatrous Gentiles are not called men, that they are comparable to the beaſts, to the beaſts of the field [l], to oxen, rams, goats [m], and aſſes [n]: the fœtus in the bowels of a *Canaanitiſh* ſervant, they ſay [o], "כולד במעי בהמה דמיו, *is* " *like the fœtus in the bowels of a beaſt*." Take the following paſſage, as an illuſtration of this, and as a further proof of the Jews calling the Gentiles dogs [p]. "A king provides a dinner for the children of his " houſe; whilſt they do his will they eat their meat " with the king, and he gives to the dogs the part " of bones to knaw; but when the children of the " houſe don't do the king's pleaſure, he gives the " dogs the dinner, and the bones to them: even " ſo, while the *Iſraelites* do the will of their Lord, " they eat at the king's table, and the feaſt is pro- " vided for them, and they of their own will give " the bones to the Gentiles; but when they don't " do the will of their Lord, lo! the feaſt is, לכלבי, " *for the dogs*, and the bones are theirs." And a little after, "*thou prepareſt a table before me*; this " is the feaſt of the king; *in the preſence of mine* " *enemies*; אינון כלבי, *theſe are the dogs* that ſit be- " fore the table, looking for their part of the bones." In which may be clearly diſcerned the diſtinction between children and dogs, and the application of the one to the *Jews*, and the other to the Gentiles, and the different food that belongs to each: and hence it's eaſy to ſee from whom Chriſt borrowed this expreſſion, and with what view he made uſe of it.

Ver. 27. *And ſhe ſaith, truth, Lord*, &c.] She owns all that he had ſaid to be true, that he was ſent only to the loſt ſheep of the houſe of *Iſrael*; that ſhe was indeed but as a dog, a poor ſinful creature, and unworthy of any favour; and that it was not right and fitting that all the childrens bread ſhould be taken from them, and given to dogs: *yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their maſter's table*. The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions add, *and live*: thus ſhe wiſely lays hold upon, and improves, in a very beautiful manner, in her own favour, what ſeemed to be ſo much againſt her. It is obſerved [q] of the *Syro-phænicians* in general, that they have all in their common talk, ſomething, ηδυ και κεχαρισμενον, *pleaſant and graceful*, as there is indeed in this ſmart reply of hers, who was one of that people. She ſuggeſts, that tho' the Gentiles were but dogs, and ſhe one of them; yet their common Lord and Maſter had a propriety in them, and they in him; and were to be maintained and fed, and ought to live, tho' not in ſuch fulneſs of favours and bleſſings, as the *Jews*, the children of God: nor did ſhe deſire their affluence, only that a crumb of mercy might be given her, that her poor daughter might be healed; which was but a ſmall favour, in compariſon of the numerous ones he heaped upon the children, the *Jews*: nor would this be any more detrimental to them, than it is to children, for the dogs, under the table, to eat of the crumbs that fall.

Ver. 28. *Then Jeſus anſwered, and ſaid unto her*, &c.] As one ſurprized at the ſtrength of her faith, and the clearneſs and juſtneſs of her pious reaſoning; and not concealing himſelf, and the deſigns of grace, any longer from her, breaks out in great admiration of her, ſaying, *O woman, great is thy faith!* He ſeems ſurprized, that ſhe, a woman, and a poor Gentile, ſhould expreſs ſuch ſtrong faith in him; calling him Lord, owning him to be the Meſſiah, worſhipping him as God, believing him able to do what could not be done by human art; and tho' ſhe met with ſuch repulſes, and even called a dog, yet ſtill continued importunate with him, believing ſhe ſhould ſucceed: *be it unto thee even as thou wilt*; let thy daughter be healed, as thou deſireſt, and in the way, and at the very time thou wouldſt have it: *and her daughter was made whole from that very hour*: power went forth from Chriſt, and diſpoſſeſſed the devil; ſo that when ſhe came home, as *Mark* obſerves, ſhe found her daughter lying on the bed, quiet, and eaſy, and perfectly well. The conduct of our Lord towards this woman, and her behaviour under it, do, in a very lively manner, repreſent the methods which God ſometimes takes with his people, when they apply to him in their diſtreſs; and the nature and actings of their faith upon him: as ſhe, when ſhe firſt applied to Chriſt for mercy and help, had not a word of anſwer given her; ſo ſometimes they cry, and the Lord turns a deaf ear, or ſeems not to hear, and, in their apprehenſion of things, has covered himſelf with a cloud, that their prayer ſhould not paſs through; however, an immediate anſwer is not returned; yea, when others interpoſe on their behalf, and intreat for them, yet no favourable anſwer is return'd, as was not by Chriſt to his diſciples, when they beſought him on this woman's account: and yet, notwithſtanding all this, as ſhe, they are not diſcouraged, but ply the throne of grace with freſh ſuits, acknowledge that the worſt of names and characters belong to them; that they are unworthy of the leaſt of mercies, and ſhould be content with the crumbs of divine favour, but can't go away without a bleſſing; they lay hold on every word of God, and haſtily catch at it, and improve every thing in their own favour, that faith can come at, and ſo, in the iſſue, ſucceed in their requeſts: effectual, fervent, and importunate prayer, the prayer of faith availeth much with God.

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[k] T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 114. 2. Zohar in Exod. fol. 35. 4. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 1. 4. [l] Zohar in Gen. fol. 31. 1. & 34. 1, 2. [m] Jarchi in Gen. 15. 10. [n] T. Bab. Kidduſhin, fol. 68. 1. [o] Ib. fol. 69. 1. [p] Zohar in Exod. fol. 63. 1, 2. Vid. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 147. 4. [q] Eunapius in Vita Libanii.

Ver. 29. *And Jeſus departed from thence,* &c.] From the coaſts of *Tyre* and *Sidon,* where he would have been private and retired; but being diſcovered, and knowing that the fame of this laſt miracle would make him more publick in thoſe parts, he removed, and paſſed thro' the midſt of the coaſt of *Decapolis,* as *Mark* ſays, *and came nigh unto the ſea of Galilee*; the ſame with the ſea of *Tiberias, Joh.* vi. 1. and xxi. 1. that is, he came to thoſe parts of *Galilee,* which lay near the ſea-ſide, *and went up into a mountain*; which was very uſual with him, either for ſolitude, or for prayer, and ſometimes, for better conveniency, to preach to the people: *and ſat down there*; to take ſome reſt, being weary with his journey, and as waiting for the multitude to come to him, both for inſtruction and healing.

Ver. 30. *And great multitudes came unto him,* &c.] From the adjacent places; having heard of his being where he was; and who had either attended on him before, or, however, the fame of him, and his miracles, had reached their ears: theſe flocked to him, *having with them,* in their hands, or arms, or upon their backs, or ſhoulders, leading ſome, and carrying others, in ſome form or another, *thoſe that were lame*; either in their legs, or arms: *blind*; in one eye, or both, and that either from their birth, or ſince: *dumb*; the word ſignifies both deaf and dumb: theſe often meet in the ſame perſon; and if a man is born deaf, he is always dumb: *maimed*; having loſt a limb, an arm, or a leg, or ſo enfeebled by ſome diſeaſe or another, as the palſy, that their limbs were uſeleſs to them. The *Perſic* verſion reads it *leprous: and many others*; who were afflicted with various other diſeaſes, too many to be mentioned particularly: *and caſt them down at Jeſus feet*; to eaſe themſelves of their burdens, and with a view to move his compaſſion, believing he was able to cure them: nor do they ſay a word to him, or deſire him to relieve theſe miſerable objects; thinking it was enough to preſent them to him, and not doubting at all, but he would ſhew favour to them: *and he healed them*; immediately, either by a word ſpeaking, or by touching them, or by putting his hands on them, or without any ſuch outward ſign, thro' a divine power proceeding from him, which, at once, removed all their diſorders and complaints.

Ver. 31. *Inſomuch that the multitude wondred,* &c.] The multitude of the ſpectators, who, though they came in expectation of ſeeing miracles wrought; yet theſe were ſo much beyond what they could have imagined, that they were amazed and ſurprized to ſee cures ſo inſtantly performed, in ſuch a miraculous manner: theſe were ſuch glaring proofs and evidences of the wonderful power of God, that they were aſtoniſhed *when they ſaw the dumb to ſpeak*; that is, ſuch who before were dumb, now ſpoke; and the ſame is to be obſerved in the other following inſtances: ſome copies have alſo, *the deaf to hear*; and ſo the *Arabic* verſion: *the maimed to be whole.* This is left out in ſome copies; nor is it in the *Arabic, Ethiopic,* and *Vulgate Latin* Verſions, nor in *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel; but the *Syriac* has it, and moſt *Greek* copies, and ſeems neceſſary; ſince theſe are particularly mentioned among the perſons brought to be cured; and a wonderful cure this was, that perſons who had not only loſt the uſe of their limbs, but ſuch who had loſt the limbs themſelves, ſhould have them reſtored perfect; for doubtleſs, the power of our Lord was able to do this, and which was amazing to behold: *the lame to walk, and the blind to ſee*; as was propheſied of the times of the Meſſiah, and as things to be effected by him, *Iſ.* xxxv. 5, 6. *and they glorified the God of Iſrael.* The *Ethiopic* verſion adds, *which had given ſuch power to the ſon of man,* or *unto men,* which ſeems to be taken out of ch. ix. 8. This muſt be underſtood both of the multitude that ſaw theſe miraculous operations, and the perſons on whom they were wrought; who were both affected with them, and gave God the praiſe and glory of them, by whoſe power alone ſuch things could be done, who is the one only and true God: and therefore to diſtinguiſh him from the fictitious deities of the Gentiles, he is here ſtiled the God of *Iſrael,* of the people of *Iſrael,* ſo called from *Jacob* their anceſtor, whoſe name was *Iſrael*; by whom God was known, and worſhipped, and was their Covenant-God, and Father.

Ver. 32. *Then Jeſus called his diſciples unto him,* &c.] Who were at ſome little diſtance from him, to impart his mind unto them, whom he had made, and uſed, as his familiar friends; and to try their faith, and raiſe their attention, and prepare them for the following miracle; as well as to teach them by his example, and accuſtom them to ſhew bowels of mercy and compaſſion to perſons in any kind of want and diſtreſs: *and ſaid, I have compaſſion on the multitude*; which muſt be underſtood of him as man, whoſe bowels earned towards them, having been ſo long without any food for their bodies, or very little; as he had compaſſion on the ſick, and diſeaſed, and healed them, ſo on the ſound and whole, and was willing to feed them. Chriſt, our high-prieſt, is a merciful one, and is touched with the feeling of the infirmities of men, of every ſort, both of ſoul and body: *becauſe they continue now with me three days*; which time had been ſpent in healing their bodily diſorders, and in preaching to them for the good of their ſouls; which ſhews the diligence and indefatigableneſs of Chriſt, as well as the attachment of the people to him; who were ſo ſtruck with his miracles and miniſtry, that though they had been ſo long from their habitations and families, knew not how to leave him; nor did they talk, or ſhew any ſigns of departing from him, and returning to their own houſes, and buſineſs of life: *and have nothing to eat*; not that they had been ſo long without eating any thing, tho' very likely it was but little, and what they brought with them, and was now expended; nor could they provide themſelves in a deſart place, and many of them were a great way off from home: *and I will not ſend them away faſting*; he might have done it, nor did the multitude aſk any food of him; but he could not bear the thoughts of diſmiſſing them in ſuch a condition; having had but very little ſuſtenance all this while, and ſo might be ſaid to be in a manner faſting during this time, at leaſt now: *leſt they faint by the way*; to their own houſes, not having ſtrength and ſpirit enough to travel, and get home; for *divers of them,* as *Mark* ſays, *came from far.*

Ver. 33. *And his diſciples ſaid unto him,* &c.] The former miracle of feeding five thouſand men, beſides women and children, with five loaves and two fiſhes, being quite out of their thoughts, they reply; *whence ſhould we have ſo much bread in the wilderneſs, as to fill ſo great a multitude?* The queſtion is big with objections, and is put with ſome vehemency and aſtoniſhment: the people to be fed were a multitude, a great multitude, a very great multitude, and theſe too had had but little, or no food, for a great while; and therefore would require the more to fill and ſatisfy them; and beſides, it was a wilderneſs where they were, and where no proviſions were to be had; and if they could have been got for money, they had not ſtock enough to purchaſe ſuch a large number of loaves, as were neceſſary to feed ſo great a company with.

Ver. 34. *And Jeſus ſaith unto them*, &c.] In a very mild and gentle manner, taking no notice of their ſtupidity, nor upbraiding them with their forgetfulneſs of the late miracle, and willing to exerciſe their patience, and try their faith, aſks, *how many loaves have ye?* meaning in the common ſtock, and which they brought along with them, for their own ſupply: *and they ſaid ſeven, and a few little fiſhes*; which they mention as ſo ſmall a proviſion, that it was as nothing for ſuch multitudes; their loaves of bread were but ſeven, and their fiſhes, which were ready dreſſed, dried, or boiled, *&c.* were few in number, and ſmall, as to ſize and bigneſs.

Ver. 35. *And he commanded the multitude to ſit down on the ground.*] Not regarding the ſmallneſs of the proviſions, nor any further conſulting with his diſciples; but knowing his own power to increaſe this food, and determining to feed the multitude before he diſmiſſed them, in an authoritative way ordered them to ſit down upon the ground in rows, that they might be the better ſeen, and ſerved.

Ver. 36. *And he took the ſeven loaves, and the fiſhes*, &c.] Into his hands, and lifted them up, that it might be ſeen, and obſerved, that there were no other food than theſe, that ſo the miracle might appear in its true light: *and gave thanks*; to God for the proviſion, tho' it was ſo ſmall, in the name of the whole company, according to the uſage of the *Jewiſh* nation; who, if there were ten thouſand [r], one for the reſt uſed to ſay, "let us bleſs the Lord "our God, the God of *Iſrael*, the God of hoſts, "that ſitteth between the cherubim:" teaching us to do ſo likewiſe, and to be thankful for, and content with our portion, be it more or leſs: *and brake them*; which alſo was the cuſtom of the maſter of the family to do: *and gave to his diſciples*; as a freſh trial of their faith, to reprove their unbelief, to put them in mind of the former miracle, and that they might be witneſſes of this, and, in order to diſtribute to the people, which they accordingly did: *and the diſciples to the multitude*; in doing which they obeyed their maſter's orders, tho' before they could not perſuade themſelves, that ſuch a multitude of people could be filled with ſo ſmall a quantity.

Ver. 37. *And they did all eat, and were filled*, &c.] Every one had a ſhare of the proviſion, and that to full ſatisfaction; no one was overlooked and neglected, and every one had as much as he could eat: *and they took up of the broken meat that was left, ſeven baſkets full.* The diſciples, after they had diſtributed to every one his portion, went round, and collected the remaining fragments, and filled ſeven baſkets therewith, according to the number of the loaves which were broken; and ſo had a full return for the loaves and fiſhes they ſpared on this occaſion.

Ver. 38. *And they that did eat, were four thouſand men*, &c.] This number of men, as well as of the baſkets of fragments, clearly ſhews this to be a diſtinct miracle from the former of this kind, recorded in ch. xiv. There the number of men were five thouſand, here four thouſand; there the quantity of food was five loaves and two fiſhes, here ſeven loaves and a few fiſhes; there the number of the baſkets of fragments was twelve, here ſeven; tho' the quantity might be as large; ſince the word here uſed for a *baſket* is not the ſame as there, and deſigns one of a larger ſize: *beſides men and women*; who were not taken into the account, though they eat as well as the men, and whoſe number might be very large.

Ver. 39. *And he ſent away the multitude*, &c.] Diſmiſſing them, either with a prayer for them, or with a ſuitable word of exhortation, to be thankful for the mercies, both ſpiritual and temporal, they had received, and behave agreeably in their lives and converſations: *and took ſhip*; being near the ſea-ſide, the ſea of *Galilee*, *and came into the coaſts of Magdala*; not far from *Tiberias*; for often mention is made of *Magdala* in the *Talmud* [s], along with *Tiberias*, and *Chammath*, another place in the ſame neighbourhood; and was famous for ſome *Rabbins*, as *R. Joden* and *R. Iſaac* [t], who are ſaid to be מגדלאה, *of Magdala*. Thus the *Syriac* verſion reads it *Magedo*, and the *Vulgate Latin Magedan*; and *Beza* ſays, in one *Greek* exemplar 'tis read *Magadan*; and ſome have thought it to be the ſame with *Megiddo*, where *Joſiah* was ſlain by *Pharoah-necho*, and which *Herodotus* calls *Magdolos* [u]. The Evangeliſt *Mark* ſays, that he came into the parts of *Dalmanutha*, which was a place within the coaſts of *Magdala*. This was not the place, but another of the ſame name near *Jeruſalem*, from whence *Mary Magdalene* may be thought to have her name. The *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *they went into a ſhip, and departed into the mountains of Magdala*; that is, Chriſt, and his diſciples.

## CHAP. XVI.

Ver. 1. THE *Phariſees alſo with the Sadducees came*, &c.] Not from *Jeruſalem*, as in ch. xv. 1. but from the neighbouring places: theſe were *Galilean Sadducees* and *Phariſees*, of whom mention is made in the *Miſna* [w]; "ſays "צדוקי גלילי, *a Galilean Sadducee*, (*i. e.* one that "was of the land of *Galilee*, as *Bartenora* on the "place obſerves) I complain of you *Phariſees*, be"cauſe ye write the name of a ruler with the name "of *Moſes*, in a divorce; ſay the *Phariſees*, we "complain of you *Galilean Sadducees*, that you "write the name of a ruler, with the name of God, "in the ſame leaf:" but tho' theſe two ſects could not agree in this, and in many other things, yet they could unite againſt Chriſt, to whom they bore an implacable hatred. *And tempting, deſired him that he would ſhew them a ſign from heaven*: they came with no ſincere view to be taught by him, or learn any thing from him; but if they could, to enſnare him, and get an opportunity of expoſing him to the people; and therefore pretending diſſatisfaction with the miracles he wrought on the earth, they aſk of him to produce a ſign from heaven, of his coming from thence, of his being the ſon of God, and the true Meſſiah. They wanted ſome ſuch ſign, as the ſtanding ſtill of the ſun and moon, in the times of *Joſhua*; and as raining manna, in the times of *Moſes*; or ſome ſuch appearances of thunder

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[r] Miſn. Beracot, c. 7. §. 3.

[s] T. Hieroſ. Sheviith, fol. 38. 4. Maaſerot, fol. 50. 3. Erubin, fol. 21. 4.

[t] T. Hieroſ. Taanith, fol. 64. 3. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 81. 2. & Nidda, fol. 33. 1. Bereſhit Rabba, fol. 4. 4.

[u] L. 2. c. 159.

[w] Yadaim, c. 4. §. 8.

and lightning, as at the giving of the law. The appearance of the rainbow, in a very extraordinary manner, is looked upon by the *Jews* as a ſign of the *Meſſiah*'s coming [x]. "Says a certain *Jew*, when my father departed out of the world, he ſaid thus to me; don't look for the *Meſſiah* until thou ſeeſt the bow in the world, adorned with light colours, and the world enlightened by it; then look for the *Meſſiah*, as it is written, *Gen.* ix. 16." Some very unuſual and uncommon ſight in the heavens, was what theſe men aſked of Chriſt in proof of his miſſion from God.

Ver. 2. *He anſwered and ſaid unto them,* &c.] Knowing full well their views, and having wrought ſufficient miracles to confirm his Meſſiahſhip, he thought fit to give them no other anſwer, than this: *when it is evening, ye ſay, it will be fair weather, for the ſky is red*; when the ſun is ſetting, it is a common thing for you to ſay, looking up to the heavens, and obſerving the face and colour of them, that it is like to be fair weather; no rain that night, nor perhaps the next day, for the ſky is red like fire, thro' the rays of the ſun; which ſhew the clouds to be very thin, and ſo will ſoon waſte away, and conſequently fine weather muſt follow.

Ver. 3. *And in the morning it will be foul weather to-day,* &c.] When you riſe in the morning, and take a ſurvey of the heavens, it is a very uſual thing with you to ſay, it is like to be windy or rainy weather to-day, *for the ſky is red and lowring*; which ſhews, that the clouds are ſo thick that the ſun can't pierce thro' them, and its face is not ſeen; ſo that it may be reaſonably concluded they will iſſue in rain, or wind, or both. *O ye hypocrites.* The *Vulgate Latin*, and *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel, leave out this appellation; but all other verſions, as well as copies, have it: and it is an uſual epithet, beſtowed very juſtly by Chriſt, on theſe men; who pretended to be the guides of the people, took upon them to teach and inſtruct them in divine things, and ſet up themſelves as men of great holineſs, piety and knowledge; and yet, inſtead of ſearching the ſcriptures, and comparing the characters of the times of the Meſſiah therein fixed, with the preſent ones, ſpent their time in making ſuch low and uſeleſs obſervations, and which fall within the compaſs of every one's knowledge and reach. *Ye can diſcern the face of the ſky*; very diſtinctly, and make ſome very probable gueſſes, if not certain concluſions, what will follow, good weather or bad: *but can ye not diſcern the ſigns of the times?* or, as the *Syriac* reads it, *the time*, the preſent time: if they had not been blind, they might eaſily have diſcerned, that the ſigns of the time of the *Meſſiah*'s coming were upon them, and that *Jeſus* was the *Meſſiah*; as the departure of the ſcepter from *Judah*, the ending of *Daniel*'s weeks, the various miracles wrought by Chriſt, the wickedneſs of the age in which they lived, the miniſtry of *John the Baptiſt*, and of Chriſt, the great flockings of the people, both to one and to the other, with divers other things which were eaſy to be obſerved by them: but they pretend this to be a very great ſecret. "The ſecret of the day of death, they ſay [y], and the ſecret of the day when the king Meſſiah comes, who by his wiſdom can find out?"

Ver. 4. *A wicked and adulterous generation,* &c.] He ſays the ſame things here, as he did to the *Phariſees* on a like occaſion, in ch. xii. 39. ſee the note there. *And he left them*; as perſons hardened, perverſe, and incurable, and as unworthy to be converſed with: *and departed*; to the ſhip which brought him thither, and went in it to the other ſide of the ſea of *Galilee*; ſee *Mark* viii. 13.

Ver. 5. *When his diſciples were come to the other ſide,* &c.] Of the ſea, as *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel adds, to *Bethſaida*, *Mark* viii. 22. as they were either in the ſhip, or going from the ſhore to the ſaid place, they recollected themſelves, *that they had forgotten to take bread*; having but one loaf, as *Mark* ſays, in the ſhip; the ſeven baſkets of fragments being either expended, or given away to the poor, of their own accord, or by Chriſt's orders. It ſeems, it was uſual with the diſciples to buy food at places moſt proper, and carry with them; ſince Chriſt often went into deſarts and mountainous places, where proviſions could not be had. This their forgetfulneſs to act according to their wonted method, might ariſe either from their being intent upon Chriſt's converſation with the *Phariſees*, and *Sadducees*, or from the ſuddenneſs of Chriſt's departure.

Ver. 6. *Then Jeſus ſaid unto them,* &c.] Either taking occaſion from the diſciples obſerving that they had forgot to take bread with them, or on account of what paſſed between him and the *Phariſees* and *Sadducees*, he gave the following advice to his diſciples; *take heed and beware of the leaven of the Phariſees and of the Sadducees.* *Mark*, inſtead of *the leaven of the Sadducees*, ſays, *the leaven of Herod*; either becauſe Chriſt might caution againſt all three; or becauſe the *Sadducees* were generally *Herodians*, taking *Herod* to be the Meſſiah; or were on his party, or for his government, which the *Phariſees* diſliked; and the *Herodians* were generally *Sadducees*. By *the leaven* of theſe is meant their doctrine, as appears from ver. 12. The doctrines the *Phariſees* taught were the commandments and inventions of men, the traditions of the elders, free-will, and juſtification by the works of the law: the doctrine of the *Sadducees* was, that there was no reſurrection of the dead, nor angels, nor ſpirits: now becauſe they ſought ſecretly and artfully to infuſe their notions into the minds of men; and which, when imbibed, ſpread their infection, and made men ſour, moroſe, rigid, and ill-natured, and ſwelled and puffed them up with pride and vanity, Chriſt compares them to *leaven*; and adviſes his diſciples to look about them, to watch, and be on their guard, leſt they ſhould be infected with them.

Ver. 7. *And they reaſoned among themſelves,* &c.] Either what ſhould be the meaning of this caution of Chriſt's, and upon what account he ſhould ſay this to them; or they were anxiouſly concerned what they ſhould do for proviſion: *ſaying, becauſe we have taken no bread*; for the phraſe, *it is*, is a ſupplement, and is not in the original text, which confines the ſenſe to the firſt way of interpretation; the words may be read without it, and confirms the other ſenſe, and which receives ſtrength from what follows.

Ver. 8. *Which when Jeſus perceived,* &c.] Without hearing any of their debates, but by his omniſcience; for he knew the doubts and unbelief, and anxious ſolicitude of their minds, as well as their private reaſonings one with another: *he ſaid unto them, O ye of little faith*; a phraſe uſed upon a like occaſion, when he would diſſuade his diſciples from an anxious diſtreſſing care about a livelihood, *Matt.* vi. 30. ſee the note there: *why reaſon ye among yourſelves, becauſe ye have brought no bread?* blaming one another for your negligence and forgetfulneſs in this matter; diſtreſſing your minds, as if you ſhould be famiſhed and ſtarved, becauſe ye have not brought a quantity of bread, as you uſed to do with you.

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[x] Zohar in Gen. fol. 53. 2.

[y] Targum in Eccl. vii. 24.

Ver. 9. *Do ye not yet underſtand*, &c.] Meaning either the ſenſe of the advice he had now given; or rather his almighty power diſplayed in the two miracles of feeding five thouſand at one time, and four thouſand at another, with a very ſmall quantity of proviſion; for to this the word *underſtand* refers, as well as the following: *neither remember the five loaves of the five thouſand, and how many baſkets ye took up?* Have you forgot what was ſo lately done, namely, the feeding five thouſand men, beſides women and children, with five loaves and two fiſhes, when ye took up, after all were filled and ſatisfied, no leſs than twelve baſkets of fragments? And can you, after this, diſtruſt my power in the care of you? Have I fed ſo many with ſo ſmall a quantity of food? and am I not able to feed twelve of you, tho' you have but one loaf? Why all theſe anxious thoughts and carnal reaſonings?

Ver. 10. *Neither the ſeven loaves of the four thouſand*, &c.] Have you forgot the other miracle done but a very little while ago, when I fed four thouſand men, beſide women and children, with ſeven loaves and a few ſmall fiſhes, *and how many baſkets ye took up?* no leſs than ſeven large baſkets; and am I not able to provide for you? diſtreſs not yourſelves about this matter; give not way to unbelief, which muſt argue great ſtupidity and inſenſibility.

Ver. 11. *How is it that ye do not underſtand*, &c.] That you ſhould be ſo ſenſeleſs and void of thought, after ſuch inſtances, as to imagine, that I concerned myſelf about what bread you brought with you; one would think you could not but know, *that I ſpake it not to you concerning bread*, taken in a literal ſenſe; but muſt be thought to ſpeak figuratively and myſtically, and to have an higher ſenſe and meaning, when I ſaid to you, *that ye ſhould beware of the leaven of the Phariſees, and of the Sadducees*; how could you think that I had any regard to the leaven taken in a literal ſenſe, the *Phariſees* and *Sadducees* approve or diſapprove of?

Ver. 12. *Then underſtood they*, &c.] Without any further explication of his ſenſe and meaning, *how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread:* which ſenſe they firſt took him in, imagining, becauſe the *Phariſees* were very particular and preciſe what ſort of leaven they made uſe of [z], that Chriſt forbad them buying bread that was made with leaven according to their directions: and ſince their rules in every thing prevailed much in all places, they were concerned what bread they muſt, or could buy; but now they perceived that he did not ſpeak of this, *but of the doctrine of the Phariſees and of the Sadducees*. It was very common with the *Jews* [a] to call the corruption and vitioſity of nature by the name of שאור שבעיסה, *leaven in the lump*: hence our Lord calls their doctrine ſo, becauſe it proceeded from thence, and was agreeable thereunto; and uſes the phraſe on purpoſe to expoſe it, and bring it into neglect and contempt.

Ver. 13. *When Jeſus came into the coaſts of Ceſarea Philippi*, &c.] The towns that were in the neighbourhood of this city; which city went by ſeveral names before, as *Leſhem*, *Joſh.* xix. 47. which being taken by the *Danites*, they called it *Dan*; hence we read of דן דקיסריון, *Dan, which is Ceſarea* [b]. It was alſo called *Paneas*, from the name of the fountain of *Jordan*, by which it was ſituated; and which *Pliny* ſays [c], gave the ſurname to *Ceſarea*; and hence it is called by *Ptolomy* [d] *Ceſarea Paniæ*; and by the name of *Paneas* it went, when *Philip* the [e] tetrarch rebuilt it, and called it *Ceſarea*, in honour of *Tiberius Cæſar*; and from his own name, *Philippi*, to diſtinguiſh it from another *Ceſarea*, of which mention is made in the *Acts* of the *Apoſtles*, built by his father *Herod*, and ſo called in honour of *Auguſtus Cæſar*; which before bore the name of *Strato*'s tower. The *Miſnic* doctors ſpeak of two *Ceſarea's* [f], the one they call the eaſtern, the other the weſtern *Ceſarea*. Now, as *Mark* ſays, whilſt Chriſt and his diſciples were in the way to theſe parts; and, as *Luke*, when he had been praying alone with them, *he aſked his diſciples, ſaying, whom do men ſay that I, the ſon of man am?* He calls himſelf *the ſon of man*, becauſe he was truly and really man; and becauſe of his low eſtate, and the infirmities of human nature, with which he was encompaſſed: he may have ſome reſpect to the firſt intimation of him, as the ſeed of woman, and the rather make uſe of this phraſe, becauſe the Meſſiah was ſometimes deſigned by it in the Old Teſtament, *Pſ.* lxxx. 17. *Dan.* vii. 13. or Chriſt ſpeaks here of himſelf, according to his outward appearance, and the prevailing opinion of men concerning him; that he looked to be only a mere man, born as other men were; was properly a ſon of man, and no more: and therefore the queſtion is, not what ſort of man he was, whether a holy, good man or no, or whether the Meſſiah or not; but the queſtion is, what men in general, whether high or low, rich or poor, learned or unlearned, under the notion they had of him as a mere man, ſaid of him; or ſince they took him to be but a man, what man they thought he was; and to this the anſwer is very appoſite. This queſtion Chriſt put to his diſciples, they being more converſant with the people than he, and heard the different opinions men had of him, and who were more free to ſpeak their minds of him to them, than to himſelf; not that he was ignorant of what paſſed among men, and the different ſentiments they had of him, but he was willing to hear the account from his diſciples; and his view in putting this queſtion to them, was to make way for another, in order to bring them to an ingenuous confeſſion of their faith in him.

Ver. 14. *And they ſaid, ſome ſay that thou art John the Baptiſt*, &c.] It was the opinion of ſome of the *Jews*, that he was *John* the *Baptiſt* riſen from the dead. This notion was ſpread, and prevailed in *Herod*'s court, and he himſelf, at laſt, gave into it. *Some Elias*; the *Tiſhbite*, becauſe an extraordinary perſon was propheſied of by *Malachi*, under the name of *Elias*; and who was to come in his power and ſpirit before the great day of the Lord; and it being a prevailing notion with the *Jews*, that *Elias* was to come before the Meſſiah; ſee the note on *Matt.* xi. 14. they concluded that he was now come: *and others Jeremias*; this is omitted both by *Mark* and *Luke*; the reaſon why he is mentioned, is not becauſe of what is ſaid of him, in *Jer.* i. 5, 10. or in ver. 18. but becauſe the *Jews* thought he was that prophet ſpoken of, in *Deut.* xviii. 15. that ſhould be raiſed up from among them, like unto *Moſes*: and this is the ſenſe of ſome of their writers;

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[z] Miſn. Peſach, c. 2. §. 2, 3. T. Hieroſ. Shabbat, fol. 3. 3.

[a] T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 7. 4. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 17. 1. Bereſhit Rabba, fol. 29. 4. Caphtor, fol. 38. 2. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 73. 2.

[b] Targum Hieroſ. in Gen. xiv. 17.

[c] Hiſt. l. 5. c. 15, 18.

[d] Geograph. l. 5. c. 15.

[e] Joſeph. Antiq. l. 18. c. 3. & de Bello Jud. l. 3. c. 13.

[f] Miſn. Oholot, c. 18. §. 9.

ters [g]; and in their very ancient writings a parallel is run between *Moſes* and *Jeremy* [h]. “*R. Judah*, the ſon of *R. Simon*, opened *Deut*. xviii. 18. and xxxiv. 10. thus: *as thee*, this is *Jeremiah*, who was, as he, in reproofs; you'll find all that is written of the one, is written of the other; one propheſied forty years, and the other propheſied forty years; the one propheſied concerning *Judah* and *Iſrael*, and the other propheſied concerning *Judah* and *Iſrael*; againſt the one thoſe of his own tribe ſtood up, and againſt the other thoſe of his own tribe ſtood up; the one was caſt into a river, and the other into a dungeon; the one was delivered by the means of an handmaid, and the other by the means of a ſervant; the one came with words of reproof, and the other came with words of reproof.” Now they fancied, either that the ſoul of *Jeremy* was tranſmigrated into another body, or that he was riſen from the dead. *Or one of the prophets*; one of the ancient ones, as *Hoſeah*, or *Iſaiah*, or ſome other: they could not fix upon the particular perſon who they thought was riſen from the dead, and did theſe wondrous works among them. From the whole it appears, that theſe perſons, whoſe different ſentiments of Chriſt are here delivered, were not his ſworn enemies, as the Scribes and Phariſees, who could never ſpeak reſpectfully of him; ſaying, that he was a gluttonous man, a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and ſinners, a very wicked man, and far from being one, or like one of the prophets: they ſometimes repreſent him as beſides himſelf, and mad, yea, as being a *Samaritan*, and having a devil, as familiar with the devil, and doing his miracles by his aſſiſtance; but theſe were the common people, the multitude that followed Chriſt from place to place, and had a great opinion of him on account of his miniſtry, and miracles: wherefore, tho' they could not agree in their notions concerning him, yet each of them fix upon ſome perſon of note and worth, whom they took him for; they all looked upon him as a great and good man, and as a prophet, as *John* the *Baptiſt* was accounted by all the people, and as one of the chief of the prophets, as *Elias* and *Jeremiah*; and they that could not fix on any particular perſon, yet put him into the claſs of the prophets: but ſtill they came ſhort of the true knowledge of him; they did not know him to be a divine perſon, which his works and miracles proved him to be; nor to be that prophet *Moſes* had ſpoken of, who was alone to be hearkened unto, tho' his miniſtry was a demonſtration of it; nor that he was the Meſſiah, ſo much ſpoken of in prophecy, and ſo long expected by the Jewiſh nation, tho' he had all the characters of the Meſſiah meeting in him. The chief reaſon why they could not entertain ſuch a thought of him, ſeems to be the mean figure he made in the world, being of a low extract, in ſtrait circumſtances of life, regarded only by the poorer ſort; and there appearing nothing in him promiſing, that he ſhould deliver them from the *Roman* yoke, and ſet up a temporal kingdom, which ſhould be proſperous and flouriſhing, which was the notion of the Meſſiah that then generally obtained: and ſince they could not, by any means, allow of this character as belonging to Jeſus, though otherwiſe they had an high opinion of him; hence they could not agree about him, but formed different ſentiments of him; which is uſually the caſe in every thing, where the truth is not hit upon and received.

Ver. 15. *He ſaith unto them, but whom ſay ye that I am?*] Without taking any further notice, or making any reflections on the different ſentiments of men concerning him, he puts this queſtion to his diſciples, and which is what he had chiefly in view, that he might have their ſenſe of him; and which he puts in a different form, and leaves out the phraſe, *the ſon of man*, becauſe they knew he was more than a man: nor was his mean appearance an offence to them; they had believed in him, became his diſciples, and were followers of him: but it was not enough to believe in him, they muſt confeſs him; both are neceſſary; therefore he does not ſay, whom believe ye, but whom ſay ye that I am? You who have been with me ſo long from the beginning; you who have heard ſo many diſcourſes from me, and have ſeen ſo many miracles wrought by me; and who are to be the teachers of others, to preach my Goſpel, and publiſh my ſalvation to *Jews* and *Gentiles*, what have you to ſay of me? whom do you ſay I am? as for thoſe men, it is no great matter who they ſay I am; but of great moment and conſequence are your ſenſe and confeſſion of me. Such who have long ſat under a Goſpel-miniſtry, or who have been long in the church and ſchool of Chriſt, it is expected of them, that they ſhould know more of Chriſt than others; and ſhould be come to a point about his perſon and office, and be ready to make a confeſſion of their faith, and give a reaſon of their hope in him; and eſpecially ſuch who are, or are to be preachers of Chriſt to others: theſe ought to be well acquainted with him, who, and what he is; they ſhould have no doubt, nor heſitation in their minds, about him, but be fully ſatisfied concerning him; and be free, and open, and ready to declare what they know and believe of him.

Ver. 16. *And Simon Peter anſwered and ſaid*, &c.] Either of his own accord, and for himſelf, being a warm, zealous, and forward man; one that dearly loved Chriſt, truly believed in him, and was ready to make a confeſſion of him; or, as the mouth of the reſt, in their name, and with their conſent; or, at leaſt, as full well knowing the ſentiments of their minds. *Thou art Chriſt, the ſon of the living God*; a ſhort, but a very full confeſſion of faith, containing the following articles: as that there is a God, that there is but one God; that he is the living God, has life in himſelf, is the fountain of life to others, and by this is diſtinguiſhable from the idols of the Gentiles: that *Jeſus* is the Chriſt, the Chriſt of God, the true Meſſiah, that was promiſed by God, propheſied of by all the prophets, from the beginning of the world, and expected by the people of God; a character that includes all his offices, of prophet, prieſt, and king, to which he is anointed by God: and that this Meſſiah was not a mere man, but a divine perſon, the ſon of God; not by creation, as angels and men are, nor by adoption, as ſaints, nor by office as magiſtrates, but by nature, being his own ſon, his proper ſon, the only-begotten of the father, of the ſame nature with him, being one with him, and equal to him. This confeſſion, as it is uniform, and all of a piece, and conſiſtent with itſelf, and is what all the diſciples of Chriſt agreed in, ſo it greatly exceeds the moſt that can be made of the different ſentiments of the people put together. They took him, one and all, to be but a mere man; their moſt exalted thoughts of him roſe no higher: but in this he is acknowledged to be the ſon of God, a phraſe expreſſive of his divine nature, and diſtinct perſonality: they thought him to be a dead man brought to life; but here he is called the ſon of the living God, as having the ſame life in him the father has: they indeed judged him to be a prophet, but not that prophet that was to come, ſuperior to all prophets; but here he is owned to be the Chriſt, which not only takes in his prophetic office in a higher ſenſe than they underſtood it, but all his other offices, and declares him to be the promiſed Meſſiah; which they who thought, and ſpoke the moſt honourably of him, could not allow of.

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[g] Baal Hatturim in Deut. xviii. 15. R. Abraham Seba, Tzeror Hammor, fol. 127. 4. & 143. 4.

[h] Peſikta Rabbati apud R. Abarbinel. Præfat. ad Jer. fol. 96. 2.

Ver. 17. *And Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto him,* &c.] Not wanting for any other declaration from them; but taking this to be the ſenſe of them all, he ſaid, *bleſſed art thou Simon Bar-Jona*, or *ſon of Jona*, or *Jonas*, as in *John* i. 42. and xxi. 15. His father's name was *Jonah*, whence he was ſo called: ſo we read [i] of *R. Bo bar Jonah*, and of a *Rabbi* of this very name [k], ר׳ שמעון בר יונא, *Rabbi Simeon bar Jona*; for *Simon* and *Simeon* are one, and the ſame name. Some read it *Bar-Joanna*, the ſame with *John*; but the common reading is beſt; *Bar-Jona* ſignifies *the ſon of a dove*, and *Bar-Joanna* ſignifies *the ſon of* one *that is gracious*. Our Lord, by this appellation, puts *Peter* in mind of his birth and parentage, but does not pronounce him bleſſed on that account; no true bleſſedneſs comes by natural deſcent; men are by nature children of wrath, being conceived in ſin, and ſhapen in iniquity: tho' he was *Bar-Jona*, the ſon of a dove, and his father might be a good man, and anſwer to his name, and be of a dove-like ſpirit; yet ſuch a ſpirit was not conveyed from him to *Peter* by natural generation: and tho' he might be, according to the other reading, *Bar-Joanna*, or the ſon of a gracious man, yet grace was not communicated to him thereby; for he was not *born of blood, nor of the will of the fleſh, nor of the will of man, but of God*, *John* i. 13. He was a bleſſed man, not by his firſt, but by his ſecond birth; and the reaſon why our Lord makes mention of his father, is to obſerve to him, that he was the ſon of a mean man, and had had but a mean education, and therefore his bleſſedneſs in general was not of nature, but of grace, and this branch of it in particular: the knowledge he had of the Meſſiah, was not owing to his earthly father, or to the advantage of an education, but to the revelation he had from Chriſt's father which is in heaven, as is hereafter affirmed. He is pronounced *bleſſed*, as having a true knowledge of God, and of his ſon Jeſus Chriſt, whom to know is life eternal; and all ſuch as he are ſo, appear to be the favourites of God, to have an intereſt in Chriſt, and in all the bleſſings of his grace; are juſtified by his righteouſneſs, pardoned through his blood, are accepted in him, have communion with Father, Son, and Spirit, and ſhall live eternally with them hereafter. *For fleſh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee:* nothing is more frequent to be met with in *Jewiſh* writings, than the phraſe of *fleſh and blood*, as deſigning men in diſtinction from God: ſo the firſt man is ſaid [l] to be "the workmanſhip of the "bleſſed God, and not the workmanſhip, דבשר ודם "*of fleſh and blood.*" Again [m], בשר ודם, *fleſh and blood*, who knows not the times and ſeaſons, *&c.* but the holy, bleſſed God, who knows the times and ſeaſons, *&c.* Inſtances of this way of ſpeaking are almoſt without number: accordingly, the ſenſe here is, that this excellent confeſſion of faith, which *Peter* had delivered, was not revealed unto him, nor taught him by any mere man; he had not it from his immediate parents, nor from any of his relations, or countrymen; nor did he attain to the knowledge of what is expreſſed in it, by the dint of nature, by the ſtrength of carnal reaſon, or the force of his own capacity and abilities; *but my father which is in heaven*; from whom both the external and internal revelation of ſuch truths come; though not to the excluſion of the ſon, by whoſe revelation the Goſpel is taught, and received; nor of the Holy Ghoſt, who is a Spirit of wiſdom and revelation, but in oppoſition to, and diſtinction from any mere creature whatever. Neither the Goſpel, nor any part of it, is an human device or diſcovery; it is not after man, nor according to the carnal reaſon of man; it is above the moſt exalted and refined reaſon of men; it has in it what eye has not ſeen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man to conceive of: its truths are the deep things of God, which the Spirit of God ſearches and reveals; and which men, left to the light of nature, and force of reaſon, muſt have been for ever ignorant of, and could never have diſcovered. The Goſpel is a revelation, it conſiſts of revealed truths; and which are to be received and believed upon the teſtimony and credit of the revealer, without entering into carnal reaſonings, and diſputes about them; and it is the higheſt reaſon, and the moſt noble uſe of reaſon, to embrace it at once, as coming from God; for this revelation is from heaven, and from Chriſt's father; particularly the Deity, Sonſhip, and Meſſiahſhip of Chriſt, are doctrines of pure revelation: that there is a God, is diſcoverable by the light of nature; and that he is the living God, and gives being, and life, and breath, and all things, to his creatures; but that he has a ſon of the ſame nature with him, and equal to him, who is the Meſſiah, and the Saviour of loſt ſinners, this could never have been found out by fleſh and blood: no man knows the ſon, but the father, and he to whom he reveals him; he bears witneſs of him, and declares him to be his ſon, in whom he is well pleaſed: and happy are thoſe who are bleſſed with the outward revelation of Jeſus Chriſt in the Goſpel, but more eſpecially ſuch to whom the father reveals Chriſt in them the hope of glory!

Ver. 18. *And I ſay alſo unto thee,* &c.] Either beſides what he had already ſaid concerning his happineſs; or, as the father had revealed ſomething great and valuable, ſo likewiſe would he; or inaſmuch as he had freely ſaid and declared who, and what he was, in like manner he alſo would ſay what *Peter* was, *thou art Peter*; intimating, that he was rightly called *Peter*, or *Cephas*, by him, when he firſt became a follower of him, *Matt.* iv. 18. *John* i. 42. which words ſignify the ſame thing, a *rock*, or *ſtone*; becauſe of his firmneſs and ſolidity, and becauſe he was laid upon the ſure foundation, and built on the rock Chriſt, and was a very fit ſtone to be laid in the ſpiritual building. The aptneſs of this name to him is eaſy to be ſeen in his full aſſurance of faith, as to the perſon of Chriſt, and his free, open, and undaunted confeſſion of him. *And upon this rock will I build my church*: by the *church*, is meant, not an edifice of wood, ſtones, *&c.* but an aſſembly, and congregation of men; and that not of any ſort; not a diſorderly, tumultuous aſſembly, in which ſenſe this word is ſometimes taken; nor does it deſign the faithful of a family, which is ſometimes the import of it; nor a particular congregated church, but the elect of God, the general aſſembly and church of the firſt-born, whoſe names are written in heaven; and eſpecially ſuch of them

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[i] Juchaſin, fol. 85. 1. [k] Ib. fol. 105. 1. [l] Zohar in Gen. fol. 43. 3. [m] R. Simeon in Jarchi in Gen. ii. 2.

as were to be gathered in, and built on Chriſt, from among the *Jews* and *Gentiles.* The materials of this building are ſuch, as are by nature no better, or more fit for it, than others: theſe ſtones originally lie in the ſame quarry with others; they are ſingled out, and ſeparated from the reſt, according to the ſovereign will of God, by powerful and efficacious grace; and are broken and hewn by the Spirit of God, generally ſpeaking, under the miniſtry of the word, and are, by him, made living ſtones; and being holy and ſpiritual perſons, are built up a ſpiritual houſe: and theſe are the only perſons which make up the true and inviſible church of Chriſt in the iſſue, and are only fit to be members of the viſible church; and all ſuch ought to be in a Goſpel church-ſtate, and partake of the privileges of it: theſe materials are of different ſorts, and have a different place, and have a different uſefulneſs in this building; ſome are only as common ſtones, and timber; others are as pillars, beams, and rafters; and all are uſeful and ſerviceable; and being put, and knit together, grow up as an holy temple to the Lord: and are called, by Chriſt, *my* church, becauſe given him by the father; and he has purchaſed them with his own blood; are built by him, and on him; inhabited by him, and of whom he is the head, king, and governor; though not to the excluſion of the father, whoſe houſe they alſo are; nor of the Spirit, who dwells in them, as in his temple. This church Chriſt promiſes to *build.* Though his miniſters are builders, they are but under-builders; they are qualified, employed, directed, encouraged, and ſucceeded by him; he is the wiſe, able, and chief maſter-builder. This act of *building* ſeems to have a ſpecial regard to the converſion of God's elect, both among *Jews* and *Gentiles,* particularly the latter; and to the daily converſions of them in all ages; and to the building up of ſaints in faith and holineſs; each of which will more manifeſtly appear in the latter day; and are both generally effected through the word, and ordinances, as means, the Spirit of Chriſt bleſſing them. By the *rock* on which Chriſt builds his church, is meant, not the perſon of *Peter*; for Chriſt does not ſay, upon thee *Peter,* but upon *this* rock, referring to ſomething diſtinct from him: for tho' his name ſignifies a rock, or ſtone, and there may be ſome alluſion to it; and he is ſo called becauſe of his truſt and confidence in the Lord, on whom he was built; but not becauſe he was the foundation on which any others, and eſpecially the whole church, were built: 'tis true, he may be called the foundation, as the reſt of the twelve apoſtles of the lamb are, *Eph.* ii. 20. *Rev.* xxi. 14. without any diſtinction from them, and preference to them; they and he agreeing in laying doctrinally and miniſterially Chriſt Jeſus as the foundation of faith and hope, but not in ſuch ſenſe as he is; neither he, nor they, are the foundation on which the church is built, which is Chriſt, and him only. Moreover, what is ſaid to *Peter* in theſe, and the following words, is not ſaid to him perſonally and ſeparately from the reſt of the apoſtles, but is deſigned for them, as well as him, as appears by comparing them with ch. xviii. 18. As he ſpoke in the name of them all, to Chriſt; ſo Chriſt ſpake to him, including them all. *Peter* had no preheminence over the reſt of the apoſtles, which he neither aſſumed, nor was it granted; nor would it ever have been connived at by Chriſt, who often ſhewed his reſentment at ſuch a ſpirit and conduct, whenever there was any appearance of it in any of them; ſee ch. xviii. 1, 2, 3. and xx. 25—28. and though *Peter,* with *James,* and *John,* had ſome particular favours beſtowed on him by Chriſt; as to be at the raiſing of *Jairus*'s daughter, and at the transfiguration of Chriſt on the mount, and with him in the garden; and he appeared to him alone after his reſurrection, and before he was ſeen by the reſt of the diſciples; yet in ſome things he was inferior to them, being left to deny his Lord and Maſter, they did not; and upon another account is called ſatan by Chriſt, which they never were; not to mention other infirmities of his, which ſhew he is not the rock: and, after all, what is this to the pope of *Rome,* who is no ſucceſſor of *Peter's? Peter,* as an apoſtle, had no ſucceſſor, in his office; nor was he biſhop of *Rome*; nor has the pope of *Rome* either his office, or his doctrine: but here, by the rock, is meant, either the confeſſion of faith made by *Peter*; not the act, nor form, but the matter of it, it containing the prime articles of Chriſtianity, and which are as immoveable as a rock; or rather Chriſt himſelf, who points, as it were, with his finger to himſelf, and whom *Peter* had made ſuch a glorious confeſſion of; and who was prefigured by the rock the *Iſraelites* drank water out of in the wilderneſs; and is comparable to any rock for heighth, ſhelter, ſtrength, firmneſs, and duration; and is the one and only foundation of his church and people, and on whom their ſecurity, ſalvation, and happineſs entirely depend. Chriſt is a rock that is higher than they, where they find ſafety in times of diſtreſs, and the ſhadow of which is refreſhing to them; and therefore betake themſelves to him for ſhelter, and where they are ſecure from the wrath of God, and rage of men: he is the rock of ages, in whom is everlaſting ſtrength; and is the ſure, firm, and everlaſting foundation on which the church, and all true believers, are laid: he is the foundation of their faith, and hope, and everlaſting happineſs, and will ever continue; *and the gates of hell ſhall not prevail againſt it.* The Jews ſpeak of the gates of hell; ſometimes of the gate of hell, in the ſingular number[p]; and ſometimes of the gates of hell, in the plural number. They ſay[q], that "שלשה פתחים יש לגיהנם, " *hell has three gates,* one in the wilderneſs, one in " the ſea, and one in *Jeruſalem.*" They talk[r] of " an angel that is appointed על תרעי דגיהנם, " *over the gates of hell,* whoſe name is *Samriel*; " who has three keys in his hands, and opens three " doors." And elſewhere[s] they ſay, that " he that " is appointed over hell his name is *Dumah,* and " many myriads of deſtroying angels are with him, " and he ſtands על פתחא דגיהנם, *at the gate of* " *hell*; and all thoſe that keep the holy covenant in " this world, he has no power to bring them in." Our Lord may allude to theſe notions of the *Jews,* and his ſenſe be, that all the infernal principalities and powers, with all their united cunning and ſtrength, will never be able to extirpate his Goſpel, to deſtroy his intereſt, to demoliſh his church in general, or ruin any one particular ſoul that is built upon him. Again, the gates of *Hades,* or hell, ſometimes ſeem to deſign no other than the gates of death, and the grave, and perſons going into the ſtate of death; ſee *Job* xxxviii. 17. *Iſ.* xxxviii. 10. where the *Septuagint* uſe the ſame phraſe as here; and then the ſenſe is, that neither death, nor the grave, ſhall finally, and totally, prevail over the people of God, and members of Chriſt; but they ſhall be raiſed out of ſuch a ſtate, and live gloriouſly with him for ever. By *it* here is not meant *Peter* himſelf; though it is true of him, that ſatan, and his poſſe of devils that beſet him, did not prevail againſt him, ſo as to deſtroy his grace, hurt his eſtate, and hinder his ſalvation: nor could death, in all its frightful appearances, deter him from holding, and preaching, and maintaining the doctrine of Chriſt; and though death, and the grave, have now power over him, yet they ſhall not always detain him: but rather, it deſigns the doctrine *Peter* made a confeſſion of; which, though it may be oppoſed by hell and earth, by ſatan, and his emiſſaries, by the open force of perſecutors, and the ſecret fraud of hereticks; it may be brought into contempt by the ſcandalous lives of profeſſors; and though the true profeſſors of it may die off, yet truth itſelf always lives, and defies the power of death, and the grave: or elſe the church in general is meant, and every true believer. Theſe words do not aſcertain the continuance of any one particular congregated church, but ſecures the church univerſal, which will continue as long as the ſun and moon endure, and the perſeverance of every one of God's elect; and aſſure that death, and the grave, ſhall not always have the dominion over the ſaints, but that they ſhall be reſcued from them. Once more, this *it* may refer to Chriſt the rock, who, though he was brought to the duſt of death, by the means of ſatan, and the powers of darkneſs, yet to the ruin of him that had the power of death; and though death, and the grave, had power over him for a while, yet could not hold him; he roſe victorious over them, and ever lives, having the keys of hell and death, to open the gates thereof, and let his people out when he thinks fit.

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[p] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 39. 1. Succa, fol. 32. 2. Bava Bathra, fol. 84. 1.

[q] T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 19. 1. Menaſſeh ben Iſrael, Niſhmat Chayim, fol. 33. 1, 2.

[r] Zohar in Gen. fol. 47. 4.

[s] Ib. fol. 7. 1.

Ver. 19. *And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven,* &c.] By *the kingdom of heaven* is meant the Goſpel, which comes from heaven, declares the king Meſſiah to be come, ſpeaks of things concerning his kingdom, is the means of ſetting it up, and enlarging it, diſplays the riches of his grace, and gives an account of the kingdom of heaven, and of perſons right unto it, and meetneſs for it. *The keys* of it are abilities to open and explain the Goſpel-truths, and a miſſion and commiſſion from Chriſt to make uſe of them; and being ſaid to be given to *Peter* particularly, denotes his after-qualifications, commiſſion, work, and uſefulneſs in opening the door of faith, or preaching the Goſpel firſt to the *Jews*, *Acts* ii. and then to the Gentiles, *Acts* x. and xv. 7, 14. and who was the firſt that made uſe of the keys of evangelical knowledge with reſpect to both, after he, with the reſt of the apoſtles, had received an enlarged commiſſion to preach the Goſpel to all nations, beginning at *Jeruſalem*. Otherwiſe theſe keys belonged to them all alike; for to the ſame perſons the keys, and the uſe of them appertained, on whom the power of binding and looſing was beſtowed; and this latter all the diſciples had, as is manifeſt from ch. xviii. 18. wherefore this does not ſerve to eſtabliſh the primacy and power of *Peter* over the reſt of the apoſtles; nor do keys deſign any lordly domination or authority; nor did Chriſt allow of any ſuch among his apoſtles; nor is it his will that the miniſters of his word ſhould lord it over his heritage: he only is king of ſaints, and head of his church; he has the key of *David*, with which he opens, and no man ſhuts, and ſhuts, and no man opens; and this he keeps in his own hand, and gives it to none. *Peter* is not the door-keeper of heaven to let in, nor keep out whom he pleaſes; nor has his pretended ſucceſſor the keys of hell and death; theſe alſo are only in Chriſt's hands: though it has been ſaid of the pope of *Rome*, that if he ſends millions of men to hell, none ſhould ſay to him what doſt thou: but the keys here mentioned are the keys of the kingdom of heaven, or of the Goſpel, which was ſhut up in the *Jewiſh* nation, through the ignorance, malice, and calumnies of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, who would neither embrace it, or enter into the kingdom of God themſelves, nor ſuffer others that were going to enter into it; and through their taking away the key of knowledge, or the right interpretation of the word of God; and through a judicial blindneſs, which that nation in general was given up to: and this was ſhut up to the Gentiles through the natural darkneſs that was ſpread over them, and through want of a divine revelation, and perſons ſent of God to inſtruct them: but now Chriſt was about, and in a little time he would, for theſe words, with what follow, are in the future tenſe, give his apoſtles both a commiſſion and gifts, qualifying them to open the ſealed book of the Goſpel, and unlock the myſteries of it, both to *Jews* and *Gentiles*, eſpecially the latter. Keys are the enſigns of treaſurers, and of ſtewards, and ſuch the miniſters of the Goſpel are; they have the rich treaſure of the word under their care, put into their earthen veſſels to open and lay before others; and they are ſtewards of the myſteries and manifold grace of God, and of theſe things they have the keys. So that theſe words have nothing to do with church-power and government in *Peter*, nor in the *Pope*, nor in any other man, or ſett of men whatever; nor to be underſtood of church cenſures, excommunications, admiſſions, or excluſions of members: nor indeed are keys of any ſuch ſimilar uſe; they ſerve for locking and unlocking doors, and ſo for keeping out thoſe that are without, and retaining thoſe that are within, but not for the expulſion of any: but here they are uſed in a figurative ſenſe, for the opening and explaining the truths of the Goſpel, for which *Peter* had excellent gifts and abilities. *And whatſoever thou ſhalt bind on earth, ſhall be bound in heaven: and whatſoever thou ſhalt looſe on earth, ſhall be looſed in heaven.* This alſo is not to be underſtood of binding, or looſing mens ſins, by laying on, or taking off cenſures, and excommunications; but only of doctrines, or declarations of what is lawful and unlawful, free, or prohibited to be received, or practiſed; in which ſenſe the words אסור ומותר, *bound and looſed*, are uſed in the *Talmudic* writings, times without number, for that which is forbidden and declared to be unlawful, and for that which is free of uſe, and pronounced to be ſo: in multitudes of places we read of one *Rabbi* אוסר, *binding*, and of another מתיר, *looſing*; thouſands, and ten thouſands of inſtances of this kind might be produced; a whole volume of extracts on this head might be compiled. Dr. *Lightfoot* has tranſcribed a great many, ſufficient to ſatisfy any man, and give him the true ſenſe of theſe phraſes; and after him to mention any other is needleſs; yet give me leave to produce one, as it is ſhort, and full, and explains theſe phraſes, and points at the perſons that had this power, explaining *Eccl.* xii. 11. and that clauſe in it, *maſters of the aſſemblies*. "Theſe, ſay they[t], are the diſ-
"ciples of the wiſe men, who ſit in different col-
"lections, and ſtudy in the law; theſe pronounce
"things or perſons defiled, and theſe pronounce
"things or perſons clean, הללו אוסרין והללו מתירין,

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[t] T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 3. 2.

“ *theſe bind, and theſe looſe*; theſe reject, or pronounce perſons or things profane, and theſe declare them right.” And a little after, “ get thyſelf an heart to hear the words of them that pronounce unclean, and the words of them that pronounce clean, the words of them, אוסרין, that *bind*, and the words of them, מתירין, that *looſe*, the words of them that reject, and the words of them that declare it right.” But Chriſt gave a greater power of binding and looſing, to his diſciples, than theſe men had, and which they uſed to better purpoſe. The ſenſe of the words is this, that *Peter*, and ſo the reſt of the apoſtles, ſhould be empowered with authority from him, and ſo directed by his holy Spirit, that whatever they bound, that is, declared to be forbidden, and unlawful, ſhould be ſo: and that whatever they looſed, that is, declared to be lawful, and free of uſe, ſhould be ſo; and accordingly they bound ſome things which before were looſed, and looſed ſome things which before were bound; for inſtance, they bound, that is, prohibited, or declared unlawful, the uſe of circumciſion, which before, and until the death of Chriſt, was enjoined the natural ſeed of *Abraham*; but that, and all ceremonies, being aboliſhed by the death of Chriſt, they declared it to be nothing, and of no avail, yea, hurtful and pernicious; that whoever was circumciſed, Chriſt profited him nothing, and that he was a debtor to do the whole law: they affirmed, that the believing Gentiles were not to be troubled with it; that it was a yoke not fit to be put upon their necks, which they, and their fathers, were not able to bear, *Gal.* v. 1, 2, 3, 6. *Acts* xv. 10, 19. They bound, or forbid the obſervance of days, months, times, and years; the keeping holy days, new moons, and ſabbaths, which had been uſed in the *Jewiſh* church for ages paſt; ſuch as the firſt day of the new year, and of every month, the day of atonement, the feaſts of the paſſover, pentecoſt, and tabernacles, the jubilee year, the ſabbatical year, and ſeventh-day ſabbath, *Gal.* iv. 9, 10. *Col.* ii. 16, 17. They looſed, or declared lawful and free, both civil and religious converſation between *Jews* and *Gentiles*; whereas, before, the *Jews* had no dealings with the Gentiles, nor would not enter into their houſes, nor keep company with them, would have no converſation with them, neither eat, nor drink with them; but now it was determined and declared, that no man ſhould be called common, or unclean; and that in Chriſt Jeſus, and in his church, there is no diſtinction of *Jew* and *Gentile*, *Acts* x. 28. and xi. 2, 3, 18. *Gal.* iii. 28. They alſo looſed, or pronounced lawful, the eating of any ſort of food, without diſtinction, even that which was before counted common and unclean, being perſuaded by the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, by the words he ſaid, *Matt.* xv. 11. They aſſerted, that there is nothing unclean of itſelf; and that the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; or that true religion does not lie in the obſervance of thoſe things; that every creature of God is good, and fit for food, and nothing to be refuſed, or abſtained from, on a religious account, provided it be received with thankſgiving, *Rom.* xiv. 14, 17. 1 *Tim.* iv. 4. And theſe things now being by them bound or looſed, pronounced unlawful or lawful, are confirmed as ſuch by the authority of God, and are ſo to be conſidered by us.

Ver. 20. *Then charged he his diſciples*, &c.] When *Peter* had ſo freely and fully confeſſed him to be the Meſſiah, and which was the ſenſe of all the diſciples; and when Chriſt had expreſſed his approbation of his confeſſion, and had promiſed ſuch great and excellent things upon it, he gave a ſtrict charge unto his diſciples, *that they ſhould tell no man that he was Jeſus the Chriſt.* The word *Jeſus* is not in ſome copies; and is left out in the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions; nor does it ſeem abſolutely neceſſary: it was enough to charge them to tell no man that he was the Meſſiah: his reaſons for it might be, leſt his enemies, the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, ſhould be the more provoked and incenſed againſt him, and ſeek his death before his time; and leſt the jealouſy of the *Romans* ſhould be ſtirred up, who might fear he would ſet up himſelf againſt *Cæſar*, as king of the *Jews*, which might lead them to take meaſures obſtructive of his further deſigns; and leſt ſome perſons, hearing of this, ſhould riſe and proclaim him king of the *Jews*, who were big with the notion of the Meſſiah being a temporal prince: and moreover, becauſe the diſciples were to atteſt the truth of this after his reſurrection; and he choſe, for the preſent, that the people ſhould collect this from his own miniſtry and miracles, which were ſufficient to lead them into the knowledge of it, without any declarations of theirs: and tho' they were poſſeſſed of true faith in him, as ſuch, for themſelves, as yet they had not the gifts and abilities to defend thoſe doctrines reſpecting his perſon, and his offices, they had after the Spirit was poured down upon them.

Ver. 21. *From that time forth began Jeſus to ſhew unto his diſciples*, &c.] From the time that *Peter* made the confeſſion concerning Jeſus, as that he was the Meſſiah, and ſon of God, and which things were clear to all the apoſtles, he began to teach them more expreſſly, and to point out to them more clearly, and plainly, his ſufferings and death, than he had done before: and this he choſe to do now, partly becauſe that their faith in him was well-grounded and eſtabliſhed, ſo that they were the better able to bear theſe things he told them, which before might have been more ſtaggering and diſcouraging to them; and partly, that being forewarned of them, they would not be ſo ſhocking when they came to paſs; as alſo to deſtroy all their expectations of a temporal kingdom, which they might now be big with, he having ſo fully and freely owned himſelf to be the Meſſiah: and this alſo furniſhes out ſome reaſons why Jeſus would not have his diſciples, for the preſent, declare him to be the Meſſiah, that his death might not, by any means, be prevented, which was ſo neceſſary; ſince, ſhould the princes of the world know him, they would not crucify him: and beſides, ſeeing he was to ſuffer, and die, and riſe again for the ſalvation of his people, it was proper that all this ſhould be over before he was ſo publickly declared to be the Meſſiah, the Saviour, and Redeemer. *How that he muſt go to Jeruſalem*; the metropolis of the nation, where the great *Sanhedrim* ſate, who only could take cognizance of him, under the imputation of a falſe prophet, and adjudge him to death, and which therefore would be in the moſt publick manner; and tho' it would add to his reproach, would leave no room to be doubted of. The word, *muſt*, not only belongs to his going to *Jeruſalem*, but to his ſufferings, death, and reſurrection; all which muſt be becauſe of the immutable decree of God, the council, and covenant of grace, and peace, the prophecies of the Old Teſtament, and the redemption and ſalvation of God's elect; theſe required them, and made them abſolutely neceſſary: *and ſuffer many things of the elders, chief-prieſts, and ſcribes*; who would lie in wait for him, ſend perſons to apprehend him, inſult, reproach, and deſpitely uſe him; load him with falſe charges, accuſations, and calumnies, and deliver him to the *Gentiles*, to be mocked, ſcourged, and crucified: and this is aggravated as what would be done to him, not by the common people, or the dregs of them, but by the principal men of the city; by the *Sanhedrim*, which conſiſted of the *elders* of the people, their ſenators; for this is not a name of age, but of office and dignity; and of the *chief prieſts*, the principal of them, thoſe of the greateſt note among them, who were choſen members of the grand council; and of *the Scribes*, a ſett of men in high eſteem, for their learning and wiſdom: *and be killed*; ſignifying, that he ſhould not die a natural death, but that his life ſhould be taken from him in a cruel and violent manner, without any regard to law or juſtice; indeed, that he ſhould be properly murdered; but for the comfort of his diſciples, and that they might not be overmuch preſſed and caſt down, at the hearing of theſe things, he adds, *and be raiſed again the third day*; according to the ſcriptures of the Old Teſtament, and the type of *Jonas*.

Ver. 22. *Then Peter took him*, &c.] The *Arabic* verſion reads it, *called to him*; the *Ethiopic*, *anſwered him*; and the *Syriac*, *led him*; he took him aſide, by himſelf; and as the *Perſic* verſion, *privately ſaid to him*; or he took him by the hand in a familiar way, to expoſtulate with him, and diſſuade him from thinking and talking of any ſuch things: *and began to rebuke him*; reprove and chide him, forgetting himſelf and his diſtance; though he did it not out of paſſion and ill-will, but out of tenderneſs and reſpect; looking upon what Chriſt had ſaid, unworthy of him, and as what was ſcarce probable or poſſible, ſhould ever befall him, who was the Son of the living God; and overlooking his reſurrection from the dead, and being ignorant at preſent of the end of Chriſt's coming into the world, and redemption and ſalvation by his ſufferings and death: *ſaying, far be it from thee, Lord*; or, *Lord, be propitious to thyſelf*, or *ſpare thyſelf*: the phraſe anſwers to, חם לך, often uſed by the *Targumiſts* [u], and ſtands in the *Syriac* verſion here. The *Septuagint* uſe it in a like ſenſe, in *Gen.* xliii. 23. 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 17. 1 *Chron.* xi. 19. Some think the word *God* is to be underſtood, and the words to be conſidered, either as a wiſh, *God be propitious to thee*; or *ſpare thee*, that no ſuch thing may ever befall thee; or as an affirmation, *God is propitious to thee*, he is not angry and diſpleaſed with thee, as ever to ſuffer any ſuch thing to be done to thee: but it may very well be rendered, by *God forbid*; or as we do, *far be it from thee*, as a note of averſation, and abhorrence of the thing ſpoken of: *this ſhall not be done unto thee*; expreſſing his full aſſurance of it, and his reſolution to do all that in him lay to hinder it: he could not ſee how ſuch an innocent perſon, could be ſo uſed by the chief men of the nation; and that the Meſſiah, from whom ſo much happineſs was expected, could be treated in ſuch a manner, and eſpecially that the Son of the living God ſhould be killed.

Ver. 23. *But he turned*, &c.] Either to *Peter*, changing his countenance, and looking ſternly upon him, or rather to the diſciples; for *Mark* ſays, *when he had turned about and looked on his diſciples, he rebuked Peter*: *Peter* had took him aſide, and was arguing the caſe privately with him; but what he ſaid, was ſo offenſive to him, that he choſe to reprove him publickly before the diſciples; and therefore turned himſelf from him to them, in a way of reſentment, *and ſaid unto Peter*; in their hearing, and before them all, *get thee behind me, ſatan*. The *Perſic* verſion renders it, *O infidel!* as he was at preſent, with reſpect to the ſufferings, death, and reſurrection of Chriſt: ſome take the word *ſatan*, to be a general name for an adverſary, or enemy, as it is uſed in 2 *Sam.* xix. 22. 1 *Kings* xi. 14. and think, that Chriſt calls *Peter* by this name, becauſe he was againſt him, and oppoſed him in this point; which ſenſe abates the harſhneſs of this expreſſion. But it ſeems rather to mean the devil, who took the advantage of *Peter*'s weakneſs and ignorance; and put him upon diſſuading Chriſt from ſuffering, for the ſalvation of his people: though it ſhould be known, that the word *ſatan*, is uſed by the *Jews* [w], to ſignify the vitioſity and corruption of nature; of which they ſay, שטן הוא, *this is ſatan*; ſo the *meſſenger*, or *angel ſatan*, 2 *Cor.* xii. 7. may be thought to be the ſame; ſee the note there. And then our Lord's ſenſe is, be gone from me, I can't bear the ſight of thee; thou art under the influence of the corruption of thy heart, and nature; thou talkeſt like a carnal, and not like a ſpiritual man; and therefore Chriſt denominates him from his carnality, *ſatan*, one of the names of the vitioſity of nature, whom a little before he had pronounced bleſſed; being then under the influence of another ſpirit, as appeared from the noble confeſſion of his faith in Chriſt: this change, ſhews the weakneſs of human nature, the ſtrength of corruption, the inconſtancy and fickleneſs of frames, and the imperfection of grace in the beſt of ſaints. *Thou art an offence unto me*; or a ſtumbling-block to me, a cauſe of ſtumbling and falling; not that he really was, but he endeavoured to be, and was as much as in him lay; and had he given heed unto him, would have been ſo. It may be obſerved, that nothing was more offenſive to Chriſt, than to endeavour to divert him from the work his Father called him to; he had agreed to do; what he came into this world for, and his heart was ſo much ſet upon; namely, to ſuffer and die in the room of his people, in order to obtain ſalvation for them: never were ſuch words uttered by him, and ſuch reſentment ſhewn to any, but to the devil himſelf, when he tempted him to worſhip him. *For thou ſavoureſt not the things that be of God*; meaning his ſufferings and death, which were the appointment of God, the counſel of his will, the proviſion of his covenant; what he foretold in the prophecies of the Old Teſtament, and what he had an hand in, and in which the glory of his grace, power, and juſtice, was concerned, and were the end of the miſſion of his Son into this world; which things were out of ſight and mind, and were not regarded by the apoſtle at this time; *but thoſe that be of men*: he thought of nothing but worldly grandeur in the kingdom of the Meſſiah, as a temporal prince and ſaviour; and of the continuance of Chriſt's natural life, for his own carnal and worldly advantage; which ſhowed him to be at this time, greatly under the influence of corrupt nature. So, though the blood, righteouſneſs, ſacrifice, and death of Chriſt, are ſavoury things, things to be ſavoured, minded and regarded by believers, and accounted precious; and they do *mind* them, ſo the word ſignifies, *Rom.* viii. 5. when being bleſſed with a ſpiritual and experimental knowledge, and application of them to themſelves, they exerciſe faith, hope, and love upon Chriſt, with reſpect unto them; when they remember them aright in the ordinance of the ſupper, the love from whence they ſpring, and the benefits that come hereby; and when they diſcern the Lord's body in it, a crucified Jeſus, and the bleſſings of grace which come by him, and aſcribe their whole ſalvation to his ſufferings and death, and taſte the ſweetneſs there is in theſe things, eating his fleſh and drinking his blood by faith; yet being left to themſelves, they do not ſavour, mind and regard theſe things, but carnal things, and human ſchemes; as when they are dilatory to profeſs a crucified Chriſt, and ſubmit to thoſe ordinances of his, which ſet forth his ſufferings and death; or are negligent in their attendance on them, their place being often empty at ſupper-time; or if they do attend, their hearts go after other things.

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[u] Targum Hieroſ. in Gen. xlix. 22. & Targum Onkelos in 1 Sam. xx. 9.

[w] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 16. 1. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 6. 2, 3. & paſſim.

Ver. 24. *Then ſaid Jeſus unto his diſciples*, &c.] Knowing that they had all imbibed the ſame notion of a temporal kingdom, and were in expectation of worldly riches, honour, and pleaſure; he took this opportunity of preaching the doctrine of the croſs to them, and of letting them know, that they muſt prepare for perſecutions, ſufferings, and death; which they muſt expect to endure, as well as he, if they would be his diſciples: *if any man will come after me*; that is, be a diſciple and follower of him, it being uſual for the maſter to go before, and the diſciple to follow after him: now let it be who it will, rich or poor, learned or unlearned, young or old, male or female, that have any inclination and deſire, or have took up a reſolution in the ſtrength of grace, to be a diſciple of Chriſt, *let him deny himſelf*: let him deny ſinful ſelf, ungodlineſs, and worldly luſts; and part with them, and his former ſinful companions, which were as a part of himſelf: let him deny righteous ſelf, and renounce all his own works of righteouſneſs, in the buſineſs of juſtification and ſalvation; let him deny himſelf the pleaſures and profits of this world, when in competition with Chriſt; let him drop and baniſh all his notions and expectations of an earthly kingdom, and worldly grandeur, and think of nothing but reproach, perſecution, and death, for the ſake of his Lord and Maſter: *and take up his croſs*; chearfully, receive, and patiently bear, every affliction and evil, however ſhameful and painful it may be, which is appointed for him, and he is called unto; which is his peculiar *croſs*, as every Chriſtian has his own; to which he ſhould quietly ſubmit, and carry, with an entire reſignation to the will of God, in imitation of his Lord: *and follow me*; in the exerciſe of grace, as humility, zeal, patience, and ſelf-denial; and in the diſcharge of every duty, moral, or evangelical; and through ſufferings and death, to his kingdom and glory. The alluſion is, to Chriſt's bearing his own croſs, and *Simeon*'s carrying it after him, which afterwards came to paſs.

Ver. 25. *For whoſoever will ſave his life*, &c.] Whoever is deſirous of preſerving himſelf from troubles, reproaches, perſecutions, and death; and takes ſuch a method to do it, as, by forſaking Chriſt, denying his Goſpel, and dropping his profeſſion of it; and by ſo doing, curries favour with men, in order to procure to himſelf worldly emoluments, honour, peace, pleaſure, and life, *ſhall loſe it*; he'll expoſe himſelf to the wrath of God, to everlaſting puniſhment, the deſtruction of ſoul and body in hell, which is the ſecond death, and will be his portion: *and whoſoever will loſe his life for my ſake*; that is, is willing to forego all the pleaſures and comforts of life, and be ſubject to poverty and diſtreſs, and to lay down life itſelf, for the ſake of Chriſt and the Goſpel, rather than deny him, and part with truth, *ſhall find it*; in the other world, to great advantage; he ſhall enjoy an immortal and eternal life, free from all uneaſineſs and affliction, and full of endleſs joys and pleaſures.

Ver. 26. *For what is a man profited*, &c.] Such perſons, though they are only ſeeking their own profit, will find themſelves moſt ſadly miſtaken; for of what advantage will it be to ſuch a man, *if he ſhall gain the whole world*; all that is precious and valuable in it; all the power, pleaſures, and riches of it; if with *Alexander*, he had the government of the whole world, and with *Solomon*, all the delights of it; and was poſſeſſed with the wealth of *Crœſus*, and *Craſſus*, *and loſe his own ſoul?* If that ſhould be conſigned to everlaſting torment and miſery, be baniſhed the divine preſence, and continually feel the knawings of the worm of conſcience that never dies, and the fierceneſs of the fire of God's wrath, that ſhall never be quenched, he'll have a miſerable bargain of it. *Or what ſhall a man give in exchange for his ſoul?* Or, *for the redemption* of it, as the *Ethiopic* verſion renders it; ſee *Pſal.* xlix. 8. If he had the whole world to give, and would give it, it would not be a ſufficient ranſom for it; the redemption of an immortal ſoul, requires a greater price than gold and ſilver, or any corruptible thing; nothing ſhort of the blood and life of Chriſt, is a proper exchange, or ranſom price for it. But in the other world, there will be no redemption; the loſs of a ſoul is irrecoverable: a ſoul once loſt and damned, can never be retrieved. This paſſage is thought to be proverbial; what comes neareſt to it, is the following[x]. "If a ſcholar dies, we never find *an exchange for him*; there "are four things, which are the miniſtry or ſervice "of the world, אם אבדו יש חליפין, *if they are* "*loſt, they may be changed*; and they are theſe, "gold, ſilver, iron, and braſs, *Job* xxviii. 1, 2. "but if a ſcholar dies, מי מביא לנו תמורתו, *who* "*will bring us his exchange?* or an exchange for "him: we loſt *R. Simon*, *who will bring us his ex-* "*change?*"

Ver. 27. *For the Son of man ſhall come in the glory of his Father*, &c.] This is a reaſon, proving the truth of what is before aſſerted, that mens lives may be loſt by ſaving them, and be found by loſing them, whatever paradoxes they may ſeem to be; and that the loſs of a ſoul is irrecoverable, and no compenſation can be made for it; and points out the time, when all this will appear: for nothing is more certain, and to be depended upon, than that Chriſt, who, though he was then a mean and contemptible man, and attended with the ſinleſs infirmities of human nature, wherefore he calls himſelf, *the Son of man*, ſhould come; either a ſecond time to judgment at the laſt day, in the ſame glory as his Father, as his Son, equal with him, and clothed with power and authority from him, and as Mediator, to execute judgment: *with his angels*; the holy ones, ſo the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read, and ſo ſome copies; who will add to the glory of his appearance; and will be employed in gathering all nations before him, and in executing his will: or, in his power, to take vengeance on the *Jewiſh* nation; on thoſe that crucified him, or did not believe in him, or deſerted and apoſtatized from him. *And then he ſhall reward every man according to his works*, or *work*; either that particular action of putting him to death, or their unbelief in him, or deſertion of him; or any, or all of their evil works, they had been guilty of: for though good works are not the cauſe of ſalvation, nor for which men will be rewarded; though they may be brought into judgment, as proofs and evidences of true faith, in the perſon, blood, and righteouſneſs of Chriſt, by which good men will be acquitted and diſcharged; yet evil works will be the cauſe of condemnation, and the rule of judgment; and the reaſon of adjudging to temporal puniſhment here, and eternal deſtruction hereafter.

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[x] Midraſh Kohelet, fol. 72. 3, 4. T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 5. 3.

Ver. 28. *Verily I ſay unto you,* &c.] This is a ſtrong aſſeveration, Chriſt puts his *Amen* to it; declaring it to be a certain truth, which may firmly be believed: *there be ſome ſtanding here*; meaning either his diſciples, or ſome of the audience; for it is clear from *Mark* viii. 34. that the people were called unto him with his diſciples, when he ſaid theſe words: *which ſhall not taſte of death*; that is, ſhall not die; a phraſe frequently uſed by the *Jewiſh* doctors: they ſay [y], "All the children of the "world, טעמין טעמא דמותא, *taſte the taſte of* "*death*." That is, die: *till they ſee the Son of man coming in his kingdom*; which is not to be underſtood of his perſonal coming in his kingdom in the laſt day, when he will judge quick and dead; for it can't be thought, that any then preſent, ſhould live to that time, but all taſted of death long before, as they have done; for the ſtory of *John*'s being alive, and to live till then is fabulous, and grounded on a miſtake which *John* himſelf has rectified at the cloſe of his Goſpel: nor of the glorious transfiguration of Chriſt, the account of which immediately follows; when he was ſeen by *Peter*, *James*, and *John*, perſons now preſent; for that at moſt, was but an emblem and a pledge of his future glory: rather, of the appearance of his kingdom, in greater glory and power, upon his reſurſurrection from the dead, and his aſcenſion to heaven; when the Spirit was poured down in an extraordinary manner, and the Goſpel was preached all over the world; was confirmed by ſigns and wonders, and made effectual to the converſion and ſalvation of many ſouls; which many then preſent, lived to ſee, and were concerned in: though it ſeems chiefly to have regard to his coming, to ſhew his regal power and authority in the deſtruction of the *Jews*; when thoſe his enemies that would not he ſhould reign over them, were ordered to be brought and ſlain before him; and this the apoſtle *John*, for one, lived to be a witneſs of.

## CHAP. XVII.

Ver. 1. AND *after ſix days,* &c.] That is, ſo long after Chriſt's converſation with his diſciples at *Cæſarea Philippi*, *Peter*'s confeſſion of him, and the reproof he gave him, upon his intimating that he ſhould ſuffer and die, and Chriſt's reſentment of it; after he had diſcourſed about his diſciples taking up their croſs, and following him; and of men's loſing and finding their lives; and after the promiſe, or prophecy, that he had given out, that ſome then preſent ſhould not die, until he came into his kingdom. *Mark* ſays the ſame as here, ch. ix. 2. but *Luke*, ch. ix. 28. ſays, it was *about an eight days after*, which may be reconciled in this manner; *Matthew* and *Mark* leave out the day in which Chriſt delivered the above ſayings, and that in which he was transfigured, and ſo reckon but ſix days; and *Luke* takes them both into the account, and makes it eight days, ſo that they all agree; and it appears, in ſhort, to be that day ſevennight. *Jeſus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother*: *Peter* is taken, though he had ſo lately offended his maſter; Chriſt did not bear the offence in mind, but freely forgave him, and ſtill loved him: *James* was not the brother of our Lord, who was of that name, but the ſon of *Zebedee*; as appears from *John* being his brother, who was the beloved diſciple; theſe three were all favourite diſciples, and were at other times admitted to be with him, when others were not, *Matt*. xxvi. 37. *Mark* v. 37. Such a number was taken, as being proper and ſufficient to bear witneſs of the truth of the following account of Chriſt's transfiguration: *and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart*. *Luke* ſays, *to pray*; as he was wont to do, in ſuch places. This mountain, is generally ſaid to be *Tabor*; but for what reaſon does not appear. Chriſt was going to *Cæſarea Philippi*, when he had that diſcourſe with his diſciples, which this account is connected with; and though it was a week after, yet we have no intimation of his removing from theſe parts, with his diſciples; only of his leading them up into a mountain; and quickly after this, we hear of him at *Capernaum*, which was ten miles from mount *Tabor*. Dr. *Lightfoot* [z] thinks, that this was the mountain, which *Cæſarea* was at the foot of; where formerly, the firſt idolatry was ſet up, one of *Jeroboam*'s calves; and now the eternal Son of God is ſhewn, in the confeſſion of *Peter*, and in the illuſtrious demonſtration of the *Meſſiah*. Since the goodly mountain *Lebanon*, and which was a very high one, was in thoſe parts which *Moſes* had a ſight of, before he died; why may it not be that, which he now deſcended upon, to be one of the witneſſes from heaven, of Chriſt's transfiguration?

Ver. 2. *And was transfigured before them,* &c.] *Peter*, *James*, and *John*, before whom he was metamorphoſed, or changed into another form; for not the ſubſtance of his body was changed, nor even the ſhape of it altered, only it received a more glorious form; that whereas before he appeared in the form of a ſervant, and looked mean and deſpicable, now he appeared in the form and majeſty of God; or there was a divine glory, which from his deity ſhewed itſelf in a viſible manner through his fleſh: *and his face did ſhine as the ſun*; it had ſtill the ſame appearance of an human face, but had ſuch a dazzling glory upon it, as equalled the ſun ſhining in its full ſtrength: *and his raiment was white as the light*: he did not put off his cloaths, nor were the nature and ſubſtance, and faſhion of them changed; but ſuch rays of glory darted through his fleſh, and through his cloaths, as made them as bright and ſhining, as the light of the ſun at noon-day. *Mark* ſays, they became *exceeding white as ſnow, ſo as no fuller on earth can white them*. The *Vulgate Latin* reads, *as ſnow*, here; and ſo do the *Ethiopic* verſion, and *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel. Snow has a peculiar whiteneſs in it, and is therefore made uſe of, to expreſs the glittering brightneſs of Chriſt's raiment; and the *fuller* is mentioned, who by the *Jews* [a] is called כובס, and means one that whitens wool, or raiment, and ſuch an one is here deſigned: not that any fuller makes garments of another colour white; for though this may be done, it is not the work of fullers, but dyers: but fullers, whatever colour garments are of, if ſullied and ſpotted, can reſtore them to their native colour; and if white, can bring them to their former whiteneſs: now Chriſt's garments were as white, yea, whiter, than any ſuch men could poſſibly make garments, that were white at firſt: what colour Chriſt's garments were of before, is not certain; now they appeared white, to the greateſt degree of whiteneſs. Dr. *Hammond* [b] has a conjecture, that in the phraſe *on earth*, reference is had to the earth fullers make uſe of in cleaning, and which is called *fullers earth*; and that the words are to be rendered, *as no fuller, by or with earth can white them*; but if this will not bear, the ſenſe is, that there is no fuller, nor ever was, or ever will be upon earth, that can make raiment ſo white as Chriſt's was.

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[y] Zohar in Gen. fol. 27. 4. & 37. 1. & in Exod. fol. 19. 2. & in Num. fol. 50. 4. & 51. 2. 4. Vid. Bereſhit Rabba, §. 9. fol. 7. 3, 4. Midraſh Kohelet, fol. 83. 3.

[z] Hor. Heb. in Mar. ix. 2.

[a] Maimon. in Miſn. Bava Kama, c. 10. §. 10.

Ver. 3. *And behold, there appeared unto them,* &c.] The diſciples: *Moſes and Elias*; *Moſes* the giver of the law, and *Elias* one of the chief of the prophets: one of them had been dead near a thouſand and five hundred years, and the other had been caught up to heaven, about nine hundred years before this. The *Jews* ſometimes ſpeak of theſe two as together. They ſay [c], "that the *Shekinah* "never deſcends below, but משה ואליהו, *Moſes* "*and Elias* aſcend above." Yea, they expect that theſe two will come together in future time; for ſo they repreſent [d] God ſaying to *Moſes*; "*Moſes*, as "thou haſt given thy life for them (the *Iſraelites*) "in this world, ſo in time to come (the days of "the Meſſiah) when I ſhall bring *Elias* the pro-"phet, שניכם באין כאחת, *you two ſhall come to-*"*gether*." Now they came. *Luke* ſays, they appeared *in glory*; in glorious bodies, in a glory upon their bodies; like, though inferior, to the glorious body of Chriſt, now transfigured: that they appeared in their own real bodies, no doubt need be made: about the body of *Elijah*, or *Elias*, there is no difficulty; ſince he was carried ſoul and body to heaven, he died not, but was changed; and has ever ſince remained in a glorious body, in which he doubtleſs now appeared: and why this ſhould not be the caſe of *Moſes*, or why he ſhould appear in another body, and not his own, I ſee not; for though he died, yet he was buried by the Lord, and no man ever knew the place of his ſepulchre; and there was a diſpute about his body, between *Michael* and the devil, all which are uncommon circumſtances: ſo that it might be, that his body was, quickly after his death, raiſed and reſtored to him; or at this time, as a pledge of the reſurrection of the dead, as Chriſt's transfiguration was of his glory. The *Jews* have a notion that *Moſes* is not dead, but is aſcended, and ſtands and miniſters to God, in the higheſt heavens [e]: the appearance of theſe two with Chriſt, was to ſhew, that Chriſt is the end of the law and prophets; that there is an entire agreement between him and them, and that they have their full accompliſhment in him; and alſo ſhews, that he was neither *Elias*, nor any of the prophets, as ſome took him to be; ſince he was diſtinct from them, and the chief and more glorious than any of them. If it ſhould be aſked, how came the diſciples to know theſe two, to be *Moſes* and *Elias*, ſince they never ſaw them before, nor could have any ſtatues or pictures of them, theſe being not allowed among the *Jews*; nor do the accounts of them in ſcripture, ſeem to be ſufficient to direct them to ſuch a thought; eſpecially, ſince by their glorification, they muſt be greatly altered: it may be replied, they knew them either by immediate divine revelation, or by the diſcourſe that paſſed between them and Chriſt; for it follows, *talking with him*. The *Jews* often ſpeak of the appearance of *Elias* to their doctors, and of his converſing with them, and teaching them. Whether this is done with deſign to leſſen the glory of this appearance, I will not ſay; however, they can't reaſonably object to the probability of this account, ſince they make it to be ſo frequent among themſelves; though they look upon it as an high favour, and that ſuch are holy good men, that are indulged with it, take an inſtance or two: thus they ſay [f] of a certain perſon, "Lo! the pious man, whom *Elias* "uſed משתעי בהדיה, *to converſe with*." And elſewhere it is ſaid [g], "*R. Phineas* and *R. Mari*, "the ſons of *R. Chaſda*, were godly men, "ואליהו מדבר עמהם, *and Elias was talking with* "*them*, and they were prieſts." What *Moſes* and *Elias* were talking with our Lord about, is expreſſed by *Luke*, ch. ix. 31. ſee the note there.

Ver. 4. *Then anſwered Peter and ſaid unto Jeſus,* &c.] Which was, as *Luke* informs us, after he, and *James*, and *John*, awoke out of ſleep; for it being night when Chriſt was transfigured, and they weary, were overpreſſed, and fell aſleep on the mount, as they afterwards did in the garden with him: but when they were awaked, either by the talk of the men with Chriſt, or by the rays of brightneſs and glory, which darted from them, and eſpecially from Chriſt, to their great ſurprize; they ſaw the glory that was upon him, and obſerved the two men that were with him, who appeared alſo in glorious forms; whom either by revelation, or the ſequel of their diſcourſe, they knew to be *Moſes* and *Elias*: and juſt as theſe were taking their leave of Chriſt, *Peter*, charmed with ſuch objects, and with ſuch delightful company, and pleaſant converſation, he had the happineſs of hearing part of, addreſſes himſelf to Chriſt and ſays, *Lord, it is good for us to be here*; in this mountain, with thyſelf and ſuch company; better than to be below among the throng and multitude, where nothing but miſery and diſtreſs are to be ſeen, and noiſe and tumult heard; or it is better to be here, than to go to *Jeruſalem*, and there ſuffer and die; the horror of which, is thought by ſome, ſtill to abide on *Peter*'s mind. *If thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles*; tents, or booths, ſuch as were made at the feaſt of tabernacles, of boughs and branches of trees, to keep off heat, cold, and rains: *one for thee, and one for Moſes, and one for Elias*; *Luke* adds, *not knowing what he ſaid*; and *Mark*, *for he wiſt not what to ſay*: the one repreſenting him, as with the rapture and ſuprize, not himſelf; and the other, under the awe and dread of ſuch majeſty, as at the utmoſt loſs what to ſay, agreeable to ſuch a ſituation of things: not but that he knew what words he did deliver, and with what view; but he ſpake as a miſtaken man, being ignorant of the deſign of this appearance; which was, not that this glory ſhould continue, only that it ſhould be an emblem and pledge of what was future; and beſides, he was wrong in putting theſe two men upon an equal foot with Chriſt, each of them being to have a ſeparate tabernacle as he; and he appeared to be quite out of the way, in propoſing earthly tabernacles for glorified perſons to dwell in, who had an houſe not made with hands, eternal in the heavens: moreover,

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[b] In Mark ix. 3.

[c] T. Bab. Succah, fol. 5. 1.

[d] Debarim Rabba, §. 3. fol. 239. 2.

[e] T. Bab. Sota, fol. 13. 2. Maimon. præfat. ad Seder Zeraim in Talmud. fol. 86. 4.

[f] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 7. 2.

[g] Juchaſin, fol. 101. 1. vid. fol. 79. 1. & 118. 2. & 13. 132. 1. & T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 106. 1.

over, as to the myſtical ſenſe, *Moſes* and *Elias*, the law and the prophets, were not to be conſidered as in diſtinct apartments, and ſeparate from Chriſt, but as agreeing with him, and fulfilled and ſwallowed up in him; who only, according to the voice that followed, was to be heard and attended to, and not they, as diſtinct from him.

Ver. 5. *While he yet ſpake*, &c.] That is, while *Peter* was propoſing the above to Chriſt, before an anſwer could be given by him, and which was unworthy of one, another ſcene of things preſents, and a full anſwer is returned him by a voice from the Father; directing him and his fellow diſciples, to attend to Jeſus only, and not to *Moſes* and *Elias*: *and behold, a bright cloud overſhadowed them*; that is, *Jeſus*, *Moſes*, and *Elias*; the two laſt of which were ſeen no more; and which cloud covered them, as the cloud of glory covered the *Iſraelites* in the wilderneſs; and which, as it ceaſed at the death of *Moſes*, the firſt prophet; one like unto it appeared at the declaration of Chriſt, as the greater prophet, ſpoken of, and typified by *Moſes*. The diſciples at its firſt appearance were not under it, and overſhadowed by it; for *Luke* adds, *and they feared as they entered into the cloud*; there was ſuch a ſolemnity and glory in it, as ſtruck their minds with awe and fear, as they gradually came into it, and under it. This cloud, which is ſaid to be a *bright* one, was a ſymbol of the divine preſence, and a token of the love, grace, and favour of God; and expreſſive of the brightneſs and clearneſs of the Goſpel-diſpenſation, in diſtinction from the obſcurity of the legal one, ſignified by the thick, dark, and black cloud, God deſcended in on mount *Sinai*, when he gave the law; *and behold, a voice out of the cloud*. The word *behold*, is prefixed both to the cloud and to the voice out of it, which were both wonderful and ſurprizing; and which voice came from heaven, and from the excellent glory, from God the Father in heaven; as ſays *Peter*, who was now preſent, 2 *Pet*. i. 17, 18. *Which ſaid, this is my beloved Son*; not a ſervant, as *Moſes*, *Elias*, and the reſt of the prophets were: though as Mediator, and as conſidered in his office-capacity, he was a ſervant; but in this clauſe, he is conſidered in his perſonal character and relation to the Father, as a divine perſon, who was the Son of God: not by creation, as angels and men are the ſons of God; nor by adoption, as ſaints are; or on account of his miraculous incarnation, and reſurrection from the dead; whereby indeed, he was manifeſted and declared to be the Son of God, which he was before; but on account of his natural relation to God, as his Father; he being the eternal, eſſential, and only begotten Son of God, in a way of filiation no creature is, and which is ineffable by us. And as ſuch he is dearly *beloved* of God his Father, being his image, and the brightneſs of his glory; of the ſame nature and perfections with him, and equal to him. So he ever was, and will be, and that even in the meaneſt form and loweſt condition, in which he has appeared: he was his beloved Son, when he was made fleſh and dwelt among men, while ſubmitting to ordinances, as to baptiſm, and obeying his Father's will, when covered with reproach, and full of ſorrows; when he hung upon the croſs, and laid down his life for his people; which he ſhewed, by concealing nothing from him; by putting all things into his hands, and by appointing him the head of the church, the Saviour of the body, and the judge of quick and dead. *In whom I am well pleaſed*: *Mark* and *Luke* have not this clauſe, but *Peter*, who was preſent, and heard the words ſpoken, mentions it, 2 *Pet*. i. 17. which confirms *Matthew*'s relation. This regards, not ſo much the well pleaſedneſs of God with the perſon of Chriſt, which is expreſſed in the former clauſe; but ſignifies, that he was in him, as Mediator, well pleaſed with all his people; he was well pleaſed with his righteouſneſs he was working out, whereby the law was magnified, and made honourable; and with the ſacrifice he was about to offer up, which would be of a ſweet ſmelling ſavour to him, his juſtice being entirely ſatisfied with it; and with all he did and ſuffered in human nature; which were things that always pleaſed the Father, being according to his will, his counſel and covenant: and ſo he graciouſly accepted of, and was infinitely well pleaſed with all his elect, as conſidered in him, and repreſented by him, on account of his righteouſneſs, ſacrifice, and ſatisfaction: *hear ye him*: as the former clauſe chiefly reſpects that part of his mediatorial office, the prieſtly, this regards his prophetical office principally, and alſo his kingly office; ſo that in this divine teſtimony, firſt his ſonſhip is bore witneſs to, and then his ſeveral offices; which his ſonſhip is the foundation of, and qualifies him to bear and execute. This clauſe has the very words which *Moſes* delivered, when he ſpoke of the Meſſiah, the great prophet like unto himſelf, that ſhould be raiſed up among the *Jews*; ſaying, *unto him ye ſhall hearken*, *Deut*. xviii. 15. So that theſe words, *hear ye him*, moſt clearly point to Chriſt, as being this prophet, who is to be heard, and he only; not *Moſes*, but he, the prophet *Moſes* propheſied of; nor *Elias*, or any of the other prophets, but one greater than them all: hear and believe his prophecies, concerning his ſufferings, death, and reſurrection, lately delivered by him; liſten to, and embrace his doctrines, as coming from God, and as having a divine impreſs upon them, and being confirmed by miraculous works; ſubmit to his ordinances, and obey his commands, as king of ſaints; hear him always, and in all things.

Ver. 6. *And when the diſciples heard it*, &c.] The voice out of the cloud, and which they apprehended came from God, and was uttered with ſo much majeſty: *they fell on their face*; not ſo much out of reverence, or for the ſake of adoration, but as perſons ſtruck with aſtoniſhment and fear, and were as half dead; and ſo fell with their faces flat to the ground, not being able to ſtand before God, to behold his majeſty, and hear his voice: *and were ſore afraid*; they were filled with fear, when, awaking out of their ſleep, they ſaw the ſurprizing glory of Chriſt, and of the two men that were with him, inſomuch that they knew not what to think, or ſay; and ſo they were when they entered into the cloud, and ſtill more upon hearing the voice of God himſelf, even though it was a voice of love, grace, and mercy; ſee *Deut*. v. 24, 25, 26. But yet they were not ſtruck with ſo much amazement and ſurprize, as not to know what was ſaid; for they diſtinctly heard the words, rightly underſtood, and faithfully related them; from whom the Evangeliſts had them, and which *Peter* perfectly remembered, and recorded many years after.

Ver. 7. *And Jeſus came and touched them*, &c.] The diſciples were at ſome little diſtance from Chriſt, but he obſerving the fear and ſurprize they were in, came to their relief and aſſiſtance; which he did not diſdain to give, notwithſtanding the glory he was covered with; but acts the part of a Mediator between God and them, and lays hold on them to raiſe them up, whom the majeſty of God's voice had caſt down: the *Perſic* verſion renders it, he *came and brought them to themſelves*; who were juſt fainting and ſwooning away, at the awfulneſs of the voice: *and ſaid, ariſe, and be not afraid:* it is not the voice of an angry God, but of God well pleaſed with me, and in me with you; it is the voice of my God, and your God, of my Father, and your Father; ariſe, ſtand on your feet, take heart, and be of good courage, no hurt will come to you.

Ver. 8. *And when they had lift up their eyes*, &c.] And *looked round about*, as *Mark* ſays, to ſee whether the ſame objects ſtill continued, as *Moſes* and *Elias*, and the bright cloud: *they ſaw no man*; neither *Moſes* nor *Elias*, who were both gone: ſignifying, that though the law and the prophets were till this time, they were now finiſhed and compleated, and the *Moſaic* œconomy was to be no more; as theſe men appeared no more after, nor will they, till the ſecond coming of Chriſt. And *Mark* has it, *they ſaw no man any more*; that is, theſe men any more, neither then, nor afterwards, *ſave Jeſus only*. *Mark* adds, *with themſelves*; in the ſame form as before his transfiguration. Chriſt is the only Mediator, Saviour, and Redeemer; the only Prophet, Prieſt, and King; and who only is to be, and can be beheld as ſuch; and who does, and will abide with his people; and helps, comforts, and ſaves them, when none elſe can. *Luke* obſerves, that *when the voice was paſt, Jeſus was found alone*; which was ſo ordered, that it might be a clear caſe, that this voice was only concerning Chriſt, and not either *Moſes* or *Elias*.

Ver. 9. *And as they came down from the mountain*, &c.] Where all theſe things had been tranſacted, *Jeſus charged them ſaying, tell the viſion to no man:* by the *viſion* is meant, as it is explained in *Mark*, *what things they had ſeen*; as *Moſes* and *Elias*, and the bright cloud that overſhadowed them, and Chriſt transfigured before them, in a ſurprizing, glorious manner. Theſe Chriſt ſtrictly ordered, *Peter*, *James*, and *John*, to ſpeak of to no man whatever; no, not their fellow-diſciples; who either would be apt to diſbelieve them, on account of the greatneſs of them, as *Thomas* did the reſurrection of Chriſt afterwards; or leſt they ſhould be troubled and diſpleaſed, that they were not admitted to the ſame ſight; and eſpecially not to the multitude, or to any other perſon, *until the Son of man be riſen again from the dead*; meaning himſelf and his reſurrection, when ſuch proof would be given of his miſſion, authority and glory, which would make this account more eaſy to be believed: beſides, he had told the *Jews*, that no ſign, that is, from heaven, as this voice was, ſhould be given, but the ſign of the prophet *Jonas*; referring to his reſurrection, which would be a ſure teſtimony of the truth of his Meſſiahſhip. This order of Chriſt was ſtrictly obſerved by the diſciples; for *Luke* ſays, *they kept it cloſe*; to themſelves, in their own breaſts; it lay concealed between theſe three; *and told no man in thoſe days, any of thoſe things which they had ſeen:* and *Mark* ſays, *they kept that ſaying within themſelves*; only as he adds, they were *queſtioning one with another, what the riſing from the dead ſhould mean:* for they were not yet reconciled to the *Meſſiah*'s dying, which was contrary to their expectation of a temporal kingdom; and therefore could not tell what to make of his riſing again, whether this had not ſome ſecret, myſtical meaning; for of his reſurrection from the dead, in a literal ſenſe, they had no notion; though it was foretold in the writings of the Old Teſtament, and had been ſo lately affirmed by Chriſt himſelf.

Ver. 10. *And his diſciples aſked him, ſaying*, &c.] That is, theſe three, *Peter*, *James*, and *John*, before they came to the reſt; whilſt they were going down the mountain, or from it, to the place where the others were; for the reſt knew nothing of the appearance of *Elias*, and ſo can't be thought to join in a queſtion concerning him. *Why then ſay the Scribes, that Elias muſt firſt come?* That is, come before the Meſſiah comes; for certain it is, that this was the ſenſe of the *Scribes*, as it was of the ancient *Jews*, and is ſtill the opinion of the modern ones. They ſay [h], "that in the ſecond year of "*Ahaziah*, *Elias* was hid; nor will he appear, "till the *Meſſiah* comes; then he'll appear, and "will be hid a ſecond time; and then will not appear, till *Gog* and *Magog* come." And they expreſsly affirm [i], that "before the coming of the "Son of *David*, יבא אליהו לבשר, *Elias will come* "*to bring the good news* of it." And this they ſay [k], will be one day before the coming of the Meſſiah. And *Maimonides* [l] obſerves, "that there are of their "wiſemen that ſay, שקודם ביאת המשיח יבא אליהו, "*that before the coming of the Meſſiah, Elias ſhall* "*come.*" So *Trypho* the *Jew*, the ſame with *R. Tarphon*, ſo often mentioned in *Talmudic* writings, diſputing with *Juſtin Martyr*, tells him [m], that the Meſſiah "ſhall not know himſelf, nor have any "power, μεχρι αν ελθων Ηλιας, *till Elias comes*, and "anoints him, and makes him known to all." And hence the *Targumiſt* [n] often ſpeaks of *Meſſiah* and *Elias* as together, and of things done by them; and in their prayers, petitions are put for them, as to come together [o]: this is founded upon a miſtaken ſenſe of *Mal.* iv. 5. and which is the general ſenſe of their commentators [p]. Now the *Scribes* made uſe of this popular ſenſe, to diſprove Jeſus being the Meſſiah: they argued, that if he was the Meſſiah, *Elias* would be come; but whereas he was not come, therefore he could not be the Meſſiah. The diſciples having juſt now ſeen *Elias*, are put in mind of this tenet of the *Scribes*, and of their uſe of it; and enquire of Chriſt, not ſo much about the truth of it, and the reaſon of their imbibing it, as why they were ſuffered to make uſe of it, to his diſadvantage; and eſpecially why they, the diſciples, ſhould be forbid publiſhing what they had ſeen; whereas, were they allowed to divulge this viſion, and bear their teſtimony to this truth, that *Elias* had appeared, and they had ſeen him, it might be a means of ſtopping the mouths of theſe *Scribes*; and of convicting men of the truth of the Meſſiahſhip of Jeſus, upon their own principles, and of confirming them that believed it: or elſe the ſenſe is, whereas they had ſeen *Elias*, and he was gone again, without making any public appearance in the nation, their queſtion is, how came the *Scribes* to ſay, that he ſhould come firſt? and if there was any truth in this, how came it to paſs, that he did not come ſooner, even before Chriſt came in the fleſh; and inaſmuch as he did now appear, why he did not appear more publickly, as the perſon that was to come, at leaſt, before the ſetting up of the kingdom and glory of the Meſſiah; which they might hope were at hand, and that *Elias* was come to uſher it in: but that he did not appear publickly, and they were not allowed to ſpeak of it, they wanted to know Chriſt's ſenſe of theſe things; and took this opportunity as they came from the mountain, to converſe with him about it.

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[h] Seder Olam Rabba, p. 45, 46.

[i] Gloſſ. in T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 43. 2.

[k] R. Abraham ben David in Miſn. Ediot, c. 8. §. 7.

[l] Hilch. Melacim, c. 12. §. 2.

[m] Dialog cum Tryph. p. 226.

[n] In Exod. xl. 10. Deut. xxx. 4. & Lam. iv. 22.

[o] Seder Tephillot, fol. 56. 2. & 128. 2.

[p] Aben Ezra, Kimchi, & Abarbinel in loc.

Ver. 11. *And Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto them,* &c.] By way of conceſſion, *Elias truly ſhall firſt come:* this is indeed a tenet of the *Scribes*, and it is alſo certain, that there is a prophecy in *Mal.* iv. 5. of the coming of *Elias*; of one that goes under that name, not of *Elias* the *Tiſhbite*, in perſon, but of one that was to come in his power and ſpirit, *and reſtore all things.* The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions render it, *ſhall perfect*, or *compleat all things*, that are propheſied of him; and ſhall put a period to the law and the prophets, and cloſe the *Moſaic* œconomy, and direct perſons to Chriſt; in whom are the perfection of the law, and the fulfilling of the prophets. The *Arabic* verſion reads it, *he ſhall teach you all things*; the whole of the Goſpel being to be reduced to theſe two heads, repentance towards God, and faith in Chriſt; both which were taught by the true *Elias:* but the trueſt ſenſe of the phraſe is, to be learnt out of *Mal.* iv. 6. *He ſhall reſtore*, השיב, *he ſhall turn* all things, *the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers*; and as this is explained in *Luke* i. 17. he ſhall turn *the diſobedient to the wiſdom of the juſt, and make ready a people prepared for the Lord:* which is other, and better ſort of work, than what the *Jews* aſſign to their *Elias*, whom they expect, and whom they make to be a reſtorer of all things, in their way: they often ſpeak of his purifying [q] of things, or pronouncing things pure, that were defiled; and among others, that he will purify baſtards, and, ישבם, *reſtore them* to the congregation of the Lord [r]. Though *Maimonides* [s] denies, that when he comes he will pronounce defiled that which is pure, or pronounce pure, that which is defiled. They pretend [t], that he is now employed, and very buſy, in writing every thing that is done in every age; ſo that when he comes, he'll be able to give an account of every thing: and nothing is more common with them, than to ſay concerning any matter, that there is any doubt or difficulty about it [u], יהא מונח עד שיבא אליהו, *let it be left till Elias comes.*

Ver. 12. *But I ſay unto you*, &c.] A way of ſpeaking uſed by Chriſt, when he oppoſes and contradicts any of the tenets of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*; ſee *Matt.* v. 22, 28, 32, 34, 39, 44. *that Elias is come already*; the perſon that was ſignified by, and propheſied of, under the name of *Elias:* for Chriſt refers not to the late appearance of *Elias* on the mount, but to the coming of a certain perſon ſome time ago; who came in the power and ſpirit of *Elias*, and was the forerunner and harbinger of him, the Meſſiah; as was ſaid of him he ſhould, *and they knew him not*; that is, the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, who believed that *Elias* would come before the Meſſiah; and yet when he who was deſigned by him was come, they knew him not, they did not know him to be the *Elias*; they knew him under the name of *John* the *Baptiſt*, and ſeemed pleaſed with his miniſtry for a while, but afterwards rejected his doctrine and baptiſm, which is referred to in the next clauſe: *but have done unto him whatſoever they liſted*; they did not believe what he ſaid, nor repent upon his preaching to them; they rejected the counſel of God he declared, not being baptized of him; they treated him with indignity and contempt, charging him with having a devil, and were well pleaſed when *Herod* put him to death; ſome of whom were doubtleſs among thoſe, that ſate at meat with him; for whoſe ſake, as well as for his oath's ſake, he ordered the execrable murder to be committed: *likewiſe alſo ſhall the Son of man ſuffer of them.* Chriſt takes this opportunity to confirm what he had ſaid in the preceding chapter, concerning his ſufferings and death; and his meaning is, that as ſure as *John* the *Baptiſt* had ſuffered indignities, and death itſelf, ſo ſure ſhould the Son of man ſuffer like things; if not from the ſame individual perſons, yet from that generation of men.

Ver. 13. *Then the diſciples underſtood*, &c.] By his ſaying that *Elias* was come, and by the account he gave of his ill uſage, it was clear to them, *that he ſpake unto them of John the Baptiſt*; and that he was the *Elias* that was to come, and was come: ſo that this obſervation, that according to prophecy *Elias* was to come before the *Meſſiah*, was no objection to Jeſus being the Meſſiah; but on the contrary, ſince he that was intended by *Elias* was come, and had done his work and office, it was a confirmation of the truth of his Meſſiahſhip.

Ver. 14. *And when they were come to the multitude*, &c.] Which was on the next day, as *Luke* ſays, ch. ix. 37. when Chriſt and his three diſciples, *Peter, James*, and *John*, came down from the mount to the other nine, with whom the multitude of the people were, during their ſtay on the mountain, *there came to him a certain man*; who was, as *Mark* ſays, *one of the multitude*; and as *Luke*, *a man of the company*; who had applied to the nine diſciples on the behalf of his ſon, but without ſucceſs, and was waiting till Chriſt came from the mount; who when he ſaw him, made up to him, and *kneeling down to him* in the manner of a ſupplicant, doing him homage and worſhip; hereby ſhewing his great eſteem of him, and veneration for him, *and ſaying* the following words;

Ver. 15. *Lord, have mercy on my ſon*, &c.] He addreſſed him with great marks of honour and reſpect, not only by geſture, but by words; he craves mercy, pity, and compaſſion; for the caſe he had to preſent, was a miſerable one; and his earneſtneſs and importunity he hoped might be excuſed, ſince it was for a child of his own. *Luke* adds, *for he is mine only child*; and therefore his affection for him muſt be thought to be very ſtrong, and he greatly concerned for its grievous affliction, and earneſtly deſirous of its health and life. *For he is lunatick:* not a mad man, but troubled with the *epileptic* diſeaſe; upon which, as on madneſs or lunacy, the changes and full of the moon have an influence: hence the next clauſe, *and ſore vexed*, is rendered in the *Arabic* verſion, *and ſore vexed at the beginning of full moons*; at which times, he had very grievous and frequent fits of his diſorder: *for oft times he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water*; which ſhows it to be the *epilepſy*, or falling-ſickneſs, he was afflicted with; which, whenever it ſeized him, whether by the fire-ſide, or by the ſide of a river or brook, or any place of water, or in any other dangerous ſituation, he fell into it, not being able to help himſelf, or avoid any danger, to which he was expoſed. A larger account of this child's diſorder, and of the circumſtances of his cure, are related by *Mark*, ch. ix. 17, 18, *&c.* where this caſe will be more fully conſidered.

Ver.

[q] T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 25. 1. & Becorot, fol. 33. 2. & 34. 1.

[r] Kimchi in Zech. ix. 6.

[s] Hilchot Melacim, c. 12. §. 2. Vid. Miſn. Ediot, c. 8. §. 7. & Maimon. & Bartenora in ib. §. 8. T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 3. 1. & 37. 1. & Bava Bathra, fol. 94. 1.

[t] Seder Olam Rabba, p. 46.

[u] Miſn. Bava Metzia, c. 1.

Ver. 16. *And I brought him to thy diſciples*, &c.] To the nine, whilſt Chriſt was with the other three upon the mountain: no doubt but his deſign was to bring him to Chriſt firſt; but he being abſent, he applied to his diſciples, and deſired them to make uſe of their power to heal him; and which they attempted, but without ſucceſs: *and they could not cure him*. This he ſaid, partly to ſhew the malignity and ſtubborneſs of the diſeaſe, and partly to accuſe the diſciples of weakneſs; when he himſelf was as much in fault as they, as the following words ſhew. Here the *Jew* [w] inſults, and charges with contradiction, that in one place it ſhould be ſaid, that Jeſus gave his diſciples power to caſt out unclean ſpirits, and here all the diſciples could not caſt a ſpirit out of one little child: but without any reaſon; let it be obſerved, that *all* the diſciples were not preſent, the three principal ones were with Chriſt; beſides, this was not owing to want of power in them, which Chriſt had conferred on them, and which they often made uſe of with ſucceſs; but partly to their own unbelief, and partly to the unbelief of the father of this child, and others with him, as appears from what follows: and it is clear from *Mark*, that when he came to Chriſt, he had but little faith; he ſays to him, *if thou canſt do any thing, help us*; and after Chriſt had talked with him about his faith, he could only ſay, *Lord, I believe, help mine unbelief.*

Ver. 17. *Then Jeſus anſwered and ſaid*, &c.] Not to the diſciples, but to the father of the child; ſee *Mark* ix. 19. and thoſe that were with him, and the *Scribes* that were preſent, diſputing with the diſciples, upbraiding them with their weakneſs, and triumphing over them: *O faithleſs and perverſe generation*; a way of ſpeaking, which is never uſed of the diſciples, and indeed could not be properly ſaid of them; for though they often appeared to be men of little faith, yet not faithleſs; nor were they ſo rebellious, ſtubborn, and perverſe, as here repreſented, though there was a great deal of perverſeneſs in them: but the characters better ſuit the body of the *Jewiſh* nation, who, on account of the incredulity of this man, and thoſe that were preſent, being of the ſame temper with them, are exclaimed againſt in words, which were long ago ſpoken of their anceſtors, *Deut*. xxxii. 5. and from whence they ſeem to be taken. *How long ſhall I be with you? how long ſhall I ſuffer you?* Upbraiding them with the length of time he had been with them, in which ſo many wonderful works had been done among them, and yet they remained unbelieving and incorrigible; and intimating, that his patience and long-ſuffering would not always continue; and that in a ſhort time, he ſhould be gone from them, and they ſhould no longer enjoy the benefit of his miniſtry and miracles, but wrath ſhould come upon them to the uttermoſt: but however, whilſt he was with them, notwithſtanding all their unbelief and obſtinacy, he ſhould go on to do good; and therefore ſays, *bring him hither to me*, meaning the lunatick child. Theſe words alſo are directed, not unto the diſciples, but to the father of the child; for ſo it is ſaid in *Luke*, ch. ix. 41. *bring thy ſon hither*; and ſo the *Syriac* renders it here, אתיהון, *bring thou him*; though, as expreſſed in the plural number, may very well be thought to intend him, and his friends.

Ver. 18. *And Jeſus rebuked the devil*, &c.] The words may indeed be rendered, *and Jeſus rebuked him, and the devil departed out of him*; ſo the *Vulgate Latin*, and the *Oriental* verſions; but the ſenſe our verſion gives, is certainly right; for it was not the father of the child Chriſt rebuked for his unbelief; this he had done already; nor the lunatick himſelf, as ſome have thought, either for his unbelief, or becauſe he was poſſeſſed by the devil, for ſome ſins of his own; which is not likely, ſince he was ſo from a child, and perhaps not now in his right mind, and capable of any rebuke: beſides, the *Evangeliſts Mark* and *Luke*, expreſly ſay, that he *rebuked the foul*, or *unclean ſpirit*; for though it was a natural diſeaſe which attended this child, yet he was afflicted with it in a preternatural way, by the means of ſatan; who, by divine permiſſion, had a power of inflicting bodily diſeaſes: and that this diſeaſe was effected by him, is clear from the manner of curing, by the diſpoſſeſſion of him; for when *he departed out of him*; at the command of Chriſt, whoſe power he could not withſtand, but was obliged, whether he would or no, to obey; *the child was cured from that very hour*; directly, immediately, and continued well, and in good health. Hence the word rendered *lunatick*, in ver. 15. is in ſeveral *Oriental* verſions, tranſlated in the ſenſe of *dæmoniack*, or one poſſeſſed with a devil. The *Arabic* verſion renders it, *he is with a dæmon*; the *Perſic* thus, *on whom a dæmon hath power*; and the *Ethiopic* after this manner, *an evil dæmon takes hold on him*. And it is uſual with the *Jews*, to aſcribe diſeaſes to evil ſpirits; and perhaps, this uncommon diſpenſation in the times of Chriſt, may give riſe to ſuch a notion; particularly, they aſcribe this very ſame diſeaſe of the *epileptic*, or falling-ſickneſs, to the ſame cauſe, which they call [x] *Kordicus*, or *Cardiacus*, the *Cardiac* paſſion, which one of their commentators [y] explains thus. "It is a diſ-
"eaſe which proceeds from the repletion of the
"veſſels of the brain, whereby the underſtanding is
"confounded; wherefore it is one of the ſorts,
"חולי הנופל, *of the falling ſickneſs*." Says another [z] of them, "It is שם שירה, *the name of a*
"*dæmon*, that rules over ſuch, that drink much
"wine out of the fat." To which others agree, ſaying [a], that one attended with this diſorder, is one, "whoſe underſtanding is confounded,
"מחמת שד, *by means of a dæmon*, who rules over
"ſuch, that drink new wine; and lo! the ſpirit's
"name is *Kardiacus*." From whence it is clear, that with them, the diſeaſe and the dæmon go by the ſame name; and that the former is from the latter.

Ver. 19. *Then came the diſciples to Jeſus apart*, &c.] Or *ſecretly*, as the *Vulgate Latin*, and *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel read; that is, privately, and when alone; and as *Mark* ſays, *when he was come into the houſe*; and was by himſelf, then came the nine diſciples to him, to converſe with him about this matter, *and ſaid unto him, why could not we caſt him out?* That is, the devil, and ſo cure the lunatick; the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions render it, *why could not we heal him?* The lunatick; which only could be done by caſting out the dæmon: they were concerned, fearing they had loſt the power which Chriſt had beſtowed on them, and wanted to know what they had done, which had deprived them of it; and what ſhould be the cauſe of their late unſucceſsful attempt, when they had ſo frequently triumphed over the unclean ſpirits, that were ſubject to them. Though they might have learned from the anſwer Chriſt gave to the father of the lunatick, and the general character of the *Jewiſh* nation in that anſwer, the true reaſon of their own inability; but this they took no notice of, imagining it belonged entirely to others, and not to them.

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[w] Vet. Nizzachon, p. 219, 220. [x] Miſn. Gittin, c. 7. §. 1. [y] Maimon. in ib. [z] Gloſſ. in T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 67. 2. [a] Bartenora & Yom Tob. in Miſn. Gittin, c. 8. §. 1.

Ver. 20. *And Jeſus ſaid unto them, becauſe of your unbelief*, &c.] The *Arabic* and *Ethiopic* verſions read, *becauſe of your little faith*, or *the ſmallneſs of your faith*; and ſo does one *Greek* manuſcript; and which is what is doubtleſs meant by their unbelief; for they were not altogether deſtitute of faith, but their faith was very low, and their unbelief very great. Chriſt ſays, not becauſe of the unbelief of the parent of the child, and thoſe that were with him, though that alſo was a reaſon; but becauſe of their unbelief, being willing to convince them of their unbelief, as he had done the father of the child, who had confeſſed it, and deſired it might be removed from him: but leſt they ſhould think they had loſt their power of doing miracles, Chriſt adds; *for verily I ſay unto you, if ye have faith as a grain of muſtard-ſeed*; which was a very ſmall ſeed, the leaſt of all ſeeds, and is uſed very often proverbially by the *Jews*, to ſignify any thing of a ſmall quantity or weight [b], and is ſometimes uſed of faith, as here; ſo ſpeaking of the congregation of *Edom*, meaning the Chriſtians, they [c] ſay, "they have not, אמונה כמו גרעין של חרדל, *faith as a grain of muſtard-ſeed.*" And it is uſed in like ſenſe, in other *Eaſtern* nations; and by *Mahomet*, in his *Alcoran* [d], who ſays, "We will appoint juſt balances in the day of reſurrection, neither ſhall any ſoul be injured at all, although the merit or guilt of an action, be of the weight of a *grain of muſtard-ſeed*." So that it has no reference to the quality of muſtard-ſeed, being hot and acrimonious; which has led ſome interpreters wrong, to compare faith unto it, for its livelineſs and fervency: when our Lord only means, that if his apoſtles had ever ſo ſmall a degree of faith in exerciſe, which might be compared for its ſmallneſs to this leaſt of ſeeds, ſuch an effect as he after mentions would follow; and which therefore is to be underſtood, not of an hiſtorical faith, by which men aſſent to all that is in the bible as true; nor of a ſpecial, ſpiritual faith, by which ſouls believe in Chriſt, as their Saviour and Redeemer; for of neither of theſe, can the following things in common be ſaid; but of a faith of miracles, peculiar to certain perſons, in thoſe early times, for certain reaſons; which ſuch as had but ever ſo ſmall a degree of, as the apoſtles here ſpoken to might ſay, as Chriſt obſerves to them, *ye ſhall ſay to this mountain*; pointing perhaps, to that he was juſt come down from, which might be in ſight of the houſe where he was, *remove hence to yonder place, and it ſhall remove*: meaning, not that it would be ordinarily or ever done in a literal ſenſe by the apoſtles, that they ſhould remove mountains; but that they ſhould be able to do things equally difficult, and as ſeemingly impoſſible, if they had but faith, when the glory of God, and the good of men, required it. So that it does not follow, becauſe the apoſtles did not do it in a literal ſenſe, therefore they could not, as the *Jew* inſultingly ſays [e]; ſince it was meant that they they ſhould, and beſides, have done, things equally as great as this, and which is the ſenſe of the words. So the apoſtle expreſſes the faith of miracles, by *removing mountains*, 1 *Cor.* xiii. 2. *i. e.* by doing things which are difficult, ſeem impoſſible to be done: wherefore Chriſt adds, *and nothing ſhall be impoſſible to you*; you ſhall not only be able to perform ſuch a wonderful action as this, were it neceſſary, but any, and every thing elſe, that will make for the glory of God, the enlargement of my kingdom and intereſt, the confirmation of truth, and the good of mankind.

Ver. 21. *Howbeit, this kind goeth not out*, &c.] The *Vulgate Latin* renders it, *is not caſt out*; and ſo do the *Arabic* verſion, and *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel; and which confirm the more commonly received ſenſe of theſe words, that they are to be underſtood of that kind of devils, one of which was caſt out of the lunatick, and was of the worſt ſort, of a fierce and obſtinate kind; and having had long poſſeſſion, was not eaſily ejected: and that there is a difference in devils, ſome are worſe and more wicked than others, is clear from *Matt.* xii. 45. and not of that kind of miracles, or kind of faith to the working of ſuch miracles. Moreover, the above verſions, as they fitly expreſs the word, εκπορευεται, here uſed; ſee *Mark* ix. 17. compared with *Matt.* xv. 17. So they pertinently ſet forth the diſpoſſeſſion of devils, who don't go out voluntarily, but by force; and this ſort could not be ejected, *but by faſting and prayer*: that is, in the exerciſe of a miraculous faith, expreſſed in ſolemn prayer to God, joined with faſting. It ſeems that Chriſt not only ſuggeſts, that faith was greatly wanting in his diſciples; for which reaſon they could not caſt out the devil, and heal the lunatick; but they had been wanting in prayer to God, to aſſiſt them in the exerciſe of their miraculous gifts; and that whilſt Chriſt, and the other three diſciples were on the mount, they had been feaſting and indulging themſelves with the people, and ſo were in a very undue diſpoſition of mind, for ſuch extraordinary ſervice, for which our Lord tacitly rebukes them. This agrees with the notions of the *Jews*, who think that by faſting, a divine ſoul [f], תשיג את מבוקשה, *may obtain that which is ſought for*; and that among other things, for which a private perſon may afflict himſelf with faſting, this is one, מפני רוח רעה, *becauſe of an evil ſpirit* [g]; which they think may be got rid of this way.

Ver. 22. *And while they abode in Galilee*, &c.] *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel reads it, ובשהתהלכו, *and while they were walking in Galilee*, for they paſſed through it, when they departed from hence; ſee *Mark* ix. 30. and as they were going to *Capernaum*, and ſo onward, to the coaſts of *Judea*, in order to be at *Jeruſalem* at the feaſt of the paſſover; where, and when, Chriſt was to ſuffer: and obſerving that the time of his death drew nigh, he inculcates it again to his diſciples a third time, that they might be prepared for it, and not be diſcouraged and terrified by it; *Jeſus ſaid unto them, the Son of man ſhall be betrayed into the hands of men*: ſome copies read, *ſinful men*; and ſo the angels report the words, in *Luke* xxiv. 7. by whom may be meant the *Gentiles*, who by the *Jews*, were reckoned very wicked men, and called ſinners of the *Gentiles*. Now Chriſt intimates, that the Son of man, meaning himſelf, ſhould be betrayed by the *Jews*, into the hands of the *Gentiles*; than which, with the *Jews*, nothing was reckoned a fouler action, or a viler crime; their canons run thus [h]: "It is forbidden to betray an *Iſraelite* into the hands of the *Gentiles*, whether in his body or in his ſubſtance; and though he may be a wicked man, and a ringleader in ſin, and though he may have oppreſſed and afflicted him; and every one that betrays an

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[b] T. Bab. Beracot, fol 31. 1. Megilla, fol. 28. 2. Nidda, fol. 66. 1. Maimon. Iſſure Biah, c. 11. §. 4. Maacolot Aſurot, c. 2. §. 21. & c. 14. §. 8. Tumaot Okelim, c. 4. §. 2. & 7. 6.

[c] Vet. Nizzachon, p. 148.

[d] C. 21. p. 268. & c. 31. p. 336. Ed. Sale.

[e] Vet. Nizzachon, p. 237.

[f] Jacchiades in Dan. x. 3.

[g] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 22. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Taaniot. c. 1. §. 6.

[h] Maimon. Hilch. Chobel Umazzik, c. 8. §. 9, 10.

“ *Iſraelite* into the hands of the *Gentiles*, whether in his body, or in his ſubſtance, has no part in the world to come.” They forgot this rule, when they delivered Chriſt to *Pontius Pilate.* They go on to obſerve, that “ it is lawful to kill a betrayer in any place, even at this time, in which they do not judge capital crimes; and it is lawful to kill him before he betrays; but when he ſays, lo! I am about to betray ſuch an one in his body, or in his ſubſtance, though his ſubſtance is ſmall, he expoſes himſelf to death; and they admoniſh him and ſay to him, don’t betray: if he is obſtinate, and ſays I will betray him, it is commanded to kill him; and he that is firſt to kill him, is a worthy man.”

Ver. 23. *And they ſhall kill him*, &c.] Put him to death, with the death of the croſs; for the angels, in rehearſing theſe words, affirm, that Chriſt told his diſciples at this time, and in this place, whilſt they were in *Galilee*, that he ſhould *be crucified*, *Luke* xxiv. 7. *And the third day he ſhall be raiſed again:* this he ſaid for their comfort; and it is obſervable, that when Chriſt ſpeaks of his riſing again, he makes mention of the exact time, the third day, on which he ſhould riſe, according to the types and prophecies of the Old Teſtament: *and they were exceeding ſorry*; that he ſhould be betrayed into the hands of the *Gentiles*, fearing that another nation would come, and take away, and poſſeſs the worldly kingdom and grandeur they were dreaming of; and that he ſhould die at all; and much more that he ſhould die ſuch a cruel and ignominious death, as that of the croſs. They ſeem to have overlooked, and to have taken no notice of his riſing again from the dead; which might have adminiſtered comfort to them, and have relieved them under their melancholy apprehenſions of things; but this they underſtood not, nor indeed truly any part of what he had ſaid; ſo *Mark* and *Luke* intimate: but then it may be ſaid, how came they to be ſo very ſorrowful, if they did not know what was ſaid? To which may be replied, that this might be the reaſon of their ſorrow, becauſe they did not underſtand what he ſaid, and they were afraid to aſk; they could not tell how to reconcile the betraying of him into the hands of men, and his ſufferings and death, with their notions, that the *Meſſiah* ſhould abide for ever, and ſhould ſet up a temporal kingdom, in great ſplendor and magnificence; and what he meant by riſing again from the dead, they could not deviſe; they could not tell whether all this was to be underſtood in a literal, or myſtical ſenſe.

Ver. 24. *And when they were come to Capernaum*, &c.] Called Chriſt’s own city, ch. ix. 1. where he dwelt ſome time, ch. iv. 13. and *Peter* had an houſe, ch. viii. 14. *they that received tribute-money*, or the *didrachms*; in *Talmudic* language, it would be, גובין השקלים [i], *they that collect the ſhekels*: for not the publicans, or *Roman* tax-gatherers are meant; nor is this to be underſtood of any ſuch tribute: there was a tribute that was paid to *Cæſar*, by the *Jews*; ſee *Matt.* xxii. 17. but that is expreſſed by another word, and was paid in other money, in *Roman* money, which bore *Cæſar*’s image and ſuperſcription; and was exacted of them, whether they would or no: but this deſigns the collection of the half *ſhekel*, paid yearly for the ſervice of the temple: the original of this cuſtom, was an order of the Lord to *Moſes*, upon numbering the people; that every one that was twenty years of age and upwards, ſhould give half a ſhekel as atonement-money, or as a ranſom for his ſoul; which was to be diſpoſed of for the ſervice of the tabernacle, *Exod.* xxx. 12—16. This does not appear to have been deſigned for a perpetual law, or to be paid yearly; nor even whenever the number of the people was taken, but only for that preſent time: in the time of *Joaſh* king of *Judah*, a collection was ſet on foot for the repair of the temple; and the collection of *Moſes* in the wilderneſs, was urged as an argument, and by way of example; nor is any mention made of the half ſhekel, nor was any ſum of money fixed they ſhould pay; but, according to the account, it was entirely free and voluntary. In the time of *Nehemiah*, there was a yearly charge of the *third* part of a *ſhekel*, for the ſervice of the temple; but this was not done by virtue of a divine order, or any law of *Moſes*, with which it did not agree; but by an ordinance the *Jews* then made for themſelves, as their neceſſity required. *Aben Ezra* [k] indeed ſays, that this was an addition to the half *ſhekel.* Now in proceſs of time, from theſe inſtances and examples, it became a fixed thing, that every year an half ſhekel ſhould be paid by every *Iſraelite*, excepting women, children, and ſervants, towards defraying the neceſſary charges of the temple ſervice, and this obtained in Chriſt’s time. There is a whole tract in the *Jewiſh Miſna*, called *Shekalim*; in which an account is given of the perſons who are obliged to pay this money, the time and manner of collecting it, and for what uſes it is put: and ſo it continued till the times of *Titus Veſpaſian*, who, as *Joſephus* ſays [l], laid a tax of two drachms, the ſame with the half *ſhekel*, upon the *Jews*; and ordered it to be brought yearly into the *Capitol* at *Rome*, as it uſed to have been paid into the temple at *Jeruſalem*. We need not wonder that we hear of receivers of the half ſhekel at *Capernaum*; ſince once a year, on the *fifteenth* of the month *Adar*, tables were placed, and collectors ſate in every city in *Judea*, as they did on the *twenty-fifth* of the ſame month, in the ſanctuary [m]. The value of the half ſhekel, was about *fifteenpence* of our money. The *Syriac* verſion renders the word here uſed, *two zuzim of head-money*: now a zuz with the *Jews*, anſwered to a *Roman* penny, four of which made a *ſhekel* [n]; ſo that two of them were the the value of an half *ſhekel*: it is further to be obſerved, that ſhekels in *Judea*, were double the value of thoſe in *Galilee*, where Chriſt now was: five *ſhekels* in *Judea*, went for ten in *Galilee*, and ſo ten for twenty [o]. The receivers of this money *came to Peter*; not caring to go to Chriſt himſelf; but obſerving *Peter* a forward and active man among his diſciples, they applied to him; or rather, becauſe he had an houſe in this place, at which Chriſt might be: *and ſaid, doth not your maſter pay tribute?* or the *didrachms*, the half *ſhekel* money. Had this been the *Roman* tribute, the reaſon of ſuch a queſtion, might have been either to have enſnared him, and to have known whether he was of the ſame mind with *Judas* of *Galilee*, that refuſed to pay tribute to *Cæſar*; or becauſe they could not tell whether he was reckoned as an inhabitant, or citizen of that city; for, according to the *Jewiſh* canons [p], a man muſt be twelve months in a place, before he is liable to tribute and taxes; or becauſe they might ſuſpect him to be exempted, as a doctor, or teacher: for the *Jewiſh* doctors, wiſe men, and ſcholars, were freed from all tribute and taxes [q], even from the *head-money*, the *Syriac* verſion here mentions; and which was a civil tax paid to kings [r]; to which ſenſe that verſion ſeems to incline: the rule concerning wiſe men or ſcholars, is this [s]. “They don't collect of them for the building a wall, or ſetting up gates, or for the hire of watchmen, and ſuch like things; nor for the king's treaſury; nor do they oblige them to give tribute, whether it is fixed upon citizens, or whether it is fixed on every man.” But this was not the *Roman* tax, nor tribute, on any civil account, but the half ſhekel for religious ſervice: and it may ſeem ſtrange that ſuch a queſtion ſhould be aſked; and eſpecially ſince it is a rule with them [t], that “all are bound to give the half ſhekel, prieſts, *Levites*, and *Iſraelites*; and the ſtrangers, or proſelytes, and ſervants, that are made free; but not women, nor ſervants, nor children; though if they gave, they received it of them.” But a following canon [u] explains it, and accounts for it: “On the fifteenth, (*i. e.* of the month *Adar*) the collectors ſit in every province or city, (that is, in the countries) ובעין בנחת כל, *and mildly aſk every one*: he that gives to them, they receive it of him; and he that does not give, אין כופין אותו ליתן, *they don't oblige him to give*: on the five and twentieth they ſit in the ſanctuary to collect; and from hence and onward, they urge him that will not give, until he gives; and every one that will not give, they take pawns of him.” So that it ſeems, there was a different uſage of perſons, at different times and places: our Lord being in *Galilee* at *Capernaum*, was treated in this manner.

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[i] Maimon. Hilch. Shekalim, c. 2. §. 4.

[k] In Neh. x. 32.

[l] De Bello Jud. l. 7. c. 26.

[m] Miſn. Shekalim, c. 1. §. 3. Maimon. Hilch. Shekalim, c. 1. §. 9.

[n] T. Bab. Kidduſhin, fol. 11. 2. Vid. Targum & Kimchi in 1 Sam. ix. 8. Maimon. in Miſn. Shekalim, c. 2. 4. & Hilch. Shekalim, c. 1. §. 3.

[o] Miſn. Trumot, c. 10. §. 8. & Cetubot, c. 5. §. 9. T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 59. 1.

[p] T. Hieroſ. Bava Bathra, fol. 12. 4. T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 8. 1.

Ver. 25. *He ſaith, yes*, &c.] Without any heſitation, knowing it had been his maſter's practice; and therefore as he had done it, did not doubt but he would again: *and when he was come into the houſe*; that is, *Peter*, as both the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions expreſs; when he was come into his own houſe, or at leaſt into that where Chriſt was, in order to talk with him about this affair, the collectors had been ſpeaking of to him, who ſeems to have been alone when they met with him; however, Chriſt was not with him: *Jeſus prevented him*; ſaying what he intended to ſay, on that head; for he being the omniſcient God, though not preſent, knew what queſtion had been put to *Peter*, and what anſwer he had returned; and therefore before *Peter* could lay the caſe before him, he puts this queſtion to him; *ſaying, what thinkeſt thou Simon?* How does it appear to thee, to thy reaſon and underſtanding? in what light doſt thou conſider this matter? what is thy judgment of it? *Of whom do the kings of the earth take cuſtom or tribute? of their own children, or of ſtrangers*, or *others?* What is the uſual practice of earthly kings, whether of *Judea*, or of other countries? do their own children, ſons, and heirs, ſuch as are of their own family, pay? or is it only their ſubjects that are not of their family?

Ver. 26. *Peter ſaith unto him*, &c.] The *Vulgate Latin* reads, *and he ſaid*; and ſo the *Ethiopic*, and *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel; but without doubt *Peter* is meant, and rightly expreſſed; whoſe anſwer to Chriſt's queſtion is, *of ſtrangers*: meaning not foreigners, or ſuch who formerly belonged to other nations, but were now taken captive, and brought into ſubjection; but their own native ſubjects, ſo called, in diſtinction from their domeſticks, their children, and thoſe of their own family: *Jeſus ſaith unto him, then are the children free*; from paying cuſtom, tribute, and taxes, and leaves *Peter* to make the application; and which he ſuggeſted might be made, either thus: ſuppoſing it was a civil tax, that ſince he was the Son of *David*, king of *Iſrael*, was of his houſe and family, and heir apparent to his throne and kingdom; according to this rule, he muſt be exempt from ſuch tribute: or, thus; taking it to have reſpect to the half ſhekel, paid on a religious account, for the ſervice of the temple worſhip; that ſince he was the ſon of the king of kings, for the ſupport of whoſe worſhip and ſervice, that money was collected; and was alſo the Lord and proprietor of the temple, and greater than that, he might well be excuſed the payment of it.

Ver. 27. *Notwithſtanding, leſt we ſhould offend them*, &c.] Though Chriſt could have maintained his right of exemption from payment, by ſuch ſtrong and clear reaſons and arguments; yet he choſe to forego it, leſt any ſhould be offended with him, and look upon him as a tranſgreſſor of the law; one that had no regard to the temple, and ſlighted the worſhip and ſervice of it, and ſo be prejudiced againſt him, and his doctrines: which, by the way, may teach us to be careful to give no offence, to *Jew* or *Gentile*, or the church of God; though it may be to our own diſadvantage, when the honour and intereſt of religion lie at ſtake. This is following the example of Chriſt, who therefore ſaid to *Peter*, *go thou to the ſea*; of *Tiberias*, which was near this city, *and caſt an hook*; a fiſher's hook into it: *and take up the fiſh that firſt cometh up, and when thou haſt opened his mouth, thou ſhalt find a piece of money*; a *ſtater*, as in the original text, the ſame with the אסתירא of the *Talmudiſts*; and which word, the *Syriac* verſion here retains, and was, they [w] tell us, of the ſame value with a *ſela*, or *ſhekel* of the province. The *Arabic* and *Perſic* verſions render it, by *four drachms*, which alſo were the ſame with a *ſhekel*: and ſo was juſt enough to pay the two half ſhekels, for Chriſt and *Peter*, and was worth, of our money, near *half a crown*; and not *nearly a crown*, as in a late paraphraſe is ſaid, through miſtake. This was a wonderful inſtance of the omniſcience of Chriſt, who knew there was in ſuch a fiſh, ſuch a piece of money, as exactly anſwered the preſent exigence, and that that would come firſt to *Peter*'s hook; and of his omnipotence, if not in forming this piece of money immediately in the fiſh's mouth, as is thought by ſome, yet in cauſing this fiſh to come to *Peter*'s hook firſt, and as ſoon as caſt in; and of his power and dominion over all creatures, even over the fiſhes of the ſea; and ſo proved himſelf to be what he ſuggeſted, the ſon of the king of kings; and to be a greater perſon than the kings of the earth, to whom tribute was paid: and yet, at the ſame time, it declares his great poverty as man, that he had not a ſhekel to pay on ſuch an occaſion, without working a miracle; and his great condeſcenſion to do it, rather than give offence by non-payment: *and take, and give unto them for me and thee*; for the half ſhekel was expected of *Peter*, as well as of Chriſt, and he had not wherewith to pay it; and this Chriſt knew, and therefore provides for both. But why did not Chriſt pay for the other diſciples, as well as for himſelf and *Peter?*

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[q] Maimon. & Bartenora in Pirke Abot, c. 4. §. 5.

[r] Gloſſ. in T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 100. 2. & Nedarim, fol. 62. 2. & Bava Metzia, fol. 73. 2.

[s] Maimon. Talmud Tora, c. 6. 10.

[t] Ib. Hilch. Shekalim, c. 1. §. 7.

[u] Ib. §. 9.

[w] Gloſſ. in T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 64. 1. & 105. 1. & Bava Metzia, fol. 102. 2.

*ter?* It may be replied, that this money would pay for no more than two: but this is not a full anſwer; Chriſt could have ordered more money in the ſame way he did this: it may then be further ſaid, that only he and *Peter*, were looked upon as inhabitants of this place; and ſo the reſt were not called upon here, but in their reſpective cities, where they might pay alſo, and, beſides, were not now preſent.

## CHAP. XVIII.

Ver. 1. A*T the ſame time came the diſciples unto Jeſus*, &c.] When the receivers of the half ſhekel had ſpoke to *Peter* about his maſter's paying it, and Chriſt and he had converſed about it, by whoſe orders he had taken up a fiſh out of the ſea, and from it a piece of money, which he had paid for them both; juſt at this time came the other eleven diſciples to the houſe where Chriſt and *Peter* were: *ſaying, who is the greateſt in the kingdom of heaven? Mark* ſays, that the diſciples diſputed this point in the way; and that when they came to *Jeſus*, he put the queſtion to them, what they had been diſputing about: and *Luke* takes no notice of any queſtion put by one or another; but obſerves, that Chriſt perceiving the thoughts of their hearts, in order to rebuke, and convince them, took the method hereafter mentioned. All which is reconcileable, and of a piece: the ſum is this; that as they were in the way to *Capernaum* they fell upon this queſtion, which, being known to Chriſt, the omniſcient God; when they came to *Capernaum*, and to the houſe where he was, and knowing that the ſame thought was in them, he aſked them what they had been talking of by the way; upon which they were ſilent; but calling them nearer to him, and they finding that the matter was known, took courage to put the queſtion to him, and deſired to have his ſenſe of it. The *Vulgate Latin* reads, *who doſt thou think*; and the *Arabic* verſion, *who in thy opinion*, &c. The occaſion of this could not be the reſpect ſhewn to *Peter*, in paying the half ſhekel for him; for this converſation was begun in the way, and before this was done, or, at leaſt, before they knew it: rather it might be occaſioned by his promiſe of giving the keys of the kingdom of heaven to him; or by his taking him, and *James*, and *John*, ſo lately to the mountain with him, where he was transfigured before them; though it ſeems beſt to aſcribe it to the mention Chriſt had made of his reſurrection from the dead: for, as Dr. *Lightfoot*, *Hammond*, and others, have obſerved, ſomething of this kind generally followed any account Chriſt gave of his death and reſurrection, as *Mark* ix. 31, 34. *Matt*. xx. 19, 20. *Luke* xxii. 24. and this thought of an earthly kingdom ſtill continued, when they ſaw him riſen, *Acts* i. 6. for they had been taught, that the reſurrection, and the kingdom of the Meſſiah, would be at the ſame time[x]. And, by the kingdom of heaven, they meant, not the kingdom of glory in another world, but the kingdom of the Meſſiah in this; and which they looked upon to be a temporal one, tho' they call it the kingdom of heaven; not only becauſe Chriſt often uſed this phraſe, but becauſe the times of the Meſſiah, and his reign, were frequently ſo called by the *Jews*; ſee the note on *Matt*. iii. 2. Now, what they wanted to be ſatisfied in was, who ſhould be advanced to the higheſt poſt in that kingdom next to the Meſſiah; and, as they doubted not but it would fall on one of them, to have the moſt honourable poſt, and the place of the greateſt truſt, they were deſirous of knowing who it ſhould be.

Ver. 2. *And Jeſus called a little child unto him*, &c.] One, very likely, that was in the houſe, and might belong to the maſter of it, and which was big enough to come to him at his call. Some have thought that this was *Ignatius* the martyr, but without any foundation. His own words, in his epiſtle to the church at *Smyrna*[y], can give no countenance to it; where he ſays, "for I alſo know, that after "his reſurrection he was in the fleſh, and I believe "that he is." The *Latin* verſion indeed renders it thus; "for I alſo ſaw him in the fleſh after the "reſurrection, and believe that he exiſts." But it does not follow from hence that he muſt be this child, but rather the contrary; ſince it can't be thought, that a child ſo young as this, in half a year after, had it ſeen Chriſt, when riſen from the dead, could have took ſo much notice of him, as this verſion repreſents *Ignatius* to do; but it matters not who it was; Chriſt deſigned, by this emblem, to give them his ſenſe of the queſtion, and convey ſome proper inſtruction to the minds of his diſciples: *and ſet him in the midſt of them*; that every one might ſee him; and upon the very ſight of him, had he ſaid no more to them, they might eaſily have perceived what was his opinion; that he that was but a child, the moſt humble, and leaſt in his own eyes, would be the greateſt: but beſides ſetting the child in ſuch a ſituation, he pointed to him, ſaying what follows.

Ver. 3. *And ſaid, verily I ſay unto you*, &c.] You may take it for a certain truth, and what may be depended upon, that *except ye be converted*, or *turned*; from that groſs notion of a temporal kingdom, and of enjoying great grandeur, and outward felicity in this world; and from all your vain views of honour, wealth, and riches, *and become as little children*: the *Arabic* renders it, *as this child*; that is, unleſs ye learn to entertain an humble, and modeſt opinion of yourſelves, are not envious at one another, and drop all contentions about primacy and pre-eminence, and all your ambitious views of one being greater than another, in a vainly expected temporal kingdom; things which are not to be found in little children, though not free from ſin in other reſpects, *ye ſhall not enter into the kingdom of heaven*: ye ſhall be ſo far from being one greater than another in it, that you ſhall not enter into it at all; meaning his viſible, ſpiritual kingdom, which ſhould take place, and appear after his reſurrection, upon his aſcenſion to heaven, and pouring forth of the ſpirit: and it is to be obſerved, that the apoſtles carried theſe carnal views, contentions, and ſentiments, till that time, and then were turned from them, and dropped them; for, upon the extraordinary effuſion of the holy Spirit, they were cleared of theſe wordly principles, and underſtood the ſpiritual nature of Chriſt's kingdom; which they then entered into, and took their place in, and filled it up with great ſucceſs, without envying one another; having received the ſame commiſſion from their Lord, and Maſter: ſo that theſe words are a ſort of prophecy of what ſhould be, as well as deſigned

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[x] Vid. Pocock. not. miſcell. ad Port. Moſis, p. 103, 104, 105, 106.

[y] P. 3. Ed. Voſſ.

as a rebuke to them for their preſent ambition and contentions.

Ver. 4. *Whoſoever therefore ſhall humble himſelf*, &c.] Whoever ſhall entertain mean thoughts of himſelf, and prefer others to himſelf, ſhall behave in a modeſt, humble manner, not affecting dominion over others, or treating his brethren and chriſtians in a haughty and ſupercilious manner, with ſcorn and contempt; but condeſcend to thoſe of the loweſt ſtate, and place himſelf in the loweſt form, converſing with his friends freely and familiarly, without diſtinction, *as this little child*; or any other of the like age; for there is no reaſon to ſuppoſe, that there was any thing peculiar in this child, which was not in another, it being common to children to behave towards one another, as on a level; not to envy one another, or to ſet up one above another, or be vainly elated with the diſtinctions of birth and fortune. *The ſame is greateſt in the kingdom of heaven*; in the Goſpel church-ſtate; which was verified in the apoſtle *Paul*, tho' not one of the twelve: nor are theſe words limited to them; at leaſt, this paſſage may be illuſtrated in his caſe: he thought himſelf to be the chief of ſinners, and leſs than the leaſt of all ſaints, and unworthy to be called an apoſtle; yet had the largeſt meaſures of grace, the greateſt gifts and abilities; and was honoured with the greateſt uſefulneſs and ſucceſs in the preaching of the Goſpel to the converſion of ſinners, and planting of churches; labouring more abundantly than they all.

Ver. 5. *And whoſo ſhall receive one ſuch little child*, &c.] Which is to be underſtood, not literally, but metaphorically; meaning not ſuch an one in age, but one, as the *Syriac* renders it, איך טליא הנא, *that is, as this child*; like unto it for modeſty and humility; one, that is as that, free from pride, ambition, and envy. Chriſt's ſenſe is, that whoever receives his diſciples, that are meek and lowly, into their houſes, or into their hearts and affections; that receives their miniſtry and meſſage, embraces the Goſpel preached by them, with readineſs and chearfulneſs, with faith and love, *in my name*; on his account, becauſe they are his diſciples, believe in him, preach his Goſpel, and, as being ſent by, and perſonating him, *receiveth me*: it is ſo taken by Chriſt, as if he was perſonally preſent, and perſonally received, and had all the favours ſhewn to his, done to himſelf in perſon; yea, ſuch receive Chriſt in the miniſtry of the word, he being the ſum and ſubſtance of it. This is ſaid to encourage modeſty and humility; and intimates, that proud and haughty perſons will not be received as the diſciples and followers of the meek and lowly Jeſus; and to encourage perſons to receive ſuch that are modeſt and humble, ſince the reſpect ſhown to them, is all one as if ſhown to him.

Ver. 6. *But whoſo ſhall offend one of theſe little ones*, &c.] Not in age, but are little and mean in their own eyes, and contemptible in the eſteem of the world; tho' otherwiſe men of great grace, gifts, and uſefulneſs; who may be ſaid to be offended, when they are not received; their perſons deſpiſed, their miniſtry rejected, and they reproached and perſecuted; and every thing done to them to diſcourage, and cauſe them to ſtumble and fall, to drop their profeſſion of Chriſt, to quit his ſervice, and deſert his cauſe: and that ſuch perſons are deſigned, appears by the following deſcriptive character of them, *which believe in me*; which can't be ſaid of infants, or little ones in age, and who alſo are not capable of offence; but muſt be underſtood of adult perſons, of ſuch who by faith look unto, lay hold on, and receive the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as their Saviour and Redeemer, and who make a profeſſion of their faith in him; and chiefly of ſuch who preach the doctrine of faith, who having believed, therefore ſpeak; and who are generally the butt of the contempt, reproach, and perſecution of men. *It were better for him, that a mill-ſtone be hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the ſea.* The word tranſlated *depth*, is ſometimes uſed for the ſea itſelf, *Iſ.* xxvii. 5. and ſignifies the middle, or deeper path, and anſwers to the *Hebrew* phraſe, *the heart of the ſea*; פילגוס דימא רבא, uſed by the *Targum*, in *Pſ.* xlvi. 3. and by *Jonathan ben Uzziel*, in *Exod.* xv. 8. *Jerom* thinks, that this was a ſort of puniſhment in uſe among the *Jews*, that is here referred to; but this does not appear. The four capital puniſhments inflicted by them were ſtoning, burning, ſlaying with the ſword, and ſtrangling [z]: they had indeed other ſorts of puniſhment, which they borrowed from other nations; and ſo they might this, either from the *Romans*, or *Greeks*, or their neighbours the *Syrians*. The *mill-ſtone*, in the original, is called μυλος ονικος, which may be rendered *the aſs mill-ſtone*, being either the nether mill-ſtone, as ſome think, which was called *the aſs*, becauſe, like an aſs, it bears the chief of the weight and burden; or elſe reſpects ſuch mill-ſtones as were turned about by an aſs, in diſtinction from thoſe that were turned by the hand; for that it was uſual with the *Jews* to make uſe of aſſes in grinding, as well as other nations, is certain: hence we read [a] of חמרא ריחיא, *the aſs of mills*, that were employed in grinding in the mills, and of one that turned his mill with wild aſſes [b]: but it is further to be obſerved, that mention is made [c] of חמור של רחים של יד, *the aſs of an hand-mill*; which the commentators ſay [d], was a beam on which an hand-mill was fixed, and was called *the aſs*. Now, I ſhould rather think that this is meant than the other. It does not ſeem likely that a nether mill-ſtone, or one that required an aſs to turn it, ſhould be tied to a man's neck, in order to drown him, when caſt into the ſea; for our Lord muſt be thought to refer to a practice ſomewhere in uſe: but rather, that ſuch a beam, or log, of an hand-mill, ſo called, were wont to be put about the necks of malefactors, in drowning them. Our Lord's ſenſe is, that it was much better for a man to endure the ſevereſt temporal puniſhment, rather than by offending, and evil treating any of his diſciples, expoſe himſelf to everlaſting deſtruction. The phraſe of having a *mill-ſtone about the neck*, I find, is ſometimes uſed to denote any thing very troubleſome and burdenſome [e]. "The tradition is, "a man that marries a wife, and after that learns the "law, *R. Jochanan* ſays, ריחים בצוארו, *though* "*a mill-ſtone is about his neck*, yet he muſt ſtudy "in the law:" that is, tho' his worldly circumſtances are narrow, and his wife and family are as burdenſome as if he had a mill-ſtone about his neck, he muſt continue his ſtudies.

Ver. 7. *Wo unto the world becauſe of offences*, &c.] By which are meant, not ſins, as ſometimes, but rather temptations to ſin; and ſo the *Ethiopic* verſion renders this word by *temptation* in every clauſe, as the *Arabic* does in the next; and may deſign all the contempt and reproach caſt upon the doctrines, ordinances, and people of Chriſt, and all thoſe afflictions, diſtreſſes, and perſecutions exerciſed on them, on purpoſe to cauſe them to ſtumble and fall; to tempt them to deny the truth, drop their profeſſion of religion, and relinquiſh the ſervice of Chriſt; things which are diſpleaſing to God, diſcouraging to his people, and often attended with bad conſequences to formal profeſſors; and bring down the judgments of God upon the men of the world; who ſooner or later will vindicate his own cauſe, avenge his own elect, and render tribulation to them that trouble them. *For it muſt needs be that offences come*; conſidering the implacable malice of ſatan, his unwearied and indefatigable pains, the malignity of the men of the world, their averſion and enmity to the Goſpel of Chriſt, and all good men; it can't be thought, God ſuffering ſuch things for the trial of ſuch as are truly gracious, and for the diſcovery of hypocrites, and for the manifeſtation of his grace, power, and faithfulneſs in the preſervation of his dear children, that it ſhould be otherwiſe, but that ſuch offences ſhould be: *but wo to that man by whom the offence cometh*; for tho' God, for wiſe ends and reaſons, as above, voluntarily permits ſuch things to be in the world; and tho' they do not ſucceed, as to cauſe the true followers of Chriſt ſo to ſtumble and fall, as to periſh, yet this does not excuſe their ſin and wickedneſs, in doing all that in them lay to effect it. For tho' God will, and does over-rule all their baſe deſigns againſt his miniſters, church, and people, for his glory, and their good, this is no thanks to them; and as it does not in the leaſt extenuate their crime, it will not abate the ſeverity of their puniſhment.

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[z] Miſn. Sanhedrim, c. 7. §. 1.

[a] T. Bab. Moed-Katon, fol. 10. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Yom Tob, c. 8. §. 15.

[b] T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 16. 2.

[c] Miſn. Zabim, c. 4. §. 2.

[d] R. Maimon. R. Sampſon, & R. Obadiah Bartenora, in ib.

[e] T. Bab. Kidduſhin, fol. 29. 2.

Ver. 8, 9. *Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot*, &c.] The ſame words are repeated here on occaſion of offences, as are ſpoken by Chriſt, ch. v. 29, 30. on account of unchaſte looks, deſires, and luſts: giving offence to Chriſt's diſciples, or endeavouring, by any means whatever, to cauſe them to ſtumble and fall, is equally gratifying the fleſh, and no more to be indulged, than the other, on pain of eternal damnation. See the note there.

Ver. 10. *Take heed that ye deſpiſe not one of theſe little ones*, &c.] That is, one of thoſe little ones that believed in Chriſt; for he is not ſpeaking of infants in age, but of thoſe who might be compared to ſuch, for their humility and modeſty; who were little in their own eyes, and mean and deſpicable in the eyes of the world, as well as appeared but little in the eyes of their fellow-diſciples and brethren: for our Lord returns and addreſſes himſelf to his diſciples, who had been contending among themſelves who ſhould be greateſt in the kingdom of heaven; and ſo were ſtriving to leſſen one another, each looking upon himſelf as the greater, and every other as little. Wherefore Chriſt cautions them againſt ſuch a ſpirit, and bids them beware of deſpiſing their fellow-diſciples, as little, and below them; eſpecially ſince ſo much notice and care were taken of them, both in heaven, and in earth: *for I ſay unto you, that in heaven*: the phraſe, *in heaven*, is omitted in the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions, perhaps, becauſe it might be looked upon as unneceſſary, ſince it afterwards appears; but is very proper, or pertinent, whether it be conſidered as deſcriptive of the angels, who have their habitation there, in diſtinction from the evil angels, who are caſt down from thence; or as pointing out the place where the angels behold the face of God, and who are ſtiled *their angels*: the angels of the little ones, that believe in Chriſt, who are miniſtring ſpirits unto them, the guardians of them, who encamp about them, and do many good offices for them. Some have thought from hence, that every good man has his peculiar angel that waits upon him, and cares for him; but this does not neceſſarily follow from theſe words, only that they all have an intereſt in angels, and in their good ſervices. This ſeems indeed to have been a notion that prevailed among the *Jews*, not only that there were angels which preſided over particular nations, but who alſo had the care of particular perſons; ſo they ſpeak of an angel that was particularly appointed for *Abraham* [f]. Nor will they allow, that one angel does two meſſages, nor two angels one [g] meſſage: but that every one has his particular place, perſon, and work; of whom it is further ſaid, that they *do always behold the face of my father which is in heaven*: which is not ſo much to be underſtood of their intellectual knowledge, and apprehenſion of the divine being, of their beholding the glory of his nature, and eſſence, and of their contemplating and applauding his perfections; as of their miniſtring before him, waiting, as ſervants upon him, watching to receive his orders, and ready to obey his commands. And our Lord's argument is, that if ſuch excellent creatures as the angels in heaven, who are continually favoured with being in the preſence of Chriſt's heavenly father, honoured with ſo high a ſtation, as always to ſtand before him, as miniſters of his; if theſe are the guardians of theſe little ones, if they are committed to their care, and they have the overſight of them, then they ought not to be deſpiſed: and beſides, ſince the angels that have the care of them are ſo near the throne, it ſhould deter every one from having their charge in contempt, or doing any injury to them; ſince they are capable of lodging accuſations and complaints againſt them; and, when leave is given, have power of executing the soreſt judgments upon men. This deſcription of angels agrees with what the *Jews* ſay of them, eſpecially of the chief of them. *Michael*, they ſay [h], is the firſt and principal of the chief princes, רואי פני המלך, *that behold the face of the king*; that is, the king of kings, the Lord of hoſts. *Suriel*, which, with them, is another name of an angel, is called [i], שר הפנים, *the prince of faces*, who is always in the preſence of God; and, as the Gloſs ſays, is "an angel that is counted worthy to "come before the king."

Ver. 11. *For the ſon of man is come to ſave that which was loſt.*] This is another, and ſtronger reaſon, why theſe little ones ſhould not be deſpiſed; becauſe Chriſt, who is here meant by the ſon of man, came into this world to ſave theſe perſons; who were loſt in *Adam*, and had deſtroyed themſelves by their tranſgreſſions, and carries great force in it: for if God had ſo great a regard to theſe little ones, as to ſend his ſon to obtain eternal ſalvation for them, when they were in a miſerable and periſhing condition; and Chriſt had ſo much love for them, as to come into this world, and endure ſorrows, ſufferings, and death itſelf for them, who were not only little, but loſt; and that to obtain righteouſneſs and life for them, and ſave them with an everlaſting ſalvation; then they muſt, and ought to be, far above the contempt of all mortals; and the utmoſt care ſhould be taken not to deſpiſe, grieve, offend, and injure them in any form or ſhape whatever; ſee *Rom.* xiv. 15. 1 *Cor.* viii. 11. *Beza* obſerves, that this whole verſe is left out in ſome *Greek* copies, but it ſtands in others, and in all the *Oriental* verſions, and in *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel; nor can it be omitted, the following parable, which is an exemplification of it, requires it.

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[f] T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 96. 1.

[g] Bereſhit Rabba, §. 50. fol. 44. 4.

[h] Jacchiades in Dan. x. 13.

[i] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 51. 1.

Ver. 12. *How think ye,* &c.] Or, as the *Arabic*, *what do you think?* what is your opinion of this matter? what is your ſenſe of it? how does it appear to you? 'Tis a *Talmudic* way of ſpeaking, the ſame with מה אתם סבורין, *what do you think?* what is your judgment? So the *Rabbins*, after they have diſcuſſed a point among themſelves, aſk [k], מאי סבירא לן, *what is our opinion?* or what do we think upon the whole? Chriſt here appeals to his diſciples, makes them judges themſelves in this matter, and illuſtrates it by a familiar inſtance of a man's ſeeking and finding his loſt ſheep, and rejoicing at it. *If a man have an hundred ſheep*; who is the proprietor of them; not the hireling, who has them under his care, and whoſe the ſheep are not; but the owner of them, to whom they belong, and who muſt be thought to be moſt concerned for any one of them that ſhould go aſtray: a hundred ſheep ſeem to be the number of a flock; at leaſt flocks of ſheep uſed to be divided into hundreds. In a *Maronite*'s will, a field is thus bequeathed [l]; “the north part of it to ſuch an one, and with it מאה צאן, *a hundred ſheep*, and a hundred veſſels; and the ſouth part of it to ſuch an one, and with it מאה צאן, *a hundred ſheep*, and a hundred veſſels; and he died, and the wiſe men confirmed his words, or his will.” Such a ſuppoſition, or putting ſuch a caſe as this, is very proper and pertinent. *And one of them be gone aſtray*; which ſheep are very prone to; ſee *Pſ.* cxix. 176. *Iſ.* liii. 6. *doth he not leave the ninety and nine*, which are not gone aſtray in the place where they are; it is uſual ſo to do: *and goeth into the mountains*; alluding to the mountains of *Iſrael*, where were paſtures for ſheep, *Ezek.* xxxiv. 13, 14. and whither ſheep are apt to wander, and go from mountain to mountain, *Jer.* l. 6. and therefore theſe were proper places to go after them, and ſeek for them in: but the *Vulgate Latin* verſion joins the words *in* or *on the mountains*, to the preceding clauſe, and reads, *doth he not leave the ninety and nine in the mountains*; and ſo read all the *Oriental* verſions, *Syriac*, *Arabic*, *Ethiopic*, and *Perſic*; and in the ſame manner *Theophylact*; *and ſeeketh that which is gone aſtray?* This is uſual with men: no man that has a flock of ſhep, and though but one ſtrays from it, but takes this method. This parable now may be conſidered, either as an illuſtration of the ſon of man's coming into this world, to ſeek, and to ſave his loſt ſheep, mentioned in the preceding verſe; even the loſt ſheep of the houſe of *Iſrael*, the little ones that believed in him, who were deſpiſed by the *Jews*. And then by the *ninety and nine*, we are not to underſtand the angels; who never went aſtray, never ſinned, but kept their firſt eſtate, whom Chriſt left in the higheſt heavens, on the holy mountains of eternity, when he became incarnate, and came down on earth to redeem mankind: for theſe never go by the name of ſheep; nor are they of the ſame nature and kind with the one that ſtrays, and is ſought out; nor is their number, with reſpect to men, as ninety-nine to one; at leaſt it cannot be aſcertained; nor were they left by Chriſt, when he came on earth; for a multitude deſcended at his birth, and ſung glory to God. Nor are the ſaints in heaven intended, whoſe ſtate is ſafe; ſince it cannot be ſaid of them, as in the following verſe, that they went not aſtray; for they went aſtray like loſt ſheep, as others, and were looked up, ſought out, and ſaved by Chriſt as others; but rather, by them, are meant the body of the *Jewiſh* nation, the far greater part of them, the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, who rejected the Meſſiah, and deſpiſed thoſe that believed in him: theſe were in ſheeps clothing, of the flock of the houſe of *Iſrael*, of the *Jewiſh* fold; and with reſpect to the remnant among them, according to the election of grace, were as ninety-nine to one: theſe were left by Chriſt, and taken no notice of by him, in compariſon of the little ones, the loſt ſheep of the houſe of *Iſrael* he came to ſave: theſe he left on the mountains, on the barren paſtures of mount *Sinai*, feeding on their own works and ſervices; or rather, he went into the mountains, or came leaping and ſkipping over them, *Cant.* ii. 8. encountring with, and ſurmounting all difficulties that lay in the way of the ſalvation of his people; ſuch as appearing in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh, bearing, and carrying the griefs and ſorrows of his people, obeying the law, ſatisfying juſtice, bearing their ſins, and undergoing an accurſed death, in order to obtain the ſalvation of his choſen ones, deſigned by the one ſheep that was *gone aſtray*; who ſtrayed from God, from his law, the rule of their walk, out of his way, into the ways of ſin, which are of their own chuſing and approving: or, the intention of this parable is, to ſet forth the great regard God has to perſons ever ſo mean, that believe in Chriſt, whom he would not have ſtumbled and offended, and takes ſpecial care of them, that they ſhall not periſh; even as the proprietor of a flock of ſheep is more concerned for one ſtraying one, than for the other ninety-nine that remain.

Ver. 13. *And if ſo be that he find it*, &c.] Which is a caſual and uncertain thing with the ſhepherd, but not ſo with Chriſt, who certainly finds all thoſe he goes after, and ſeeks: for, *verily I ſay unto you, he rejoiceth more of that* ſheep; at the finding of it, whoſe loſs greatly affected him, *than of the ninety and nine which went not aſtray*; who ſeemed not to go aſtray, were outwardly righteous before men, and, in their own opinion, being the ſame with the ninety and nine juſt perſons who needed no repentance in their own apprehenſion, *Luke* xv. 7. This ſame parable is related in *Luke* xv. 3, 4, 5, 6. and it being there more largely expreſſed, and along with other parables of the ſame kind, I ſhall refer the more particular conſideration of it to that place; only obſerve, that it ſeems to me that this parable was twice delivered by our Lord, and that on two different occaſions; once, as here, in his diſcourſe on offences, and upon mention of his coming into this world to ſave loſt ſinners; at another time, as there, upon the *Phariſees* murmuring at his receiving ſinners, and eating with them.

Ver. 14. *Even ſo it is not the will of your father which is in heaven*, &c.] This is the accommodation, or application of the parable of the loſt ſheep to the preſent purpoſe, and is the top of the climax or gradation here made uſe of. Firſt, Chriſt obſerves, in order to deter any from deſpiſing and offending any of his diſciples, even the meaneſt, that they have angels to be their guardians, who are continually in the preſence of God; and next, that he himſelf in human nature came to be the author of ſalvation to theſe perſons; and then riſes up to the ſovereign will of his father, and theirs, the ſource and ſecurity of their everlaſting happineſs; which will is, not, *that one of theſe little ones*, that believe in Chriſt, *ſhould periſh*. It is his will of command that no ſtumbling-blocks ſhould be laid in their way to cauſe them to ſtumble and fall, to the grieving of their ſouls, the wounding of their conſciences, and the periſhing, or loſs of their peace and comfort; and it is his unalterable will of purpoſe, or his unchangeable decree, that not one of them, even the meaneſt, ſhall periſh eternally: in purſuance of which will, he has choſen them in his Son, he has put them into his hands, and ſecured them in his covenant; and having redeemed them by Chriſt, and called them by grace, he keeps them by his power, through faith unto ſalvation. Nor ſhall any one of them finally and totally fall away and periſh, through the power of their own corruptions, the temptations of ſatan, the reproaches and perſecutions of men, the frowns or flatteries of the world, or through the errors and hereſies of falſe teachers, or any other way. It is to be obſerved, that when our Lord in ver. 10. is ſpeaking of the happineſs of the angels, and the honour done to the little ones by having ſuch guardians; then the more to aggrandize this matter, he repreſents thoſe as in the preſence *of* his *Father which is in heaven*; but here, when he would expreſs the wonderful love and grace of God, in the reſolutions of his heart, and purpoſes of his will, to ſave them, then it is *your Father which is in heaven*; and this, the rather to engage them to the belief of it, ſince they ſtood in ſuch a near relation to him, as children to a father; and therefore muſt be infinitely more concerned for their welfare, than a proprietor of ſheep can be, for one that is loſt. The *Arabic* and *Ethiopic* verſions indeed read, *my father*, but without any authority; for the phraſeology, *the will before your Father*, as in the original text, ſee the note on *Matt.* xi. 26.

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[k] T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 88. 2.

[l] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 156. 2.

Ver. 15. *Moreover, if thy brother ſhall treſpaſs againſt thee*, &c.] This is ſaid to ſhew, that as on the one hand, if any of thoſe that believe in Chriſt, ſhould commit a treſpaſs againſt his fellow chriſtian, his ſin is not to be connived at, for fear of offending him; for what Chriſt has before ſaid, is not to be taken in ſuch ſenſe, as to prevent private reproof, or publick cenſures, when there is occaſion for them; ſo on the other hand, he is not to be deſpiſed and ill uſed, and treated in the ſame injurious manner; but gentle reproofs are to be made uſe of, for his good. This is ſpoken not to the apoſtles as ſuch, but as believers in Chriſt; and concerns every one that ſtands in the relation of a brother, or church-member to each other, and only ſuch; for they that are without, don't fall under their notice, nor are they obliged to take, nor can they take altogether, the ſame methods with them. This rule reſpects ſins committed by one brother againſt another, either in word or deed; or ſuch as are of a private nature, and which one only, or at leaſt but few, are acquainted with: in ſuch caſes the advice is, *go and tell him his fault between thee, and him alone*; don't wait for his coming to thee, as being the aggreſſor, to acknowledge his fault, teſtify his repentance, expreſs his ſorrow for his ſin, and aſk pardon; but go to him, and freely and faithfully lay his ſin before him; but don't aggravate it, and reproach him with it, and bear hard on him for it, but gently rebuke and reprove him: let this be done in the moſt private manner; let none be preſent, nor any know of it, even the moſt intimate friend and acquaintance: *if he ſhall bear thee*; patiently, take your reproof kindly, acknowledge his offence, declare his hearty ſorrow for it, and deſire it might be overlooked, and reconciliation made: *thou haſt gained thy brother*; recovered him from the error of his ways, reſtored him to his duty, and ſecured his friendſhip, and intereſt in his favour; nor ſhould any mention be made of this ever after, either to him, or any other, or to the church.

Ver. 16. *But if he will not hear thee*, &c.] But will either deny the fact, or extenuate and excuſe it, or defend it, or at leaſt is obſtinate and incorrigible, ſhews no ſigns of repentance, but is angry, gives hard words, and ill language: *then take with thee one or two more*; members of the church, and perſons of weight, reputation, and character, who either know ſomething of the matter, and ſo can confirm, by their teſtimony, what has been alledged, in order to bring the perſon to conviction and acknowledgment; or if they do not, and which ſeems rather to be the ſenſe, they may, by hearing what is ſaid on both ſides, judge where the truth lies, and join with the offended perſon in the admonition, that it may fall with the greater weight, and become more effectual: *that in the mouth of two or three witneſſes every word may be eſtabliſhed*, referring to *Deut.* xix. 15. So that ſhould the matter be brought before the whole church, theſe witneſſes would be able to teſtify the truth of the caſe, and report the ſteps that had been taken, and what effect they had had; ſo that things being thus prepared, the caſe would appear plain and eaſy, and without difficulty. The whole of this is very agreeable to the rules and cuſtoms of the *Jews*, and is founded on the law, in *Lev.* xix. 17. upon which they form rules very much like to theſe. They repreſent God himſelf taking ſuch a method as this, with the ſons of men[m]: "When the holy bleſſed God reproves "a man, he reproves him in love, privately; if "he receives it, it is well; if not, he reproves him "among his friends: if he receives it, it is well; "if not, he reproves him openly before the eyes "of all; if he receives it, it is well; if not, he "leaves him, and reproves him no more." And this is an inſtruction to men, how they ſhould reprove their friends. They ſay[n], "he that ſees "any thing in his friend that is not becoming, he "ought to reprove him." And which is elſewhere more[o] largely expreſſed: "he that ſeeth his friend "walking in a way that is not good, he is bound "to reprove him, even a diſciple his maſter; and "this he ſhall do for his good, and in order to bring "him to the life of the world to come, or eternal "life; and *if he takes* it *of him, it is well*; but if "not, he muſt reprove again, *a ſecond and a third* "*time*; and ſo he muſt reprove him many times, "if, or until he hears him." And this they require to be done, in the moſt private manner: "reproof out of love, they[p] ſay, is ſecret from the "children of men; whoever reproves his friend in "love, ſeeks to ſecrete his words from the ſons of "men, that he may not expoſe him thereby to "ſhame and reproach." That is, as the *Gloſs*[q] on it obſerves, "he ſeeks to reprove him in ſecret, ſo "that he may not be put to ſhame before many." If this way does not ſucceed, they allow of a publick reproof, for ſo it is ſaid[r]; "thou mayeſt not "reprove him with hard words, till his countenance changes; for whoever cauſes the face of "his friend to turn pale publickly, has no portion "in the world to come; but thou mayeſt reprove "in the words of heaven, or God; and if he does "not return privately, thou mayeſt make him

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[m] Raya Mehimna in Zohar, in Lev. fol. 35. 4.

[n] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 31. 1, 2.

[o] Moſes Kotſenſis Mitzvot Tora pr. Affirm. 11.

[p] Zohar in Lev. fol. 19. 3.

[q] Imre Binah in ib.

[r] Mitzvot Tora, pr. neg. 6.

" aſhamed publickly, and expoſe his ſin before him; " and reproach and curſe him, until he returns to " do well; for ſo did all the prophets to *Iſrael.*" They plead alſo for a ſecond reproof, from the text in *Lev.* xix. 17 [s]. " From whence does it appear, " that he that ſees any thing in his friend unbecoming, ought to reprove him? As it is ſaid, *thou* " *ſhalt in any wiſe rebuke, &c.* if he reproves him, " ולא קבל, *and he does not receive* it, (he does not " take it kindly, or, as here, he does not hear him) " from whence is it manifeſt, that he muſt return " and reprove him? (or repeat the reproof) from " what is ſaid, *reproving thou ſhalt reprove.*" The whole of this, is very fully expreſſed in a few words, by one [t] of their beſt writers, and in great agreement with theſe rules of Chriſt: " He that ſees his " friend ſinning, or going in a way not good, he " is commanded to cauſe him to return to that " which is good; and to let him know, that he " ſins againſt himſelf by his evil works; as it is " ſaid, *thou ſhalt in any wiſe rebuke thy neighbour:* " he that reproveth his friend, whether for things " between him and himſelf, or whether for things " between him and God, *ought to reprove him,* " בינו לבין עצמו, *between him and himſelf;* and " ſhould ſpeak to him mildly, and in tender language; and let him know that he does not ſpeak " to him, but for his good, and to bring him to " everlaſting life; *and if he receives* it *of him,* " *it is well, and if not, he muſt reprove him,* " פעם שנייה ושלישית, *a ſecond and a third time;* " and ſo a man muſt continually reprove, until the " ſinner ſtrikes him and ſays, *I will not hear.*" *Buxtorf* has produced a paſſage out of one of their writers [u], in the very language in which Chriſt here delivers himſelf: " The wiſe man ſays, if thy " friend does thee an injury, reprove him between " him and thee alone: if he hears thee, thou haſt " already gained; if he does not hear thee, ſpeak " to him before one or two, who may hear the " matter, and if he will not hear, reckon him *a* " *worthleſs friend.*" One would almoſt be ready to think, that this writer ſhould mean Chriſt by the wiſe man, were it not for the implacable enmity they bear unto him. The above author, has cited alſo the following paſſage out of the ſame [w] writer, pertinent to the preſent purpoſe: " A friend that " declares to thee thy faults, *between him and thee,* " whenever he meets thee, is better to thee than a " friend, that whenever he meets thee, gives thee " a golden penny."

Ver. 17. *And if he ſhall neglect to hear them,* &c.] The one or two, in conjunction with the offended perſon that ſhall hear the caſe, and admoniſh and reprove; if he takes no notice of what they ſay to him, but remains ſtiff and impenitent, *tell it unto the church:* which ſome underſtand, of the רבים, or *multitude,* before whom it was lawful to reprove, after ſuch private methods had been taken: others, of the political magiſtrates, or *Sanhedrim;* who took cognizance of caſes between one perſon and another, either by themſelves, or meſſengers; and gave admonitions and reproofs, as to parents, when they did not provide for their families [x], and to wives that were perverſe, and provoked their huſbands [y], *&c.* others, of the preſbyters and governors of the chriſtian church; others, of the church itſelf, and ſo the *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *the houſe of chriſtians;* to which it is objected, that as yet a chriſtian church was not formed: but what were the twelve apoſtles of the Lamb? They were the great congregation and church, in the midſt of which Chriſt ſung praiſe to his Father: and ſince the whole of this advice, and theſe excellent rules are given to them, and they are ſpoken of in the next verſe, as having the power of binding and looſing, they may well be thought to be meant here; and that the deſign of Chriſt is, to inſtruct them how to behave, in caſe of offence to one another; that the reproof ſhould be firſt private, and if it did not ſucceed, to be made before one or two more; and if that did not do, the whole body was to be acquainted with it; and which rules hold good, and are to be obſerved by all chriſtian men and churches, in all ages: though no doubt, but alluſion is made to the *Jewiſh* cuſtoms, in rebuking before the multitude, or carrying of a private caſe, after all other means uſed were ineffectual, to the *Sanhedrim. But if he neglect to hear the church;* the advice they ſhould give unto him, the reproof they ſhould think proper for him, or the cenſure they ſhould paſs upon him, *let him be unto thee as an heathen man, and a publican.* This is not a form of excommunication to be uſed among chriſtians, nor was there ever any ſuch form among the *Jews;* nor could heathens or publicans, eſpecially ſuch publicans as were *Gentiles,* be excommunicated, when they never were of the *Jewiſh* church. " A religious perſon indeed, that becomes a col- " lector of taxes, they firſt ſaid, is to be driven " from the ſociety; but they afterwards ſaid, all " the time that he is a tax-gatherer, they drive him " from the ſociety; but when he goes out of his " office, lo! he is as a religious perſon [z]." But one that never was of a religious ſociety, could not be driven out of it. And beſides, this is given, not as a rule to the church, but as advice to the offended perſon, how to behave towards the offender: after he has come under the cognizance, reproof, and cenſure of the church, he is to look upon him as the *Jews* did one that diſregarded both private reproof by a man's ſelf, and that which was in the preſence of one or two more, חבר פחות, *a worthleſs friend,* or neighbour; as a *Gentile,* with whom the *Jews* had neither religious nor civil converſation; and as a *Publican,* or as *Munſter's Hebrew* Goſpel reads it, בעל עברה, *a notorious ſinner,* as a publican was accounted: hence ſuch are often joined together, and with whom the *Jews* might not eat, nor keep any friendly and familiar acquaintance; and ſo ſuch that have been privately admoniſhed and publickly rebuked, without ſucceſs, their company is to be ſhunned, and intimate friendſhip with them to be avoided.

Ver. 18. *Verily I ſay unto you,* &c.] To them all, what he had ſaid before to *Peter,* ch. xvi. 19. ſee the note there: what is ſaid here, refers to things, and not perſons, as there alſo.

Ver. 19. *Again, I ſay unto you,* &c.] As the words in the former verſe ſeem to regard the whole body of the diſciples, whoſe deciſions in caſes brought before them, declaring them juſt or unjuſt, are determinate and unalterable; theſe ſeem to reſpect the one or two, that ſhould join the offended perſon in the reproof of the offender, and are ſpoken for their encouragement; who might think proper either to premiſe, or follow their engaging in ſuch a work with prayer: *that if two of you ſhall agree on earth, as touching any thing that they ſhall aſk;* both in the caſe before mentioned, and in any other thing; whether it be for themſelves or others; to aſſiſt them in the miniſtry of the word, and give ſucceſs to it, for the converſion of ſinners; and in the performance of any miracle, for the confirmation of the Goſpel; in the adminiſtration of ordinances, for the comfort of ſaints; and in laying on of cenſures, for the reclaiming of backſliders; or be it what it will that may be done, conſiſtent with the glory of God, the purpoſes of his mind, and the declarations of his will, and the good of men, provided they agree in their requeſts; though they are here on earth, and at ſuch a diſtance from heaven, from whence their help and aſſiſtance come: *it ſhall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven*; wth whom nothing is impoſſible; and who, as he regards the effectual fervent prayer of any righteous man, ſo more, of two agreed together in any one thing; and ſtill more, of a church and community of ſaints in their united requeſts: a great encouragement this to ſocial prayer, though ever ſo few are engaged in it.

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[s] T. Bab. Erachin, fol. 16. 2. [t] Maimon. Hilch. Deyot, c. 6. §. 7. [u] Miſchar happeninim apud Buxtorf. Florileg. Heb. p. 297. [w] Ibid. [x] Maimon. Hilchot Iſhot, c. 12. §. 14. [y] Ib. c. 14. §. 9. & Moſes Kotſenſis Mitzvot Tora, pr. neg. 81. [z] T. Hieroſ. Demai, fol. 23. 1.

Ver. 20. *For where two or three are gathered together*, &c.] This ſeems to be ſaid in oppoſition to a *Jewiſh* notion, that a number leſs than ten, is not a congregation [a]; whereas, though the number is ever ſo few that are met together to pray to God, or to hear his word, attend on his ordinances, or do the buſineſs of his houſe, or tranſact any affair that is for the glory of God, and the good of ſouls, *in my name*, ſays Chriſt; that is, by his authority, depending on his aſſiſtance, calling upon his name, and making uſe of it, and ſeeking the glory of it: *there am I in the midſt of them*; preſiding over them, ruling in their hearts, directing their counſels, aſſiſting them in all they are concerned, confirming what they do, and giving a bleſſing and ſucceſs to all they are engaged in. The *Jews*, though they ſay there's no congregation leſs than ten, yet own that the divine preſence may be with a leſſer number, even as ſmall an one as here mentioned [b]. “Ten that ſit “and ſtudy in the law, the *Shecinah* dwells among “them, as it is ſaid, *Pſal.* lxxxii. 1. From whence “does this appear, if but five? from *Amos* ix. 6. “from whence, if but three? from *Pſal.* lxxxii. 1. “from whence, if but two? from *Mal.* iii. 16. “from whence, if but one? from *Exod.* xx. 24.” And again [c], “two that ſit together, and the words “of the law are between them, the *Shecinah* dwells “among them, according to *Mal.* iii. 16. from “whence does it appear, that if but one ſits and “ſtudies in the law, the holy bleſſed God hath fixed “a reward for him? from *Lam.* iii. 28.”

Ver. 21. *Then came Peter unto him*, &c.] Having heard and obſerved the rules Chriſt gave concerning offences and brotherly reproofs, he drew near to Chriſt, and put this queſtion to him: *and ſaid, Lord, how oft ſhall my brother ſin againſt me, and I forgive him?* He inſtances in a brother, becauſe it was ſuch an one Chriſt had been ſpeaking of; he makes no doubt of its being his duty to forgive him upon his repentance, and acknowledgment, but wanted to be informed, how often this was to be done, and aſks, whether *until ſeven times?* Which was, as he might think, a large number; and eſpecially, ſince it was double the number of times, that the *Jewiſh* doctors ſet for forgiveneſs: for thus they ſay [d], “A man that commits a ſin, the “*firſt* time they pardon him; the *ſecond* time they “pardon him; the *third* time they pardon him; “the *fourth* time they do not pardon, according “to *Amos* ii. 6. and *Job* xxxiii. 29.” Again, “he “that ſays I have ſinned, and I repent, they for“give him *unto three times*, and no more [e].”

Ver. 22. *Jeſus ſaith unto him, I ſay not unto thee*, &c.] Which is as if he had ſaid, obſerve what I am about to ſay, I do not agree to what thou ſayeſt to fix the number, *until ſeven times* only, but *until ſeventy times ſeven*; a certain number for an uncertain, ſee *Gen.* iv. 24. Chriſt's meaning is, that a man ſhould be all the days, and every day of his life, forgiving thoſe that ſin againſt him, as often as they repent and acknowledge their fault; and that no time is to be ſet for the exerciſe of the grace of forgiveneſs; but as often as there are objects and occaſions, though ever ſo many and frequent, it ſhould be uſed; and which he illuſtrates by the following parable.

Ver. 23. *Therefore is the kingdom of heaven*, &c.] The Goſpel church-ſtate, or the church of Chriſt under the Goſpel diſpenſation, and the methods of God's dealings in it: *likened unto a certain king*; or *a man, a king*, pointing either to Chriſt, the king Meſſiah, who is king of kings, and lord of lords, the king of ſaints and churches; who, as God, has a natural kingdom of providence, and as man and Mediator, a kingdom of grace; and will have a more viſibly glorious one, both in this world and in the other: or rather, the Father of Chriſt, as appears from the application of the parable, in ver. 35. who is the living God, and everlaſting king; whoſe is the kingdom of nature, grace, and glory: *which would take account of his ſervants*; not all mankind, though theſe are all in a ſenſe his ſervants, and accountable to him; nor only miniſters of the Goſpel, who are ſo in an eminent and peculiar ſenſe, and muſt give an account to God of their time and talents, and ſouls committed to them; but all that bear the chriſtian name, that are profeſſors of religion, that are either really or nominally, the ſubjects and ſervants of God. Theſe, it is ſometimes the will and pleaſure of God, to *take account of*; not of their perſons, or number, but of their conduct and behaviour; which, as it will be more fully done at death, or at judgment, ſo ſometimes is taken in this life: God ſometimes calls, and brings, profeſſors of religion to an account, and reckons with them by afflictive diſpenſations of providence; when he puts them upon reflecting how they have ſpent their time, made uſe of their talents and gifts, and have behaved in their families, and in the world, and church; or by dealing roundly with men's conſciences, awakening and convincing them of their ſins, of omiſſion and commiſſion, which ſeems to be intended here.

Ver. 24. *And when he had begun to reckon*, &c.] To open the book of conſcience, and to bring to account by ſome awakening providence, and ſtrong conviction: *one was brought unto him*; whether he would or no, through the force of an awakened conſcience, under guilt and terror; *which owed him ten thouſand talents*; which muſt be underſtood, either of gold, or ſilver: a talent of ſilver contained 3000 ſhekels, as appears from *Exod.* xxxviii. 25, 26. and was in value of our money 375 *l.* but a talent of gold was equal to 4500 *l.* of our [f] money. According to Dr. *Prideaux* [g], a talent of ſilver was 450 *l.* and a talent of gold, the proportion of gold to ſilver being reckoned as ſixteen to one, was 7200 *l.* and according to Biſhop *Cumberland*, a talent of ſilver was 353 *l.* 11 *s.* 10 *d.* *ob.* and a talent of gold of the ſame weight, was 5075 *l.* 15 *s.* 7 *d. ob.* The whole, according to Dr. *Hammond*, was a thouſand eight hundred ſeventy-five thouſand pounds, reckoning them ſilver talents; but if talents of gold are meant, what an immenſe ſum muſt ten thouſand of them be? According to ſome, ſeventy-two millions ſterling. The deſign of the phraſe, is to ſet forth the exceeding greatneſs of the debt. *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel reads it, *ten thouſand manehs*, or pounds; and ſo the *Perſic* verſion: now the value of a *maneh* of gold, was 75 *l.* and of ſilver, 7 *l.* 10 *s.*[h] take the ſum in the leaſt quantity and value, it was exceeding large. The *Arabic* verſion renders it, a *ſum of talents*, without mentioning the number, and may mean an innumerable one. Mention is made of ſuch a number of talents of ſilver, in *Eſth.* iii. 9. which *Aben Ezra* ſays is defective, and ſignifies ten thouſand thouſand talents. The *ſecond Targum* on the place ſays, that the ſum of ſix hundred thouſand zuzim, drachms, or pence (*i. e. Roman* ones) is ten thouſand talents of ſilver. Theſe ten thouſand talents intend ſins, which are called debts, in ſcripture; not that they are properly ſo, or owing to God, for then it would be right to pay them, but becauſe they bind over to puniſhment. All men owe a debt of thankfulneſs to God, for their beings, the preſervation of them, and all the mercies of life; and alſo a debt of obedience to the whole law, in failure of which, they are obliged to puniſhment: hence every ſin becomes a debt, and theſe are numerous; in-dwelling ſin, and the luſts thereof, are innumerable; as are actual ſins and tranſgreſſions; they are more than the hairs of a man's head, and are fitly expreſſed, both for the weight and quantity of them, by *ten thouſand talents.* In this light they appear to the conſcience of an awakened ſinner, who ſees that he has been doing nothing but ſin, all the days of his life; and that he has been continually breaking the law, one precept or another of it, in thought, word, or deed; which violations of the law, even in word and deed, are riſen up to ſo great a ſum, that he is not able to give it to any nearneſs, and with any exactneſs: he can't underſtand all his errors, nor expreſs the full number of them, or declare all their aggravated circumſtances; beſides the ſwarms of corruption of internal luſts and ſins, which he obſerves dwelling in his heart, and are as innumerable as the motes and atoms in a ſun-beam. The ſins of God's people, which have been all made to meet upon Chriſt, have been laid upon him by his Father's imputation of them to him, with his own conſent, are repreſented in this manner; ſee *Pſal.* xl. 12. And indeed, if the debts of one of them amount to ten thouſand talents, what muſt the ſum of all be, put together! and how great muſt be the ſtrength and power of Chriſt, to bear the weight of theſe ſins, and not be broken or diſcouraged, and fail, as he did not! and what a rich virtue and efficacy muſt there be in his blood, to pay off all theſe debts, and make ſatisfaction for them, which could never have been done, if he had not done it! for it is impoſſible that a perſon in ſuch circumſtances as here deſcribed, ſhould ever be able to recover himſelf, or pay his debts, as follows.

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[a] Miſn. Sanhedrim, c. 1. §. 6. T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 23. 2. Gloſſ. in ib.

[b] Pirke Abot, c. 3. §. 6.

[c] Ib. §. 2.

[d] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 86. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Teſhuba, c. 3. §. 5.

[e] Abot R. Nathan, c. 40. fol. 9. 3.

[f] Brerewood de Nummis Heb. c. 4.

[g] Connection, Vol. I. Preface, p. 20.

Ver. 25. *But foraſmuch as he had not to pay,* &c.] Every ſinner is inſolvent: ſinful man has run out the whole ſtock of nature, and is become a bankrupt, and has nothing to offer by way of compoſition; nor has he any righteouſneſs to anſwer for him, nor any works of righteouſneſs which deſerve that name: and if he had, theſe are nothing in point of payment: for a debt of ſin, can't be diſcharged by a debt of obedience; ſince God has a prior right to the latter; and in paying it, a man does but what is his duty. Sin being committed againſt an infinite God, contracts the nature of an infinite debt, which can't be paid off by a finite creature. Chriſt only was able to pay this debt, and he has done it for his people; and without an intereſt in his blood, righteouſneſs, and ſatisfaction, every debtor is liable to be caſt, and will be caſt into the priſon of hell, there to lie till the uttermoſt farthing of the ten thouſand talents is paid, which will be to all eternity. We ſee what a ſad condition ſin has brought men into; it has ſtripped them of their eſtates and poſſeſſions; it has reduced them to want and beggary; it expoſes them to a priſon; to the juſt reſentments of their creditor; to the wrath of God, and the curſes of the law; and what little reaſon there is to think, yea, how impoſſible it is, that a man ſhould be able to merit any thing at the hands of God, to whom he is ſo greatly indebted: he muſt firſt pay his debts, which is a thing impracticable, before he can pretend to do any thing deſerving the notice of God; and even was he ſet free, and clear of all his debts, and entered upon a new life of obedience, and this ſtrictly attended to, without contracting any debts for the future, yet all this would be but what is due to God, and could merit nothing of him; ſee *Luke* xvii. 10. *Rom.* xi. 35, 36. We ſee alſo from hence, how much the ſaints are obliged to Chriſt Jeſus, and how thankful they ſhould be to him, who became a ſurety for ſuch inſolvent creatures; has paid all their debts for them, and procured for them every bleſſing of grace they ſtand in need of: but think, O ſinner, what thou wilt be able to ſay and do, when God comes to reckon with thee, and thou haſt nothing to pay, nor any to pay for thee, or be thy ſurety; a priſon muſt be thy portion for ever. *His Lord commanded him to be ſold, and his wife and children, and all that he had*; according to the *Jewiſh* laws, in ſuch a caſe: of a man's being ſold, or ſelling himſelf when poor, ſee *Lev.* xxv. 47. for the law in *Exod.* xxii. 3. referred to by ſome as an inſtance of this, reſpects the ſelling of a man for theft, and not for debt. Of the ſelling of a man's wife for the payment of his debts, I don't remember to have read any law concerning it, or inſtances of it; but of children being taken for bondmen by the creditor, for their father's debts, mention is made, 2 *Kings* iv. 1. Theſe children, by the *Jewiſh* writers[l], are ſaid to be the children of *Obadiah*, who contracted the debt to feed the prophets in a cave, when they were perſecuted by *Jezebel*; and the creditor, according to them, was *Jehoram*, the ſon of *Ahab*, who lent him money on uſury for this purpoſe, in his father's time; and now *Obadiah* being dead, he takes his children for the debt, and makes them bondmen; ſee alſo *Neh.* v. 5. There ſeems to be an alluſion to this practice, in *Iſa.* l. 1. and it was not only the cuſtom of the *Jews* to come upon children for the debts of parents, but of other nations: with the *Athenians*, if a father could not pay his debts, the ſon was obliged to pay, and in the mean while to be kept in bonds, till he did[k]: and as *Grotius*, in 2 *Kings* iv. 1. proves from *Plutarch* and *Dionyſius Halicarnaſſenſis*, children were ſold by the creditors of their parents, as in *Aſia*, at *Athens*, and at *Rome*. Now this expreſſes the ſtate of bondage, ſin as a debt, brings men into; they become ſlaves to their own luſts, vaſſals of ſatan, and in bondage to the law; and alſo the ruin and deſtruction it expoſes them to; as, the curſe and condemnation of the law, the wrath of God, eternal death, even the deſtruction of body and ſoul in hell: *and payment to be made*; by puniſhment, which will always be making, and never finiſhed. This order of the king was not intended to be executed, as the ſequel ſhews; but declares the will of God, that the ſad and woful condition of man ſhould be ſet before him by the miniſters of the word; ſignifying what his ſtate is, how deſerving of vengeance, and what muſt be his portion, if grace prevent not: the view of which is to vindicate the rights of law and juſtice, to expreſs the ſinners deſerts, and move him to apply to the Lord for grace and mercy, which effect it had.

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[h] Brerewood de Nummis. Heb. c. 4.

[l] Targum Jon. in loc. Tanchuma in Abarbinel in loc. Jarchi, Kimchi & Laniado in ib.

[k] Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 6. c. 10.

Ver. 26. *The ſervant therefore fell down, &c.*] At his feet, upon his knees, or on his face, to the ground; not being able to ſtand before him, or look him in the face, and much leſs to anſwer the demands of his law and juſtice; but owned the debt, and his preſent inability to pay, *and worſhipped him:* the *Vulgate Latin* reads it, *prayed*, or intreated him, *ſaying, Lord have patience with me*; give me but time, ſpare me a little longer, ſend me not to priſon, *and I will pay thee all*: a very weak and fooliſh promiſe, but what is uſual for men in ſuch circumſtances to make. Thus men, under guilt, and dreadful apprehenſions of wrath and ruin, frequently promiſe, that if their lives are but ſpared, what they will do for God, and in a religious way; and very fooliſhly and ignorantly imagine, that by their humiliation and tears, their prayers, and other ſervices, by their good lives and converſations, for the future, they ſhall be able to make compenſation to God for all the iniquities they have been guilty of: which ſhows them to be exceeding ignorant of the nature of ſin, which is committed againſt an infinite being, and therefore reconciliation for it cannot be made by a finite creature; as alſo of the nature of their duties and ſervices, which, when performed, in ever ſo good a manner, can never make ſatisfaction for paſt offences, theſe being duties they are obliged to perform; and would have been equally obliged thereunto if they had never offended; and likewiſe, betrays great vanity, pride, boaſting, and conceit of themſelves, and abilities, as that they ſhall be able, in a little time, to pay all, when they have nothing at all to pay with: and was patience to be exerciſed towards them ever ſo long, they would ſtill be in the ſame condition, and in no better capacity to make payment; but, on the contrary, would ſtill run a larger ſcore, and be more and more in debt. Indeed, the patience and long-ſuffering of God to his people is ſalvation; not that by giving them time, and bearing with them, they diſcharge their debts, and work out their ſalvation; but waiting upon them to be gracious to them, he brings them to repentance, to a ſenſe of themſelves and ſins, and to an acknowledgment of them, and leads them, by faith, to his ſon for righteouſneſs, forgiveneſs, ſalvation, and eternal life; but as for others, his patience towards them, and forbearance of them, iſſue in their everlaſting deſtruction, which, by their iniquities, they are fitted for.

Ver. 27. *Then the Lord of that ſervant was moved with compaſſion, &c.*] Or had compaſſion on him, ſhewed pity to him, and extended mercy towards him; not that he was moved hereunto by any actions of his, as his proſtrating himſelf before him, and his worſhipping him, nor by his cries and intreaties, nor by his promiſes, which were not at all to be depended on, but by his own goodneſs, and will; for not to any thing that this man ſaid, or did, nor to any deſerts of his, but to the pure mercy, and free grace of God, is to be aſcribed what is after related: *and looſed him*; from obligation to puniſhment, and from a ſpirit of bondage, through the guilt of ſin, and work of the law upon his conſcience: *and forgave him the debt*; the whole debt of ten thouſand talents: for when God forgives ſin, he forgives all ſin, original and actual, ſecret and open, ſins of omiſſion and commiſſion, of heart, lip, and life, of thought, word, and deed, paſt, preſent, and to come; and that freely, according to his abundant mercy, and the riches of his grace, without any regard to any merits, motives, and conditions in the creature; though not without reſpect to the ſatisfaction of Chriſt, which no ways detracts from the grace and mercy of God, ſince this is owing to his gracious proviſion and acceptation. It was grace in God that provided, ſent, and parted with his ſon to be the propitiatory ſacrifice for ſin, and accepted the ſatisfaction when made, in the room, and ſtead of ſinners: it was grace in Chriſt to become a ſurety for them, to aſſume their nature, to ſhed his precious blood, and give himſelf an offering, and a ſacrifice for them; and it is diſtinguiſhing grace that this ſatisfaction ſhould be provided, made, and accepted, not for angels, but for men; and though it is at the expence of Chriſt's blood and life, that this ſatisfaction is made, and remiſſion of ſins obtained, yet the whole is entirely free to thoſe who are partakers of it; they have it without money, and without price. So, that though the ſatisfaction of Chriſt is not expreſly mentioned in this parable, and forgiveneſs of ſin, which lies in a non-remembrance, and non-imputation of it, in a covering, and blotting it out, and in remitting the obligation to puniſhment for it, is aſcribed to the compaſſion and mercy of God, yet it is implied; ſince theſe two involve each other: the ſpecial mercy of God, in the forgiveneſs of ſins, ſtreams only thro' the blood, righteouſneſs, and ſacrifice of Chriſt; and the ſacrifice and ſatisfaction of Chriſt largely diſplay the grace and mercy of God.

Ver. 28. *But the ſame ſervant went out, &c.*] From his Lord's palace and preſence, immediately, directly, after he had got his pardon and liberty: *and found one of his fellow-ſervants*; a fellow-creature and chriſtian; not only one of the ſame nature and ſpecies, but of the ſame profeſſion of religion, and in the ſervice of the ſame kind and generous maſter: *which owed him an hundred pence*; which, if underſtood of *Roman* pence, each penny being ſeven pence half-penny of our money, amounted to no more than three pounds and half a crown; a ſmall ſum, in compariſon of the ten thouſand talents which had been juſt now forgiven him: for ſo ſins committed againſt men, againſt fellow-creatures, or fellow-chriſtians, are but ſmall, when compared with thoſe which are committed againſt God. All which circumſtances, as that it was immediately after he had been forgiven himſelf; that it was a fellow-ſervant he found; and the ſum he owed him ſo inconſiderable, greatly aggravate his inhuman carriage, next related: *and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, ſaying, pay me that thou oweſt*; he laid hold on him in a violent manner, and uſed him with great inhumanity: he took him by the collar, and ſhook him, and griped him ſo hard about the neck, that he almoſt throttled, and ſtrangled, or choaked him, as the word ſignifies, and is ſo rendered in moſt verſions. It anſwers to the *Hebrew* word חנק, which is uſed by the *Jews* [1] in the ſame ſenſe; "חוניק, *he that throttles* any one "(who is indebted to him) in the ſtreets, and his "friend comes up and ſays, let him go, and I'll "pay thee, he is free, *&c.*" This man inſiſted on payment of the whole debt; which expreſſes the rigour and ſeverity uſed by ſome profeſſors of religion to their fellow-chriſtians; who, having offended them, in ever ſo ſmall a matter, will not put up with the affront, nor forgive the injury, without having the moſt ample ſatisfaction, and avenging themſelves upon them to the uttermoſt.

Ver. 29. *And his fellow-ſervant fell down at his feet*, &c.] In the moſt humble and ſubmiſſive manner, juſt as he himſelf had done a little before at the feet of his Lord: *and beſought him, ſaying, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all*; uſing the very ſame words, in which he had expreſſed himſelf to his Lord, and had ſucceeded.

Ver. 30. *And he would not*, &c.] Have patience with him, give him time for payment, and forbear ſeverity at preſent, as he requeſted: *but went and caſt him into priſon, till he ſhould pay the debt*; had him before a proper officer, and proved his debt, and got him ſent to jail, there to lie till the whole debt was paid; which, as it diſcovered ill-nature, ſevere uſage, ſo, great ignorance and ſtupidity; for a priſon will pay no debt: which ſets forth the rigorous proceedings of ſome church-members againſt their brethren, that have diſpleaſed them; who immediately bring the matter before the church, and wont be eaſy unleſs ſome cenſure is laid upon them, or they are caſt out, until full ſatisfaction is given them, whereby oftentimes an uſeful member of a church is loſt.

Ver. 31. *So when his fellow-ſervants ſaw what was done*, &c.] What hard uſage, and ill treatment, their fellow-ſervant met with; the *Syriac* reads, *their fellow-ſervants*, being the fellow-ſervants both of the creditor and the debtor: *they were very ſorry*; they were greatly grieved and troubled at the cruelty of the one, and the unhappineſs of the other; being more tender-hearted, and of a more forgiving ſpirit than he: *and came and told unto their Lord all that was done*; to their fellow-ſervant, by one that had ſo lately received ſuch favours from him: this may be expreſſive of the concern of ſome members of churches at ſuch conduct; who, tho' they may not have ſtrength and number ſufficient to oppoſe ſuch meaſures, yet being ſecretly grieved at ſuch cruel methods, go to the throne of grace, and ſpread the caſe before the Lord, tell him all that is done by way of complaint; which is no impeachment of his omniſcience, only ſhews their trouble for ſuch male practices, and the ſenſe they have, by whom only ſuch grievances can be redreſſed.

Ver. 32. *Then his Lord, after that he had called him*, &c.] Or ordered him to be called, and brought before him, *ſaid unto him, O thou wicked ſervant! Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel reads, *thou ſervant of Belial*; thou cruel and hard-hearted man to thy fellow-ſervant, and ungrateful creature to me, on whom my goodneſs to thee has not made any impreſſion, nor taken any effect: *I forgave thee all that debt*; all that vaſt debt of ten thouſand talents, and that freely: *becauſe thou deſiredſt me*; not to forgive the debt, but to have patience, and give time, and therefore unaſked forgave the whole ſum, every farthing of it; which was ſuch an inſtance of pure goodneſs, as was enough to have wrought upon an heart of ſtone, and engaged the moſt tender concern and pity for a fellow-creature, as well as filled with thankfulneſs to the kind benefactor. The favour, ſo lately beſtowed on him, is juſtly obſerved as an aggravation of his wickedneſs.

Ver. 33. *Shouldſt not thou alſo have had compaſſion*, &c.] It is but reaſonable, what ought to be, and may be expected, that ſuch who have received mercy, ſhould ſhow mercy; and as the Lord had compaſſion on this man, and had forgiven him ſuch an immenſe ſum, and ſaved him, his wife and children, from being ſold for bond-ſlaves, the leaſt he could have done after this, would have been to have followed ſuch an example, and have had mercy, as his Lord ſays to him, *on thy fellow-ſervant*; between whom, and him, there was not ſo great a diſtance, as between him, and his Lord; and the ſum ſo ſmall that was owing to him, as not to be mentioned with his: *even as I had pity on thee*; ſuch an inſtance of pity and compaſſion did not only ſet him an example, worthy of his imitation, but laid him under an obligation to have acted ſuch a part.

Ver. 34. *And his Lord was wroth*, &c.] Very angry, greatly incenſed, and juſtly provoked at ſuch inhuman treatment: *and delivered him to the tormentors*, or jail-keepers. The *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *to them that judge*, or the judges; *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel, *to the puniſhers*, or ſuch that inflicted puniſhment according to the decree of the judge: from both, the ſenſe may be, that he was delivered over to proper judges of his caſe, to be treated as the nature of it required, to be caſt into priſon, and there endure all the ſeverities of law and juſtice: *till he ſhould pay all that was due unto him*; which being ſo vaſt a ſum, and he but a ſervant, could never be done: but inaſmuch as this man was fully and freely pardoned before, how comes it to paſs, that full payment of his debt is yet inſiſted on? It is certain, that ſin, once pardoned by God, he never puniſhes for it; for pardon with him is of all ſin; he forgives all treſpaſſes, though ever ſo many, and remits the whole debt, be it ever ſo large; which act of his grace will never be revoked: it is one of his gifts which are without repentance; it proceeds upon, and comes through a plenary ſatisfaction for ſin made by his own ſon, and therefore it would be unjuſt to puniſh for it: by this act, ſin is covered out of ſight; 'tis blotted out, and entirely done away, and that for ever. Hence ſome think this man had only the offer of a pardon, and not that itſelf; but it is not an offer of pardon, that Chriſt, by his blood, has procured, and is exalted to give, but that itſelf; and this man had his debt, his whole debt forgiven him: others think, that this was a church-forgiveneſs, who looked upon him, judged him, and received him as one forgiven; but for his cruel uſage of a fellow-member, delivered him to the tormentors, paſſed cenſures on him, and excommunicated him, till he ſhould give full ſatisfaction, which is more likely: others, that this forgiveneſs was only in his own apprehenſions: he preſumed, and hoped he was forgiven, when he was not; but then his crime could not have been ſo aggravated as it is: rather, this forgiveneſs is to be underſtood of averting calamities and judgments, likely to fall on him for his iniquities, which is ſometimes the ſenſe of this phraſe; ſee 1 *Kings* viii. 34, 36, 39. and ſo his being delivered to the tormentors may mean, his being diſtreſſed with an accuſing guilty conſcience, an harraſſing, vexing devil, many misfortunes of life, and temporal calamities. Though after all, this is not ſtrictly to be applied to any particular caſe or perſon, but the ſcope of the parable is to be attended to; which is to enforce mutual forgiveneſs among men, from having received full and free pardon at the hands of God; and that without the former, there's little reaſon to expect the latter, as appears from what follows.

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[1] Apud Caſtell. Lexic. Polyglott. col. 1314.

Ver. 35. *So likewiſe ſhall my heavenly father*, &c.] This is the accommodation and application of the parable, and opens the deſign and intent of it; ſhewing, that God, who is Chriſt's father, that is in heaven, will act in like manner towards all ſuch perſons, who are cruel and hard-hearted to their brethren, and are of mercileſs and unforgiving ſpirits; for ſo it is ſaid, he will *do alſo unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their treſpaſſes*. The phraſe, *their treſpaſſes*, is omitted by the *Vulgate Latin*, the *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, but is in all the *Greek* copies; and deſigns not pecuniary debts, though theſe are to be forgiven, and not rigorouſly exacted in ſome caſes, and circumſtances; but all injuries by word or deed, all offences, though ever ſo juſtly taken, or unjuſtly given; theſe ſhould be forgiven fully, freely, and from the heart, forgetting, as well as forgiving, not upbraiding with them, or with former offences, and aggravating them; and ſhould alſo pray to God that he would forgive alſo. 'Tis certainly the will of God, that we ſhould forgive one another all treſpaſſes and offences. The examples of God and Chriſt ſhould lead and engage unto it; the pardon of ſin received by ourſelves from the hands of God ſtrongly enforces it; the peace and comfort of communion in public ordinances require it; the reverſe is contrary to the ſpirit and character of chriſtians, is very diſpleaſing to our heavenly father, greatly unlike to Chriſt, and grieving to the Spirit of God.

## CHAP. XIX.

Ver. 1. AND *it came to paſs, that when Jeſus had finiſhed theſe ſayings*, &c.] Concerning humility, avoiding offences, the methods to be taken in reproving offenders, and the forgiveneſs that is to be exerciſed towards them: *he departed from Galilee*; where he had chiefly preached and wrought his miracles, no more to return thither till after his reſurrection: *and came into the coaſts of Judea beyond Jordan*; that is, to that country which was called *beyond Jordan*, and bordered on *Judea*; coming ſtill nearer and nearer to *Jeruſalem*, where he had told his diſciples, a little while ago, he muſt come, and ſuffer, and die. Rather, it ſhould be rendered, *on this ſide Jordan*, as alſo in *John* i. 28. for the coaſts of *Judea* were on this ſide; ſo עבר הירדן is rendered in *Deut*. iv. 49.

Ver. 2. *And great multitudes followed him*, &c.] The *Perſic* verſion adds, *of the ſick and diſeaſed*; but all that followed him were not ſuch, tho' ſome were: theſe came not only from *Galilee*, but from the adjacent parts, from the country beyond *Jordan*, and the coaſts of *Judea*, where he had been formerly; and who reſort to him again, as *Mark* obſerves; and whom, according to his uſual manner, he taught and inſtructed in the knowledge of divine things, and confirmed his doctrines by miracles: *and he healed them there*; in the above-mentioned places, even as many of them as were ſick and diſeaſed.

Ver. 3. *The Phariſees alſo came unto him*, &c.] Either from the places round about, or from *Jeruſalem*: theſe came unto him, not for the ſake of learning, or to be inſtructed by him; but as ſpies upon him, to obſerve what he ſaid and did, and watch every opportunity to expoſe him to the contempt and hatred of the people; *tempting him* with a queſtion about divorces, in order to enſnare him: *and ſaying to him, is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cauſe?* be it ever ſo trivial, as ſaid the ſchool of *Hillell*: for there was a difference between the ſchool of *Shammai*, and the ſchool of *Hillell* about this matter; the former inſiſted that a man might not put away his wife but in caſe of uncleanneſs; but the latter allowed putting away for very trifling things; as if ſhe ſpoiled her huſband's food by over roaſting, or over ſalting it; and, as one of the doctors ſay, if he found another woman that was more beautiful than her; ſee the note on ch. v. 32. This queſtion being now agitated in the ſchools, they artfully put to Chriſt; not for information, but with a view to reproach him in ſome way or other; and that he might incur the reſentment of one party or another, as he ſhould anſwer. They might argue thus with themſelves, and hope to ſucceed in this manner; ſhould he be on the ſide of the ſchool of *Shammai*, which was the weakeſt ſide, and leſs popular, as they had reaſon to believe he would, he would then expoſe himſelf to the reſentment of the ſchool of *Hillell*, and all on that ſide the queſtion; ſhould he take the part of *Hillell*, he would make the ſchool of *Shammai* his enemies; ſhould he forbid putting away of wives, which *Moſes* allowed, they would then traduce him as contrary to *Moſes*, and his law, which could not fail of ſetting the people againſt him; and ſhould he conſent to it, they would charge him with contradicting himſelf, or with inconſtancy in his doctrine, ſince he had before aſſerted the unlawfulneſs of it, but in caſe of adultery; and ſhould he abide by this, they might hope to irritate the men againſt him, who would think their liberty granted by *Moſes* was intrenched on; as, on the other hand, ſhould he, according to the queſtion, admit of putting away for every cauſe, the women would be provoked at him, who would be left to the uncertain humour and caprice of their huſbands; ſo that either way they hoped to get an advantage of him.

Ver. 4. *And he anſwered and ſaid unto them*, &c.] Not by replying directly to the queſtion, but by referring them to the original creation of man, and to the firſt inſtitution of marriage, previous to the law of *Moſes*: *have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning, made them male and female?* This may be read in *Gen*. i. 27. and from thence this ſenſe of things collected; that God, who in the beginning of time, or of the creation, as *Mark* expreſſes it, made all things, the heavens, and the earth, and all that is therein, and particularly *man*, as the *Vulgate Latin*, and *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel ſupply it here, made the firſt parents of mankind, male and female; not male and females, but one male, and one female; firſt, one male, and then of him one female, who, upon her creation, was brought and married to him; ſo that in this original conſtitution, no proviſion was made for divorce, or poligamy. *Adam* could not marry more wives than one, nor could he put away *Eve* for every cauſe, and marry another: now either the *Phariſees* had read this account, or they had not; if they had not, they were guilty of great negligence and ſloth; if they had, they either underſtood it or not; if they did not underſtand it, it was greatly to their reproach, who pretended to great knowledge of the ſcriptures, and to be able to explain them to others; and if they did underſtand it, there was no need for this queſtion, which therefore muſt be put with an evil deſign.

Ver. 5. *And ſaid*, &c.] *Gen.* ii. 24. where they ſeem to be the words of *Adam*, tho' here they are aſcribed to God, who made *Adam* and *Eve*; and, as if they were ſpoken by him, when he brought them together: and which is eaſily reconciled by obſerving, that theſe words were ſpoken by *Adam*, under the direction of a divine revelation; ſhewing, that there would be fathers, and mothers, and children; and that the latter, when grown up, would enter into a marriage-ſtate, and leave their parents, and cleave to their proper yoke-fellows, which relations then were not in being: this therefore being the effect of a pure revelation from God, may be truly affirmed to be ſaid by him. Some think they are the words of *Moſes* the hiſtorian; and if they were, as they were delivered by divine inſpiration, they may be rightly called the word of God. *Jarchi*'s note on the text exactly agrees herewith, which is, רוח הקדש אומרת כן, *the holy Spirit ſays thus: for this cauſe ſhall a man leave father and mother, and ſhall cleave to his wife*; and not wives: and the phraſe denotes that cloſe union between a man and his wife, which is not to be diſſolved for every cauſe, it being ſtricter than that which is between parents and children; for the wife muſt be cleaved unto, and father and mother forſaken: not that upon this new relation between man and wife, the former relation between parents and children ceaſes; nor does this phraſe denote an entire ſeparation from them, ſo as to have the affection alienated from them, or to be diſengaged from all duty and obedience to them, and care and regard for them, for the future; but a relinquiſhing *the houſe of his father and mother's bed*, as all the three *Targums* on the place explain it: that is, he ſhall quit his father's houſe, and not bed and board there, and live with him as before; but having taken a wife to himſelf, ſhall live and cohabit with her: *and they twain ſhall be one fleſh*; the word *twain* is not in the *Hebrew* text in *Geneſis*, but in the *Septuagint* verſion compiled by *Jews*, in the *Samaritan Pentateuch*, and verſion, and in the *Targum* of *Jonathan ben Uzziel*, who renders it, as here, ויהון תרויהון לבישרא חד, *and they two ſhall be one fleſh*. This is the true ſenſe, for neither more nor leſs can poſſibly be meant; and denotes, that near conjunction, and ſtrict union, between a man and his wife, the wife being a part of himſelf, and both as one fleſh, and one body, and therefore not to be parted on every ſlight occaſion; and has a particular reſpect to the act of carnal copulation, which only ought to be between one man and one woman, lawfully married to each other; ſee the note on 1 *Cor.* vi. 16.

Ver. 6. *Wherefore they are no more twain*, &c.] They were two before marriage, but now no more ſo; not but that they remain two diſtinct perſons, *but one fleſh*; or, as the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read, *one body*: hence the wife is to be loved by the huſband as his own body, as himſelf, as his own fleſh, *Eph.* v. 28, 29. *what therefore God hath joined together*; or, by the firſt inſtitution of marriage, has declared to be ſo cloſely united together, as to be, as it where, one fleſh, and one body, as huſband and wife are; *let no man put aſunder*; break the bond of union, diſſolve the relation, and ſeparate them from each other, for every trivial thing, upon any ſlight occaſion, or for any thing, but what is hereafter mentioned. The ſenſe is, that the bond of marriage being made by God himſelf, is ſo ſacred and inviolable, as that it ought not to be diſſolved by any man; not by the huſband himſelf, or any other for him; nor by any ſtate or government, by any prince or potentate, by any legiſlator whatever; no, not by *Moſes* himſelf, who is, at leaſt, included, if not chiefly deſigned here, tho' not named, to avoid offence: and God and man being oppoſed in this paſſage, ſhews, that marriage is an inſtitution and appointment of God, and therefore not to be changed and altered by man at his pleaſure; 'tis not merely a civil, but a ſacred affair, in which God is concerned.

Ver. 7. *They ſay unto him*, &c.] That is, the *Phariſees*, who object the law of *Moſes* to him, hoping hereby to enſnare him, and expoſe him to the reſentment of the people, ſhould he reject that, as they ſuppoſed he would; *why did Moſes then command to give a writing of divorcement, and put her away?* referring to *Deut.* xxiv. 1. which they thought to be a contradiction, and what they knew not how to reconcile to the doctrine Chriſt had delivered, concerning the original inſtitution of marriage, and the cloſe union there is between a man and his wife, by virtue of it, and which is not to be diſſolved by men. Concerning a writing of divorcement, and the form, and manner of it, ſee the note on ch. v. 31.

Ver. 8. *He ſaith unto them*, &c.] In anſwer to their objection; *Moſes, becauſe of the hardneſs of your hearts, ſuffered you to put away your wives*: in which may be obſerved, that, tho' it was by divine direction that *Moſes*, in his ſyſtem of laws, allowed of divorces; yet not God, but he is ſaid to do it, becauſe it was a branch of the political and judicial laws, by which the people of the *Jews* were governed under *Moſes*, and whilſt the *Moſaic* oeconomy continued, and did not concern other people, and other times; and therefore 'tis ſaid *you*, and *your* wives, you *Jews*, and you only, and not the *Gentiles*. And ſo the *Jews* ſay [m], that the *Gentiles* have no divorces: for thus they repreſent God, ſaying; "in *Iſrael* I have granted divorces, I have "not granted divorces among the nations of the "world. *R. Chananiah*, in the name of *R. Phinehas*, obſerved, that in every other ſection it is "written, the Lord of hoſts, but here it is written, the God of *Iſrael*; to teach thee, that the "holy, bleſſed God does not join his name to di"vorces, but in *Iſrael* only. *R. Chayah Rabbah* "ſays, גוים אין להן גירושין, *the Gentiles have no* "*divorces*." Beſides, this was a direct poſitive command to the *Jews*, as the *Phariſees* ſuggeſt in their objection; it was only a ſufferance, a permiſſion in ſome caſes, and not in every one; and that becauſe of the hardneſs of their hearts; they being ſuch a ſtubborn and inflexible people, that when they were once diſpleaſed there was no reconciling them; and ſo malicious and revengeful, that if this had not been granted, would have uſed their wives, that diſpleaſed them, in a moſt cruel, and barbarous manner, if not have murdered them: ſo that this grant was made, not to indulge their luſts, but to prevent greater evils; and not ſo much as a

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[m] T. Hieroſ. Kidduſhin, fol. 58. 3

privilege and liberty to the men, as in favour of the women; who, when they could not live peaceably and comfortably with a man, might be diſmiſſed, and marry another: *but from the beginning it was not ſo*; from the beginning of time, or of the creation, or of the world, or at the firſt inſtitution of marriage, and in the firſt ages of the world, there was no ſuch permiſſion, nor any ſuch practice. This was not the declared will of God at firſt, nor was it ever done by any good men before the times of *Moſes*: we never read that *Adam*, or *Seth*, or *Noah*, or *Abraham*, put away their wives, upon any conſideration; though in the latter there might have been ſome appearance of reaſon for ſo doing, on account of ſterility, but this he did not; nor *Iſaac*, nor *Jacob*, nor any of the *patriarchs*.

Ver. 9. *And I ſay unto you*, &c.] To his diſciples, when they were with him alone in the houſe, and aſked him more particularly about the ſubject, concerning which he had been diſcourſing with the *Phariſees*, as *Mark* obſerves, ch. x. 10, 11. when he ſaid to them much the ſame things he had delivered before in *Matt.* v. 32. *whoſoever ſhall put away his wife*; ſeparate her from his perſon, houſe, and bed, and diſmiſs her as his wife, no more to be conſidered in that relation to him, *except it be for fornication*; or whoredom, for defiling his bed: for this is not to be underſtood of fornication committed before, but of uncleanneſs after marriage, which deſtroys their being one fleſh: *and ſhall marry another* woman, *committeth adultery*; *Mark* adds, *againſt her*; which may be underſtood either of the woman he marries, which not being lawfully done, ſhe lives in adultery with another woman's huſband; or of his former wife, and who is ſtill his wife, and to whoſe injury he has married another; and he not only commits adultery himſelf, but, as in *Matt.* v. 32. *cauſeth her to commit adultery* alſo, by being the occaſion of marrying another man, when ſhe is ſtill his lawful wife: *and whoſo marrieth her which is put away*, for any other cauſe than adultery, *doth commit adultery* alſo; ſince he cohabits with another man's wife; ſee the note on *Matt.* v. 32.

Ver. 10. *His diſciples ſay unto him*, &c.] Being ſurprized at this account of things, it being quite contrary to what they had been taught, and very different from the general practice and uſage of their nation: *if the caſe of a man be ſo with his wife*; if they are ſo cloſely joined together in marriage; if they are, as it were, one fleſh, or one body, that a man's wife is himſelf; that the bond between them is ſo inviolable, that it is not to be diſſolved, but in caſe of adultery; that if a ſeparation be made by a bill of divorce, in any other caſe, and either party marry again, they are guilty of adultery; if a man can't part with his wife lawfully, provided ſhe be chaſte, and is faithful to his bed, let her be what ſhe will otherwiſe, though ever ſo diſagreeable in her perſon, and troubleſome in her behaviour; tho' ſhe may be paſſionate, and a brawler; though ſhe may be drunken, luxurious, and extravagant, and mind not the affairs of her family, yet if ſhe is not an adultreſs, muſt not be put away: *it is not good to marry*; it would be more expedient and adviſeable for a man to live always a ſingle life, than to run the riſque of marrying a woman, that may prove very diſagreeable and uncomfortable; to whom he muſt be bound all the days of his or her life, and, in ſuch a caſe, not be able to relieve and extricate himſelf. This they ſaid under the prejudice of a national law and cuſtom, which greatly prevailed, and under the influence of a carnal heart.

Ver. 11. *But he ſaid unto them*, &c.] With reſpect to the inference or concluſion, the diſciples formed from what he had aſſerted: *all men cannot receive this ſaying*; of theirs, that it is not good to marry, but it is more proper and expedient to live a ſingle life: every man, as the *Syriac* verſion renders it, is not ספק לה, *ſufficient*, or *fit*, for this thing; every one has not the gift of continency, and indeed very few; and therefore it is expedient for ſuch to marry: for what the diſciples ſaid, tho' it might be true in part, yet not in the whole; and though the ſaying might be proper and pertinent enough to ſome perſons, yet not to all, and indeed to none, *ſave they to whom it is given*; to receive ſuch a ſaying, to live unmarried with content, having the gift of chaſtity; for this is not of nature, but of grace; it is the gift of God.

Ver. 12. *For there are ſome eunuchs*, &c.] Our Lord here diſtinguiſhes the various ſorts of perſons, that can, and do live in a ſingle ſtate with content: ſome by nature, and others by violence offered to them, are rendered uncapable of entering into a marriage-ſtate; and others, through the gift of God, and under the influence of his grace, abſtain from marriage chearfully and contentedly, in order to be more uſeful in the intereſt of religion; but the number of either of theſe is but few, in compariſon of ſuch who chuſe a conjugal ſtate, and with whom it is right to enter into it, notwithſtanding all the difficulties that may attend it. Some men are eunuchs, and of theſe there are different ſorts; there are ſome, *which were ſo born from their mother's womb*; meaning, not ſuch who through a natural temper and inclination of mind, could eaſily abſtain from marriage, and choſe to live ſingle; but ſuch who had ſuch defects in nature that they were impotent, unfit for, and unable to perform the duties of a marriage-ſtate; who, as ſome are born without hands or feet, theſe were born without proper and perfect organs of generation; and ſuch an one was, by the *Jews*, frequently called, סריס חמה, *an eunuch of the ſun* [n]: that is, as their doctors [o] explain it, one that from his mother's womb never ſaw the ſun but as an eunuch; that is, one that is born ſo; and that ſuch an one is here intended, ought not to be doubted. The ſigns of ſuch an eunuch, are given by the *Jewiſh* [p] writers, which may be conſulted by thoſe, that have ability and leiſure. This ſort is ſometimes [q] called סריס בידי שמים, *an eunuch by the hands of heaven*, or *God*, in diſtinction from thoſe who are ſo by the hands, or means of men, and are next mentioned: *and there are ſome eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men*; as among the *Romans* formerly, and which *Domitian* the Emperor forbid by a law [r]; and more eſpecially in the Eaſtern countries, and to this day among the *Turks*, that they may the more ſafely be entruſted with the cuſtody of their women; and this ſort the *Jews* call, סריס אדם, *an eunuch of men*, or בידי אדם, *by the hands of men*. The diſtinction between an *eunuch of the ſun*, and an *eunuch of men*, is ſo frequent with the *Jews* [s], and ſo well known to them, that a queſtion need not be made of our Lord's referring to it: *and there be eunuchs which have made themſelves eunuchs*; not in a literal ſenſe, in which the words are not to be taken, as they were by *Origen*; who though otherwiſe too much purſued the allegorical way of interpreting ſcripture, here took it literally, and caſtrated himſelf [t]; as did alſo a ſort of hereticks, called *Valeſians* [u], from one *Valens* an *Arabian*; and which practice is recommended by *Philo* the *Jew* [w], and by heathen philoſophers [x], for the ſake of chaſtity. But here it means ſuch, who having the gift of continency without mutilating their bodies, or indulging any unnatural luſts, can live chaſtly without the uſe of women, and chuſe celebacy: *for the kingdom of heaven's ſake*; not in order, by their chaſte and ſingle life, to merit and obtain the kingdom of glory; but that they might be more at leiſure, being free from the incumbrances of a marriage-ſtate, to attend the worſhip and ſervice of God, the ordinances of the Goſpel church-ſtate, to minſter in, and preach the Goſpel of Chriſt, and be a means of ſpreading it in the world, and of enlarging his kingdom and intereſt. *He that is able to receive it, let him receive it*: whoever is able to receive cordially, and embrace heartily, the above ſaying concerning the expediency and goodneſs of a ſingle life, and having the gift of continency, can live according to it, let him take it, and hold it faſt, and act up to it; he may have leſs of worldly trouble, and be more uſeful for God in the Goſpel of Chriſt, and to the intereſt of religion; but this ſhould be a voluntary thing; no man ſhould be forced into it; and he that goes into it, ought to conſider well whether he is able to contain, or no.

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[n] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 75. 1. 79. 2. & 80. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Iſhot, c. 2. §. 14.

[o] Maimon. & Bartenora in Miſn. Yebamot, c. 8. §. 4.

[p] Bartenora, ibid. & Maimon. Hilch. Iſhot, ut ſupra.

[q] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 80. 2.

[r] Philoſtrat. vit. Apollon. l. 6. c. 17.

[s] Miſn. Yebamot, c. 8. §. 4. Zabim, c. 2. §. 1. T. Hieroſ. Yebamot, fol. 9. 4. Maimon. Hilch. Iſhot, c. 2. §. 26. & 4. 18. Mechoſre Caphara, c. 3. §. 6. Miſhcabumoſhab, c. 1. §. 5.

Ver. 13. *Then were there brought unto him little children*, &c.] It does not appear that they were new born babes; the words uſed by either of the Evangeliſts, do not always ſignify ſuch, but are ſometimes uſed of ſuch, as are capable of going alone; yea, of receiving inſtructions, of underſtanding the ſcriptures, and even of one of twelve years of age, *Matt.* xviii. 2. *Mark* v. 39, 42. 2 *Tim.* iii. 15. nor is it probable that infants juſt born, or within a month, ſhould be had abroad. Moreover, theſe were ſuch as Chriſt called unto him, *Luke* xviii. 16. and were capable of coming to him of themſelves, as his words following ſuppoſe; nor does their being brought to him, or his taking them in his arms, contradict this; ſince the ſame things are ſaid of ſuch, as could walk of themſelves, *Matt.* xii. 22. and xvii. 16. *Mark* ix. 36. Nor is it known whoſe children they were, whether their parents were believers or unbelievers, nor by whom they were brought: but the end for which they were brought is expreſſed, *that he ſhould put his hands on them, and pray*; not that he ſhould baptize them, nor did he; which may be concluded from the entire ſilence of all the Evangeliſts; and from an expreſs declaration that Chriſt baptized none; and from the mention of other ends for which they were brought, as that Chriſt ſhould *touch* them, *Mark* x. 13. *Luke* xviii. 15. as he ſometimes uſed to do perſons, when he healed them of diſeaſes; and probably ſome of thoſe infants, if not all of them, were diſeaſed, and brought to be cured; otherwiſe, it is not eaſy to conceive, what they ſhould be touched by him for: or as here, that he might put his hands on them, and pray over them, and bleſs them, as was uſual with the *Jews* to do; ſee *Gen.* xlix. 14, 15, 16. and it was common with them, to bring their children to venerable perſons, men of note for religion and piety, to have their bleſſing and prayers [y]: *and the diſciples rebuked them*; not the children, as the *Perſic* verſion reads, but thoſe that brought them, as *Mark* obſerves; either becauſe they came in a rude and diſorderly manner, and were very noiſy and clamorous; or they might think it would be too troubleſome to Chriſt, to go through ſuch a ceremony with ſo many of them; or that it was too mean for him, and below him to take notice of them; or for fear he ſhould take freſh occaſion, on the ſight of theſe children, to rebuke them again for their pride and ambition. However, from this rebuke and prohibition of the diſciples, it looks plainly as if it had never been the practice of the *Jews*, nor of *John* the *Baptiſt*, nor of Chriſt and his diſciples, to baptize infants; for had this been then in uſe, they would ſcarcely have forbid and rebuked thoſe that brought them, ſince they might have thought they brought them to be baptized; but knowing of no ſuch uſage that ever obtained in that nation, neither among thoſe that did, or did not believe in Chriſt, they forbad them.

Ver. 14. *But Jeſus ſaid, ſuffer little children*, &c.] This he ſaid to ſhew his humility, that he was not above taking notice of any; and to teach his diſciples to regard the weakeſt believers, and ſuch as were but children in knowledge; and to inform them what all ought to be, who expect the kingdom of heaven, for it follows; *and forbid them not to come unto me*, now, or at any other time; *for of ſuch is the kingdom of heaven*; that is, as the *Syriac* renders it, *who are as theſe*; or as the *Perſic* verſion, rather paraphraſing than tranſlating, renders it, *who have been humble as theſe little children*: and it is as if our Lord ſhould ſay, don't drive away theſe children from my perſon and preſence; they are lively emblems of the proper ſubjects of a Goſpel church-ſtate, and of ſuch that ſhall enter into the kingdom of heaven: by theſe I may inſtruct and point out to you, what converted perſons ſhould be, who have a place in my church below, and expect to enter into my kingdom and glory above; that they are, or ought to be, like ſuch children, harmleſs and inoffenſive; free from rancour and malice, meek, modeſt, and humble; without pride, ſelf-conceit, and ambitious views, and deſires of grandeur, and ſuperiority. Chriſt's entire ſilence about the baptiſm of infants at this time, when he had ſuch an opportunity of ſpeaking of it to his diſciples, had it been his will, has no favourable aſpect on ſuch a practice. It is not denied that little children, whether born of believers or unbelievers, which matters not, may be choſen of God, redeemed by the blood of Chriſt, and have the paſſive work of the Spirit on their ſouls, and ſo enter into heaven; but this is not the ſenſe of this text. It was indeed a controverſy among the *Jews*, whether the little children of the wicked of *Iſrael*, באין לעולם הבא, *go into the world to come*: ſome affirmed, and others denied; but all agreed, that the little children of the wicked of the nations of the world, do not. They diſpute about the time of a child's entrance into the world to come; ſome ſay, as ſoon as it is born, according to *Pſal.* xxii. 31. others, as ſoon as it can ſpeak, or count, according to ver. 30. others, as ſoon as it is ſown, *i. e.* as the *Gloſs* ſays, as ſoon as the ſeed is received in its mother's womb, though it becomes an abortion; according to the ſame words, *a ſeed ſhall ſerve thee*: others, as ſoon as he is circumciſed, according to *Pſal.* lxxxviii. 15. others, as ſoon as he can ſay *Amen*, according [z] to *Iſa.* xxvi. 2. All weak, frivolous, and impertinent.

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[t] Euſeb. Eccl. Hiſt. l. 6. c. 8. [u] Auguſtin. de Hæreſ. c. 37. & Danæus in ib. [w] Lib. quod deterius, p. 186. [x] Sexti Pythag. Sent. p. 8. [y] Maſſechet Sopherim, c. 18. §. 5. ſee the note on Luke ii. 42. [z] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 110. 2.

Ver. 15. *And he laid his hands on them,* &c.] *And bleſſed them,* as *Mark* ſays; he put his hands upon them, according to the cuſtom of the country, and wiſhed all kind of proſperity to them: *and departed thence*; out of the houſe where he had been, and his diſciples with him: the *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *and they went from thence*; from thoſe parts, towards *Jeruſalem*.

Ver. 16. *And behold, one came,* &c.] The *Perſic* verſion reads, *a rich man*; and ſo he was, as appears from what follows: *Luke* calls him, *a certain ruler*; not of a ſynagogue, an eccleſiaſtical ruler, but a civil magiſtrate: perhaps he might be one of the *Sanhedrim*, which conſiſted of *twenty-one* perſons; or of that which conſiſted only of *three*, as in ſome ſmall towns and villages. *Mark* repreſents him as *running*; for Chriſt was departed out of the houſe, and was gone into the way, the high-road, and was on his journey to ſome other place, when this man ran after him with great eagerneſs; and, as the ſame Evangeliſt adds, *kneeled to him*; thereby paying him civil reſpect, and honour; believing him to be a worthy good man, and deſerving of eſteem and veneration: *and ſaid unto him, good maſter*: ſome ſay, that this was a title which the *Jewiſh* doctors were fond of, and gave to each other, but I have not obſerved it: he ſeems by this to intimate, that he thought him not only to be a good man, but a good teacher; that he was one that came from God, and taught good doctrine, which induced him to run after him, and put the following queſtion to him: *what good thing ſhall I do, that I may have eternal life?* Or, as in the other *Evangeliſts*, *inherit eternal life*; a phraſe much in uſe with the *Jewiſh Rabbins*[a]: "*Judah* confeſſed, "and was not aſhamed, and what is his end? "נחל חיי העולם הבא, *he inherits the life of the* "*world to come* (*i. e.* eternal life) *Reuben* confeſſed, "and was not aſhamed, and what is his end? *he* "*inherits the life of the world to come*." This man was no *Sadducee*, he believed a future ſtate; was a ſerious man, thoughtful about another world, and concerned how he ſhould enjoy everlaſting life; but was entirely upon a legal bottom, and under a covenant of works; and ſpeaks in the language and ſtrain of the nation of *Iſrael*, who were ſeeking for righteouſneſs and life by the works of the law: he expected eternal life by doing ſome good thing, or things; and hoped, as the ſequel ſhews, that he had done every good thing neceſſary to the obtaining it.

Ver. 17. *And he ſaid unto him,* &c.] By way of reply, firſt taking notice of, and queſtioning him about the epithet he gave him: *why calleſt thou me good?* not that he denied that he was ſo; for he was good, both as God and man, in his divine and human natures; in all his offices, and the execution of them; he was goodneſs itſelf, and did good, and nothing elſe but good. But the reaſon of the queſtion is, becauſe this young man conſidered him only as a mere man, and gave him this character as ſuch; and which, in compariſon of God, the fountain of all goodneſs, agrees with no mere man: wherefore our Lord's view is, by his own language, and from his own words, to inſtruct him in the knowledge of his proper deity. Some copies read, *why doſt thou aſk me concerning good?* And ſo the *Vulgate Latin*, and the *Ethiopic* verſions, and *Munſter's Hebrew* Goſpel read; but the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions, read as we do, and this the anſwer of Chriſt requires. *There is none good but one, that is God*; who is originally, eſſentially, independently, infinitely, and immutably good, and the author and ſource of all goodneſs; which can't be ſaid of any mere creature. This is to be underſtood of God conſidered eſſentially, and not perſonally; or it is to be underſtood, not of the perſon of the Father, to the excluſion of the Son, or Spirit; who are one God with the Father, and equally good in nature as he. Nor does this contradict and deny that there are good angels, who have continued in that goodneſs in which they were created; or that there are good men, made ſo by the grace of God; but that none are abſolutely and perfectly good, but God. What Chriſt here ſays of God, the [b] *Jews* ſay of the law of *Moſes*, whoſe praiſe they can never enough extol; אין טוב אלא תורה, *there is nothing good but the law*. The law is good indeed, but the author of it muſt be allowed to be infinitely more ſo. Chriſt next directly anſwers to the queſtion, *but if thou wilt enter into life*; eternal life, which is in the queſtion, and which being ſometimes expreſſed by a houſe, a city, and kingdom, by manſions, and everlaſting habitations, enjoyment of it is fitly ſignified by entering into it; which, if our Lord ſuggeſts, he had a deſire of having a right to by doing any good thing himſelf, he muſt *keep the commandments*; that is, perfectly: he muſt do not only one good thing, but all the good things the law requires; he muſt not be deficient in any ſingle action, in any one work of the law, either as to matter, or manner of performance; every thing muſt be done, and that juſt as the Lord in his law has commanded it. Our Lord anſwers according to the tenor of the covenant of works, under which this man was; and according to the law of God, which requires perfect obedience to it, as a righteouſneſs, and a title to life; and in caſe of the leaſt failure, curſes and condemns to everlaſting death; ſee *Deut.* vi. 25. *Gal.* iii. 12, 10. This Chriſt ſaid, in order to ſhew, that it is impoſſible to enter into, or obtain eternal life by the works of the law, ſince no man can perfectly keep it; and to unhinge this man from off the legal foundation on which he was, that he might drop all his dependencies on doing good things, and come to him for righteouſneſs and life.

Ver. 18. *He ſaith unto him, which?* &c.] Whether thoſe commandments of a moral, or of a ceremonial kind; whether the commands of the written, or of the oral law; of God, or of the elders, or both; or whether he did not mean ſome new commandments of his own, which he delivered as a teacher ſent from God: *Jeſus ſaid*; according to the other Evangeliſts, *thou knoweſt the commandments*; not the true nature, ſpirituality, and uſe of them, but the letter and number of them; being trained up from a child by his parents, in the reading them, committing them to memory, and the outward obſervance of them, particularly thoſe of the ſecond table: *thou ſhalt do no murder, thou ſhalt not commit adultery, thou ſhalt not ſteal, thou ſhalt not bear falſe witneſs*. Chriſt takes no notice of the ceremonial law, nor of the traditions of the elders, only moral precepts; and theſe only ſuch, as refer to the ſecond, and not the firſt table of the law, which reſpect duty to the neighbour, and not to God: and this he does, becauſe theſe commandments were more known, and were in common uſe; and he choſe to inſtance in theſe, partly to ſhew, that if men are under obligation to regard theſe, much more ſuch as concern God more immediately; and partly, to obſerve, that if men are deficient in their duty to one another, they are much more ſo in their worſhip of God; and conſequently, eternal life is never to be got and enjoyed by the performance of theſe things.

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[a] T. Bab. Sota, fol. 7. 2.

[b] T. Hieroſ. Roſhhaſhanah, fol. 59. 1. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 151. 2.

Ver. 19. *Honour thy father and thy mother*, &c.] This, as it is the firſt commandment with promiſe, ſo it is the firſt of the ſecond table, and yet is here mentioned laſt; which inverſion of order, is of no conſequence: ſo the *ſeventh* command is put before the *ſixth*, and the *fifth* omitted, in *Rom.* xiii. 9. and with the *Jews* it is a common [c] ſaying, אין מוקדם ומאוחר בתורה, *there's neither firſt nor laſt in the law*; that is, it is of no conſequence which commandment is recited firſt, or which laſt. Moreover, it looks as if it was uſual to recite theſe commands in this order, ſince they are placed exactly in the ſame method, by a very noted *Jewiſh* [d] writer. *And thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thyſelf*; which is not a particular diſtinct command from the reſt, or an explication of the tenth and laſt, not mentioned; but a recapitulation, or compendium, and abridgment of the whole, and is ſaid to be a complement and fulfilling of the law; ſee *Rom.* xiii. 9. *Gal.* v. 14.

Ver. 20. *The young man ſaith unto him*, &c.] For though he was ſo very rich, and in ſuch an exalted ſtation in life, as to be a ruler, it ſeems he was but a young man; and to be ſo early ſerious and religious, amidſt ſo much riches and grandeur, though it was but externally, was both remarkable and commendable: upon hearing Chriſt's anſwer, with which he was highly pleaſed and greatly elated, he very pertly replies, *all theſe things have I kept from my youth up:* as ſoon as he was capable of learning, his parents taught him theſe precepts; and ever ſince he had the uſe of his reaſon, and underſtood the letter, and outward meaning of them, he had been careful to obſerve them; nor could he charge himſelf with any open and flagrant tranſgreſſion of them; not underſtanding the internal ſenſe, extenſive compaſs, and ſpirituality of them; and therefore aſks, *what lack I yet?* In what am I deficient hitherto? in what have I come ſhort of doing theſe things? what remains at laſt to be performed? what other precepts are to be obeyed? if there are any other commands, I am ready to obſerve them, which may be thought neceſſary to obtain eternal life.

Ver. 21. *Jeſus ſaid unto him, if thou wilt be perfect*, &c.] Wanting nothing, compleatly righteous, according to the tenor of the covenant of works, having no evil concupiſcence, or worldly luſts: our Lord ſignifies it was not enough to be poſſeſſed of negative holineſs, and do no hurt to his neighbour, to his perſon, property, and eſtate, but he muſt love him, and do him good; and therefore, though ſo far as he had complied with the law, it was right and commendable; wherefore 'tis ſaid by *Mark*, that *Jeſus beholding him, loved him*; had an affectionate regard to him as man, and approved of his intentions, ſeriouſneſs, and actions, ſo far as agreeable; yet tells him, *one thing thou lackeſt*: not but that he lacked many more, but he was only willing to obſerve one thing to him, as a trial of his love to his neighbour, which is the fulfilling of the law: *go and ſell that thou haſt, and give to the poor, and thou ſhalt have treaſure in heaven:* not that either the law of God, or Goſpel of Chriſt, require this to be done of all men, and at all times; for though it is a duty binding upon all, and always, to relieve the poor and the needy, yet a man is not obliged to give all that he has to them; ſee 2 *Cor.* viii. 11. nor does either legal or chriſtian perfection, lie in doing this: a man may give all his goods to the poor, and yet be deſtitute of the grace of God, 1 *Cor.* xiii. 3. much leſs can ſuch an action merit the heavenly treaſure of eternal life. Nevertheleſs of ſome perſons, and in ſome caſes, it has been required, that they part with all their worldly ſubſtance, for the ſake of Chriſt and his Goſpel; as the apoſtles were called to leave all and follow Chriſt, as this man was alſo; for it is added, *and come and follow me:* between theſe two, *Mark* puts, *take up the croſs*; all which to do, was much more than to ſell what he had, and give to the poor; and indeed, in this branch lies Goſpel perfection, or to be really and truly a chriſtian: for to *come* to Chriſt, is to believe in him, lay hold on him, receive and embrace him as a Saviour and Redeemer; and to *follow* him, is to be obedient to his will, to be obſervant of his commands, to ſubmit to his ordinances, and to imitate him in the exerciſe of grace, and diſcharge of duty; neither of which can be done, without *taking up the croſs*; bearing reproach and perſecution, with patience; undergoing hardſhips and difficulties, of one ſort or another, which attend faith in Chriſt, a profeſſion of his name, and following him the Lamb, whitherſoever he goes. The conſequence of this now, not by way of merit, but by way of grace, is the enjoyment of the rich treaſures of eternal glory: but this man was ſo far from complying with the latter, with coming to Chriſt, taking up the croſs, and following him, that he could by no means agree to the former, parting with his worldly ſubſtance; and which is mentioned, as a teſt of his love to God and his neighbour, and to diſcover his ſinful love of the world, and the things of it; and conſequently, that he was far from being in a ſtate of perfection. Moreover, it ſhould be obſerved, that Chriſt is here ſpeaking, not in the pure language of the law, or according to the principles of the Goſpel, when he ſeems to place perfection in alms-deeds, and as if they were meritorious of eternal life; but according to the doctrine of the *Phariſees*, and which was this man's; and ſo upon the plan of his own notions, moves him to ſeek for perfection, and convicts him of the want of it, in a way he knew would be diſagreeable to him; and yet he would not be able to diſprove the method, on the foot of his own tenets: for this is their doctrine [e]; “ It is a “ tradition, he that ſays this *ſela*, or ſhekel, is for “ alms, that my ſon may live, or I may be a ſon “ of the world to come, lo! זה צדיק גמור, *this* “ *man is a perfect righteous man.*” The *Gloſs* adds, “ In this thing; and he does not ſay, that he does “ not do it for the ſake of it, but he fulfils the “ command of his Creator, who has commanded “ him to do alms; and he alſo intends profit to “ himſelf, that thereby he may be worthy of the “ world to come, or that his children may live.” And ſo in anſwer to a queſtion much like this, the young man put to Chriſt [f]; “ How ſhall we come “ at the life of the world to come?” It is replied, “ take thy riches, and give to the fatherleſs and “ the poor, and I will give thee a better portion in “ the law.”

Ver. 22. *But when the young man heard that ſaying*, &c.] That he muſt ſell his eſtates, and all his worldly ſubſtance, and the money made of them, give away to the poor; and become a follower of Chriſt, deny himſelf, and ſubmit to hardſhips very diſagreeable to the fleſh: *he went away ſorrowful*; not with a godly ſorrow for his ſin and imperfections, but with the ſorrow of the world, which worketh death: he was aſhamed and confounded, that he could not perform what he had juſt now ſo briſkly promiſed, at leaſt tacitly, that whatever elſe was proper he would do; as alſo grieved, that he had not arrived to perfection, which he had hoped he had, but now began to deſpair of, and of obtaining eternal life; and moſt of all troubled, that he muſt part with his worldly ſubſtance, his heart was ſo much ſet upon, or not enjoy it: *for he had great poſſeſſions*; which were very dear to him; and he choſe rather to turn his back on Chriſt, and drop his purſuits of the happineſs of the other world, than part with the preſent enjoyments of this.

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[c] T. Bab. Peſach. fol. 6. 2. Zohar in Num. fol. 61. 4.

[d] R. Sangari, Sepher Coſri, par. 3. §. 11. fol. 146. 2.

[e] T. Bab. Peſach. fol. 8. 1, 2. & Roſhhaſhanah, fol. 4. 1.

[f] Zohar in Gen. fol. 60. 4.

Ver. 23. *Then ſaid Jeſus unto his diſciples*, &c.] When the young man was gone; taking this opportunity to make ſome proper obſervations for the uſe and inſtruction of his diſciples, after, as *Mark* obſerves, he had *looked round about*; with concern, and in order to affect their minds with this incident, and to raiſe their attention to what he was about to ſay: *verily I ſay unto you, that a rich man ſhall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven*; either into the Goſpel diſpenſation, and receive the truths, and ſubmit to the ordinances of it, or into the kingdom of glory hereafter; not but that there have been, are, and will be, ſome that are rich, called by grace, brought into a Goſpel church-ſtate, and are heirs of the kingdom of heaven; though theſe are but comparatively few: nor is it riches themſelves that make the entrance ſo difficult, and clog the way, either into grace or glory, but putting truſt and confidence in them; and therefore in *Mark*, they *that have riches*, are by Chriſt explained of ſuch, that *truſt in riches*; and which rich men in common are very apt to do, as this young man did, againſt which the apoſtle cautions, 1 *Tim*. vi. 17.

Ver. 24. *And again I ſay unto you*, &c.] After the apoſtles had diſcovered their aſtoniſhment at the above expreſſion, about the difficulty of a rich man entering into the kingdom of heaven; when they expected that in a ſhort time, all the rich and great men of the nation, would eſpouſe the Meſſiah's intereſt, and acknowledge him as a temporal king, and add to the grandeur of his ſtate and kingdom; and after he had in a mild and gentle manner, calling them *children*, explained himſelf of ſuch, that truſted in uncertain riches, ſerved mammon, made theſe their Gods, and placed their hope and happineſs in them; in order to ſtrengthen and confirm what he had before aſſerted, and to aſſure, in the ſtrongeſt manner, the very great difficulty, and ſeeming impoſſibility, of rich men becoming followers of Chriſt here, or companions with him hereafter, he expreſſes himſelf in this proverbial way: *it is eaſier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God*: thus, when the *Jews* would expreſs any thing that was rare and unuſual, difficult and impoſſible, they uſed a like ſaying with this. So ſpeaking of ſhewing perſons the interpretation of their dreams [g]; "Says *Rabba* you know, they "don't ſhew to a man a golden palm-tree (*i. e.* "the interpretation of a dream about one, which, "as the *Gloſs* ſays, is a thing he is not uſed "to ſee, and of which he never thought, "ולא פילא דעייל בקופא דמחטא, *nor an elephant* "*going through the eye of a needle*." Again, to one that had delivered ſomething as was thought very abſurd, it is ſaid [h]; "perhaps thou art one "of *Pombeditha* (a ſchool of the *Jews* in *Babylon*) "דמעיילין פילא בקופה דמחטא, *who make an elephant paſs through the eye of a needle*." That is, who teach ſuch things as are equally as monſtrous and abſurd, and difficult of belief. So the authors of an edition of the book of *Zohar*, to ſet forth the difficulty of the work they engaged in, expreſs themſelves in this manner [i]: "In the name of our God, "we have ſeen fit, להכנים פילא בקופא דמהטא, "*to bring an elephant through the eye of a needle*." And not only among the *Jews*, but in other eaſtern nations, this proverbial way of ſpeaking was uſed, to ſignify difficulties or impoſſibilities. *Mahomet* has it in his *Alcoran* [k]; "Verily, ſays he, they who "ſhall charge our ſigns with falſhood, and ſhall "proudly reject them, the gates of heaven ſhall "not be opened to them, neither ſhall they enter "into paradiſe, *until a camel paſs through the eye of* "*a needle*." All which ſhew, that there is no need to ſuppoſe, that by a camel is meant, not the creature ſo called, but a cable-rope, as ſome have thought; ſince theſe common proverbs manifeſtly make it appear, that a creature is intended, and which aggravates the difficulty: the reaſon why inſtead of an elephant, as uſed in moſt of the above ſayings, Chriſt makes mention of a camel, may be, becauſe that might be more known in *Judæa*, than the other; and becauſe the bunch on it's back, would ſerve to make the thing ſtill more impracticable.

Ver. 25. *When his diſciples heard it*, &c.] That is, the difficulty of a rich man's entering into the kingdom of heaven, aggravated by the above proverbial expreſſion, *they were exceedingly amazed*. They were ſurprized at his firſt words; but when he confirmed them by the proverb of a camel's paſſing through the eye of a needle; they were, as *Mark* ſays, *aſtoniſhed out of meaſure*: they did not imagine there was any difficulty of rich men coming into the kingdom of the *Meſſiah*, which they took to be a worldly one, and would be filled with rich men; for ſo they underſtood Chriſt; though he meant by the kingdom of heaven a ſpiritual kingdom, a Goſpel church-ſtate here, or the heavenly glory, or both; but when he expreſſed, by the proverb, the impracticableneſs of ſuch men becoming the ſubjects thereof, their amazement increaſed: *ſaying*, as in *Mark*, *among themſelves*, privately to one another, *who then can be ſaved?* meaning, not with a ſpiritual and everlaſting ſalvation, but a temporal one: for upon Chriſt's ſo ſaying, they might reaſon with themſelves, that if rich men did not come into the kingdom of the Meſſiah, they would oppoſe him and his kingdom, with all their force and ſtrength; and then what would become of ſuch poor men as themſelves, who would not be able to ſtand againſt them? nor could they hope to be ſafe long, or enjoy any continued happineſs in the expected kingdom, ſhould this be the caſe.

Ver. 26. *But Jeſus beheld them*, &c.] Looking wiſhly and earneſtly at them; ſignifying thereby, that he knew their reaſonings among themſelves, though they did not ſpeak out ſo as to be heard by him; and that there was no reaſon why they ſhould be in ſo much concern, as their countenances ſhewed, or poſſeſs themſelves with ſuch fears: *and ſaid unto them, with men this is impoſſible*. *Mark* adds, *but not with God*; *for with God all things are poſſible*; to be done by him, if he will; which are conſiſtent with the glory and perfections of his nature: for as he could, by his almighty power, if he would, reduce a camel to ſo ſmall a ſize, as to be able to go through the eye of a needle, which, with men, is an impoſſible thing; ſo by the mighty power of his grace he can work upon a rich man's heart, in ſuch a manner, as to take off his affections from his worldly ſubſtance, and cauſe him to drop his truſt and confidence in it: he can ſo influence and diſpoſe his mind, as to diſtribute his riches chearfully among the poor, and largely, and liberally ſupply their wants, and even part with all, when neceſſity requires it: he can change his heart, and cauſe the deſires of his ſoul to be after true riches of grace and glory; and bring him to ſee his own ſpiritual poverty, his need of Chriſt, and ſalvation by him; and to deny himſelf, take up the croſs, and follow him, by ſubmitting to his moſt deſpiſed ordinances, and by ſuffering the loſs of all things for his ſake; and he can carry him through a thouſand ſnares ſafe to his kingdom and glory, which is Chriſt's ſenſe; though the thing is impoſſible upon the foot of human nature, and ſtrength, which can never effect any thing of this kind: and as to what the apoſtles ſuggeſted concerning the ſafety of perſons in the Meſſiah's kingdom, if no rich man could enter there, but ſhould be in oppoſition to it; our Lord's anſwer implies, that though, humanly ſpeaking, it was not poſſible and practicable that they, a company of poor, mean, and deſpicable men, ſhould be able to ſtand againſt the united force of the great and mighty men of the earth; yet God was able to ſupport, and uphold them, ſucceed, and keep them, and make them both uſeful and comfortable, amidſt all the oppoſition and perſecution they ſhould meet with, until he had finiſhed his whole will and work by them.

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[g] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 55. 2.

[h] T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 38. 2.

[i] Prefat. ad Zohar, Ed. Sultzbach.

[k] Chap. 7. p. 120. Ed. Sale.

Ver. 27. *Then anſwered Peter and ſaid unto him,* &c.] *Peter* obſerving what Chriſt ſaid to the young man, bidding him ſell all that he had, and give to the poor, and he ſhould have treaſure in heaven, and come and follow him, lays hold on it, and addreſſes him in the following manner, *behold, we have forſaken all, and followed thee.* Though their worldly ſubſtance was not ſo large as the young man's, they had not ſuch eſtates to ſell, nor that to give to the poor, he had; yet all that they had they left for Chriſt's ſake, their parents, wives, children, houſes, and worldly employments, by which they ſupported themſelves and families; and became the diſciples and followers of Chriſt, embraced his doctrines, ſubmitted to his commands, imitated him in the exerciſe of grace, and diſcharge of duty, denying themſelves, and ſuffering many hardſhips on his account: wherefore it is aſked, *what ſhall we have therefore?* what reward for all this? what part in the Meſſiah's kingdom? or what treaſure in heaven?

Ver. 28. *And Jeſus ſaid unto them,* &c.] To all the diſciples whom *Peter* perſonated; *verily I ſay unto you:* the thing being ſomething very conſiderable, and of great moment, Chriſt uſes the aſſeveration he ſometimes does in ſuch caſes: *that ye which have followed me.* Chriſt does not deny that they had forſaken all for his ſake, nor does he deſpiſe it, becauſe it was but little they left, though he does not repeat it; but only takes notice of their following him, which, including their faith in him, their profeſſion of him, and ſubjection to him, was a much greater action, and of more importance than the other; and therefore is only mentioned, and which our Lord confirms: *in the regeneration.* This clauſe is ſo placed, that it may be read in connection with the preceding words, and be underſtood of the diſciples following Chriſt in the regeneration; meaning, not the grace of regeneration, in which they could not be ſaid, with propriety, to follow Chriſt; and one of them was never a partaker of it: but the new ſtate of things, in the church of God, which was foretold, and is called the time of reformation, or ſetting all things right, which began upon the ſealing up the law, and the prophets, and the miniſtry of *John* the *Baptiſt*, and of Chriſt; who both, when they began to preach, declared, that this time, which they call the kingdom of heaven, was at hand, juſt uſhering in. Now the twelve apoſtles followed Chriſt herein: they believed, and profeſſed him to be the Meſſiah; they received, what the *Jews* called, his new doctrine, and preached it to others; they ſubmitted to the new ordinance of baptiſm, and followed Chriſt, and attended him wherever he went, working miracles, preaching the Goſpel, and reforming the minds and manners of men. Now this new diſpenſation is called the regeneration, and which more manifeſtly took place after our Lord's reſurrection, and aſcenſion, and the pouring down of the Spirit; wherefore the phraſe may be connected with the following words, *when the ſon of man ſhall ſit in the throne of his glory, in the regeneration*; not in the reſurrection of the dead, or at the laſt judgment, but in this new ſtate of things, which now began to appear with another face: for the apoſtles having a new commiſſion to preach the Goſpel to all the world; and being endued with power from on high for ſuch ſervice, in a ſhort time went every where preaching the word, with great ſucceſs. *Gentiles* were converted, as well as *Jews*, and both brought into a Goſpel church-ſtate; the ceremonies of the old law being aboliſhed, were diſuſed; and the ordinances of baptiſm, and the Lord's ſupper, every where practiſed; old things paſſed away, and all things became new: agreeable to this the *Syriac* verſion renders the phraſe, בעלמא חדתא, *in the new world*; and ſo the *Perſic*. The *Arabic* reads it, *in the generation*, or *age to come*; which the *Jews* ſo often call the world, or age to come, the kingdom of the Meſſiah, the Goſpel-diſpenſation. *When the ſon of man ſhall ſit in the throne of his glory*, or glorious throne; as he did when he aſcended into heaven, and ſat down at the right hand of God; and was then exalted as a prince, and made, or declared to be Lord and Chriſt; and was crowned in human nature, with honour, and glory, and angels, principalities, and powers, made ſubject to him: *ye alſo ſhall ſit upon twelve thrones:* for tho' *Judas* fell from his apoſtleſhip, yet *Matthias* was choſen in his room, and took his place, and made up the number twelve; a metaphorical phraſe, ſetting forth the honour, dignity, and authority of their office and miniſtry, by which they ſhould be *judging the twelve tribes of Iſrael*; doctrinally and practically; by charging them with the ſin of crucifying Chriſt, condemning them for their unbelief, and rejection of him, denouncing the wrath of God, and the heavieſt judgments that ſhould fall upon them, as a nation, for their ſin; and by turning from them to the *Gentiles*, under which judgment they continue to this day. So the doctors among the *Jews* are repreſented as ſitting and judging others: of *the potters*, in 1 *Chron.* iv. 23. they ſay[1], "these are the "diſciples of the law, or the lawyers, for whoſe "ſake the world is created, דיתבין על דינא, *who* "*ſit in judgment*, and eſtabliſh the world; and build, "and perfect the ruins of the houſe of *Iſrael*."

Ver. 29. *And every one that hath forſaken houſes,* &c.] Not only the then diſciples of Chriſt, but any other believer in him, whether at that time, or in any age, that ſhould be called to quit their habitations, or leave their deareſt relations, friends, and ſubſtance: as *brethren or ſiſters, or father or mother, or wife or children, or lands, for my name's ſake*; or, as in *Luke*, *for the kingdom of God's ſake*; that is, for the ſake of the Goſpel, and a profeſſion of it. Not that believing in Chriſt, and profeſſing his name, do neceſſarily require a parting with all worldly ſubſtance, and natural relations; but when theſe things ſtand in competition with Chriſt, he is to be loved and preferred before them; and believers are always to be ready to part with them for his ſake, when perſecution ariſes, becauſe of the word. All theſe things are to be relinquiſhed, rather than Chriſt, and his Goſpel; and ſuch who ſhall be enabled, through divine grace, to do ſo, *ſhall receive an hundred fold*: *Mark* adds, *now in this time*; and *Luke* likewiſe, *in this preſent time*, in this world; which may be underſtood either in ſpiritual things, the love of God, the preſence of Chriſt, the comforts of the Holy Ghoſt, the communion of ſaints, and the joys and pleaſures felt in the enjoyment of theſe things; being an hundred times more and better to them, than all they have left or loſt for Chriſt's ſake; or in temporal things, ſo in *Mark* it ſeems to be explained, that ſuch ſhall now receive an hundred fold, even *houſes and brethren, and ſiſters and mothers, and children and lands*; not that they ſhould receive, for the leaving of one houſe, an hundred houſes; or for forſaking one brother, an hundred brethren, &c. which laſt indeed might be true, as to a ſpiritual relation; but that the ſmall pittance of this world's goods, and the few friends they ſhould have *with perſecutions* along with them, and amidſt them, ſhould be ſo ſweeten'd to them, with the love and preſence of God, that theſe ſhould be more and better to them than an hundred houſes, fields, and friends, without them: *and ſhall inherit everlaſting life*. The other Evangeliſts add, *in the world to come*; which is infinitely beſt of all; for this is an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, which fades not away, reſerved in the heavens, when all other inheritances are corruptible, defiled, fading, and periſhing; houſes fall, relations die, friends fail, and lands and eſtates do not continue for ever: they then have the beſt of it, who being called, in providence, to quit all terrene enjoyments for Chriſt's ſake, are favoured with his preſence here, and ſhall enjoy eternal glory and happineſs with him in another world.

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[1] Targum in 1 Chron. iv. 23.

Ver. 30. *But many that are firſt ſhall be laſt*, &c.] This may refer unto, or be occaſioned by, either the young ruler; ſignifying that he, and others like him, who were ſuperior in riches and honour, were firſt in this world, of the firſt rank and figure, ſhould be the laſt in the world to come: *and the laſt ſhall be firſt*; the apoſtles, who were laſt in this world, being poor, mean, and abject, ſhould be the firſt in the other: or to the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, who were in the chief place, and higheſt eſteem, in the *Jewiſh* church, and yet leaſt in the kingdom of heaven; when, on the other hand, the publicans and ſinners, who were in the loweſt claſs, and in leaſt eſteem, went firſt into it: or to the caſe of perſecution, when ſome, who ſeem moſt forward to endure it at a diſtance, when it comes nearer, are moſt backward to it; whilſt others, who were moſt fearful of it, and ready to ſhrink at the thoughts of it, moſt chearfully bear it: or to the apoſtles themſelves, one of which, who was now firſt, *Judas*, ſhould be laſt; and the apoſtle *Paul*, who was laſt of all, as one born out of due time, ſhould be firſt: or to *Jews* and *Gentiles*, intimating, that the *Jews*, who were firſt in outward privileges, would be rejected of God for their unbelief, and contempt of the Meſſiah; and the *Gentiles*, who were laſt called, ſhould be firſt, or chief, in embracing the Meſſiah, profeſſing his Goſpel, and ſupporting his intereſt. This ſentence is confirmed, and illuſtrated, by a parable, in the following chapter.

## CHAP. XX.

Ver. 1. FOR *the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man*, &c.] That is, the Goſpel-diſpenſation, or times of the Meſſiah, may fitly be repreſented by a man *that is an houſholder*, or maſter of a family, as Chriſt is; ſee *Matt*. x. 25. He is maſter of the whole family of God, in heaven, and in earth, of all the children of God, and houſhold of faith; his houſe they are, he is father and maſter, ſon and firſt-born, prieſt and prophet there. *Which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard*: by *the vineyard* may be meant the church, which, like a vineyard, is ſeparated by electing, redeeming, and calling grace, and by the order and ordinances of the Goſpel, from the reſt of the world; is ſet with various vines, with trees of righteouſneſs, with pleaſant plants, both fruitful and profitable; and which are dear and valuable to Chriſt; and about which much care is uſed to preſerve, keep, and improve them. This may be called *his*, Chriſt's, being what he has choſen for himſelf, his father has given him, and he is heir of; which he has purchaſed with his blood, and which he plants, waters, takes care of, and enjoys. The *labourers* deſign either the miniſters of the Goſpel, who labour in the word and doctrine, who are, or, at leaſt ought to be, labourers in Chriſt's vineyard, and not loiterers; whoſe work in ſtudy, meditation, and prayer, in the miniſtration of the word and ordinances, and in performing other ſervices they are called unto, is very laborious; and made more ſo, through the wickedneſs of ſome, and weakneſs of others: the employment of theſe labourers in the vineyard is various; the buſineſs of ſome is to plant; they are chiefly made uſe of in converſion: the work of others is to water; theſe are inſtruments in edification, and means of the growth of grace: others have a good hand at pruning, giving reproofs and corrections, in a ſuitable manner, with ſucceſs, to the checking of ſin, and bringing forth more fruit: others are uſeful in propping and ſupporting the vines, comforting and ſtrengthening weak believers; and others in protecting and defending the outworks of the church, the doctrines and ordinances of it; or elſe private Chriſtians in general may be intended, who all are, or ſhould be labourers, both in the exerciſe of grace; for there's the work of faith, and the labour of love, to God, Chriſt, and his people, in which they ſhould be continually employed; and in the diſcharge of duty, with regard to themſelves; and in the care of their own vineyard, with reſpect to their families, which are their charge, and alſo to the church of Chriſt, of which they are members. Theſe labourers are ſaid to be *hired* by the houſholder, or owner of the vineyard, Chriſt, not ſtrictly and properly ſpeaking; nor does it mean that he had no prior right to their obedience, or that there is any merit in their labour, or that that is the condition of their ſalvation; but it ſignifies the influence of his grace, in making them willing to ſerve him chearfully, and labour in his vineyard freely; to encourage them in which, he makes them many gracious, and exceeding great and precious promiſes, and particularly that of eternal life: for which purpoſe, 'tis ſaid, that he *went out*, either from his father as mediator, being ſent by him; or from heaven into this world, by the aſſumption of human nature; or by his Spirit, and the influence of his grace, in the calls of his people, to their ſeveral ſervices, in his church; and that *early in the morning:* ſome of them being very early called to labour there; meaning either in the morning of the world, as *Adam*, *Abel*, *Seth*, *Enoch*, and others; or in the morning of the *Jewiſh* church-ſtate, as *Abraham*, *Moſes*, *Joſhua*, and the like; or in the morning of the Goſpel-diſpenſation, as the apoſtles of Chriſt, which ſeems moſt likely; or in the morning of youth, as *Timothy*, and others. Several things in this firſt part of the parable might be illuſtrated from the *Jewiſh* writings. They have a parable indeed, which, in the ſeveral parts of it, greatly reſembles this, and begins thus[m]; "to " what is *R. Bon* like? to a king that hath a vine-" yard, ושכר עליו פועלים, *and hires labourers into* " *it*, &c." Out of which ſome other things will be remarked, in the following parts of this parable: of a ſon's being ſent, and going out to hire labourers into the vineyard, take the following inſtance[n]; " it happened to *R. Jochanan ben Matthia*, that he " ſaid to his ſon, צא ושכר, *go out*, *and hire la-* " *bourers* for us: *he went out*, and agreed with " them for their food." The time of hiring labourers, here mentioned, exactly agrees with the *Jewiſh* accounts[o]. " Says *R. Juda ben Bethira*, when " the face of all the eaſt is light unto *Hebron*, all " the people go out, every man to his work; and " when it is ſo light, it is good *to hire labourers* " we ſay." Upon which the *Gloſs* ſays, " every " man goes out to his work, not for labourers, but " *the houſholder*, who משכים יותר, *riſes earlier to* " *find labourers to hire*." Perhaps it may not be worth while to obſerve, how large a ſpot of ground, ſet with vines, was, by them, called a vineyard: it is frequently ſaid by them[p], " that a vineyard " planted by leſs than four cubits, is no vineyard; " but *R. Simeon*, and the wiſe men, ſay it is a " vineyard."

Ver. 2. *And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day*, &c.] Theſe labourers were of that ſort that were called שכיר יום, *hired for a day*; concerning whom is the following rule[q]: " he " that is hired for a day, may demand it all the " night; and he that is hired for a night, may de-" mand it all the day: he that is hired for hours, " may demand it all the night, and all the day; " he that is hired for a week, he that is hired for a " month, he that is hired for a year, he that is " hired for ſeven, if he goes out in the day, may " demand all the day; and if he goes out in the " night, he may demand it all the night, and all " the day." And the wages of a day were uſually דינר, *a penny*; which, if underſtood of a *Roman* penny, was ſeven pence half-penny of our money. One of their canons runs thus[r]; " he that hires a " labourer in the winter, to work with him in the " ſummer, בדינר בכל יום, *for a penny every day*, " and he gives him his hire; and, lo! his hire is " alike to that in the winter, a *ſela* every day, " this is forbidden; becauſe it looks as if he choſe " that time to leſſen his wages; but if he ſays to " him, work with me from this day, to ſuch a " time, *for a penny every day*, tho' his hire is the " ſame, a *ſela* every day, this is lawful." By the penny a day agreed for with the labourers, may be meant external privileges; or the free promiſe made, whether to miniſters, or private believers, of a ſufficient ſupply of grace daily, that as their day is, their ſtrength ſhall be; together with that of eternal life and happineſs at laſt. *He ſent them into his vineyard*; to labour there: for none have any buſineſs there, but ſuch who are called and ſent by the owner of it; and where ſons are ſent, and work, as well as ſervants; ſee *Matt.* xxi. 28, 29.

Ver. 3. *And he went out about the third hour*, &c.] About nine o'clock in the morning, *and ſaw others ſtanding idle in the market-place*; the place where labourers uſed to be hired: and may deſign the world, becauſe a place full of people, and of great wickedneſs, for the whole world lies in it; a place of trade and traffick in worldly things, and likewiſe of worldly and carnal pleaſure, and alſo of idleneſs. Now God's elect, before calling, are in this place: they are natives of it, have their converſation according to it: here Chriſt came in perſon, and here he ſends his miniſters, his Goſpel, to find them out, and by his Spirit and grace he calls them from hence; ſo that afterwards they are no more of it, tho' they are in it: but before converſion they belong to it, and their poſture then is *ſtanding idle*; being ſluggiſh, and ſlothful in buſineſs, unwilling to work, and afraid of a little danger and trouble, ſauntring away their time in carnal pleaſures, and ſo clothed with rags, and in a ſtarving, famiſhing condition: but Chriſt's eye is upon them; he obſerves, and takes notice of them in this diſagreeable poſition and ſituation, and beſpeaks them in the following manner.

Ver. 4. *And ſaid unto them, go ye alſo into the vineyard*, &c.] Expreſſive of a call of divine grace out of the world, into the church; and which ariſes from mere grace, and good-will, without any merit in, or motive from man, as the caſe here ſhews: for the houſholder went out to theſe men, not they to him; he puts the queſtion to them, and calls them, and bids them go into his vineyard; they don't aſk him to hire them, nor deſire to be in his ſervice. Moreover, the perſons called were a parcel of idle, mean, vulgar people, as market-folks commonly are; the weak, baſe, and fooliſh things of the world. The encouragement given them follows, *and whatſoever is right I will give you*; which is to be underſtood, not of ſtrict juſtice; for in this ſenſe nothing could be given to ſinful mortals, for their ſervices; but of grace, for what is had on this ſcore, whether in this, or in the other world, is in a way of giving and receiving, which are the phraſes uſed here, and in the context. It properly ſignifies what is meet and convenient, and will be ſatisfying; and ſince it is not expreſſed what he would give them, and they ſhould receive, it calls for faith and dependance on divine goodneſs: for it does not yet appear, what the faithful labourers in Chriſt's vineyard will want, and ſhall receive in this life, nor what will be their happineſs in the world to come: the glories and joys of heaven are unſeen things; and eternal life is a hidden one at preſent, and muſt be truſted for: *and they went their way*; into the vineyard, the church, to labour there; which ſhews, that the call was powerful and efficacious; they were powerfully wrought upon by it; were at once inclined, and made willing to, and did go chearfully, without ſtanding to diſpute about their work or wages.

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[m] Shirhaſhirim Rabba, fol. 21. 3. Vid. Midraſh Koheleth, fol. 72. 4. & Talmud Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 5. 3.

[n] Miſna Bava Metzia, c. 7. §. 1.

[o] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 28. 2.

[p] T. Hieroſ. Sheviith, fol. 33. 2. T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 37. 2. & 83. 1.

[q] Miſna Bava Metzia, c. 9. §. 11. Maimon. Hilch. Shecirut, c. 11. §. 2.

[r] Maimon. Hilch. Milvah Ulavah, c. 7. §. 12. Vid. T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 86. 2. & 87. 1. & Gloſſ. in ib.

Ver. 5. *Again he went out about the ſixth and ninth hour*, &c.] About twelve o'clock, or at noon, and three o'clock in the afternoon. Theſe three laſt mentioned ſeaſons of the day, were the hours of prayer; ſee *Acts* ii. 15. and iii. 1. and x. 9. *and did likewiſe*: ſeeing others in the ſame place, and poſture, he called them, and ſent them into his vineyard, to labour there, giving them the ſame promiſe he did to others.

Ver. 6. *And about the eleventh hour he went out*, &c.] About five o'clock in the afternoon. The *Perſic* verſion reads it, *the twelfth hour*, which was ſix o'clock in the afternoon, the laſt hour of the day. The *Jews* divided their day into twelve hours, *John* xi. 9. and theſe twelve hours into four parts; ſee *Neh.* ix. 3. each part containing three hours, to which diviſion there is a manifeſt reſpect in this parable. Theſe different ſeaſons of the huſbandman's going out to hire labourers, may have regard either to the ſeveral periods of time, and ages of the world, as before the law, under the law, the times of the Meſſiah, and the laſt days; or the various diſpenſation of the Goſpel, firſt by Chriſt, and *John* the *Baptiſt* to the *Jews*, then by the apoſtles to the ſame in their firſt miſſion, afterwards when their commiſſion was renewed, firſt to the *Jews* in *Judæa*, and then to the ſame among the nations of the world, and laſt of all to the *Gentiles*; or to the ſeveral ſtages of human life, and may regard Chriſt's call of perſons in childhood, youth, manhood, and old age; which laſt may be ſignified by the eleventh hour, as alſo the *Gentiles*, and the remainder of God's elect in the laſt day: *and found others ſtanding idle*; in the ſame place and poſition as before: for the ſtate and condition of God's elect, by nature, as it is the ſame with others, 'tis the ſame with them all. The word *idle* is omitted here by the *Vulgate Latin*, the *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, and in *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel; but is retained in the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions; and ſtands in the *Greek* copies: *and ſaith unto them, why ſtand ye here all the day idle?* for being about the eleventh hour, the day was far ſpent, it was almoſt gone, a ſmall portion of it remained, but one hour, as appears from ver. 12.

Ver. 7. *They ſay unto him, becauſe no man hath hired us*, &c.] This may be fitly applied to the *Gentiles*, who for many hundreds of years were neglected by God; he over-looked the times of their ignorance, took no notice of them in their ſtate of ſtupidity, blindneſs, and irreligion; but ſuffered them to walk in their own ways, ſent no prophets to inſtruct them, nor meſſages, nor meſſengers to them; till at length the *Jews*, having rejected and crucified the Meſſiah, and perſecuted his apoſtles, and contradicted, and blaſphemed the Goſpel, they were ordered to go to the *Gentiles*, and preach it to them: *he ſaith unto them, go ye alſo into the vineyard:* the Goſpel was made the power of God unto ſalvation to them; they were called by grace, became of the ſame body the church, were fellow-heirs with the believing *Jews*, partakers of the ſame promiſes and privileges, in a Goſpel church-ſtate, and were equally labourers in the Lord's vineyard: *and whatſoever is right, that ſhall ye receive*; with the reſt of the labourers in it. This clauſe is left out in the *Vulgate Latin*, and in *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel; nor is it in *Beza*'s moſt ancient *Greek* copy, tho' in all the reſt; nor is it in the *Perſic* verſion, which has added, *and they went*, as they were bidden, into the vineyard, the call being effectual; but is retained in the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions.

Ver. 8. *So when even was come*, &c.] At ſix o'clock, or when the ſun was ſet, which was the time of paying labourers their wages: thus in the parable of the *Jews*, before referr'd to, which bears ſome reſemblance to this, it is ſaid; "לעתותי ערב[s]; "that *at evening time* the labourers came to take "their wages." Sooner than this, one that was hired for a day, could not demand it; nor was the maſter of the vineyard, who hired him, obliged to pay him till the ſun was ſet[t], which was the time of his going forth from his labour[u]. This even may be underſtood, either of the evening of the *Jewiſh* ſtate, upon the calling of the *Gentiles*; or of the end of the world, the cloſe of the Goſpel-diſpenſation; when the work of it will be over, when all the elect of God, *Jews* and *Gentiles*, ſhall be called and gathered in, and all brought to repentance towards God, and faith in Chriſt. *The Lord of the vineyard ſaith unto his ſteward*: by *the Lord of the vineyard* may be meant God the father, who has choſen and ſeparated the vineyard of the church for himſelf; and has made it the care and charge of his ſon Jeſus Chriſt; who, as mediator, may be deſigned by *his ſteward*; who has not only all the ſtores of grace in his hand, to diſtribute to his people, in this life, as their caſes require; but has alſo eternal life and happineſs in his poſſeſſion for them; not only the promiſe of it, but that itſelf; and has a power of giving it to as many as the father hath given him; and which he, the righteous judge, and faithful ſteward, will give at the day of judgment, to all that love his appearing. *Call the labourers, and give them their hire*; the proper time being come: for the *Jews* ſay[w], "it is an affirma-"tive precept to give the wages of an hired perſon "in its time; as it is ſaid, *Deut.* xxiv. 15. *at his* "*day thou ſhalt give him his hire*; and if it is pro-"longed after its time, 'tis tranſgreſſing a nega-"tive precept, as it is ſaid, (in the ſame place) "*neither ſhall the ſun go down upon it.*" So *Jews* and *Gentiles* were called to partake of the ſame Goſpel privileges; and ſo will all the faithful labourers in the Lord's vineyard be called together, and have the reward of eternal life beſtowed upon them, and be bid to enter into the joy of their Lord, and inherit the kingdom prepared for them, as they before were ordered to go into the vineyard, and work. And tho' eternal life may be called hire or reward, becauſe as hire is given to labourers, ſo is eternal life; and as that is given at the even and cloſe of the day, and when the labourer has done his work, ſo everlaſting glory will be given to the ſaints at the end of life, and when they have done the will and work of God: yet it will not be beſtowed by way of merit, or, as if there was a juſt proportion between the work, labour, and ſervices of the ſaints, and the glory that ſhall be revealed in them. Their pureſt ſervices, even their ſufferings for Chriſt, are not worthy to be compared with that; nor are there any that are done by them, but what are due to God, what he has a right unto, and are their duty to perform; ſo that when they are done by them in the beſt and moſt perfect manner, they are but unprofitable ſervants: nor can they, by any thing they do, be profitable to God, or give any thing to him, which can be obligatory upon him, to do any thing for them, or be a valuable conſideration for any thing they ſhould receive from him; and therefore they can't merit any thing at his hand, and much leſs eternal life: beſides, their ſervices are very impure and imperfect, and whenever any thing is well done by them, it is done not by their own ſtrength and might, but by the aſſiſtance and grace of God; and therefore they can have no demand upon him for what they do: eternal life, though a reward, is not a reward of debt, but of grace; it is the free-gift of God through Chriſt; God has graciouſly promiſed it in the covenant of his grace, before the world began; he has given it into the hands of his Son for his people, with whom it is ſure; and he gives it freely to all the ſheep the Father has given him. *Beginning from the laſt unto the firſt*; beginning with the laſt that was called and ſent into the vineyard, and ſo proceeding on to the next to them; giving them their wages as he went along, till he came to the firſt, who were early in the morning hired into this ſervice; intimating, that ſome ſuch method will be taken in the introducing of the ſaints into the kingdom of the Meſſiah here, and into his everlaſting kingdom hereafter; whereby that ſaying of our Lord's, which occaſioned this parable, will be alſo fulfilled, *the firſt ſhall be laſt, and the laſt firſt.*

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[s] Shir Haſhirim Rabba, fol. 21. 3. Midraſh Kohelet, fol. 72. 4. T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 5. 3.

[t] Bartenora in Miſn. Bava Metzia, c. 9. §. 11.

[u] Jarchi in Lev. xix. 13.

[w] Maimon. Hilch. Shecirut, c. 11. §. 1.

Ver. 9. *And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour*, &c.] Who were the laſt that were hired; and ſignify either ſuch, as are called in their laſt days, in old age; or *Gentile* ſinners; or the laſt of God's elect, that will be called by grace, in the end of the world: *they received every man a penny*; the ſame they firſt agreed for, that were hired early into the vineyard; and all, and every man alike, not one more, or another leſs. So the ſame church privileges and immunities, are common to all believers, *Jews* or *Gentiles*, ſooner or later called; and equal title given to the ſame eternal life and happineſs, which will be enjoyed alike, by one ſaint as another: they are all loved with the ſame everlaſting love by God; they are choſen alike by him in his Son, at the ſame time, in the ſame way and manner, and to the ſame grace and glory; they are intereſted in the ſame covenant, in all the promiſes and bleſſings of it; they are bought with the ſame price of a Redeemer's blood, are juſtified by the ſame righteouſneſs, and are called in one hope of their calling; they are equally the ſons of God, and their glory and happineſs are always expreſſed by the ſame thing, as a kingdom, a crown, an inheritance, *&c.* They are all equally heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Chriſt; they are heirs of the ſame kingdom and glory, and are born again to the ſame incorruptible inheritance, of which they will all be partakers; they will all be called to inherit the ſame kingdom, they will ſit on the ſame throne of glory, and wear the ſame crown of righteouſneſs, and enjoy the ſame uninterrupted communion with Father, Son, and Spirit. Now, indeed, they have not the ſame meaſures of grace; ſome have more, others leſs; but in heaven, it will be alike, compleat and perfect in all; and even now, they have the ſame grace for nature and kind, only it is not in all in the ſame exerciſe; now the ſaints are diſtinguiſhed by the ſeveral ſtations and places in which they are; though they are members of the ſame body, they have not the ſame office, and have gifts differing from one another; but in the other ſtate, all ſuch offices and gifts will ceaſe, and all will be upon an equal foot; be where Chriſt is, and behold his glory, and will ſtand in no need of each others inſtruction and help. Now the capacities of men are different, according to the different temperament of their bodies, their different education, opportunities, advantages, and ſtations in life; but in the other world, where this difference will be no more, every veſſel of mercy being prepared for glory, will be equally capable of receiving it: and though there will be degrees of puniſhment in hell, proportionate to the ſins of men, which the juſtice of God requires, yet it follows not, that there will be degrees in glory; ſince that is not proportioned to the works of men, but ſprings from the grace of God, and yet in a way of juſtice too, through the blood, righteouſneſs, and ſacrifice of Chriſt: and ſince the ſaints have an equal intereſt in theſe things, it ſeems that upon the foot of juſtice, they ſhould equally enjoy all that happineſs which theſe entitle them to.

Ver. 10. *But when the firſt came*, &c.] Who were early hired into the vineyard; and deſign either the firſt ſaints that were in the world; or the *Jews* that firſt believed in Chriſt, either really or nominally; or ſuch, who were called by grace in their early days: *they ſuppoſed*, or *hoped*, as the *Syriac* verſion renders it, *that they ſhould have received more*; than a penny, a greater reward: not that they could expect it on the foot of their agreement, or on account of their work; but becauſe they obſerved, that they that came laſt into the vineyard, had as much as they agreed for; and therefore hoped, from the goodneſs of their Lord to them, that they ſhould receive more: *and they likewiſe received every man a penny*; the ſelf-ſame privileges of the Goſpel, and a title to the ſelf-ſame reward of free-grace, the ſelf-ſame glory and happineſs.

Ver. 11. *And when they had received it*, &c.] The external privileges of the Goſpel diſpenſation, an inheritance among them that are ſanctified, and a right unto it, on the foot of free-grace, *they murmured againſt the good man of the houſe*; who had been ſo kind and liberal, to thoſe who came laſt into the vineyard, and had done no injury to them, but gave them a full reward. So the *Jews* that firſt believed in Chriſt, were at firſt uneaſy at the Goſpel being preached to the *Gentiles*, at the calling of them, and their partaking of the ſame privileges in a Goſpel church-ſtate with them, without ſubmitting to the ceremonies of the law, as they had done; juſt as the *Phariſees* in Chriſt's time, murmured againſt him, for receiving ſinners, and eating with them: though in the latter day, the envy of *Ephraim* ſhall depart, and in the ultimate glory there will be no murmuring at each others happineſs.

Ver. 12. *Saying, theſe laſt have wrought but one hour*, &c.] Thinking it hard, that they ſhould have the ſame reward for the ſervice of one hour, others had for the ſervice of many. This is grudged by the *Jews* [x]; "*Bath Kol*, a voice from "heaven, went out and ſaid, *Ketiah bar Shallum*, "is prepared for the life of the world to come; "*Rabbi* wept and ſaid, there is that obtains his "world (or the world to come for himſelf) "בשעה אחת, *in one hour*; and there is that ob"tains it in many years." The ſame obſervation is alſo made by the ſame perſon, on account of "*R. Eleazar ben Durdia* [y]. So in the parable of the *Jews* above-mentioned, which is the broken remains of a common proverb among them like [z] this; it is obſerved, that there being one labourer among thoſe that were hired, who did his work better than all the reſt, and who was taken notice of by the king; that when "at even the labourers came to take their wages, this labourer alſo came to take his; and the king gave him his wages equal with them, (or, as in another place, a perfect one) the labourers began to preſs him with difficulty, (or as elſewhere [a], מתרעמין, *they murmured*) and ſaid, Oh! our Lord, the king, *we have laboured all the day*; but this man has not laboured but *two or three hours* in the day, and he takes his wages, even as ours, or a perfect reward." And ſo it follows here, *and thou haſt made them equal to us, who have born the burden and heat of the day*; of all the *Jewiſh* rites and ceremonies, which were burdenſome and intolerable. The ceremonial law was a burden to the *Jewiſh* people; the multitude of ſacrifices enjoined them, and the frequent repetition of them, together with the great number of other ordinances and inſtitutions, produced a wearineſs in them; eſpecially in the carnal part of them, who ſaw not the things typified by them, the uſe and end of them, and ſo did not enjoy ſpiritual pleaſure in them, *Mal.* i. 13. It was a yoke, and a yoke of bondage, to them, which brought on them a ſpirit of bondage, through the fear of death, which was the penalty annexed to it; and it was an inſupportable one, which neither they, nor their forefathers, were able to bear, becauſe it made them debtors to keep the whole law: and this was made ſtill more burdenſome, by the traditions of the elders, which were added to it, and which the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* obliged to the obſervance of; to which they themſelves ſtill added, and bound heavy burdens, and grievous to be born, and laid them on mens ſhoulders. The law was a fiery law, and the diſpenſation of it was a hot and ſcorching one; it was uncomfortable working under the flaſhes of a mount, that burned with fire: the law worked wrath, and poſſeſſed the minds of men with a fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation. This may alſo be applied to ſuch chriſtians, who are called to more ſevere ſervice or ſufferings for Chriſt, than others are; who are almoſt preſſed down without meaſure, and endure fiery trials, are ſcorched, and made black, with the ſun of perſecution beating upon them; as the ſaints under the ten perſecutions of the *Roman* Emperors, and as the confeſſors and martyrs in the times of papal power and cruelty; and who, it might be thought, will have a greater degree of glory and happineſs hereafter; and ſo ſome have been of opinion, that theſe are they that ſhall live and reign with Chriſt a thouſand years, *Rev.* xx. 4, 5, 6. But it rather ſeems, that others will be made equal with them, who have not endured what they have done; for all the dead in Chriſt, all that have part in the firſt reſurrection, when Chriſt comes, as all the ſaints will then riſe, will ſhare in that glory; even the innumerable company, choſen, redeemed, and called, out of every nation, tongue, and people, and will be admitted to the ſame honour and happineſs, *Rev.* vii. 9, 13, 15, 16, 17. And this character will alſo agree with many other ſervants of Chriſt, who are called to harder and more laborious ſervice than others are, and labour more abundantly in the Lord's vineyard than others do, and are longer employed in it; as for inſtance, the apoſtle *Paul*; and yet the ſame crown of righteouſneſs that is laid up for him, and given to him, will be given to all that love the appearance of Chriſt, though they have not laboured for his name ſake, as he has done.

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[x] T. Bab. Avoda Zara, *fol.* 10. 2.

[y] Ib. fol. 17. 1.

Ver. 13. *But he anſwered one of them*, &c.] Who was the forwardeſt and loudeſt in his complaints, and perſonated the reſt: *and ſaid, friend, I do thee no wrong*; by giving all alike, the ſame privileges and bleſſings to the laſt, as to the firſt, ſince nothing was witheld from him. And indeed, the Lord does no wrong to any, by the diſtinction which he makes among his creatures: he is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works: he does no injury to the evil angels, by chuſing the good angels, and confirming them in the eſtate in which they were created; when the others are reſerved in chains of darkneſs, to the judgment of the great day; or by chuſing fallen men in Chriſt, and making proviſions of grace for them, and not devils: and ſo there is no unrighteouſneſs in him, nor does he do any wrong to any, when, like the potter, out of the ſame clay, he makes one veſſel to honour, and another to diſhonour; any more than when in a providential way, he gives riches and wealth to ſome, and witholds them from others; or ſends his Goſpel, the means of grace to one, and not to another: and ſtill leſs can he be thought to do wrong to the ſons of men, by giving to them alike the ſame grace and privileges here, and the ſame happineſs and glory hereafter; ſince neither have any right to what they have, or ſhall enjoy, and no one has the leſs for what is given to the other. *Didſt thou not agree with me for a penny?* That is, to labour in the vineyard all the day for a penny; yea, this agreement was made perſonally with him, not with a ſervant, or meſſenger of his; though if it had, it ought, according to the *Jewiſh* canons, to have been abode by, which run thus [b]: "A man ſays to his meſſenger, or ſervant, go and hire workmen for me for three-pence; he goes and hires them for four-pence: if the meſſenger ſays to them, your wages be upon me, he gives them four-pence, and takes three-pence of the maſter of the houſe; he looſes one out of his own purſe: if he ſays to them, your hire be upon the maſter of the houſe, the maſter of the houſe gives them according to the cuſtom of the province: if there are one in the province that hired for three-pence, and others that are hired for four-pence, he gives them but three-pence, *and the murmuring* is againſt the meſſenger; in what things? When the work is not known, but when the work is known, and it is worth four-pence, the maſter of the houſe gives them four-pence; but if his meſſenger does not ſay to them four-pence, they do not labour and do what deſerves four-pence. The houſholder ſays to him, hire me for four-pence, and the meſſenger goes and hires for three-pence, though the work deſerves four-pence, they have but three-pence; becauſe that, קבלו על עצמן, *they took it upon themſelves*, (*i. e.* they agreed for ſo much) and their murmuring is againſt the meſſenger." Thus the argument in the parable proceeds upon the agreement, which ought to be abode by.

Ver. 14. *Take that thine is*, &c.] By agreement, *and go thy way*; out of my ſight, give me no more trouble on this head; which looks like a diſmiſſion from his ſervice, and after privileges; and was true

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[z] Shirhaſhirim Rabba, fol. 21. 4. Midraſh Kohelet, fol. 72. 4.

[a] T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 5. 3.

[b] Maimon. Hilch. Shecirut, c. 9. §. 3.

of many among the *Jews*, who were only nominal profeſſors, and from whom the Goſpel and ordinances of it were taken: *I will give unto this laſt* man that was called, and ſent into the vineyard, *even as unto thee*; the ſame outward privileges, beſides ſpecial grace, and eternal glory, which it looks as if the other had not.

Ver. 15. *Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?* &c.] External gifts and outward privileges, ſuch as enjoying the word and ordinances, are God's own; and he may, as he does, beſtow them on whom he will, and when and where he pleaſes; as he gave them to the *Jews*, and continued them with them many hundred years, when the *Gentiles* were utterly deſtitute of them; and as he has beſtowed them in a more abundant manner for a long time on the *Gentiles*, whilſt the *Jews* deſpiſe and reject them. Special grace is his own, which he gives to whom he pleaſes; 'tis by his own grace, and not the merits of men, that any are choſen, adopted, juſtified, pardoned, regenerated, and called; that they have faith, hope, love, repentance, or perform new obedience from a new heart, and new principles. Heaven and glory is his own, of his own preparing and giving; and both grace and glory are diſpoſed of, and that very rightly and lawfully, according to his ſovereign good-will and pleaſure: he chuſes, adopts, juſtifies, pardons, regenerates, calls, and ſanctifies whom he pleaſes; and brings what ſons to glory he thinks fit, and beſtows it equally upon them: and in ſo doing, does no wrong, or any injuſtice to any of his creatures; not to the fallen angels, by chuſing ſome of their ſpecies, and confirming them in their original conſtitution; and by leaving them, the fallen angels, in their apoſtacy; nor by making proviſion for fallen man, and not them, nor by puniſhing them with everlaſting deſtruction; nor do they ever complain of any wrong being done them: nor to non-elect men; for none of *Adam*'s race have any right to grace or glory, and therefore no wrong is done to any of them, by witholding them from them, whereby nothing is taken from them, and given to others; and by puniſhing them for ſin: nor to any elect men, by making others partners with them; ſince they are all alike by nature, unworthy of grace and glory, and deſerving of wrath: what is enjoyed by any of them, is of mere grace, and not through merit; and one has not a whit the leſs, for what the other is poſſeſſed of; ſo that there is no room for envy, murmuring, and complaint: *is thine eye evil becauſe I am good?* An *evil eye*, is oppoſed to a *good eye*, frequently in *Jewiſh writings*, as a good eye ſignifies beneficence and liberality; hence it is ſaid [c], "He " that gives a gift, let him give it, בעין יפה, *with* " *a good eye*;" bountifully and generouſly; and " he that devoteth any thing, let him devote it *with* " *a good eye*," chearfully and freely: ſo an *evil eye* intends envy and covetouſneſs, as it does here: and the ſenſe is, art thou envious at the good of others, and covetous and greedy to monopolize all to thyſelf, becauſe I am liberal, kind, and beneficent? Men are apt to complain of God, and charge his procedures in providence and grace, with inequality and injuſtice; whereas he does, as he may, all things according to his ſovereign will, and never contrary to juſtice, truth, and goodneſs; though he is not to be brought to man's bar, and men ſhould ſubmit to his ſovereignty.

Ver. 16. *So the laſt ſhall be firſt, and the firſt laſt,* &c.] As he had aſſerted in ch. xix. 30. and which is clearly illuſtrated by this parable, as it may be applied to *Jews* or *Gentiles*, or to nominal and real chriſtians: *for many be called*; externally, under the miniſtration of the Goſpel, as the *Jews* in general were, by Chriſt and his apoſtles; *but few choſen*; in Chriſt from all eternity, both to grace and glory; and in conſequence, and as an evidence of it, but few among the *Jews*; as alſo in the *Gentile* world, comparatively ſpeaking: and even but a few of thoſe that are outwardly called, are inwardly and effectually called by the powerful grace of God, out of darkneſs into marvellous light, into the grace and liberty of the Goſpel, into communion with Chriſt, and to the obtaining his kingdom and glory, according to the eternal purpoſe of God. It is a ſaying of *R. Simeon ben Jochai* [d], " I have ſeen " the children of the world to come (elſewhere [e] it " is, of the chamber) והן מועטין, *and they are* " *few*." Though he vainly thought, that if thoſe few were but two, they were himſelf and his ſon.

Ver. 17. *And Jeſus going up to Jeruſalem*, &c.] Which was ſituated [f] in the higheſt part of the land of *Iſrael*: the land of *Iſrael*, is ſaid to be higher than any other land whatever; and the temple at *Jeruſalem*, higher than any part of the land of *Iſrael*; wherefore Chriſt's going to *Jeruſalem*, is expreſſed by going up to it. Whither he came either from the coaſts of *Judæa*, from beyond *Jordan*, ch. xix. 1. where he had been ſome time healing diſeaſes, diſputing with the *Phariſees*, diſcourſing with the young ruler, and inſtructing his diſciples; or from a country near to the wilderneſs, from a city called *Ephraim*, *John* xi. 54. where he continued ſome time with his diſciples, after the *Sanhedrim* had took counſel to put him to death; for this was his laſt journey to *Jeruſalem*. *Took the twelve diſciples apart in the way*; into ſome private place, which lay near the road; for it ſeems that there were others that followed him, beſides the twelve; when he was not willing they ſhould hear what he had to ſay to them, concerning the iſſue of this journey; leſt either they ſhould be diſcouraged and deſert him, or it ſhould be made publick, and methods be uſed to prevent it: *and ſaid unto them*; the diſciples, whom he thought fit once more to remind of his ſufferings and death, and to prepare them for the ſame; and though they would not ſo thoroughly underſtand all that he ſhould ſay, yet when it was come to paſs, they would remember it, and which would be of ſervice to confirm their faith in him, as the true Meſſiah. See the note on *Mark* x. 32.

Ver. 18. *Behold, we go up to Jeruſalem*, &c.] This is the laſt time of our going thither; obſerve, and take notice of what I am about to ſay; ſome extraordinary things will come to paſs, and, as *Luke* relates that he ſaid, *all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man, ſhall be accompliſhed*; every thing that is recorded in *the twenty-ſecond Pſalm*, and in the *fifty-third* of *Iſaiah*, or in any other prophecies of the Old Teſtament, relating to the ill-treatment the Meſſiah ſhould meet with, to his ſufferings and death, and all the circumſtances attending them, ſhall be exactly fulfilled in every punctilio: and that they might not be at a loſs about what he meant, he gives an account of various particular things, which ſhould befal him; *and the Son of man ſhall be betrayed:* he does not ſay by whom, though he knew from the beginning who ſhould betray him, that it would be one of his diſciples,

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[c] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 65. 1. & 71. 1. & 72. 1.

[d] T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 13. 4.

[e] T. Bab. Succa, fol. 45. 2. & Sanhedrin, fol. 97. 2.

[f] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 87. 1.

ciples, and that it would be *Judas*; but the proper time was not yet come to make this diſcovery: the perſons into whoſe hands he was to be betrayed, are mentioned; *unto the chief prieſts, and unto the Scribes*; who were his moſt inveterate and implacable enemies; and who were the perſons that had already taken counſel to put him to death, and were ſeeking all advantages and opportunities to execute their deſign: *and they ſhall condemn him to death*; which is to be underſtood not of their declaring it as their opinion, that he was guilty of death, and ought to die by a law of theirs, which declaration they made before *Pilate*; nor of their procuring the ſentence of death to be pronounced by him, upon him; but of their adjudging him to death among themſelves, in the palace of the high-prieſt; which was done by them, as the *Sanhedrim* and great council of the nation; though either they could not, or did not, chuſe to execute it themſelves, and therefore delivered him up to the *Romans*; for this act of condemning him to death, was to be, and was, before the delivery of him up to the *Gentiles*, as is clear from what follows.

Ver. 19. *And ſhall deliver him to the Gentiles*, &c.] To *Pilate*, an heathen governor, and to the *Roman* officers and ſoldiers under him; ſee *John* xviii. 35. *To mock* him, as they did, by putting on him a ſcarlet robe, platting a crown of thorns, and placing it on his head, and a reed in his hand; and then bowed the knee to him, and cried, hail, king of the *Jews! and to ſcourge him*; as he was by *Pilate*, at leaſt by his orders; *Mark* adds, *and ſpit upon him*; as not only did the *Jews* in the palace of the high-prieſt, but alſo the *Gentiles*, the *Roman* ſoldiers, after they had mocked him in the manner before deſcribed: *and to crucify him*; which, as it was a cruel and ſhameful death, ſuch as ſlaves and the worſt of malefactors were put to, ſo it was a *Roman* one; for which reaſon, the *Jews* choſe to deliver him into the hands of the *Gentiles*. The *Perſic* verſion here adds, *and put him into the grave*; which, though it followed his crucifixion, was not done by the *Gentiles*, but by *Joſeph* of *Arimathea*, a *Jew*, and a diſciple of *Jeſus*; and that not in a contemptuous, but honourable manner: *and the third day he ſhall riſe again*: this he ſaid for the comfort of his diſciples; but now, though theſe things were ſo clearly and diſtinctly expreſſed by Chriſt, and which ſhew his omniſcience, and give proof both of his deity and Meſſiahſhip, yet *Luke* obſerves of the diſciples, that *they underſtood none of theſe things, and this ſaying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were ſpoken*: the words were plain, the grammatical ſenſe of them was eaſy, but they could not imagine, that they were to be taken literally; which was ſuch a glaring contradiction to their received and rooted principles of the temporal kingdom of the Meſſiah, and the grandeur of it, that they fancied theſe expreſſions carried a myſtical, ſecret meaning in them, which they were not maſters of: and certain it is, that what our Lord now ſaid, was ſo far from deſtroying, or weakening theſe prejudices of theirs, that it rather confirmed them in them; particularly, what he ſaid about riſing again, which ſeemed to have put them afreſh in mind, and to excite their hopes of this external felicity, as appears from the following caſe.

Ver. 20. *Then came to him the mother of Zebedees children*, &c.] Whoſe name was *Salome*, as may be concluded from *Matt.* xxvii. 56. compared with *Mark* xv. 40. She is not called the wife of *Zebedee*, who might be now dead, but the mother of his children, his *two ſons*, as the *Arabic* verſion renders it; *James* and *John*, and who were the diſciples of Chriſt: it is not certain, that *Zebedee* was ever a follower of him; and therefore the woman is deſcribed by her relation to her children, and not her huſband; and the rather, becauſe it was in their name, and on their account, that ſhe came to Jeſus. She is ſaid to be the ſiſter of *Joſeph*, the huſband of *Mary*, the mother of our Lord; and if ſo, might hope to ſucceed in her requeſt, on the foot of relation; as alſo, ſince ſhe herſelf had been a conſtant follower of, and attendant on him; and eſpecially, inaſmuch as her ſons were his favourite diſciples: *with her ſons*; her two ſons, *James* and *John*, whom *Mark* mentions by name: *worſhipping* him, *and deſiring a certain thing of him*; that is, ſhe came in a very ſubmiſſive manner to him, either bowed unto him, or kneeled down before him, or threw herſelf at his feet, and ſignified that ſhe had a ſingle favour, and a very conſiderable one, to aſk of him. *Mark* repreſents the caſe thus, that her two ſons, *James* and *John*, came to Chriſt, and that they themſelves ſpoke to him, and addreſſed him in this manner: *Maſter, we would that thou ſhouldſt do for us, whatſoever we ſhall deſire*: which was a very odd requeſt, both as to the matter and manner of it; that they ſhould aſk, and inſiſt upon every thing to be done for them, they deſired; and ſuggeſt, that they expected that he would promiſe them this, before they declared the particular favour they had to aſk of him. The matter may be reconciled thus. Theſe two diſciples, having obſerved what Chriſt had ſaid concerning the twelve diſciples ſitting on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of *Iſrael*, and what he had juſt related, concerning his riſing again the third day, which they might underſtand of ſome diſplay of his glory; and concluding from all this, that the ſetting up of his temporal monarchy was at hand, inform their mother of it, and move to her, to uſe her intereſt with Chriſt, in their favour; and which they did, partly to ſhun the envy and ill-will of the reſt of the diſciples; and partly, to conceal their own pride and vanity; as alſo, they might think a requeſt from her, on their behalf, would be more eaſily granted: accordingly, ſhe agreeing to the motion, they all three came, as *Matthew* relates, and the mother is the mouth, and ſpeaks for her ſons; ſo that they may be ſaid to make ſuch a requeſt by her, ſhe perſonating them; or they joined in the petition with her; or as ſoon as ſhe had made it, they ſeconded it, and made it their own.

Ver. 21. *And he ſaid unto her, what wilt thou?* &c.] *Mark* ſays, *he ſaid unto them*; her two ſons, *James* and *John*, *what would you that I ſhould do for you?* Both is true; what is this ſingular favour? what buſineſs of moment and importance is it, you would have me do for you, you are ſo eager and preſſing for, and ſo ſollicitous of? This he ſaid, not as being ignorant of the matter; he knew the corruption of their hearts, the vanity of their minds, their carnal, worldly, and ambitious views; but to lead them on to ſay all they had to ſay upon this head; in which may be obſerved the goodneſs, humanity, and patience of Chriſt, in not upbraiding them with their pride and inſolence, in bearing with their raſhneſs and folly, and in giving them room to believe, that he ſhould anſwer their requeſt in every thing that was right and reaſonable to be done. *She ſaith unto him, grant that theſe my two ſons may ſit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left in thy kingdom*; or, as in *Mark*, *in thy glory*: that is, in thy glorious kingdom; meaning a temporal one, which would outvie all the kingdoms of the world, in external glory, pomp, and ſplendor, as they imagined: to ſit one on the right hand, and the other on the left hand of Chriſt, when he ſhould be ſeated, literally, on the throne of his father *David*, ſignifies to be neareſt to his perſon; to be next to him in power and authority; to have the higheſt poſts of honour, and places of truſt and profit; to be his prime miniſters; and, in a word, to have the greateſt ſhare next to him of worldly honour, riches, and power. To ſit at the right hand, was, with the *Jews*, reckoned a great mark of honour and affection; ſee 1 *Kings* ii. 19. and ſo with other nations: with the *Egyptians* eſpecially, it was accounted a great honour to be placed on the right hand, but the greateſt to be in the middle; which was equally obſerved among the *Romans*, and the ſame with the *Africans* and *Numidians*; tho' *Xenophon* relates, that *Cyrus*, with a ſingular prudence, that he might receive his gueſts the more honourably, uſed to place them at the left hand, accounting that part, as neareſt the heart, to be the more worthy [g]. Theſe two, the beſt and moſt honourable places, this woman was for engroſſing for her two ſons, who joined with her in the requeſt; for *Mark* ſays, that *they ſaid unto him, grant unto us that we may ſit*, &c. and Chriſt's anſwer here, which follows, implies as much.

Ver. 22. *But Jeſus anſwered and ſaid*, &c.] To her two ſons, *ye know not what ye aſk*. They were ignorant of the nature of Chriſt's kingdom, which is ſpiritual, and not of this world; or they would never have aſked ſuch a queſtion, or ſued for that which will never be enjoyed by any: and ſuppoſing that Chriſt's kingdom had been ſuch as they imagined, yet in aſking for honours and riches, they might not know what they aſked for; they might promiſe themſelves much pleaſure and happineſs in the enjoyment of them, and yet, if indulged with them, might be diſappointed, and find unexpected troubles and uneaſineſs. It would have been much more proper and ſeaſonable, on hearing of Chriſt's being mocked, ſcourged, ſpit upon, and crucified, if they had put ſuch a queſtion to themſelves, Chriſt here directs to, *are ye able to drink of the cup that I ſhall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptiſm I am baptized with?* meaning his reproaches, ſorrows, ſufferings, and death; which becauſe of the diſagreeableneſs of them, he compares to a bitter cup of vengeance, wrath, fury, and indignation; and becauſe they were appointed to him, and allotted for him, they were his portion, therefore he expreſſes them by a *cup*; and becauſe they were ſo many and great, of ſuch an overwhelming nature, that he ſeemed to be plunged into them, and covered with them, therefore he likens them to a *baptiſm*; and which the ordinance of water-baptiſm, performed by immerſion, is a lively repreſentation of. Now Chriſt ſuggeſts to theſe diſciples, that inſtead of indulging their ambitious deſires of worldly grandeur, that they would do well to conſider what a bitter cup he had to drink of, and what a ſea of ſorrows and ſufferings he was about to be plunged into, and drenched in; and whether they could think of enduring any thing of the like kind, for his ſake, which was moſt likely to be in a ſhort time, what they would be called unto, and not to honours, eaſe, and pleaſure; and what they muſt be ſure, more or leſs, to undergo, before they entered the everlaſting kingdom of glory: *they ſay unto him, we are able*; not conſidering the nature of theſe ſufferings, and their own weakneſs; but partly thro' ignorance of themſelves, and a vain confidence which poſſeſſed them; and chiefly thro' a vehement deſire of the places in his kingdom, they aſked for, and which they thought drinking his cup, and being baptized with his baptiſm, were the condition, and the means of enjoying; and ſo raſhly affirm their ability, and which includes their willingneſs to comply herewith.

Ver. 23. *And he ſaith unto them, ye ſhall drink indeed of my cup*, &c.] Not of the ſelf-ſame, but of what was like unto it; meaning, that they ſhould endure much perſecution for his name's ſake, as all that will live godly in Chriſt Jeſus muſt expect in one ſhape or another. Thus *James*, who was one of theſe perſons, was ſlain with the ſword by *Herod*; *John*, the other, was impriſoned, and beaten by the order of the *Jewiſh ſanhedrim*, was baniſhed into the iſle of *Patmos* by *Domitian*; and, ſome ſay, was caſt into a cauldron of boiling oil, tho' ſaved in it: ſo that theſe words ſeem to be a prophecy of what they ſhould ſuffer for Chriſt, inſtead of enjoying places of worldly honour and profit under him, they were ſeeking for. *And be baptized with the baptiſm that I am baptized with*: this clauſe is here, and in the former verſe, omitted by the *Vulgate Latin*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, and in ſome *Greek* copies, and is thought to be tranſcribed hither out of *Mark*'s Goſpel; but the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions have it, and ſo has *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel, and it appears in many *Greek* copies. *James*, being bathed in his own blood, when killed with the ſword, and *John* being caſt into a veſſel of ſcalding oil, theſe are fitly expreſſed by a baptiſm. *But to ſit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give*; in the ſenſe in which they aſked it, ſince he was no temporal prince; nor was his kingdom of this world; nor had he any ſuch external favours, or worldly honours: and as to the true and ſpiritual ſenſe of ſuch a phraſe, it was not a point to be fixed now by him, as man, and according to his own will; as who ſhould reign with him in the kingdom of heaven, who ſhould ſit down on the ſame throne with him, and enjoy all the glories and happineſs of the world to come; and though, as mediator, all this glory was given to him, and he had it in his hands to give to others, yet to none *but thoſe for whom*, ſays he, *it is prepared of my father*: for this is the true reading and ſenſe of the laſt clauſe; ſignifying, that eternal life, or the heavenly glory, is a kingdom prepared by his father, from the foundation of the world, and not for any body, and every perſon, but for ſome only, according to his father's ſovereign will and pleaſure; and that this is an affair that was fixed by him, in his eternal counſels and purpoſes, and in the covenant of his grace, and not to be adjuſted now; nor was the deſignation of it to be, nor will the diſtribution of it be according to the merits of men, but the free grace of God; and though he, as mediator, was appointed to beſtow both grace and glory on men, yet only on thoſe the father had given to him, for whom grace was laid up in him, and glory prepared.

Ver. 24. *And when the ten heard it*, &c.] The other ten apoſtles, who either were within hearing the requeſt made, and Chriſt's anſwer, or had by ſome means information of it: *they were moved with indignation againſt the two brethren*; the two ſons of *Zebedee*, *James* and *John*: they were not ſo much diſpleaſed with the mother of them, who aſked the favour for them, as with her ſons, knowing that they had put her upon making this motion to Chriſt; nor were they ſo much moved with indignation

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[g] Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 2. c. 19.

nation at the action, deteſting all notions of ſuperiority and pre-eminence; for they were all tinctured with the ſame carnal principle, and each was deſirous of the chief place for himſelf; but they were angry, and out of all temper, that theſe two brethren ſhould move for that, which they thought they had as good a right unto, as any of them: wherefore, as *Mark* ſays, *they began to be much diſpleaſed with* them, and to ſhew their reſentment, not only by their looks and geſtures, but by words; and very probably they would have roſe to very high words, and a downright quarrel, had not Chriſt interpoſed; as, from the following verſe, it appears he did.

Ver. 25. *But Jeſus called them unto him*, &c.] All his twelve diſciples, perceiving that the ſame ambitious views prevailed in them all: to diſcourage which, and to prevent their quarrelling one with another, he called them to him, and made uſe of the following reaſonings: *and ſaid, ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exerciſe dominion over them, and they that are great exerciſe authority upon them*; appealing to them in a caſe that was well known by them, what the princes of the *Gentiles* did; or, as *Mark* expreſſes it, *they which are accounted*, or *ſeem to rule over the Gentiles*; who know not God, the king of kings, and lord of lords, who neither ſerve and obey him, or have any dependance on him, but aſſume a power of governing others, take upon them to rule the nations of the world, and are acknowledged as ſuch by them: theſe claim a ſuperiority over others, and exerciſe lordly power over them; and they that are their great ones, their lords, and nobles under them; theſe alſo aſſert a pre-eminence, and exerciſe authority on thoſe that are below them; which they have received from thoſe that are above them: this is the uſual way and method of the governments of the kingdoms of this world: wherefore, for the apoſtles to affect and deſire a ſuperiority to each other, in the kingdom of Chriſt, was to imitate the *Gentiles*, and to act according to worldly forms of government; which is very unſuitable to the followers of the meek and lowly Jeſus, whoſe kingdom is ſpiritual, and not of this world.

Ver. 26. *But it ſhall not be ſo among you*, &c.] This is not to be extended to Chriſtian nations, as if there were to be no order of magiſtracy ſubſiſting in them; but that all muſt be on a level, and no diſtinction of princes and ſubjects, of governors and governed; nor to Chriſtian churches, as if there was no eccleſiaſtical authority to be uſed, or any church-government and power to be exerciſed; none to rule, whom others are to obey and ſubmit themſelves to; but is to be reſtrained to the apoſtles as ſuch, among whom there was an entire equality; being all apoſtles of Chriſt, being equally qualified and ſent, and put into the ſelf-ſame office by him: the ſame holds good of all paſtors of churches, who have no ſuper-intendency and pre-eminence over one another, or can, or ought to exerciſe any lordly power and authority, one, or more, over the reſt; being equally inveſted with the ſame office-power, one as another: for otherwiſe Chriſt's kingdom would appear like the nations of the world, and to be of a worldly nature; whereas it is ſpiritual, and does not lie in worldly pomp and grandeur, and in external ſuperiority and pre-eminence of one another; but in the ſpiritual adminiſtration of the word and ordinances; which every paſtor of a church has an equal right to exerciſe, and obedience to them lies in a ſubmiſſion to theſe things: *but whoſoever will be great among you, let him be*, or, as in *Mark*, *ſhall be, your miniſter*: whoever would be reckoned a great man in the kingdom of Chriſt, or under the Goſpel-diſpenſation, muſt be a miniſter to others: if he is deſirous of being truly great in the eſteem of God, and of men, he muſt do great ſervice for Chriſt, and to the ſouls of men; and ſeek to bring great glory to God, by faithfully miniſtring the word and ordinances, and by denying himſelf worldly honour and glory, and by ſerving others, through much reproach, difficulty, and oppoſition.

Ver. 27. *And whoſoever will be chief among you*, &c.] Or firſt, or have the pre-eminence, the firſt place in the kingdom of the Meſſiah, *let him be your ſervant*; or, as in *Mark*, *ſhall be ſervant of all*: not only a miniſter, but a ſervant; not a ſervant of ſome only, but of all. This was verified in the apoſtle *Paul*, who became a ſervant to all men, tho' he was free, that he might gain ſome to Chriſt; and by ſo doing was the chief, tho' he reckoned himſelf the leaſt of the apoſtles, yea, leſs than the leaſt of all ſaints. The *Jews* have a ſaying ſomewhat like this, that [h] "every one that makes himſelf כעבד, *as a ſervant*, for the words of the law in this world, ſhall be made free in the world to come."

Ver. 28. *Even as the ſon of man*, &c.] Meaning himſelf, the ſeed of the woman, the ſon of *Abraham*, and of *David*, according to the fleſh; and whom he propoſes as an example of humility, and as an argument to draw them off from their ambitious views of worldly grandeur, and from all thoughts of the Meſſiah's ſetting up a temporal kingdom; ſince he *came not to be miniſtred unto*; by others; to be attended on in pomp and ſtate, to have a numerous retinue about him, waiting upon him, and miniſtring to him; as is the caſe of the princes, and great men of the world; tho' he is Lord of all, and king of kings; *but to miniſter*; in the form of a ſervant unto others, going about from place to place to do good, both to the bodies and ſouls of men: he *came* forth from his father, down from heaven, into this world, by his aſſumption of human nature, to *miniſter* in the prophetic office, by preaching the Goſpel, and working miracles, in confirmation of it; and in the prieſtly office, one branch of which is expreſſed in the next clauſe, *and to give his life a ranſom for many*: what he came to give was *his life*, which was his own, and than which nothing is more dear and precious: beſides, his life was an uncommon one, being not only ſo uſeful to men, and entirely free from ſin in its ſelf, but was the life of the man Jeſus, who is in union with the ſon of God: this he came to *give*, and did give into the hands of men, to the juſtice of God, and death itſelf; which giving, ſuppoſes it to be his own, and at his own diſpoſal; was not forfeited by any act of his, nor was it forced from him, but freely laid down by him; and that as a *ranſom*, or redemption-price for his people, to deliver them from the evil of ſin, the bondage of ſatan, the curſes of a righteous law, from eternal death, and future wrath, and, in ſhort, from all their enemies: which ranſom-price was paid *for* them in their room and ſtead, by Chriſt, as their ſubſtitute; who put himſelf in their law-place, and laid himſelf under obligation to pay their debts, and clear their ſcores, and redeem them from all their iniquities, and the evil conſequences of them: and this he did *for many*; for as many as were ordained to eternal life; for as many as the father gave unto him; for many out of every kindred, tongue, and people, and nation; but not for every individual of human nature; for many are not all.

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[h] T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 85. 2.

Ver. 29. *And as they departed from Jericho,* &c.] Which was diſtant about ten *parſas*, or miles, from *Jeruſalem*[i], thro' which Chriſt juſt paſſed, and had met with *Zaccheus*, and called him, and delivered the parable concerning a nobleman's going into a far country. The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions render the words, *when Jeſus departed from Jericho*; and the *Arabic*, *when he went out of Jericho*; not alone, but *with his diſciples*, as *Mark* ſays; and not with them only, for *a great multitude followed him* out of the city; either to hear him, or be healed by him, or to ſee him, or behold his miracles, or to accompany him to *Jeruſalem*; whither he was going to keep the feaſt of the paſſover, and where they might be in ſome expectation he would ſet up his kingdom. The *Ethiopic* verſion reads it, *as they went* out from *Jeruſalem*, contrary to all copies and verſions.

Ver. 30. *And behold, two blind men,* &c.] *Mark* and *Luke* make mention but of one; which is no contradiction to *Matthew*; for they neither of them ſay that there was but one. A greater difficulty occurs in *Luke*'s account; for whereas *Matthew* and *Mark* both agree, that it was when *Jeſus* came out of *Jericho*, that this cure was wrought, *Luke* ſays it was when he *came nigh unto it*; which ſome reconcile by obſerving, that that phraſe may be rendered, *while he was near Jericho*; and ſo only ſignifies his diſtance from it, and not motion to it; but this will not ſolve the difficulty, becauſe we after read of his entrance into it, and paſſing thro' it. Some therefore have thought, that Chriſt met with, and cured one blind man before he entered the city, and another when he came out of it, and that *Matthew* has put the hiſtory of both together: but to me it ſeems, that there were three blind men cured; one before he went into *Jericho*, which *Luke* only relates, and two as he came out of *Jericho*, which *Matthew* here ſpeaks of; and one of which, according to *Mark*, was by name *Bartimeus*, the ſon of *Timeus*; for ſo *Bartimeus* ſignifies. *Tima*, or *Timeus*, was a name in uſe among the *Jews*: we often read of *R. Judah*, בן תימא, *Ben Tima*[k], the ſon of *Tima*, or *Timeus*. *Origen*[l] thinks, he had his name from the *Greek* word Τιμη, which ſignifies *honour*; and ſo טימי, *Time*, with the *Jews*, is uſed for honour and profit[m]. This man's father might have been a very honourable and uſeful man, tho' the ſon was fallen into poverty and diſtreſs, thro' blindneſs; for which reaſon he may be mentioned, as being a perſon well known to the *Jews*. *Sitting by the way-ſide*; *Mark* ſays, *begging*, where ſuch were wont to ſit, in order to aſk alms of perſons, as they paſſed by: *when they heard that Jeſus paſſed by*; who, upon perceiving that there was an unuſual concourſe of people, might aſk the reaſon of it, when it was told them that *Jeſus* of *Nazareth* was coming that way: or, without aſking, they might hear the people ſpeak of him; and inaſmuch as they had heard many things concerning him, and the miracles he wrought, applied to him for help, and *cried out, ſaying, have mercy on us, O Lord, thou ſon of David*: in which may be obſerved the titles of honour they give him, which declare their faith in him; calling him *Lord*, expreſſing their ſenſe of his deity, dominion, and power; and *ſon of David*, thereby owning and profeſſing him to be the Meſſiah, that being a common name of him, well known among the *Jews*; ſee the note on *Matt.* i. 1. the petition they make is, that he would *have mercy on them*, who, thro' blindneſs, were in a poor, helpleſs, and miſerable condition; and this was made with great vehemency: they *cried* out aloud, that he might hear them, and take pity on them; being eagerly deſirous of having their ſight, and firmly believing that he was able to reſtore it to them.

Ver. 31. *And the multitude rebuked them,* &c.] Who were either the friends or enemies of Chriſt: if his friends, they might rebuke them, that they might not be ſo troubleſome to him, and judging it unworthy of him to have any thing to do with ſuch mean perſons, and ſuppoſing that their buſineſs was only to aſk alms of him; or if they were his enemies, or not ſo well affected to him, they might chide them for giving him ſuch high characters, as Lord, and ſon of *David*; and therefore being diſpleaſed with ſuch encomiums, reproved them, *becauſe they ſhould hold their peace*; be ſilent, and ſay no more of that kind, leſt others ſhould take up the ſame notion of him, and it ſhould prevail among the people. *But they cried the more, ſaying, have mercy on us, O Lord, thou ſon of David.* They lifted up their voice higher, and cried the more loudly, that their voice might be above the noiſe of the people, and be heard by Chriſt; and renewed their requeſt with more eagerneſs and importunity, repeating the characters they before gave him, being not in the leaſt intimidated by the rebukes of the people: their faith in Jeſus, as the Meſſiah, being more increaſed, and their deſires of his pity and compaſſion being more enlarged, they grew bolder, and more reſolute, as faith often does by oppoſition, and trials.

Ver. 32. *And Jeſus ſtood ſtill,* &c.] Made a full ſtop, when he was near, or right againſt where theſe blind men ſat; which ſhews the ſtrength of faith, the force of prayer, and the great regard Chriſt has to both: *and called them*; himſelf, being near unto them, and within the reach of his voice; or he commanded them to be brought to him, as *Mark* ſays: he ordered others to call them, or let them know, that it was his will they ſhould come to him; upon which they threw away their garments, their long upper garments, which were ſome hindrance to a quick motion, at leaſt *Bartimeus* did; that they might be the ſooner with him: and when they were come to him, he ſaid, *what will ye that I ſhall do unto you?* is it alms you want? or would you have your ſight reſtored? This queſtion he put, not as being ignorant of their deſires, but to ſhew both his power and willingneſs to do any thing for them they ſhould aſk; and that their faith in him might be made manifeſt, and the people have their expectations raiſed, and they prepared to attend the miracle now to be wrought.

Ver. 33. *They ſay unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened.*] That is, that their ſight might be reſtored to them; for being deprived of that, it was all one as if their eyes were ſo cloſed, that they could not open them; and ſo the recovery of it is expreſſed by an opening of them. The opening of the eyes of the blind was propheſied of, as what ſhould be done in the days of the Meſſiah, and by him, as an evidence of his being that perſon,

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[i] Bartenora in Miſn. Tamid, c. 3. §. 8.

[k] T. Hieroſ. Nazir, fol. 52. 1. Erubin, fol. 19. 4. T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 84. 1. Bava Metzia, fol. 94. 1. Maſſech. Semachot, c. 9. Juchaſin, fol. 159. 2.

[l] Comment. in Matt. vol. 1. p. 428. Ed. Huet.

[m] Targum in Eſth. iii. 8. & ℣. 13. T. Hieroſ. Peah, fol. 15. 4.

*Iſ.* xxxv. 5. which prophecy theſe blind men might be acquainted with, and be an encouragement to their faith to expect a cure from him. They don't aſk for alms, but for the recovery of their ſight; which, being granted, they would be able to get their bread in another way; for they were not like ſome idle perſons that chuſe rather to be under ſuch a calamity, or any other, that they might not be obliged to work with their hands for a livelihood. Their requeſt ſhews, that they made no doubt of it, but firmly believed that Chriſt was able to do this for them, tho' the thing was impoſſible to be done by man; who therefore muſt conclude that he was not a mere man, but the ſon of the living God.

Ver. 34. *So Jeſus had compaſſion on them*, &c.] His bowels moved towards them as a man; he pitied their miſerable and diſtreſſed condition, and diſcovered the tenderneſs of his heart towards them by ſome outward ſign, by his looks, or by ſome geſture or another: *and touched their eyes*; with his bare hand, without the uſe of any inſtrument or medicine. The *Ethiopic* verſion adds; *and ſaid unto them, according to your faith ſhall it be unto you*; which ſeems to be taken out of ch. ix. 29. The Evangeliſt *Mark* relates, that *Jeſus ſaid unto him (Bartimeus) go thy way, thy faith hath made thee whole*: not that the virtue of healing came from the act of faith, but from the object of it; his faith was not the cauſe of, nor the reaſon why, but the way and means in and by which he received the cure: *and immediately their eyes received ſight*; or, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions render the words, *that moment their eyes were opened*: the cure was wrought at once, directly; a clear proof of the omnipotence of Chriſt, and of his true and proper deity: the words, *their eyes*, are not in ſome copies; and are omitted by the *Vulgate Latin*, *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, which read thus, *they immediately ſaw*. The *Perſic* verſion adds, *and they ſaw the world*; the men and things of it, which they either had never ſeen before, or, at leaſt, for a conſiderable time; which muſt be a very ſurprizing and agreeable ſight to them. *And they followed him*; in a corporal ſenſe; they joined the multitude, and went after him to *Jeruſalem*; partly to expreſs their gratitude for ſuch a wonderful favour beſtowed upon them; and partly that they might be witneſſes of the power of his deity, and the truth of his *Meſſiahſhip*, as they went along, and at *Jeruſalem*: and in a ſpiritual ſenſe; they became his diſciples, they embraced his doctrines, believed in him as the Meſſiah, ſubmitted to his ordinances, imitated him in the exerciſe of grace, and in the performance of duty: for, at the ſame time he reſtored their bodily ſight, he gave them a ſpiritual one to look to him, and follow him, the light of the world, that they might enjoy the light of life in another world.

## CHAP. XXI.

Ver. 1. AND *when they drew nigh unto Jeruſalem*, &c.] The *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read, *when he drew nigh*, or *was near*; but not alone, his diſciples were with him, and a multitude of people alſo; as is evident from the following account. They might well be ſaid to be near to *Jeruſalem*, ſince 'tis added, *and were come to Bethphage*; which the *Jews* ſay [n] was within the walls of the city of *Jeruſalem*, and was in all reſpects as the city itſelf, and was the outermoſt part of it [o]; and that all within the outward circumference of the city of *Jeruſalem* was called *Bethphage* [p]: it ſeems to me to be part of it within the city, and part of it without, in the ſuburbs of it, which reached to *Bethany*, and that to the mount of *Olives*. Various are the derivations and etymologies of this place: ſome ſay it ſignifies *the houſe*, or *place of a fountain*, from a fountain that was in it; as if it was a compound of *Beth*, an houſe, and πηγη, *pege*, a fountain: others, *the houſe of the mouth of a valley*; as if it was made up of thoſe three words, בית פי גיא, becauſe the outward boundary of it was at the foot of the mount of *Olives*, at the entrance of the valley of *Jehoſhaphat*: others ſay, that the ancient reading was *Bethſphage*, *the houſe of ſlaughter*; and *Jerom* ſays [q], it was a village of the prieſts, and he renders it, *the houſe of jaw-bones*: here indeed they might bake the ſhew-bread, and eat the holy things, as in *Jeruſalem* [r]; but the true reading and ſignification of it is, בית פאגי, *the houſe of figs*; ſo called from the fig-trees which grew in the outward limits of it near *Bethany*, and the mount of *Olives*: hence we read of [s] פגי בית היני, *the figs of Bethany*; which place is mentioned along with *Bethphage*, both by *Mark* and *Luke*, where Chriſt, and thoſe with him, were now come: the latter ſays, they were come *nigh* to theſe places, for they were come *to the mount of Olives*; near to which were the furthermoſt limits of *Bethany*, and *Bethphage*, from *Jeruſalem*. This mount was ſo called from the abundance of olive-trees which grew upon it, and was on the eaſt-ſide of *Jeruſalem* [t]; and it was diſtant from it a ſabbath-day's journey, *Acts* i. 12. which was two thouſand cubits, or eight furlongs, and which made one mile: *then ſent Jeſus two diſciples*; who they were is not certain, perhaps *Peter* and *John*, who were afterwards ſent by him to prepare the paſſover, *Luke* xxii. 8.

Ver. 2. *Saying unto them, go into the village over-againſt you*, &c.] *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel reads *before you*; not *Jeruſalem*, as ſome have thought, for that would never be called a village; tho' the *Ethiopic* verſion reads it, *the city*; but rather *Bethany*, which was near to *Bethphage*, and is mentioned with it; tho' the *Jews* ſay [u], the name of the village was *Nob*, and was near to *Jeruſalem*, and own, that Chriſt had an aſs from hence, on which he rode to *Jeruſalem*, and applied to himſelf the prophecy in *Zech.* ix. 9. And it is very likely this was the village; for *Nob* was very near to *Jeruſalem*; it was over-againſt it, within ſight of it, and from thence might be taken a view of the whole city, according to the *Jews*; who ſay [w], that *Sennacherib* ſtood in *Nob*, a city of the prieſts, over-againſt the walls of *Jeruſalem*, and ſaw the whole city, and it was little in his eyes; and he ſaid, is not this the city of *Jeruſalem*, &c. *and ſtraightway*, or, as in *Mark*, *as ſoon as ye be entered into it*; and in *Luke*, *at your entring*, at the town's end, at one of the firſt houſes in it, at the door thereof, *ye ſhall*

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[n] Gloſſ. in T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 14. 2. & Peſach, fol. 91. 1.

[o] Gloſſ. in T. Bab. Peſach. fol. 63. 2. & 91. 1.

[p] Gloſſ. in T. Bab. Sota, fol. 45. 1. & Bava Metzia, fol. 90. 1.

[q] In loc. & ad Euſtoch. fol. 59. 3. tom. 1.

[r] Miſn. Menachot, c. 11. §. 2. T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 63. 1. & 78. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Peſul. Hamukdaſh, c. 12. §. 16. Gloſſ. in Peſach, fol. 63. 2.

[s] T. Bab. Peſach, fol. 53. 1. & Erubin, fol. 28. 2.

[t] Zech. xiv. 4. Targum in Ezek. xi. 23. & Bartenora in Miſn. Middot, c. 1. §. 3.

[u] Toldos Jeſu, p. 9.

[w] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 95. 1. Targum, Jarchi, & Kimchi in Iſ. x. 32.

*ſhall find an aſs tied, and a colt with her.* The other Evangeliſts only make mention of the colt, or young aſs; but, no doubt, both were ſpoken of by Chriſt, and both were found by the diſciples, the aſs, and the colt by her, and both were brought away by them; and on both of them, very probably, Chriſt rode; firſt on one, and then on the other, as the prophecy hereby fulfilled ſeems to require, and as the ſequel of the account ſhews. The ancient allegorical ſenſe of the aſs and colt is not to be deſpiſed: that the aſs may ſignify the *Jews*, who had been uſed to bear the burdenſome rites and ceremonies of the law; and the colt, the wild and untamed *Gentiles*, and the coming of Chriſt, firſt to the one, and then to the other: *looſe* them, *and bring* them *unto me*, both aſs and colt. So the *Arabic* verſion reads it, *looſe both, and bring them both to me.*

Ver. 3. *And if any man ſay ought unto you*, &c.] As, what buſineſs have you with the aſs and colt? why do you looſe them? as certain perſons, the owners of them did, as *Mark* and *Luke* relate; *ye ſhall ſay, the Lord hath need of them:* he that is our Lord, and your Lord, and the Lord of theſe creatures, and of all things elſe, wants them for his preſent ſervice; *and ſtraightway he will ſend them:* which is either a continuation of what the diſciples ſhould ſay to any that ſhould aſk them the reaſon of their looſing the aſs and colt, in order to make them eaſy; that the Lord, who had need of them, as ſoon as he had done with them, would ſend them back to their proper owners, ſafe and well: or they are ſpoken for the encouragement of the diſciples to go, and not be diſheartened, tho' they ſhould be thus examined; for immediately upon ſaying, that the Lord ſtood in need of them, and had an uſe for them at that time, the owners thereof, without any more words, would immediately ſend them along with them; which latter rather ſeems to be the ſenſe of the clauſe; and which is confirmed by *Mark:* a very clear proof is this of the omniſcience of Chriſt. He knew, that there were an aſs, and a colt, in ſuch a village, faſtened to ſuch a door, juſt at the entrance into the town: he knew the owners of it would examine the diſciples about looſing and taking them away, and prepares them to give an anſwer; and he knew that the minds of theſe owners would be immediately wrought upon, and inclined to let them go directly and quietly.

Ver. 4. *All this was done*, &c.] The diſciples were ſent to the neighbouring village for the aſs and colt, and they brought them, and Chriſt rode upon them; not becauſe of the diſtance of the place from *Jeruſalem*, for he was juſt at it; or becauſe he was weary, or it would be very fatiguing to him to walk thither on foot; for he had been uſed to travelling, and had gone thro' moſt parts of *Galilee* and *Judea*; but *that it might fulfilled which was ſpoken by the prophet:* the *Ethiopic* verſion adds, *Iſaiah*; for the former part of the following citation ſtands in *Iſ.* lxii. 11. as the latter does in *Zech.* ix. 9. It was uſual with the *Jews* to cite ſcripture in this manner, by taking a part from one writer, and another from another, and joining them together: *ſaying*, the following words.

Ver. 5. *Tell ye the daughter of Zion*, &c.] Theſe words ſeem to be taken out of *Iſ.* lxii. 11. where it is ſaid, *ſay ye to the daughter of Zion, behold thy ſalvation cometh*, or *thy ſaviour cometh*; meaning, without doubt, the Meſſiah: by *the daughter of Zion* is meant, not the city of *Jeruſalem*, but the inhabitants thereof, the *Jewiſh* ſynagogue; or, as the *Targum* renders it, כנישת דציון, *the congregation of Zion*, the people of the *Jews*; particularly the elect of God among them, thoſe that embraced the true Meſſiah, and believed in him: *behold, thy king cometh unto thee:* this, and what follow, are cited from *Zech.* ix. 9. and to be underſtood of the king Meſſiah, who, in a little time after this prophecy was given out, was to come to *Zion*, and redeem *Jacob* from all his iniquities, and was now come. One of the *Jewiſh* commentators ſays [x], that interpreters are divided about the ſenſe of this prophecy; but obſerves, that there are ſome that ſay this is the Meſſiah: and another [y] of them affirms, that it is impoſſible to explain it of any other than the king *Meſſiah*; and that it can be underſtood of no other, I have elſewhere [z] ſhewn. *Meek*; in the prophecy of *Zechary* 'tis, עני, *poor*, as the Meſſiah Jeſus was, in a temporal ſenſe; but the word, both by the *Septuagint*, and our *Evangeliſt*, is rendered *meek*; as it is by the *Targum*, *Jarchi*, and *Kimchi*, who all explain it by ענותן, *lowly*, *humble*, or *meek:* and a character it is, that well agrees with Jeſus, who, in the whole of his deportment, both in life, and in death, was a pattern of meekneſs, and lowlineſs of mind: *and ſitting upon an aſs, and a colt, the fole of an aſs.* This is applied to the Meſſiah by the *Jews*, both ancient [a] and modern [b], who conſider this as an inſtance and evidence of his humility: they ſuppoſe this aſs to be a very uncommon one, having an hundred ſpots on it; and ſay, that it was the fellow of that which was created on the eve of the ſabbath [c]; and is the ſame that *Abraham* and *Moſes* rode upon: and they own, as before obſerved, that Jeſus of *Nazareth* rode on one to *Jeruſalem*, as is here related. Their ancient governors, patriarchs, princes, and judges, uſed to ride on aſſes, before the introduction and multiplication of horſes in *Solomon*'s time, forbidden by the law of God: whereſore, though this might ſeem mean and deſpicable at this preſent time, yet was ſuitable enough to Chriſt's character as a king, and as the ſon of *David*, and king of *Iſrael*; ſtrictly obſerving the law given to the kings of *Iſrael*, and riding in ſuch manner, as they formerly did.

Ver. 6. *And the diſciples went*, &c.] The two diſciples, as the *Arabic* verſion reads, to the village over-againſt them; and, as *Mark* ſays, *found the colt tied to the door without, in a place where two ways met:* the houſe was juſt at the entrance of the village, at the door of which, on the outſide in the ſtreet, was the colt faſtened, where were two ways of going into, and coming out of the town; ſo that it was a public place; the colt was eaſily ſeen, nor could it well be taken away without being obſerved, as it was by the owners of it: and *did as Jeſus commanded them*; they looſed the colt; and whereas whilſt they were looſing it, the owners of it aſked them, what they meant by ſo doing? they returned for anſwer what Chriſt had directed them to ſay; upon which they were ſatiſfied, and let them go with it; ſee *Mark* xi. 4, 5, 6. This is a very conſiderable inſtance of the faith of the diſciples in Chriſt, and their ready and chearful obedience to him; who might have objected the appearance of theft, the ſcandal that might be brought upon them, and the trouble they might be expoſed to hereby; but they make no heſitation, but go and do as he had ordered them; and in which, they are worthy of the imitation of all the followers of Jeſus.

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[x] Aben Ezra in Zech. ix. 9. [y] Jarchi in ib. [z] Propheſies of the Meſſiah literally fulfilled in Jeſus, c. 9. p. 151, &c.

[a] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 98. 1. & 99. 1. Bereſhith Rabba, fol. 66. 2. & 85. 3. Midraſh Kohelet, fol 63. 2. Zohar in Gen. fol. 127. 3. & in Num. fol. 83. 4. & in Deut. fol. 117. 1. & 118. 3. Raya Mehimna in Zohar in Lev. fol. 38. 3. & in Num. fol. 97. 2. [b] Jarchi in Iſ. xxvi. 6. Baal Hatturim in Exod. fol. 88. 2. Abarbinel, Maſhmia Jeſhua, fol. 15. 4. [c] Pirke Eliezer, c. 31. Caphtor, fol. 81. 2.

Ver. 7. *And brought the aſs and the colt*, &c.] *To Jeſus*, as *Mark* and *Luke* add, and who only make mention of the colt: both were undoubtedly brought; the colt being unlooſed and taken away, the aſs, its dam, followed after: *and put on them their cloaths*; their looſe upper garments, to be inſtead of ſaddles and trappings, and that Chriſt might ſit thereon with eaſe and decency: the other Evangeliſts ſay, that they caſt their garments on the colt; and the *Syriac* verſion here reads, *they put their garments on the colt, and Jeſus rode upon it*: but as both were brought, it is clear from hence, that their cloaths were put upon both; not knowing which Chriſt would chuſe to ride on. And it ſhould ſeem, that it was not unuſual to put garments on aſſes to ride on; for the *Targumiſt* on *Judg.* v. 10. repreſents the princes of *Iſrael* as riding upon aſſes, ſtrewed or ſaddled with all kind ציורין, *of painted garments*. The *Perſic* verſion, without the leaſt colour of authority from the original text, renders it, *and Jeſus put his own garment on the colt, and ſat thereon*; which is ridiculous, as well as contrary to truth: *and they ſat him thereon*, or *on them*; meaning either on the aſs and colt, that is, on one of them, or both ſucceſſively, or on the cloaths they put upon them.

Ver. 8. *And a very great multitude*, &c.] Which conſiſted partly of the great multitude which followed Chriſt from *Jericho*, and partly of the much people that were come up to the feaſt of the paſſover from divers parts, and met him from *Jeruſalem*; ſee *John* xii. 12, 13. Theſe, many of them, for it can't be thought to be done by them all, *ſpread their garments in the way*; either in the middle of the road, inſtead of carpets, to ride upon; the *Perſic* verſion adds, *that he might paſs over them*: this they did, in honour to him as a king. So when *Jehu* declared to the princes of *Iſrael*, that he was anointed king of *Iſrael*, they haſtened, and took every man his garment, and put it under him, 2 *Kings* ix. 13. that is, to tread upon; though the *Jewiſh* writers [x] ſay, it was done that he might be higher than them all, ſuitable to the dignity of a king: and it is reported [y] of *Cato Uticenſis*, the emperor, that his ſoldiers ſtrewed their garments for him to walk upon: or theſe garments were ſpread by the way-ſide. Dr. *Lightfoot* conjectures, that little tents might be raiſed by them along the road, upon which they ſpread their garments to make a ſhow, in imitation of the feaſt of tabernacles, to which there is a very great reſemblance in many things which occur in this account; when they uſed to ſpread linen cloth, garments, and fruits, over their booths, for decoration and ornament; as appears from their traditions about theſe things: "פירס עליה סדין, *if a man ſpreads a linen cloth* "*over it*, (his booth) becauſe of the ſun, or under "it, becauſe of the falling of leaves, *&c.* or "ſpreads it over a canopy, it is not right; but he "may ſpread it over the bed-poſts [z]." That is, for ornament, as the commentators obſerve [a]. Again, "פרש עליה בגד, *if a man ſpreads a garment* "over it, (his booth) or if he ſpreads it under it, "becauſe of what falls, it is not right; but if he "ſpreads it ſo as that it is, לנאותה, *for ornament*, it "is right; and ſo if he covers it according to the "tradition of it, and encompaſſes it with various "kinds of fruits, and precious things, and veſſels "which hang upon it, whether on its walls, or on "its covering, ſo they be for ornament, 'tis "right [b]." In like manner, the multitude might hang their garments, to make the ſhow the greater, either on ſuch booths, or on the houſes and trees, that were upon the road, as they went along. *Others cut down branches from the trees*; from the olive-trees, as the *Perſic* verſion expreſſes it, which grew in great plenty hereabout; and alſo from the palm-trees, the branches of which, with the boughs of other trees, were what the *Jews* uſed to carry in their hands on the feaſt of tabernacles; ſee *Levit.* xxiii. 40. and the Evangeliſt *John* expreſsly ſays, that the people which met Chriſt from *Jeruſalem* at this time, did take branches of palm-trees in their hands, *John* xii. 13. And though this was not the time of the feaſt of tabernacles, but of the paſſover, yet it was common with the *Jews* to ſignify their joy upon any occaſion, by ſuch ways and methods they uſed at that feaſt: ſo upon the cleanſing of the tower of *Jeruſalem*, by *Simon Maccabeus*, the *Jews* entered into it with thankſgiving, and branches of palm-trees, *&c.* 1 *Maccab.* xiii. 51. Likewiſe upon purifying the temple, which had been polluted by *Antiochus*, they kept eight days with gladneſs as in the feaſt of tabernacles, and bare branches and fair boughs, and palms alſo, 2 *Maccab.* x. 6, 7. But here 'tis ſaid, *and they ſtrewed them in the way*: not in the middle of the road, which would have been an hindrance to riding; but by the way-ſide, upon the booths, or houſes in the road, in honour of him; juſt as the *Jews* [c] ſay, "the ſtreets were ſtrewed with myrtles, and the "courts with purple, when *Mordecai* went out of "the king's gate."

Ver. 9. *And the multitudes that went before*, &c.] That is, that went before Chriſt; accordingly the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, and *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel read, *that went before him*: theſe ſeem to be the much people that met him from *Jeruſalem*, *and that followed* him; which were perhaps thoſe that came from *Jericho*, and other parts; *cried, ſaying, Hoſanna to the Son of David*: by calling *Jeſus* the ſon of *David*, they owned and proclaimed him to be the *Meſſiah*; this being the uſual title, by which the *Meſſiah* was known among the *Jews*; ſee the note on *Matt.* i. 1. and by crying and ſaying *Hoſanna* to him, which was done with loud acclamations, and the united ſhouts of both companies, before and behind; they aſcribe all praiſe, honour, glory, and bleſſing to him, and wiſh him all proſperity, happineſs, and ſafety. The word is an *Hebrew* word, and is compounded of נא, and הושיעה, which ſignifies, *ſave I beſeech*; and which words ſtand in *Pſal.* cxviii. 25. to which the multitude had reference, as appears from what follows; and are formed into one word, הושענא, *Hoſana*, or *Hoſanna*, in which form it frequently appears in the *Jewiſh* writings; and becauſe of the often uſe of it at the feaſt of tabernacles, that feaſt was called *Hoſanna*, and the ſeventh day of it was called, הושענא רבה, *the great Hoſanna* [d]. Moreover, the *Lulabs*, or the bundles made of branches of palm-trees, and boughs of willow and myrtle, which they carried in their hands at the feaſt of tabernacles, often go by this name: 'tis ſaid [e], "the *Egyptian* myrtle is "right or fit, להושענא, *for the Hoſanna*." That is, to be put into the *Lulab*, or bundle of boughs and branches, which was carried about, and ſhaken at the above feaſt. Again [f], 'tis a tradition of *R.* “ *Meir*, that it was the practice of the honourable “ men of *Jeruſalem*, to bind their *Lulabs* with “ golden threads —— ſays *Rabbah*, theſe are they, “ מגדלי הושענא, *that bind the Hoſanna*: the *Gloſs* “ on it is, *that bind the Lulabs*, of the houſe of “ the head of the captivity; for in binding the “ *Hoſanna* of the houſe of the head of the captivity, they leave in it an hand's breadth —— and “ ſays the ſame *Rabbah*, a man may not hold an “ *Hoſanna* in a linen cloth.” Once more [g], “ ſays “ *R. Zera*, a man may not prepare, הושענא, *an* “ *Hoſanna* for a child, on a good day.” Sometimes the *Hoſanna* ſeems to be diſtinguiſhed from the *Lulab*, and then by the *Lulab* is meant, only the branches of palm-tree; and by the *Hoſanna*, the boughs of willow and myrtle; as when [h], “ *Rabbah* “ ſays, a man may not fix the *Lulab*, בהושענא, “ *in the Hoſanna*.” And a little after ſays the ſame, “ a man may not bind the *Lulab* with the *Hoſanna*.” Now theſe bundles might be ſo called, becauſe they were lifted up and ſhaken, when the above words out of *Pſal.* cxviii. 25. were recited: for thus it is ſaid [i], “ when do they ſhake, that is, their *Lu-* “ *labs*, or *Hoſanna's*? At thoſe words, *O give thanks* “ *unto the Lord*, *Pſal.* cxviii. 1. the beginning and “ end; and at thoſe words, *Save now I beſeech thee*, “ ver. 25. The houſe of *Hillell*, and the houſe of “ *Shammai* ſay alſo at thoſe words, *O Lord I beſeech* “ *thee, ſend now proſperity*: ſays *R. Akiba*, I have “ obſerved *Rabban Gamaliel* and *Rabbi Joſhua*, “ that all the people ſhook their *Lulabs*, but they “ did not ſhake, only at thoſe words, *Save now I* “ *beſeech thee, O Lord*.” Hence ſome have thought, that theſe are meant by the *Hoſanna* in this text; and that the ſenſe is, that the multitude cried, ſaying, Theſe branches of palm-trees we carry in our hands, and ſtrow by the way-ſide, are in honour to the Son of *David*, the true *Meſſiah*, *Jeſus* of *Nazareth*: but then this ſenſe will not agree with the following clauſe, *Hoſanna in the higheſt*: it may therefore be further obſerved, that certain prayers and ſongs of praiſe, were called *Hoſanna's*: hence we read [k] of, הושענות של שבת, *the Hoſanna's of the ſabbath*; which conſiſted of various ſentences in praiſe of the ſabbath, and thankſgiving to God for it, and are concluded with this word *Hoſanna*; and of various petitions that God would ſave them, as he had done others; and at the end of each petition is this word. As alſo of [l], הושענות של הושענא רבה, *the Hoſanna's of the great Hoſanna*; which are certain words of prayer and praiſe, uſed on the ſeventh day of the feaſt of tabernacles: and whereas at that feaſt the *Hallell*, or hymn, was ſung, which concluded with the cxviiith *Pſalm*, where the words, *Save now I beſeech thee, O Lord*, ſtand, from whence this word is formed; the true ſenſe and meaning of it here appears to be this; that the multitude that attended Chriſt to *Jeruſalem*, as they went along, ſung ſongs of praiſe to him, as the true *Meſſiah*; particularly, applying the above paſſage to him, and earneſtly wiſhed him all ſucceſs and proſperity; and importunately prayed for ſalvation by him; adding, *Bleſſed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord*: which words are taken alſo out of *Pſal.* cxviii. 26. and is an aſcription of bleſſing and praiſe to *Jeſus*, the Meſſiah; who being ſent by God, came from him with his authority, as his apoſtle, and as repreſenting him; and contains another petition for him, that he might be crowned with the bleſſings of divine goodneſs, for his people; and be bleſſed and praiſed by them, for all the ſpiritual bleſſings they are bleſſed with in him. And very properly and pertinently were thoſe words uſed and applied to Chriſt, ſince the Pſalm from whence they are taken belongs to him: the whole of it is, by ſome *Jewiſh* interpreters [m], ſaid to be ſpoken concerning him; and particularly, he is deſigned in ver. 22. by the ſtone the builders refuſed, as is clear from ver. 42. of this chapter, and from *Acts* iv. 11. and 1 *Pet.* ii. 7. and which is allowed by ſome *Jewiſh* writers, ancient and modern [n]; and ver. 27. the words following theſe, are by them interpreted of the days of the Meſſiah, the times of *Gog* and *Magog*, and the future age [o]. And others of them ſaid, as *Mark* obſerves, ch. xi. 10. *Bleſſed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord*; ſee the note there. Moreover, as it may be thought others of the people ſaid, as *Luke* relates, ch. xix. 38. *Bleſſed be the king that cometh in the name of the Lord*; ſee the note there. To which is added, *Hoſanna in the higheſt*; that is, let ſongs of praiſe be ſung to God, who is in the higheſt heavens, for all his grace and goodneſs vouchſafed to the ſons of men, through Chriſt his beloved Son; or let not only all ſalvation, happineſs, and proſperity, attend the Meſſiah, *David*'s ſon, here on earth, but all glory and felicity in the higheſt heavens, above which he will be exalted.

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[x] R. Levi ben Gerſom, & R. Samuel Laniado in loc. [y] Plutarch in Alcibiade. [z] Miſn. Succa, c. 1. §. 3. [a] Maimon. & Bartenora in ib. [b] Maimon. Hilch. Succa, c. 5. §. 17. [c] Targum in Eſther viii. 15. [d] Seder Tephillot, fol. 298. 2. [e] T. Bab. Succa, fol. 33. 1.

Ver. 10. *And when he was come into Jeruſalem*, &c.] The metropolis of the nation, the ſeat of the ancient kings of *Judah*, and of his father *David*, entering into it in this very publick manner, as he never did before; riding in the manner the ancient judges and kings of *Iſrael* did, attended with a numerous retinue, ſhouting as they went along, and ſinging their *Hoſanna's* to him: *all the city was moved*; as *Bethlehem* was, when *Naomi* with *Ruth* returned thither; and of which the ſame phraſe is uſed, as here, *Ruth* i. 19. *all the city was moved about them*; which the *Chaldee* paraphraſe renders, “ all the inhabitants of the city were gathered in “ troops about them.” And ſo here the ſenſe is, that the inhabitants of the city of *Jeruſalem* were in general alarmed at the uncommon apparatus, and ſhouting, and ran in great numbers to enquire what was the matter: *ſaying, who is this?* They knew him not; for though he had preached unto them, and wrought miracles among them, yet they had never ſeen him in any ſuch pomp and ſtate; and could not deviſe who he ſhould be, that entered their city in ſuch a manner, amidſt the ſhouts and acclamations of ſo great a multitude: it ſeemed greatly to affect them, and fill them with concern, aſtoniſhment, and fear.

Ver. 11. *And the multitude ſaid*, &c.] Or *the people*, as the *Vulgate Latin*, and *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel read; the common people, that went before, and followed after him: theſe knew Chriſt better than the inhabitants of *Jeruſalem*, the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, and rulers of the people. *This is Jeſus the prophet*; that prophet *Moſes* ſpoke of, in *Deut.* xviii. 15. and the nation of the *Jews* in general expected: *of Nazareth of Galilee*; who, tho' he was not born there, yet being educated, and having lived much in that place, is ſaid to be of it; and which was the common opinion of the people.

Ver. 12. *And Jeſus went into the temple of God*, &c.] At *Jeruſalem*, which was built by his order, and dedicated to his worſhip, and where the *Shekinah*,

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[f] T. Bab. Succa, fol. 37. 1.

[g] Ib. fol. 46. 2. Vid. Maimon. Hilch. Lulab, c. 8. §. 10.

[h] Ib. fol. 37. 2.

[i] Miſn. Succa, c. 3. §. 9.

[k] Seder Tephillot, fol. 297. 1.

[l] Ib. fol. 298. 2.

[m] Vid. Kimchi in Pſal. cxviii. 1.

[n] Zohar in Exod. fol. 93. 3. Jarchi in Mic. v. 2.

[o] T. Hieroſ. Megilla, fol. 73. 1.

*nah*, or the divine preſence was. Chriſt went not to the tower of *David*, the ſtrong hold of *Zion*, the palace of his father *David*; for he entered not as a temporal king; but he went to the houſe of his heavenly Father, as the Lord and proprietor of it, to preach in it, and purge it; whereby the glory of the latter houſe became greater than that of the former; and ſo ſeveral prophecies had their accompliſhment, particularly *Hagg.* ii. 7, 9. *Mal.* iii. 1. though this was not the firſt time by many, of Chriſt's being in the temple; yet this his entrance was the moſt publick and magnificent of any: after he had alighted from the colt, and ſent back that and the aſs to their proper owners, as is very probable, he went in by the eaſtern gate, called the king's gate, 1 *Chron.* ix. 18. into the temple: *and caſt out all them that ſold and bought in the temple*; not in the holy of holies, nor in the holy place, nor in the court of the prieſts, nor in the court of the *Iſraelites*, but in the court of the *Gentiles*, and in the mountain of the houſe, in which were ſhops, where various things were ſold, relating to ſacrifices. What theſe perſons bought and ſold, whom Chriſt caſt out, is not ſaid, but may be collected from *John* ii. 14. where beſides *doves*, of which hereafter, mention is made of *ſheep* and *oxen*; which were brought to be ſold, on account of the paſſover, for it was then near their time of paſſover as now; for beſides the lambs and kids, which were here alſo ſold and bought for the paſſover ſupper, ſheep and oxen were here alſo killed and ſold for the *Chagiga*, or feaſt [p], which was the day following: here likewiſe the drink-offerings were bought and ſold, of which take the following account. "There were fifteen preſidents, במקדש, "*in the ſanctuary*: *Jochanan ben Phinehas* was over "the tickets, and *Abijah* over the drink-offerings, "*&c.*———He that enquired for drink-offerings, "went to *Jochanan*, who was appointed over the "tickets: he gave him the money, and took a "ticket; he then went to *Abijah*, that was appointed over the drink-offerings, and gave him "the ticket, and received from him the drink-"offerings; and in the evening they came together, and *Abijah* produced the tickets, and took "for them the money [q]." This was one way of buying and ſelling in the temple: *and overthrew the tables of the money-changers*; of which ſort were they, who ſat in the temple at certain times, to receive the half ſhekel, and change the money of ſuch, who wanted one, by which they gained ſomething to themſelves. It was a cuſtom in our Lord's time, for every *Iſraelite*, once a year, to pay half a ſhekel towards the temple charge and ſervice, which was founded upon the orders given by God to *Moſes* in the wilderneſs; that upon his numbering the people, to take of every one that was twenty years of age and upwards, rich or poor, half a ſhekel, *Exod.* xxx. 13, 14, 15. though this does not ſeem to be deſigned as a perpetual rule. However, it now obtained, and was annually paid: "On the firſt "day of *Adar* (which anſwers to our *February*) "they proclaimed concerning the ſhekels [r]." That is, they gave publick notice, in all the cities in *Iſrael*, that the time of paying the half ſhekel was near at hand, that they might get their money ready, for every one was obliged to pay it: the *Jews* [s] ſay, "it is an affirmative command of the law, that "every man in *Iſrael* ſhould pay the half ſhekel "every year; even though a poor man that is "maintained by alms, he is obliged to it, and "muſt beg it of others, or ſell his coat upon his "back and pay it, as it is ſaid, *Exod.* xxx. 15. "*The rich ſhall not give more*, &c. —— All are "bound to give it, prieſts, *Levites*, and *Iſraelites*, "and ſtrangers, and ſervants, that are made free; "but not women, nor ſervants, nor children." Notice being thus given [t], "on the fifteenth day "(of the ſame month) שולחנות, *tables* were placed "in the province, or city (which *Bartenora* [u] interprets of *Jeruſalem*; but *Maimonides* [w] ſays, the "word uſed is the name of all the cities in the "land of *Iſrael*, excepting *Jeruſalem*) and on the "twenty-fifth they ſit, במקדש, *in the ſanctuary*." The ſame is related by *Maimonides* [x], after this manner: "On the firſt of *Adar* they proclaim concerning the ſhekels, that every man may prepare his half ſhekel, and be ready to give it on "the fifteenth; השולחנים *the exchangers* ſit in "every province or city, and mildly aſk it; every "one that gives them it, they take it of them; "and he that does not give, they don't compel "him to give: on the twenty-fifth, *they ſit in the* "*ſanctuary* to collect it; and henceforward they "urge him that does not give, until he gives; "and every one that does not give, they oblige "him to give a pledge, and they take his pledge, "whether he will or no, and even his coat." This gives us a plain account of theſe money-changers; of their tables, and of their ſitting at them in the temple, and on what account. Now theſe exchangers had a profit in every ſhekel they changed [y]. "When a man went to an exchanger, and changed "a ſhekel for two half ſhekels, he gave him an "addition to the ſhekel; and the addition is called, "קלבון, *Kolbon*: wherefore, when two men gave a "ſhekel for them both, they were both obliged to "pay the *Kolbon*." Would you know what this *Kolbon*, whence theſe exchangers are called, Κολλυβισταὶ, *Collybiſtæ*, in this text, or the gain which theſe men had, take the queſtion and anſwer in their own words [z]. "How much is the *Kolbon*? A ſilver *Meah*, according to *R. Meir*; but the wiſe "men ſay, half an one." Or as it is elſewhere expreſſed [a], "what is the value of the *Kolbon*? At "that time they gave two-pence for the half ſhekel; the *Kolbon* was half a *Meah*, which is the "twelfth part of a penny; and ſince, a *Kolbon* leſs "than that is not given." Now a *Meah* was the half of a ſixth part of the half ſhekel, and the twenty-fourth part of a ſhekel, and weighed ſixteen barley corns; half a *Meah* was the forty-eighth part of a ſhekel, and weighed eight barley [b] corns; a *Meah* was of our money, the value of ſomewhat more than a penny, and half an one more than a half-penny. This was their gain, which in ſo large a number that paid, muſt amount to a great deal of money. There ſeems to be nothing lie againſt theſe men being the very perſons, whoſe tables Chriſt overturned, unleſs it ſhould be objected, that this was not the time of their ſitting; for it was now within a few days of the paſſover, which was in the month *Niſan*; whereas it was in the month *Adar*, that the half ſhekel was paid: but it ſhould be obſerved, according to the above account, that they did not begin to ſit in the temple to receive this money, until the twenty-fifth of *Adar*; and it was now but the tenth of *Niſan*, when Chriſt entered the temple and found them there: ſo that there was but fifteen days between the one and the other; and conſidering the large numbers that were obliged to pay, and the backwardneſs and poverty of many, they may reaſonably be thought to be ſtill ſitting on that account: and what *Maimonides* before relates deſerves notice, and will ſtrengthen this ſuppoſition; that on the twenty-fifth of *Adar*, they ſate in the temple to collect this money; and that *henceforward* they urged and compelled perſons to pay it. Moreover, theſe men had other buſineſs, in a way of exchange, than this to do; and eſpecially at ſuch a time as the paſſover, when perſons came from different parts to attend it; and who might want to have their foreign money changed for current coin; or bills of return, to be changed for money: add to all this the following account, which will ſhew the large and perpetual buſineſs of theſe men [c]. "In the ſanctuary there were before them, תמיד, *continually*, or *daily*, thirteen cheſts; (and there were as many tables [d]) every cheſt was in the form of a trumpet: the firſt was for the ſhekels of the preſent year, the ſecond for the ſhekels of the year paſt; the third for every one that had a *Korban*, or vow upon him to offer two turtle-doves, or two young pidgeons; the one a burnt-offering, the other a ſin-offering: their price was caſt into this cheſt: the fourth for every one that had the burnt-offering of a fowl only on him, the price of that was caſt into this cheſt. The fifth was for him, who freely gave money to buy wood, to be laid in order on the altar; the ſixth, for him that freely gave money for the incenſe; the ſeventh, for him that freely gave gold for the mercy-ſeat; the eighth, for the remainder of the ſin-offering; as when he ſeparated the money for his ſin-offering, and took the ſin-offering, and there remained of the money, the reſt he caſt into this cheſt: the ninth, for the remainder of the treſpaſs-offering; the tenth, for the remainder of the doves for men and women in fluxes, and women after child-birth; the eleventh, for the remainder of the offerings of the *Nazarite*; the twelfth, for the remainder of the treſpaſs-offering of the leper; the thirteenth, for him that freely gave money for the burnt-offering of a beaſt." *And the ſeats of them that ſold doves*; which were the offerings of the poor ſort after child-bearing, and on account of running iſſues; which caſes were very frequent, and ſometimes raiſed the price of doves very high, of which what follows is an inſtance [e]. "It happened at a certain time, that doves were ſold in *Jeruſalem* for a golden penny each; ſaid *Rabban ben Simeon Gamaliel*, by this habitation (or temple which he ſwore by) I will not lodge, (or lie down) this night, until they are ſold for a ſilver penny each: he went into the council-houſe and taught, that if a woman had five certain births, or five certain iſſues, ſhe ſhould bring one offering, and eat of the ſacrifices, nor ſhould there remain any debt upon her; and doves were ſold that day for two fourths." That is, for a ſilver penny; now a golden penny, was the value of twenty-five ſilver pence [f]; ſo that the price, by this means, was ſunk very much: but not only doves were ſold in the markets in *Jeruſalem*, but in the temple itſelf [g]. "There was a preſident over the doves, which was he with whom they agreed, who *ſold doves* for the offerings, ſo and ſo by the ſhekel; and every one that was obliged to bring a pair of turtle-doves, or two young pidgeons, brought the price of them, למקשד, *to the ſanctuary*; and the preſident gave the doves to the maſters of the offerings, and made up the account with the treaſurers." Now at a feaſt time as this was, there was a greater demand for doves than uſual; for women who had lain in, and ſuch as had fluxes, whether men or women, who lived in diſtant parts, reſerved their offerings till they came up to the feaſt [h]; and which in conſequence muſt occaſion a greater call for theſe creatures, and furniſhes out a reaſon, why there ſhould be ſo many ſitting at this time in the temple to ſell doves. Some have thought, that thoſe perſons are here meant, which are often mentioned by the *Jewiſh* doctors [i], as an infamous ſort of men, who are not admitted as witneſſes in any caſe; and are reckoned among thieves, robbers, uſurers, and players at dice; who מפריחי יונים *teach doves to fly*, either to decoy other doves from their dove-houſes, or to out-fly others for money, or to fight one againſt another; and theſe ſate in the temple to ſell this ſort of doves, which was ſtill more heinous; but the other ſenſe is more agreeable.

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[p] Vid. R. Sol. Jarchi, in Deut. xvi. 2.

[q] Miſn. Shekalim, c. 5. §. 4. Maimon. Cele Hamikdaſh, c. 7. §. 10, 11, 12.

[r] Miſn. Shekalim, c. 1. §. 1.

[s] Maimon. Hilch. Shekalim, c. 1. §. 1. 7.

[t] Miſn. Shekalim, c. 1. §. 3.

[u] In ib.

[w] In ib.

[x] Hilch. Shekalim, c. 1. §. 9.

[y] Ib. c. 3. §. 1.

[z] Miſn. Shekalim, c. 1. §. 7.

[a] Maimon. Hilch. Shekalim, c. 3. §. 7.

[b] Maimon. & Bartenora in Miſn. Shekalim, c. 1. §. 7. & Cholin, c. 1. §. 7.

Ver. 13. *And ſaid unto them, it is written*, &c.] In *Iſa.* lvi. 7. *My houſe ſhall be called the houſe of prayer.* Theſe are the words of God, calling the temple his houſe, which was built according to the plan he gave; and was the place of his worſhip, and where he dwelt, and vouchſafed his preſence to his people; and ſignifying, that in time to come, it ſhould be an houſe of prayer; not for the *Jews* only, but for the *Gentiles* alſo: *for all people*, as it is expreſſed by the prophet, and cited by *Mark*; and particularly this part of it, in which were the money-changers and ſellers of doves; for that was the court of the *Gentiles*, where they were admitted to pray, and perform other parts of worſhip. Theſe words are rightly applied by Chriſt to the temple; nor can the *Jews* themſelves deny it; for their own *Targum* paraphraſes it thus, בית המקדשי, *the houſe of my ſanctuary ſhall be called an houſe of prayer*; or ſhall be one; for the meaning is not that it ſhould go by ſuch a name, but ſhould be for ſuch uſe, and not for buying and ſelling, and merchandize, to which uſe the *Jews* now put it: hence it follows, *but ye have made it a den of thieves*. Theſe are the words of Chriſt, affirming what is complained of in *Jer.* vii. 11. and applying it to the preſent caſe, on account of the wicked merchandize, unlawful gain, avarice and extortion, of the prieſts and other officers of the temple, who had a conſiderable ſhare in theſe things; and to whom the temple was, and by them uſed, as a den is to and by thieves and robbers, where they ſhelter themſelves; for theſe perſons robbed both God and man, and the temple was a ſanctuary to them: here they ſkreened themſelves, and, under the appearance of religion and devotion, devoured widows houſes, plundered perſons of their ſubſtance, and were full of extortion and exceſs.

Ver. 14. *And the blind and the lame came to him*, &c.] The *Syriac* and *Ethiopic* verſions read, *they brought unto him the blind and the lame.* The blind could not come to him unleſs they were led, nor the lame, unleſs they were carried: the ſenſe therefore is, they came, being brought to him: *in the temple*; that part of it, the court of the *Gentiles*, and mountain of the houſe, out of which he had caſt the buyers and ſellers, *&c.* and in the room of them, were brought in theſe objects of his pity: *and he healed them*; to the blind he reſtored ſight, and cauſed the lame to walk; which miracles he wrought in confirmation of the doctrine he preached: for all the other Evangeliſts relate, that he taught in the temple.

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[c] Maimon. Hilch. Shekalim, c. 2. §. 2.
[d] Miſn. Shekalim, c. 6. §. 1.
[e] Miſn. Cerithot, c. 1. §. 7.
[f] Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.
[g] Maimon. Hilch. Cele Hamikdaſh, c. 7. §. 9.
[h] Gloſſ. in T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 11. 1.
[i] T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 82. 1. T. Sanhedrin, fol. 25. 2. & Gloſſ. in ib. Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 3. §. 3. Maimon. Bartenora, & Ez. Chayim in ib. & Edayot, c. 2. 7. & Bartenora in ib. Maimon. Hilch. Gazela veabada, c. 6. §. 7. Toen unitan, c. 2. §. 2. & Eduth, c. 10. §. 4.

Ver. 15. *And when the chief-prieſts and Scribes,* &c.] The inveterate enemies of Chriſt; who upon hearing the ſhouts of the people at Chriſt's entrance into the city, and paſſage thro' it to the temple; and underſtanding that it was Jeſus of *Nazareth* that was come thither, they came alſo to awe the people, and pick up what they could againſt him: who, when they *ſaw the wonderful things that he did*; as the over-turning the tables of the money-changers, and the ſeats of thoſe that ſold doves, without any oppoſition, when theſe traders were ſo many, and in great power, and he a ſingle perſon, and unarmed; and that the blind received their ſight, and the lame were cured, *and the children crying in the temple*; who came from the various parts of the city, with their parents, to ſee the ſight; who, when the multitude had done, they began the ſame ditty: *and ſaying, Hoſanna to the ſon of David*; proclaiming Jeſus to be the Meſſiah, and aſcribing praiſe and glory to him, and wiſhing him all happineſs and proſperity: the form they had taken up from the people, and might be encouraged by their parents; and which they pronounced without fear of the high-prieſts, and *Scribes*, being diſpoſed, directed, and over-ruled hereunto by the providence of God. It was indeed no unuſual thing for children to ſing the *Hoſanna* at the feaſt of tabernacles; for, according to the *Jewiſh* canons [k], "a child "that knew how to ſhake, was obliged to carry "the *lulab*," or bundle of myrtle, and willow-boughs, and palm-tree branches, at the ſhaking of which *Hoſanna* was ſaid: but that they ſhould cry *Hoſanna* to *Jeſus*, as *David*'s ſon, was very extraordinary, and what the high-prieſts, and *Scribes*, took notice of with great reſentment: *they were ſore diſpleaſed*; at the children, that ſo ſaid, at their parents that ſuffered them, and eſpecially at Chriſt, who did not forbid them. The *Perſic* verſion renders it, *it diſpleaſed the prieſts*; the *Arabic* reads, *they murmured*; and the *Ethiopic* has it, *it was not pleaſant to them.*

Ver. 16. *And ſaid unto him, heareſt thou what theſe ſay?* &c.] Suggeſting, that if he did, he ought to reprove them, or elſe he would be a very vain, as well as a weak man, to take ſuch things to himſelf, which did not belong to him, and that from ſuch poor, little, ſilly creatures, ſo void of knowledge and underſtanding: *and Jeſus ſaid unto them, yea*; ſignifying he did hear, and well approved of what they ſaid, and was ready to vindicate it; and did, by putting the following queſtion to them, *have ye never read*; that paſſage of ſcripture in *Pſ.* viii. 2. *out of the mouth of babes and ſucklings thou haſt perfected praiſe?* in the orginal text it is, *thou haſt ordained*, or *founded ſtrength*; and which is rendered by the *Septuagint*, as it is by *Matthew* here; and glory and ſtrength are mentioned together, as being to be given to God, *Pſ.* xxix. 1. and ſo *ſtrength* and *praiſe* by the *Targumiſt* in *Iſ.* xiii. 3. by which is meant ſtrong glory, or glory and praiſe expreſſed with a ſtrong voice, or in a very vehement manner, as it was by theſe babes and ſucklings; and this owing to God's diſpoſing them hereunto, putting it into their mouths, and ſtrengthening them to declare it in a very ſtrong and powerful manner; ſo that his ſtrength was made perfect in their weakneſs, and his praiſe the more glorious. In the *Pſalm* 'tis added, *becauſe of thine enemies, that thou might ſtill the enemy, and the avenger*: by whom are meant the high-prieſts, *Scribes*, and *Phariſees*, the mortal enemies of Chriſt, who were full of enmity againſt him, and wanted to revenge themſelves on him for ſpoiling their market at this time; but were ſtilled by the *hoſannas* of the children, and Chriſt's defence of them. The *Jews* themſelves ſeem to be conſcious, that theſe words relate to the Meſſiah; for they ſay [l], that "babes and ſuck-"lings, יהבין הוקפא, *ſhall give ſtrength* to the king "Meſſiah;" manifeſtly referring to this paſſage.

Ver. 17. *And he left them,* &c.] The high-prieſts and *Scribes*, confounded and put to ſilence, and as unworthy of his company and converſation; *and went out of the city*; of *Jeruſalem*, partly to prevent being apprehended by his enemies before his time, and partly to remove all ſuſpicion of ſeizing the city and government, and ſetting himſelf up as a temporal prince: *to Bethany*; which was about fifteen furlongs from *Jeruſalem*, or almoſt two miles, *John* xi. 18. Hither he went to converſe with his dear friends, *Lazarus*, and *Martha*, and *Mary*, who were all of this place, and where he could lodge and reſt quietly. The name of the town is variouſly interpreted: according to ſome ancient writers [m], it ſignifies *the houſe of obedience*; ſo Chriſt went from the diſobedient and faithleſs city, to a place of obedience, where he had ſome faithful and obedient diſciples: others read it, and ſo *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel, בית עניה, *the houſe of affliction*; a ſuitable place for Chriſt to go to, who was about to ſuffer for the ſins of his people. The *Syriac* verſion renders it בית עניא; and which is interpreted *an houſe*, or *place of buſineſs*, as this town of *Bethany* was. We read [n] of חנויות של בית הינו, *the ſhops of Bethany*, which were deſtroyed three years before *Jeruſalem*, becauſe they made their affairs to ſtand upon the words of the law; that is, as the Gloſs explains it, they found that what was forbidden by the wiſe men, was free by the law: a great trade might be drove here for olives, dates, and figs, which grew hereabout in great plenty: mention is made in the *Talmud* of [o] פגי בית היני, *the figs of Bethany*: hence, as Chriſt departed from this place, the next morning he ſaw a fig-tree. But the true etymology and ſignification of the name is בית אהיני, *the houſe*, or *place* of *dates*, the fruit of the palm-tree: hence they that came from *Jeruſalem* to meet Chriſt, might have their palm-tree branches. One part of mount *Olivet* abounded with olives, from whence it had its name; another part bore palm-trees, and that was called *Bethany*, from whence this town over-againſt it had its name; and another part had great plenty of fig-trees growing on it, and this was called *Bethphage*; and that part of *Jeruſalem* which was neareſt to it went by the ſame name. We read [p] alſo of מרחץ של בית היני, *the waſhing-place of Bethany*; which ſeems to me to be not a place for the waſhing and purification of unclean men and women, as Dr. *Lightfoot* thinks, but for waſhing of ſheep; for the ſtory is, that "a fox "tore a ſheep in pieces at the waſhing-place of "*Bethany*, and the affair came before the wiſe men;" that is, at *Jeruſalem*, to know whether that ſheep might be eaten or no, ſince that which was torn was forbidden. And ſome have interpreted *Bethany*, *an houſe*,

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[k] T. Bab. Succa, fol. 42. 1. Erachin, fol. 2. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Lulab, c. 7. §. 19.

[l] Zohar in Exod. fol. 4. 2.

[m] Jerom. in loc. Origen. in Joan. p. 131. T. 2. & in Matt. p. 435, 446, 447. T. 1. Ed. Huet.

[n] T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 88. 1.

[o] T. Bab. Peſachim, fol. 53. 1. & Erubin, fol. 28.

[p] T. Bab. Cholin, fol. 53. 1.

*houſe*, or *place of ſheep*: but ſo much for this town, and what account is given of it. *And he lodged there*; either in the houſe of *Lazarus*, and his two ſiſters, or in that of *Simon* the leper; for it was even-tide when he went out of *Jeruſalem*, as *Mark* obſerves. The *Ethiopic* verſion adds, *and reſted there*; and ſo *Origen* [q] reads it; and, according to *Harpocratian* [r], the word uſed by the Evangeliſt ſignifies to lie down, and ſleep, and take one's reſt. Chriſt lodged here all night.

Ver. 18. *Now in the morning*, &c.] *Gr. in the firſt*, or morning-light, in the dawn, or break of day, the firſt ſpring of light; ſo the *Latins* [s] uſe *prima luce* for early in the morning, as ſoon as ever day breaks: ſo early did Chriſt riſe, and return from *Bethany* to *Jeruſalem*; *and as he returned to the city*. The *Perſic* verſion renders it, *they returned*; which, tho' not a good verſion, gives a true ſenſe; for, as Chriſt went with the twelve to *Bethany*, as *Mark* affirms, ſo theſe returned with him, as is clear from what follows. Thus Chriſt, day after day, went to and from *Jeruſulem*: in the evening he went to *Bethany*, or to ſome part of the mount of *Olives*, and there abode all night, and returned in the day-time to *Jeruſalem*, and taught in the temple; for it does not appear that he was one night in *Jeruſalem*, before the night of the paſſover. *He hungred*; riſing ſo early before his friends were up, he had eaten nothing that morning, and ſo before he had got far from *Bethany*, found himſelf hungry; which proves the truth of his human nature, which was in all reſpects like to ours, excepting ſin.

Ver. 19. *And when he ſaw a fig-tree*, &c.] In the *Greek* text 'tis, *one fig-tree*, one remarkable fig-tree: he muſt ſee a great many, as he went along; for a large tract of the mount of *Olives* was full of fig-trees, and therefore called *Bethphage*; and notice has been taken already of the figs of *Bethany*: but he ſaw none that had ſuch large and ſpreading leaves as this; for it was the time when the fig-tree was juſt budding, and putting forth its leaves; wherefore he took notice of it; and tho' it was *afar off*, as *Mark* ſays, yet being hungry, he made up to it, expecting, from its promiſing appearance, to find fruit on it. This fig-tree was *in the way*; by the road-ſide, and probably had no owner; was common to any body, and ſo no injury was done to any perſon by loſing it: *he came to it, and found nothing thereon but leaves only*: *Mark* ſays, *he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon*; which muſt be underſtood of him as man; for as he hungred as man, ſo he judged and expected as man, from the appearance of this fig-tree, that he might find fruit upon it; and which is no contradiction to his deity, and his having the Spirit of God, as the *Jew* [t] objects; and eſpecially ſince, as Biſhop *Kidder* [u] obſerves, ſuch an expectation is attributed to God himſelf, in *Iſ.* v. 2, 4. and it may be added, and with regard to that people, of which this fig-tree was an emblem, and deſigned by Chriſt to be conſidered as ſuch in what he did to it. The ſame Evangeliſt further obſerves, *and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves, for the time of figs was not yet*. The word *yet* is not in the original text; which laſt clauſe is a reaſon, either why he found no fruit, or nothing but leaves upon it, becauſe it was not a time, or ſeaſon of figs: it was not a good fig year, ſo Dr. *Hammond* interprets it; and yet though it was not, ſince this tree was ſo very flouriſhing, fruit might have been expected on it: and alſo, it furniſhes out a reaſon why Chriſt took ſo much pains to go to it, ſeeing there were very few figs to be had elſewhere, and this bid very fair to ſupply him with ſome in this time of ſcarcity: or elſe, as a reaſon why, beſides its promiſing appearance, he expected fruit upon it, becauſe the time of figs, that is, of the gathering of the figs, was not come: in which ſenſe the phraſe is uſed in ver. 34. of this chapter; and is Biſhop *Kidder*'s interpretation of the paſſage: and ſince therefore the time was not come for the in-gathering of the figs, none had been taken off of it, the more might be expected on it. This ſenſe would be very probable, did it appear that figs were uſually ripe about this time; but the contrary ſeems manifeſt, both from ſcripture, which repreſents the fig-tree putting forth its leaves, as a ſign the ſummer is nigh, *Matt.* xxiv. 32. and from the *Talmudiſts*, who ſay [w], that the beginning of leaves, or putting forth of the leaves of trees, is in the month *Niſan*, the month in which the paſſover was kept, and ſo the then preſent time of the year; and who, from this time, reckon three times fifty days, or five full months before the figs are ripe [x]: ſo that theſe words are rather a reaſon why Chriſt did not expect to find figs on other trees, which he ſaw in great abundance as he paſſed along, becauſe the time of common, ordinary figs being ripe, was not come; and why he particularly expected to find ſome on this tree, becauſe it being full of leaves, appeared to be of a different kind from other fig-trees: and was either of that ſort which they call בנות שוח, *Benoth Shuach*, as Dr. *Lightfoot* conjectures, which were a kind of white figs that were not ripe till the third year [y]. This tree put forth its fruit the firſt year, which hung on it the ſecond, and were brought to perfection on the third: ſo that when it was three years old, it had fruit of the firſt, ſecond, and third year on it: this being ſuch a tree, by its being full of leaves, when others had none, or were juſt putting out, fruit of one year, or more might have been expected on it, when it had none at all, and therefore was curſed: or it might be one of that ſort which brought forth fruit twice a year; for of ſuch ſort of fig-trees we read in the *Jewiſh* writings [z]: and therefore tho' it was not the time of the common figs being ripe, yet this being one of the ſeaſons, in which this tree bore ripe fruit, and being ſo very flouriſhing, might reaſonably be expected from it: but there being none, *he ſaid unto it, let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever*; or, as it is expreſſed in *Mark*, *no man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever*: for if none grew on it henceforward, no man could hereafter eat of it. Both expreſſions deſign the ſame thing, the perpetual barrenneſs of the fig-tree: *and preſently the fig-tree withered away*; immediately, upon Chriſt's ſaying theſe words, its ſap was dried up, it loſt its verdure; its leaves were ſhrivell'd and ſhrunk up, and dropp'd off, and the whole was blaſted. This tree was an emblem of the *Jews*: Chriſt being hungry, and very deſirous of the ſalvation of men, came firſt to them, from whom, on account of their large profeſſion of religion, and great pretenſions to holineſs, and the many advantages they enjoyed, humanly ſpeaking, much fruit of righteouſneſs might have been expected; but, alas! he found nothing but mere words, empty boaſts, an outward ſhew of religion, an external profeſſion, and a bare performance of trifling ceremonies, and oral traditions; wherefore Chriſt rejected them, and in a little time after, the kingdom of God, the Goſpel, was taken away from them, and their temple, city, and nation entirely deſtroyed.

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[q] In Matt. p. 447. [r] Lexic. Decem Orator, p. 55. [s] Cæſar. Comment. l. 1. p. 14 & paſſim. Curtius, l. 5. c. 5. paſſim. Apulei Metamorph. l. 9. p. 134. [t] R. Iſaac, Chizzuk Emuna, pars 2. c. 30. p. 421. [u] Demonſtration of the Meſſiah, par. 2. p. 38. [w] Jarchi & Bartenora in Miſn. Sheviith, c. 4. §. 10. [x] T. Hieroſ. Sheviith, fol. 35. 4. [y] Miſn. Sheviith, c. 5. §. 1. & Demai, c. 1. §. 1. & Maimon. & Bartenora in ib. [z] Miſn. Demai, c. 1. §. 1. & Maimon. in ib. T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 18. 1.

Ver. 20. *And when the diſciples ſaw it*, &c.] The next day in the morning, as *Mark* ſays: they had *heard* what Chriſt had ſaid to it the day before, as the ſame Evangeliſt obſerves; but did not take notice of the immediate withering of the tree; but the next morning, as they returned from *Bethany*, they ſaw it dried up from the roots: *they marvelled*; not that Chriſt ſhould curſe it, but that it ſhould wither away ſo ſoon, and upon his ſaying what he did; which was a conſiderable inſtance of his power and Godhead, all creatures, animate and inanimate, being at his command and diſpoſal: *ſaying, how ſoon is the fig-tree withered away?* This was ſaid by *Peter*, in the name of the reſt, who recollecting what Jeſus had ſaid to it the day before, and obſerving how the event had anſwered his words ſo ſoon, addreſſed Chriſt after this manner: *maſter, behold the fig-tree which thou curſedſt is withered away*; expreſſing his wonder at it, and aſcribing it to the power of Chriſt; of which this was an amazing proof and evidence.

Ver. 21. *Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto them*, &c.] His diſciples wondring at his power, in cauſing the fig-tree to wither ſo ſuddenly: *verily I ſay unto you, if ye have faith*; that is, in God, in his power, which reaches to all things: the object of faith is expreſſed in *Mark*, and by way of exhortation, *have faith in God*, that he will enable you to perform whatſoever ye ſhall deſire; which muſt be underſtood, not of ſpiritual faith in the promiſes of God, and perſon of Chriſt, but of the faith of miracles, or faith in the power of God to perform things that are above the ſtrength of nature: *and doubt not*; either of the power, or will of God to do for you, and by you, the thing deſired; for this kind of faith wont admit of the leaſt degree of doubting: there muſt be no heſitation in the mind, no reaſoning upon the thing, how it can be performed; the mind muſt not be divided between the power and will of God, and the difficulties and diſcouragements which attend the caſe, but muſt believe in hope againſt hope, with a full perſuaſion of accompliſhment: for want of this faith, without doubting, the diſciples could not cure the child that was lunatic. *Ye ſhall not only do this which is done to the fig-tree*; cauſe one to be dried up, and wither away by a word, as Chriſt had done to this, which, comparatively ſpeaking, was but a leſſer ſort of miracle; *but alſo, if ye ſhall ſay to this mountain*; the mount of *Olives*, where Chriſt and his diſciples now were, and were paſſing over, or, at leaſt, were very near it; or any other mountain wherever they might be, to which they ſhould, upon any occaſion, think fit to ſay, *be thou removed, and caſt into the ſea*; which was many miles off from mount *Olivet*, and muſt be a very ſurprizing performance for a mountain to be rooted up, ſo large as that was, and be carried ſeveral miles from its former ſituation, and be thrown into the ſea; and yet, as difficult and amazing as this may ſeem, *it ſhall be done*: that is, provided the perſon doubts not; or, as it is ſaid in *Mark*, *ſhall not doubt in his heart, but ſhall believe that thoſe things, which he ſaith ſhall come to paſs, he ſhall have whatſoever he ſaith*: for this muſt not be confined to the particular inſtances of drying up a fig-tree, or removing a mountain, but the doing of any ſort of miracle, how great ſoever. Nor is it our Lord's meaning that they ſhould do theſe particular things; nor is it certain that they ever did: but his ſenſe is, that, had they faith, they ſhould be able not only to do ſuch leſſer miracles, as, comparatively ſpeaking, the withering of the fig-tree was, but they ſhould be able to perform things much more difficult and ſurprizing, when ever the good of the ſouls of men, the propagation of the Goſpel, and the glory of God required them.

Ver. 22. *And all things whatſoever*, &c.] Not only miracles, but any other thing which may be for the honour of God, the intereſt of religion, the ſpreading of the Goſpel, the enlargement of the kingdom of Chriſt, their own ſpiritual good, and the welfare of immortal ſouls, *ye ſhall aſk in prayer, believing*. *Munſter's Hebrew* Goſpel reads it, *in prayer, and in faith*; and the *Arabic* verſion renders it, *in prayer with faith*; both to the ſame purpoſe, and aptly expreſs the ſenſe of the words, which deſign the prayer of faith; or that prayer which is put up in the ſtrength of faith, and is of great avail with God: for whatever is aſked in faith, agreeable to the will of God, which is contained in his covenant, word, and promiſes, and makes for his glory, and the good of his people, ſhall be given, be it what it will; tho' to carnal ſenſe and reaſon it may ſeem impracticable and impoſſible: *ye ſhall receive*; of God, through Chriſt, freely and fully, and ſhall have and enjoy them, either they themſelves, if aſked for themſelves, or others, for whom they are aſked.

Ver. 23. *And when he was come into the temple*, &c.] The day following the curſing the fig-tree: for the withering of it, and the notice the diſciples took of it, and our Lord's diſcourſe with them about it, were not in one and the ſame day, as is clear from the account the Evangeliſt *Mark* gives; but on the morning that Chriſt had converſed with his apoſtles by the way, from *Bethany* to *Jeruſalem*, concerning the ſtrength of faith in prayer, and the ſucceſs of it; when they were come into the city, and to the temple, whither he directly went, and entered upon his work of preaching to the people, *the chief-prieſts and elders of the people came unto him*. The *chief-prieſts* were not the high-prieſt, and his *ſagan*, or deputy, but the principal of the prieſthood, who were choſen from the reſt of their brethren, to ſit in the *ſanhedrim*; and *the elders of the people* were the laity that were choſen from among the people, to be members of the ſame grand council: in this ſenſe the *Jewiſh* writers interpret the word *elders*, in *Deut*. xxi. 2. *thy elders, and thy judges*; that is, "thy elders, who are thy judges: "it is a tradition, *R. Eliezer ben Jacob* ſays, "זקניך זה בי״ד הגדול, *thine elders; this is the great* "*ſanhedrim*[a]." The other Evangeliſts *Mark* and *Luke* add to theſe, *Scribes*, who alſo were a part of this great aſſembly; ſo that the principal members of it, if not the whole *ſanhedrim*, came in a body together, if poſſible, by their preſence and authority, to daunt Chriſt, diſcourage his miniſtry, bring it into contempt with the people, and ſtop his proceedings and ſucceſs. And this they did *as he was teaching*; the people, that is, preaching the Goſpel to them, as *Luke* explains it: he was inſtructing them in the things relating to himſelf, and his kingdom, diſpenſing the myſteries of his grace, the doctrines of regeneration, juſtification, and ſalvation. *Mark* ſays, 'twas *as he was walking in the temple*; and at the ſame time teaching the people, who flocked about him in like manner, as the *Peripatetic* philoſophers taught their ſcholars walking; whence they had their name. *And ſaid, by what authority doſt thou theſe things?* that is, drive out the buyers and ſellers out of the temple, which greatly provoked them, their own gain and intereſt being concerned therein; and perform theſe miracles of reſtoring ſight to the blind, and cauſing the lame to walk; which he had very lately wrought in the temple; and particularly preach theſe doctrines, the work in which he was then engaged: *and who gave thee this authority?* They don't object to his doctrines, or diſpute whether they were true or falſe; nor examine his miracles, whether they were of God, or of the devil: in theſe points they might fear he would be able to put them to ſilence and confuſion, of which ſome of them had had an experience before; but they proceed in another way, in which they might hope for ſucceſs, and attack him about his commiſſion and authority under which he acted, whether he pretended to derive his authority from God, or from men: by this they deſigned to enſnare him, and hoped they ſhould gain their point, let him anſwer in what form he would. Should he ſay that God gave him the authority to do theſe things, they would charge him with enthuſiaſm and blaſphemy, urging, that it was wickedneſs and preſumption in any man to pretend to be ſent immediately from God; ſince the order of the prieſthood, and of teaching, was fixed, and none were to take upon them the office of a prieſt, or of a teacher of the people, but by their appointment; or none were called and ſent, but thro' them, or by their means: and if he ſhould ſay, that he had his authority from men, they would confront him, and abſolutely deny that he had any from them, who only had the power of giving men an authority of preaching in the temple; wherefore he muſt be an uſurper of this office, and a turbulent, ſeditious perſon, that ſought to deſtroy all order, civil and eccleſiaſtical.

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[a] T. Hieroſ. Sota, fol. 23. 3. Jarchi in Deut. xxi. 2.

Ver. 24. *And Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto them*, &c.] Not by replying directly to their queſtion, but by putting another queſtion to them, whereby he eſcaped the ſnare he ſaw they laid for him: *I alſo will aſk you one thing*, word, or queſtion, *which if ye tell me*; honeſtly, and plainly anſwer to it, *I likewiſe will tell you by what authority I do theſe things:* which was putting the thing upon ſuch a foot, and in ſuch a form, as they could not well object to; for Chriſt promiſes, that if they would return a plain anſwer to the queſtion he had to put to them, and which was no unreaſonable, nor impertinent one, he would thoroughly ſatisfy them in this point; and expreſsly declare his commiſſion and authority, what it was, and from whence he had it. The queſtion is as follows:

Ver. 25. *The baptiſm of John, whence was it?* &c.] By *the baptiſm of John*, is meant the ordinance of water-baptiſm, which was firſt adminiſtred by him; from whence he took the name of *John* the *Baptiſt*; and the doctrine which he preached concerning it, and previous to it, and even the whole of his miniſtry; which is denominated from a principal part of it, and which greatly diſtinguiſhed his miniſtry from all others: and the queſtion put by Chriſt concerning it is, whence it was? by what authority did *John* adminiſter the ordinance of water-baptiſm, which had never been adminiſtred before by any? who ſent him to preach the baptiſm of repentance for the remiſſion of ſins, a doctrine the world had never heard of before? who gave him a commiſſion to diſcharge the ſeveral parts of his miniſtry, which he performed in ſuch a wonderful and powerful manner? did he receive his authority *from heaven, or of men?* that is, from God or man? as the oppoſition requires; and as it was uſual for the *Jews* to call God by the name of *heaven:* in this ſenſe 'tis uſed by them, when they ſay [b], that ſuch have no part in the world to come, who affirm, that the law is not מן השמים, *from heaven*, that is, from God; which is exactly the phraſe here: and when they obſerve [c], that care ſhould be taken that a man does not pronounce שם שמים, *the name of heaven*, that is, God, in vain: and when they tell [d] us of a certain man that built large buildings by the way-ſide, and put food and drink there, ſo that every one that came went in and eat, and drank, וברך לשמים, *and bleſſed heaven*; that is, bleſſed, or gave thanks to God: and when they ſpeak of [e] מיתה לשמים, *death by heaven*; that is, death which is immediately inflicted by God. So when Chriſt here aſks, whether *John*'s baptiſm was from heaven, or of men, his meaning is, whether it was of divine inſtitution, and that *John* acted by divine authority, and commiſſion; or whether it was an human device of his own, or of other men, and that he took the office of preaching and baptizing upon himſelf of his own head, or by ſome human appointment: to this he requires a direct anſwer, as is ſaid in *Mark*, *anſwer me*; whether it was from the one, or from the other; *and they reaſoned with themſelves*; either *within themſelves*, as the *Arabic* verſion renders it; *in their own minds*, as the *Syriac*; or they took ſome little time and privately conferr'd together, what anſwer they ſhould return; when they argued the point among themſelves, *ſaying, if we ſhall ſay from heaven*; if we ſhall return for anſwer, that the baptiſm and miniſtry of *John* were of divine appointment, and that he acted by a divine authority, *he will ſay unto us, why did ye not believe him?* why did not ye believe the doctrine that he preached? and receive the teſtimony that he gave concerning the Meſſiah? and why were ye not baptized by him? why did ye reject the counſel of God againſt yourſelves? They ſaw plainly, that if they owned the divine authority of *John*'s baptiſm and miniſtry, they muſt allow Jeſus to be the true *Meſſiah*, *John* bore witneſs to; and conſequently, that it was by a divine authority he did what he did; and then there was an end of their queſtion, and is the very thing that Chriſt had in view.

Ver. 26. *But if we ſhall ſay of men*, &c.] They reaſoned with themſelves, that ſhould they give their anſwer in this form, and ſay, that the miniſtry and baptiſm of *John* were merely human, and what he took up of himſelf, or which he performed by an authority derived from men, *we fear the people*; that were then upon the ſpot, in the temple; who, as many of them were now the followers of Chriſt, more of them had been the admirers of *John*, and probably had been baptized by him: wherefore the *ſanhedrim* were afraid of them, leſt if they ſhould affirm, that the authority by which *John* acted was human, they would immediately riſe up againſt them; and, as *Luke* ſays, *ſtone* them: ſo high a veneration had they for him, and ſo dear was his memory ſtill unto them. *For all held John as a prophet.* Theſe are the words of the high-prieſts and elders, and not of the Evangeliſt, expreſſing the reaſon of their fears from the people, who, in general,

[b] T. Hieroſ. Sanhedrin, fol. 27. 3. Vid. ib. fol. 19. 3. T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 99. 1.

[c] T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 3. 1. Abot R. Nathan, c. 7. fol. 3. 2.

[e] Ib. c. 11. fol. 4. 1. Vid. ib. c. 14. fol. 4. 4. & 5. 1. & c. 27. fol. 7. 1.

general, were thoroughly *perſuaded*, as *Luke* expreſſes it, and firmly believed that *John* was a prophet, that was raiſed up, and ſent immediately by God; and did not derive his authority and commiſſion to preach and baptize from any men, or ſett of men, whatever.

Ver. 27. *And they anſwered Jeſus and ſaid, we cannot tell*, &c.] They ſaw the dilemma they were brought into; they choſe rather therefore to ſpeak againſt their own conſciences, and tell a wilful lye, and incur the reproach of ignorance; who, at other times, took upon them to judge of a prophet, whether he was a true or a falſe one, and by what authority he acted, whether of God, or man: but now being reduced to this wretched condition, contrary to their office and character, declare they did not know, and could not tell from whence *John* had his commiſſion, and who gave him his authority: *and he ſaid unto them, neither tell I you by what authority I do theſe things:* ſince, according to the propoſal of Chriſt, and the agreement he enter'd into with them, they did not give him a direct anſwer to his queſtion, he looked upon himſelf under no obligation to inform them, what was his authority, and from whence he had it; though by the queſtion he put to them he tacitly ſuggeſts, that he had his authority not from man, but from God; and by this his anſwer ſignifies, that ſince *John* preached and baptized without their authority and approbation, ſo might he; nor was he dependant on them, or accountable to them.

Ver. 28. *But what think you?* &c.] See the note on ch. xviii. 12. *a certain man had two ſons.* This is a parable; the deſign of which is to ſhew the hypocriſy and deceit of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, in pretending to works of righteouſneſs, and not doing them; and to reprove them for their diſbelief and rejection of *John*'s miniſtry; and to make it appear, that the worſt of ſinners in the *Jewiſh* nation were preferable to them; and that many of them were, and would be, happy, when they would be miſerable. By the *certain man*, in the parable, God is deſigned; who, tho' he is not a man, nor to be repreſented by any human form; yet, as man, is the image of God, he is therefore, in an improper and figurative ſenſe, compared to man, and ſet forth by him; which may be allowed in a metaphorical and parabolical way: and tho' the ſon of God only aſſumed human nature, and really became man; yet God, the Father, ſeems rather to be here intended, who is ſometimes compared to a huſbandman and a vine-dreſſer; ſee *John* xv. 1, 2. and as appears from the relation of the *two ſons* unto him: by whom are meant not *Jews* and *Gentiles*; for the latter can never be intended by the firſt ſon; for theſe were not ſons in ſuch ſenſe as the *Jews* were, nor were upon an equal foot of ſonſhip with them, as the parable ſuppoſes; much leſs were they called firſt, and bid to work in the vineyard: but, on the contrary, *John* the *Baptiſt*, Chriſt, and his apoſtles, were firſt, and only ſent to the *Jews*; and God, as yet, was not come even in the external miniſtry of the word to the *Gentiles*; nor were they brought to repentance and obedience: but by them are meant two ſorts of people, among the *Jews*, the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, and publicans and ſinners; as the application of the parable, by our Lord himſelf, moſt clearly ſhews: theſe were both the ſons of God; not only by creation, as all men are, all having, in this ſenſe, but one common father, whoſe offspring they be; but alſo by national adoption; for to all, who were *Iſraelites*, according to the fleſh, whether good men, or bad men, alike belonged the general privilege of adoption, *Rom.* ix. 4. This publicans and ſinners had an equal right to, as well as the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, though they were not all the ſons of God by ſpecial grace, or ſpiritual adoption: *and he came to the firſt*; the publicans and ſinners among the *Jews*, by the miniſtry of *John* the *Baptiſt*, Chriſt, and his diſciples, who firſt and chiefly preached to ſuch ſort of perſons; *and ſaid, ſon, go work to-day in my vineyard:* by the *vineyard*, is meant the kingdom of God, or of heaven, the Goſpel church-ſtate, the then preſent diſpenſation of things, which was ſet up, and which men were called to embrace and enter into; the doors of which the *Phariſees*, who pretended to have the key of knowledge, did all they could to ſhut up, and hinder perſons going in, as they refuſed to do themſelves: this is called a *vineyard*; ſee the note on ch. xx. 1. To work in it ſignifies to hear the word preached, to believe in the Meſſiah, embrace his doctrines, and ſubmit to his ordinances, particularly the ordinance of baptiſm, which was the then principal ordinance of that diſpenſation. The time of working in it is *to-day*; directly, immediately, and whilſt it is day; for the hour cometh when no man can work, and when all theſe means and ordinances will be at an end, and attending on them will be over: the argument uſed to engage hereunto, is taken from the relation the perſon ſtood in as a *ſon*, highly favoured by God, with the bleſſing of national adoption, beſides that of natural ſonſhip common to all mankind.

Ver. 29. *He anſwered and ſaid, I will not*, &c.] Which anſwer fitly expreſſes the language and practice of openly profane and unregenerate ſinners, who will not come to Chriſt, that they may have life; nor will they ſerve the Lord, but are bent upon indulging their luſts; nor will they be ſubject to the law of God; nor will they hear and receive the Goſpel of Chriſt, or ſubmit to his ordinances, and are averſe to every good work: where's man's free-will? this is the true picture of it; man has no will naturally to that which is good. *But afterward he repented, and went:* a change of mind was wrought in him, and this produced a change of life and converſation: ſo, many of the *publicans* and *ſinners* repented of their ſins of diſobedience, and rebellion againſt God, under the miniſtry of *John* the *Baptiſt*, Chriſt, and his apoſtles; not of themſelves, for men do not naturally ſee their ſin, or need of repentance; their hearts are hard and obdurate; nor have they any ſpiritual ſenſe and feeling; nothing will bring them to repentance, not the moſt powerful miniſtry, the ſevereſt judgments, or the kindeſt mercies, without the grace of God: but it was of God, and owing to his powerful and efficacious grace, that they repented: 'twas his will they ſhould come to repentance; he called them to it, and gave it to them, as a free-grace gift of his: and they repented not in a mere legal way, with a legal repentance, which lies in a mere conviction of the outward acts of ſin; in an external ſorrow for it, in horror and terror of mind about it, and in ſhedding tears for it, accompanied with a ceſſation from the groſſer acts of ſin, and an outward reformation of life and manners: but they repented in an evangelical manner, as ſuch do, who are really converted, and ſpiritually inſtructed; who are true believers in Chriſt, have views, and, at leaſt, hopes of pardoning grace and mercy; and have the love of God ſhed abroad in their hearts by the Spirit: the repentance of ſuch lies in a ſpiritual ſight and ſenſe of ſin, of the evil nature of in-dwelling ſin, and the exceeding ſinfulneſs of it, as well as of the outward actions of life; in a hearty, godly ſorrow for it, becauſe committed againſt a God of purity, grace, and goodneſs; in a loathing it, and themſelves for it; in a holy ſhame, and bluſhing, on account of it; and is attended with an ingenuous confeſſion of it, and forſaking it: the conſequence of which is, that ſuch go readily and chearfully into the Lord's vineyard; hear the word with all diligence, receive it with gladneſs; walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord; and are taught, by the grace that has appeared to them, to live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in this world.

Ver. 30. *And he came to the ſecond,* &c.] The *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, by the miniſtry of *John* the *Baptiſt*, Chriſt, and his apoſtles alſo: *and ſaid likewiſe*; the ſame things as to the other ſon, the publicans and ſinners; calling them into the Goſpel-diſpenſation, to hear the word, embrace truth, attend on ordinances, and labour in promoting the kingdom, and intereſt of the Meſſiah, whilſt they had the light of the Goſpel with them. Urging alſo the relation they ſtood in to God, as a part of the *Jewiſh* body; to whom, among other external privileges, the adoption belonged: *and he anſwered and ſaid, I go, ſir, and went not:* the word *go* is not in the generality of the *Greek* copies; the phraſe is only *I ſir*, tho' it is rightly enough ſupplied as to the ſenſe. *Beza* ſays, it was in his moſt ancient copy; and ſo it is in the *Arabic* and *Perſic* verſions, and in *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel; tho' it is not in the *Syriac* and *Ethiopic* verſions. So, the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* ſeemed pleaſed with the miniſtry of *John* for a while, and at firſt were forward to ſubmit to his baptiſm, and were very inquiſitive about the Meſſiah; yet, when he was declared in *John*'s miniſtry, and by his own doctrine, and miracles, they refuſed to give in to the belief of him; they would neither enter into the Goſpel-kingdom, embrace the doctrines, and obey the commands of it themſelves, nor ſuffer others to enter in; but, as much as in them lay, by their reproaches, menaces, and excommunications, deterr'd them from it. They were like ſome other perſons, who promiſe fair, and talk much of doing good works, but do none; teach the people to do them, but do not perform them themſelves, though they would ſeem to do them; make great pretenſions to them, boaſt of them, and truſt in them; and therefore, of all men, ought to be careful to maintain them, and yet do the leaſt.

Ver. 31. *Whether of them twain did the will of his father?* &c.] This is the queſtion put by Chriſt, upon the preceding parable to the chief-prieſts, elders, and *Scribes*; *they ſay unto him, the firſt:* an anſwer which natural reaſon, and common ſenſe, directed them to; and therefore they give it out at once, directly, without ſtaying upon it, and demurring about it; tho' they ſeemed not to be aware of the application of it to themſelves, which follows: *Jeſus ſaith unto them, verily I ſay unto you, that the publicans and the harlots*; that is, ſuch who had been ſo; ſee the note on ch. ix. 10. *go into the kingdom of God before you.* They are ſignified by the firſt ſon, who repenting went, and did the will of his father: theſe repented under *John*'s miniſtry, were called, and brought to repentance by the preaching of Chriſt, and his apoſtles: theſe juſtified God, their father, by being baptized with *John*'s baptiſm: theſe embraced the Meſſiah, believed in him, and were the firſt in his kingdom, and ſet an example to the chief among the *Jews* to follow: and it is eaſy to obſerve, that a poor, profane ſinner may, by the grace of God, be brought to repentance, that before was obſtinate, rebellious, and diſobedient, and be made willing to go and work in the Lord's vineyard here, and be at laſt glorified; when a ſelf-righteous perſon, notwithſtanding all his fair promiſes and reſolutions to do good, his profeſſions of, and pretenſions to religion, neither repents of his ſins, nor believes in Chriſt; has no ſhare in the kingdom of grace here, nor will he enter into the kingdom of glory.

Ver. 32. *For John came unto you in a way of righteouſneſs,* &c.] He had a commiſſion from God; he was no impoſtor; the doctrine he taught was true, and which he faithfully delivered; his life and converſation were unblameable; there was nothing in his credentials, miniſtry, and conduct, that could juſtly be found fault with: *and ye believed him not*; to be the fore-runner of the *Meſſiah*, or the *Elias* that was to come; nor attended to the doctrine of repentance preached by him; nor were ſubject to the ordinance of baptiſm he adminiſtred; nor gave any aſſent, or credit, to the Meſſiah he ſo manifeſtly pointed out: *but the publicans and harlots believed him*; what he ſaid concerning the wrath to come, and the miſerable ſtate and danger they were in; and they repented of their ſins, and confeſſed them, and were baptized of him in *Jordan*; believing the teſtimony he gave of *Jeſus* of *Nazareth* being the Meſſiah, and Son of God: *and ye, when ye had ſeen it*; the repentance and faith of theſe perſons, and what a wonderful reformation was wrought in them, *repented not afterwards*; of their diſobedience, impenitence, and unbelief, after they had ſeen the effects of *John*'s miniſtry on theſe very profligate ſinners, and after the death of *John*; who, by his conſtancy, zeal, and faithfulneſs, had ſhewn himſelf to be a true, and upright miniſter of the word; and afterwards under the miniſtry of Chriſt, and his apoſtles, by whom the ſame doctrines were preached, and the ſame ordinances adminiſtred, *that ye might believe him*; the teſtimony he has left behind him concerning the Meſſiah.

Ver. 33. *Hear another parable,* &c.] Which, though *Luke* ſays was ſpoken to the people, who were gathered round about him, yet was directed to, and againſt the chief prieſts; who continued with him till it was delivered, and the application of it made; when they perceived it was ſpoken of them. The deſign of it is, to ſet forth the many favours and privileges beſtowed on the *Jewiſh* nation; their unfruitfulneſs, and the ingratitude of the principal men among them; and their barbarous uſage of the ſervants of the Lord, and particularly of the Son of God himſelf; the conſequence of which would be, the removal of the Goſpel from them, and the miſerable deſtruction of them. So that this parable is partly a narrative of ſome things paſt, and partly a prophecy of ſome things to come: *there was a certain houſholder*; by whom the Great God of heaven and earth is meant; who may be ſo called, either with reſpect to the whole world, which is an houſe of his building, and the inhabitants of it are his family, who live, are nouriſhed, and ſupplied by him; or to the church, the houſe of the living God, the family in heaven and in earth, called the houſhold of God, and of faith; or to the people of *Iſrael*, often called the houſe of *Iſrael*, the family, above all the families of the earth, God took notice of, highly favoured, and dwelt among. *Which planted a vineyard:* of the form of a vineyard, the manner of planting it, and the bigneſs of it, the *Jews* ſay many things in their *Miſna*[f]. "He that plants a row of five vines, the ſchool

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[f] Miſna Kilaim, c. 4. §. 5, 6. Maimon. Hilch. Kilaim, c. 7. §. 7.

“ of *Shammai* ſay, *it is a vineyard*; but the ſchool “ of *Hillell* ſay, it is not a vineyard, unleſs there “ are two rows——he that plants two vines over-“ againſt two, and one at the tail or end, “ הרי זה כרם, *lo! this is a vineyard* (it was a “ little vineyard) but if two over-againſt two, and “ one between the two, or two over-againſt two, “ and one in the midſt, it is no vineyard, unleſs “ there are two over-againſt two, and one at the “ tail, or end.” Again [g], “ a vineyard that is “ planted with leſs than four cubits (between every “ row) *R. Simeon* ſays, is no vineyard; but the “ wiſe men ſay it is a vineyard.” And the deciſion is according to them. Now by this vineyard is meant, the houſe of *Iſrael* and the men of *Judah*, the nation of the *Jews*, as in *Iſa.* v. 7. from whence our Lord ſeems to have taken many of the ideas expreſſed in this parable; who were a people ſeparated from the reſt of the world, and ſet with valuable plants, from whom fruit might reaſonably be expected: the planting of them deſigns the removing them out of *Egypt*, the driving out the natives before them, and ſettling them in the land of *Canaan*, where they were planted with choice vines, ſuch as *Joſhua*, *Caleb*, *&c.* and where they ſoon became a flouriſhing people; though, for their iniquities, often expoſed to beaſts of prey, the neighbouring nations, that were ſuffered at times to break in upon them. The *Jews* often ſpeak [h] of the houſe of *Iſrael*, as the vineyard of the Lord of hoſts, and even call their ſchools and univerſities vineyards: hence we read [i] of כרם ביבנה, the vineyard in *Jabneh*, where the ſcholars were placed in rows, as in a vineyard. *And hedged it round about*; as it was uſual to ſet a hedge, or make a wall round a vineyard, which, according to the *Jewiſh* writers, was to be ten hands high, and four broad; for they aſk [k], “ אי זה גדר, *what is a hedge?* That which is “ ten hands high.” And elſewhere [l], “ An hedge “ that encompaſſes a vineyard, which is leſs than “ ten hands high, or which is ten hands high, but “ not four hands broad, it has no circuit (or void “ place between that and the vines)——an hedge “ which is ten hands high, and ſo a ditch which is “ ten hands deep, and four broad, lo! this is lawful “ to plant a vineyard on one ſide of it, and herbs “ on the other; even a fence of reeds, if there is “ between the reeds the ſpace of three hands, lo! “ this divides between the vineyard and the herbs, “ as an hedge.” By this *hedge* is deſigned, either the law, not the oral law, or the traditions of the elders, which the *Jews* [m] call, סיג לתורה, *an hedge for the law*, which was none of God's ſetting, but their own; but either the ceremonial law, which diſtinguiſhed them from other people, was a middle wall of partition between them, and the nations of the world, and kept them from coming among them, and joining together; or the moral law, which taught them their duty to God and man, and was the means of keeping them within due bounds; or elſe, the protection of them by the power of God, which was an hedge about them, is here intended; and which was very remarkable at the time of their three feaſts of paſſover, pentecoſt, and tabernacles; when all their males went up to *Jeruſalem*, and the whole country was left an eaſy prey to the nations about them; but God preſerved them, and, according to his promiſe, ſuffered not their neighbours to have any inclination or deſire after their land. *And digged a wine-preſs in it*; which is not חריץ, *the ditch*, that went through a vineyard; for this can't be ſaid of a wine-preſs, and is Dr. *Lightfoot*'s miſtake [n]; but גת, *the wine-fat*, in which they ſqueezed the grapes and made the wine, and this uſed to be in the vineyard: the rule about it is this, “ הגת שבכרם, the wine-“ preſs that is ten hands deep and four broad, *R.* “ *Eliezer* ſays, they may ſett in it; but the wiſe “ men do forbid it [o].” By this may be meant, the altar where the drink-offerings of wine were poured forth; and ſo the *Targumiſt* [p] renders it by מדבחי, *my altar I have given them, to atone for their ſins:* though one of their commentators [q], by it, underſtands the prophets, who taught *Iſrael* the law, that their works might be good before God and men; they urged and preſſed them to the performance of them, as grapes are ſqueezed in the wine-preſs: *and built a tower*; the ſame the *Jews* call שומרה, *the watch-houſe*; which was an high place, in which the watchman ſtood to keep the [r] vineyard, and which was built in the vineyard; of this they ſay, “ שומרה שבכרם, the *watch-houſe which is* “ *in the vineyard*, that is ten hands high and four “ broad, they ſett in it [s].” By this is meant, either the city of *Jeruſalem*, which ſtood in the midſt, and on the higheſt part of the land of *Iſrael*; or the temple, which ſtood on the higheſt part of *Jeruſalem*, where the prieſts and *Levites* kept their watch every night; and ſo the *Targumiſt* [t] interprets it, by מקדשי, *my ſanctuary I built among them*; that is, the temple: *and let it out to huſbandmen*; of which there were different ſorts, as there were different methods of hiring and letting out fields and vineyards among the *Jews*: one ſort was called השוכר, and ſuch was he, who hired of his neighbour a field to ſow in it, or a vineyard to eat of the fruit of it, for a certain ſum of money yearly; ſee *Cant.* viii. 11. another ſort was called החוכר, and this was one that hired a field, or a vineyard, and agreed to give the proprietor of it yearly, ſo many meaſures of the fruit thereof, whether it yielded more or leſs; and there was a third ſort, called אריס, or מקבל, and ſuch was he, who agreed to give the owner half, or a third, or a fourth part of the increaſe of the field, or vineyard [u]. Now it is not of the former, but of the latter ſort of letting out and farming, that this is to be underſtood; not of letting it out for money, but for fruit, as appears from ver. 34. and by the huſbandmen are meant, the rulers of the *Jews*, civil and eccleſiaſtical, eſpecially the latter; the prieſts, *Levites*, and *Scribes*, who were entruſted with the care of the *Jewiſh* people, to guide and inſtruct them, and cultivate the knowledge of divine things among them, that they might bring forth fruits of righteouſneſs; and to offer their gifts and ſacrifices, and the like, which are meant by letting out the vineyard to them: *and went into a far country*; which muſt be interpreted conſiſtent with the omnipreſence of God, who is every where, and can't be ſaid properly to move from place to place; but fills heaven and earth with his preſence, and cannot be contained in either: but this phraſe ſeems to deſign, his taking up his reſidence in the thick darkneſs, in the tabernacle and temple, when the civil and eccleſiaſtical ſtate of the *Jews* were ſettled, and God did not appear to them in that viſible manner he had done before; but having fixed their order of government, worſhip, and duty, left them to themſelves and their rulers, for many years; in which he expreſſed much long-ſuffering and patience towards them.

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[g] Ib. c. 5. §. 2, Maimon. ib. §. 1.
[h] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 148. 2. Zohar in Exod. fol. 2. 1.
[i] T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 7. 4. T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 42. 2.
[k] Miſn. Kilaim, c. 4. §. 3.
[l] Maimon. Hilch. Kilaim, c. 7. §. 14, 15.
[m] Pirke Abot, c. 1. §. 1.
[n] Horæ in Mark xli. 1.
[o] Miſn. Kilaim, c. 5. §. 3.
[p] Targum Jon. in Iſa. v. 2. Vid. T. Hieroſ. Succa, fol. 54. 4.
[q] R. David Kimchi in loc.
[r] Maimon. in Miſn. Kilaim, c. 5. §. 3. Aben Ezra in Iſa. v. 2.
[s] Miſn. Kilaim, c. 5. §. 3. Maimon. Hilch. Kilaim, c. 7. §. 22.
[t] Targum Jon. in Iſa. v. 2.
[u] T. Hieroſ. Demai, fol. 25. 1. Gloſſ. in T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 11. 2. & in Bava Metzia, fol. 103. 1. in Avoda Zara, fol. 21. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Sheeirut, c. 8. §. 1, 2. Bartenora in Miſn. Pea, c. 5. §. 5. & in Demai, c. 6. §. 1.

Ver. 34. *And when the time of the fruit drew near*, &c.] Of gathering the fruit, when it was ripe, and might be eaten, or profit made of it, according to the law in *Lev.* xix. 23, 24, 25. The fruit of all manner of trees, for the firſt three years, was uncircumciſed; it was not to be eaten, nor any profit made of it, and on the fourth year it was to be holy to praiſe the Lord with; being either given to the prieſts, or eaten by the owners before the Lord at *Jeruſalem*; and on the fifth year it might be eaten, and made uſe of for profit, and henceforward every year; which law regarded the fruit of the vine, as any other fruit: hence 'tis ſaid [w], that "the grapes of the vineyard of the fourth year, the *Sanhedrim* ordered that they ſhould be brought up to *Jeruſalem*, a day's journey on every ſide, ſo that they might crown or adorn the ſtreets with fruits." To this time of fruit, and the cuſtom of bringing it up to *Jeruſalem*, the alluſion ſeems to be here. Thus, God after a long time, after he had waited a great while for fruit from the *Jewiſh* nation, from whom much might have been expected, by reaſon of the advantages they enjoyed; *he ſent his ſervants to the huſbandmen*: by *his ſervants* are meant, the prophets of the Old Teſtament; who were ſent by God from time to time, to the kings, prieſts, and people of the *Jews*; to inſtruct them in their duty, to exhort them to the performance of it, to reprove them for their ſins, to ſtir them up to repentance, and to bring forth fruits meet for it, ſignified in the next clauſe: *that they might receive the fruits of it*; of the vineyard from the huſbandmen, for the uſe of the owner; for fruits of juſtice and judgment, of righteouſneſs and holineſs, might be juſtly expected and demanded of ſuch perſons, to be brought forth by them, to the honour and glory of God.

Ver. 35. *And the huſbandmen took his ſervants*, &c.] They ſeized and laid hold on them in a rude and violent manner: ſo far were they from treating theſe ſervants with reſpect, as they ought to have done; conſidering whoſe they were, from whom they came, and upon what account; and alſo ſo far from delivering to them the fruit due to their maſter, or excuſing their inability to make a ſuitable return, as might be expected, they uſe them very roughly: *and beat one*; either with the fiſt, as *Jeremiah* was ſtruck by *Paſhur*, the ſon of *Immer*, the prieſt, one of theſe huſbandmen, *Jer.* xx. 1, 2. and as *Micaiah* was ſmitten on the cheek by *Zedekiah*, the ſon of *Chenaanah*, the falſe prophet, 2 *Chron.* xviii. 23. or with a ſcourge, and may refer to the puniſhment of beating with forty ſtripes ſave one, by which the ſkin was flead off, as the word here ſignifies; for ſome of theſe ſervants had trial of cruel mockings and ſcourgings, *Heb.* xi. 36. *And killed another*; that is, with the ſword. There were four kinds of death in the power of the *Sanhedrim*, of which this is one, and what follows is another; and were theſe, ſtoning, burning, killing (*i. e.* beheading with the ſword) and ſtrangling: the manner of executing this puniſhment here expreſſed, was this; "They cut off the perſon's head, בסייף, *with a ſword*, in the manner the government orders it. *R. Judah* ſays, this is indecent (*i. e.* to cut off his head ſtanding, they do not do ſo) but they put his head upon a block, and cut it off with an ax; they reply to him, there's no death more abominable than this [x]." So the prophets, in the time of *Elijah*, were killed with the ſword, 1 *Kings* xix. 14. ſee alſo *Dan.* xi. 33. *And ſtoned another*; as they did *Zechariah*, 2 *Chron.* xxiv. 21. and doubtleſs many others; ſince *Jeruſalem* had the character of killing the prophets, and ſtoning them that were ſent unto her, *Matt.* xxiii. 37. theſe ſeemed ſuch that were ſtoned, but not killed; but as *Mark* ſays, were wounded in the head with the ſtones thrown at them, and ſhamefully handled, and ſadly abuſed.

Ver. 36. *Again he ſent other ſervants*, &c.] Meaning, perhaps, ſuch as ſuffered in the times of the *Maccabees*: *more than the firſt*; their number was greater, though their office was the ſame, at leaſt not higher: *and they did unto them likewiſe*; they beat them with rods, they killed them with the ſword, and ſtoned them, *Heb.* xi. 36, 37.

Ver. 37. *But laſt of all*, &c.] In the laſt times, in the laſt days, in the end of the world, the *Jewiſh* world, at the cloſe of their eccleſiaſtic and civil ſtate; after all the prophets had been ſent, and finiſhed their courſe, came the great prophet of all, to ſeal up the viſion and prophecy: *he ſent unto them his ſon*; not a ſervant as before, but a ſon; his own ſon, his only begotten ſon, the ſon of his love, his dearly beloved one; him he ſent to theſe huſbandmen the *Jews*. The Son of God, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, was ſent only to the houſe of *Iſrael*: he was the miniſter of the circumciſion; he was the great prophet raiſed up among them, and was ſent to bleſs them, by turning them from their iniquities; he came to them, to his own, to them of his own nation, but they received him not: *ſaying, they will reverence my ſon*. The Son of God is to be reverenced equally as his Father, ſince he is in nature and glory equal to him; and it is the will of his Father he ſhould be ſo reverenced, as he is by the angels in heaven, and by the ſaints, both in heaven and in earth; but did theſe huſbandmen reverence him? no; they deſpiſed and rejected him; they reproached and traduced him, as the vileſt of men, and uſed him in the moſt cruel and barbarous manner. And did not his Father know this? yes; this is certain from his omniſcience, which reaches to all future events, the moſt minute and contingent; and from the predictions of the uſage of theſe perſons of him, delivered long before it came to paſs. *Luke* ſays, *it may be they will reverence him*: ſo that it was not a poſitive affirmation, that they would do it, and which alſo is to be underſtood after the manner of men; that humanly ſpeaking, it might be expected that they would give him reverence, in conſideration of the dignity of his perſon, his character, and relation to God, which was his due and their duty; but he had a very different treatment from them.

Ver. 38. *But when the huſbandmen ſaw the ſon*, &c.] Whom many of them knew, though ſome did not: ſome were entirely ignorant of him; ſome knew him, but durſt not confeſs him, yet were not injurious to him; others acted againſt light and conſcience, with ſpite and malice, as did theſe men. They expected the Meſſiah about this time; they knew, by prophecy, it could not be long e'er he appeared: when they ſaw Jeſus of *Nazareth*, they knew by various circumſtances, by all the characters of the Meſſiah meeting in him, and by his miracles,

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[w] Maimon. Hilch. Maaſer Sheni, c. 9. 5. Miſn. Maaſer Sheni, c. 5. §. 2.

[x] Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 7. §. 1, 3.

racles, that he muſt be the ſame. *They ſaid among themſelves*; privately, not openly to the people, *this is the heir*; as indeed he is of all things, as the Son of God, and as the Mediator of the new covenant: he is heir of all that his Father has, as he is his natural, eſſential, and only begotten Son; and, as Mediator, he is heir of all things, natural, ſpiritual, and eternal, for the uſe and benefit of his church and people, who are alſo his portion and inheritance: but here it ſeems to denote, his being heir to the throne of *Iſrael*, the government of the *Jewiſh* nation, as he was the Son of *David*; and the *Jews* confeſs [y], that becauſe it was ſaid that Jeſus of *Nazareth* was קרוב למלכות, *near to the kingdom*, therefore they put him to death: *come let us kill him, and ſeize on his inheritance*; concluding, that could they be rid of him, their nation would be in peace, their temple would ſtand, and temple worſhip and ſervice continue, and they remain in their office and authority undiſturbed; the contrary of which they feared, ſhould he be ſuffered to live; though what they feared from his life, befel them upon, and in conſequence of his death, quite beyond all their counſels and expectations.

Ver. 39. *And they caught him*, &c.] Seized and laid hold on him, in a rude and violent manner, as they had ſome of the ſervants before. This regards their apprehending of Chriſt in the garden, by a band of ſoldiers and officers, ſent by the chief prieſts and *Phariſees*, who with ſwords and ſtaves took him, bound him, and led him away: *and caſt him out of the vineyard*; which is not to be underſtood of their caſting him out of the ſynagogue, which is never ſaid of them; nor does it ſo much relate to the leading of him without the gates of *Jeruſalem*, where they crucified him, though this is a ſenſe not to be deſpiſed and rejected; but rather, to the delivery of him to thoſe, that were without the vineyard of the *Jewiſh* church and nation, to the *Gentiles*; to be mocked, ſcourged, and put to death by them: *and ſlew him*; for though the ſentence of death was pronounced on him by *Pilate*, an heathen governour, and was executed by the *Roman* ſoldiers; yet it was through the inſtigation, and at the preſſing importunity of theſe huſbandmen, the *Jewiſh* rulers; and who were afterwards frequently charged by the apoſtles with the murder of him.

Ver. 40. *When the Lord therefore of the vineyard cometh*, &c.] In a way of providence, to call theſe huſbandmen to an account; not only for the fruit they were to bring to him; but for their barbarity to his ſervants, the prophets, time after time; and eſpecially, for the inhuman uſage and murder of his own ſon; *what will he do unto thoſe huſbandmen?* This queſtion is put to the chief prieſts, elders, and *Scribes*; and they themſelves who are deſigned hereby, are made judges in this caſe, juſt as the inhabitants of *Jeruſalem* and men of *Judah* are, in *Iſa.* v. 4. which paſſage of ſcripture our Lord had greatly in view, when he ſpake this parable.

Ver. 41. *They ſay unto him*, &c.] Either the common people that were about him; or rather the chief prieſts, *Scribes*, and elders, to whom he put the queſtion; little thinking then, that they were the perſons intended in this parable: *he will miſerably deſtroy thoſe wicked men*: in ſaying which, they own that perſons guilty of ſuch crimes, as beating, killing, and ſtoning, ſervants ſent to them by the proprietor of the vineyard, to receive his due and proper fruit, and at laſt murdering his ſon and heir, were very wicked perſons, and deſerved the ſevereſt puniſhments to be inflicted upon them, and that without mercy; nor could it be thought, but this muſt and would be unavoidably their caſe, when the Lord of the vineyard ſhould come: thus tacitly did they condemn themſelves as wicked men, and as deſerving the worſt of deaths, who in a few days after this, were concerned in the death of the Son of God: *and will let out his vineyard unto other huſbandmen*; allowing it to be a very juſt thing, not only to put theſe men to the moſt miſerable and tormenting death that could be deviſed, but to take the vineyard out of the hands of their poſterity, and let it out to other perſons; as it was a righteous thing with God, to remove the church-ſtate, Goſpel and ordinances from the *Jews*, and deliver them to the *Gentiles*: *which ſhall render him the fruits in their ſeaſons*; that is, his due, and that in proper time. The other Evangeliſts relate theſe words, as ſpoken by Chriſt: for the reconciliation of which let it be obſerved, that they were firſt ſpoken by the *Jews*, as is here ſignified; and after that were ſpoken by Chriſt, confirming what they ſaid, and applying it to them; upon which they ſaid, *God forbid*; that we ſhould ever be guilty of ſuch crimes, incur ſuch puniſhment, and this ſhould be our caſe: but in proof of it, that ſo it would be, our Lord alledges the following words.

Ver. 42. *Jeſus ſaith unto them, did ye never read in the ſcriptures*, &c.] The paſſage which ſtands in *Pſal.* cxviii. 22, 23. *The ſtone which the builders rejected, the ſame is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.* Very appoſitely is this ſcripture cited, and applied to the preſent caſe; which expreſſes the rejection of the Meſſiah by the *Jewiſh* builders, prieſts, and *Scribes*: the whole pſalm may be underſtood of the *Meſſiah*. *R. David Kimchi* owns [z], that there is a diviſion among their *Rabbins* about it: ſome ſay that the pſalm is ſpoken of *David*, and others, that it is ſpoken of the days of the *Meſſiah*; and theſe are certainly in the right; and as for this particular paſſage, it is applied by ſome of them to the *Meſſiah*: ſo on mentioning *Hoſ.* iii. 5. they [a] ſay, "*David* was king in this world, and *David* ſhall "be king in the time to come: wherefore 'tis ſaid, "*the ſtone which the builders refuſed*, &c." And one of their noted commentators [b] on thoſe words, *though thou be little among the thouſands of Judah*, has this note: "It is fit thou ſhouldſt be little a-"mong the families of *Judah*, becauſe of the im-"purity of *Ruth* the *Moabiteſs*, which is in thee: "out of thee ſhall come forth unto me, *Meſſiah*, "the Son of *David*; for ſo he ſaith, *the ſtone which* "*the builders refuſed*, &c." Chriſt is often in ſcripture compared to a ſtone, and is called the ſtone of *Iſrael*; is ſaid to be a ſtone of ſtumbling to ſome, and a precious tried ſtone to others; is repreſented as a ſtone cut out of the mountain without hands, and on which are ſeven eyes: and is fitly compared to one, for his uſefulneſs in the ſpiritual building the church, where he is as both the foundation and corner-ſtone, and for his ſtrength and duration. Chriſt is the ſure, firm, and everlaſting foundation, which God has laid in *Zion*, and the only one of any avail; nor can any other be laid to any purpoſe; and if he is neglected, and laid aſide, in the miniſtration of the word, the building which men endeavour to rear, or exhort unto, will come to nothing. Whoever build on him are ſafe, and on nothing elſe: Chriſt is the foundation, on which the church, and every believer, are built, and therefore will abide; for the gates of hell cannot prevail againſt them: the covenant of grace is immoveable, being eſtabliſhed in him; its mercies are ſure, and its promiſes yea and amen: the ſalvation of immortal ſouls is certain, reſting upon him; the faith and hope of the ſaints, fail not, being directed to, and ſettled on him: the houſe not made with hands, which is in heaven, is an eternal one; and the city, which has foundations, is a continuing one, becauſe of the concern that Chriſt has in it; and tho' he is of ſuch eminent uſe and importance in the building, yet, as ſuch, *the builders rejected* him: by the *builders* are meant, the *Jewiſh* rulers, both political and eccleſiaſtical, eſpecially the latter, who pretended to inſtruct and build up the people in knowledge and underſtanding; but in a very bad way did they do it, and upon a very ſandy foundation, upon their fleſhly privileges, their moral righteouſneſs, and the obſervance of the ceremonial law, and the traditions of the elders. The *Jews* uſed to call their doctors and their ſcholars *builders*[c]: ſays *R. Jochanan*, "the diſciples of the wiſe men are called "בנאין, *builders*, becauſe they ſtudy in the building "of the world all their days, which is the law." Theſe rejected the Meſſiah, refuſed to receive, and acknowledge him as ſuch: they diſallowed and diſapproved of him, as baſe and vile, and the moſt contemptible of mortals, and ſet him at nought, and had him in the utmoſt ſcorn and deriſion. And ſo he is rejected by ſome who bear the characters of builders among chriſtians: as when his proper deity, and eternal ſonſhip are denied, and he is treated as a mere creature; when his ſatisfaction and atoning ſacrifice are either wholly rejected, or little regarded, leſſened, and depreciated, and repentance and good works are put in the room of them; when his imputed righteouſneſs is oppoſed, and laid aſide, and the righteouſneſs of men preferred unto it, and cried up as the matter of juſtification in the ſight of God; when his efficacious grace is repreſented as unneceſſary to regeneration, converſion, and ſanctification, and to the performance of good works; and when he is left out of public miniſtrations, as the way of life and ſalvation, as the fountain of all grace, and foundation of all happineſs, and human power, free-will, and moral righteouſneſs are put in his room. But notwithſtanding the former and preſent rejection, and ill treatment of him, he is *become the head of the corner:* he is the corner-ſtone in the building which knits and cements it together, angels and men, *Jews* and *Gentiles*, Old and New Teſtament ſaints; ſaints above, and ſaints below, and in all ages and places, all meet, and are united together in this corner-ſtone; which alſo ſtrengthens and ſupports the building, and holds it together, and is the ornament and beauty of it: he is the chief corner-ſtone; he is higher than the kings of the earth; he is ſuperior to angels, and the chiefeſt among ten thouſands of his ſaints; he is exalted above all creatures, angels, and men, who, by the *Jewiſh* builders, was deſpiſed and rejected, and ſcarce allowed to be worthy the name of a man: *this is the Lord's doing*; this ſtone is laid in the building by him: the rejection of him is according to his determinate counſel and fore-knowledge; and the exaltation of him, above every name, is owing to him, and he is by, and at his own right hand: and *is marvellous in our eyes*; in the eyes of all the ſaints; there being in all this ſuch a wonderful diſplay of the wiſdom, grace, mercy, power, and faithfulneſs of God.

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[y] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 43. 1.

[z] In Pſal. cxviii. 1.

[a] Zohar in Exod. fol. 93. 3.

[b] Jarchi in Mic. v. 2.

Ver. 43. *Therefore I ſay unto you*, &c.] This is the application of the parable; and the words are directed to the chief-prieſts, elders, *Scribes*, and people of the *Jews*; and are delivered as what would be in conſequence of the builders rejecting the Meſſiah, the foundation and corner-ſtone of the building. *The kingdom of God ſhall be taken from you:* by which is meant, not their political eſtate, their civil government, which was of God, and in a ſhort time was to depart from them, according to ancient prophecy, and which is come to paſs, as the event ſhews; nor their legal national church-ſtate and ordinances only, or the prieſthood, and the appendages of it; all which, in a little while, were ſhaken and removed; but the Goſpel, which had been preached among them by *John* the *Baptiſt*, Chriſt, and his apoſtles; ſo called, becauſe it treats of the kingdom of God, and things pertaining to it, and ſhews men both their right and meetneſs for it; the one, as in the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and the other in the regenerating and ſanctifying grace of the Spirit, which Goſpel may be taken away from a people, as from the *Jews*, becauſe of their contempt of it, and oppoſition to it, or lukewarmneſs and indifferency about it, or unfruitfulneſs under it; and when God has no more ſouls to gather in by it in ſuch a place, and which is a very unhappy caſe, whenever it is the caſe of any people: for when the Goſpel is taken away, the riches of a people are gone; the glory of a nation is departed; the light of it is put out; the ſpiritual bread of a people is no more; the means of converſion and ſpiritual knowledge ceaſe: all which have a melancholy aſpect on poſterity. Moreover, the Goſpel church-ſtate, which was ſet up in *Judæa*, may be here meant; which, tho' it continued and flouriſhed a while, in proceſs of time was to be removed: and which may be done elſewhere, as it has been in *Judæa*, by God's ſuffering perſecution to ariſe, as he did againſt the church of *Jeruſalem*, whereby the miniſters of the Goſpel are driven into corners, or ſcattered abroad; or by ordering his miniſters to preach no more unto ſuch a people, as the apoſtles were ordered to turn from the *Jews* to the *Gentiles*; or by taking away miniſters and members of churches by death, and not raiſing up others in their room; or by with-holding a bleſſing from the word; or by permitting the growth of errors and hereſies, which, in courſe of time, muſt iſſue in the diſſolution of the church-ſtate in ſuch a place, and which neceſſarily follows upon the removing of the Goſpel: *and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.* Tho' God may take away the Goſpel from a people, as he did from the *Jews*; yet he does not, nor will he, as yet, take it out of the world: he gives it to another *nation*; to the *Gentiles*, to all the nations of the world, whither he ſent his apoſtles to preach it, and where it muſt be preached before the end of the world comes, in order to gather his elect out of them: for not one particular nation is meant, unleſs the nation of God's elect, among all nations, can be thought to be deſigned. It may be obſerved, that the Goſpel, where-ever it comes, it comes as a gift; it is *given:* to have it only in the external miniſtration of it, is a favour; and more eſpecially to underſtand it ſpiritually; this is an unmerited gift; as is alſo ability to preach it: and it is likewiſe a national mercy where-ever it comes; for tho' it comes in power only to a few, in a nation, yet it is, more or leſs, a bleſſing to the whole: nor is it eaſy to ſay what temporal advantages a nation enjoys thro the miniſtration of the Goſpel in it: and where it is given, and comes in power, it brings forth fruit, as it did in all the world of the *Gentiles*; even the fruits of grace, and righteouſneſs, and every good work; all which come from Chriſt, under the influence of his Spirit; and by the word and ordinances, as means, and highly become the Goſpel, and the profeſſors of it; and for want of which it is removed ſometimes from one nation to another: for this cauſe it was taken from the *Jews*, and given to the *Gentiles*. One of the *Jewiſh* commentators [d] on theſe words, in *Jer.* xiii. 17. *my ſoul ſhall weep in ſecret places for your pride*, has this note; "becauſe of your grandeur, which ſhall ceaſe; becauſe of the excellency of *the kingdom of heaven*, שתנתן לפסילים, *which ſhall be given to the profane*;" *i. e.* the nations of the world.

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[c] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 114. 1. Vid. En Iſrael, fol. 64. 3. & Juchaſin, fol. 80. 2. & 81. 1.

Ver. 44. *And whoſoever ſhall fall on this ſtone*, &c.] This is not to be underſtood of believing in Chriſt, or of a ſoul's caſting itſelf on Chriſt, the foundation-ſtone; relying on him, and building all its hopes of happineſs and ſalvation on him; which is attended with contrition and brokenneſs of heart, or repentance unto life, which needed not to be repented of: nor of a believer's offending Chriſt by evil works, whereby his conſcience is wounded, his ſoul is grieved, and his faith ſhaken; and tho' he is hereby in great danger, he ſhall not be utterly deſtroyed, but being recovered by repentance, ſhall be preſerved unto ſalvation; but of ſuch to whom Chriſt is a ſtone of ſtumbling, and a rock of offence: for as he is the foundation and corner-ſtone to ſome, and is ſet for the riſing of them, and to whom he is precious; ſo he is a ſtone ſet for the fall of others, and at which they ſtumble and fall, and fall upon it: and ſuch are they who are offended at Chriſt's ſtate of humiliation on earth; at the manner of his birth, the meanneſs of his parentage, and education; the deſpicable figure he made in his perſon, diſciples, and audience; and at his ſufferings and death: and theſe *ſhall be broken*: as a man that ſtumbles at a ſtone, and falls upon it, breaks his head, or his bones, or, at leaſt, bruiſes himſelf, does not hurt the ſtone, but the ſtone hurts him; ſo all ſuch as are offended at Chriſt, injure their own ſouls, being filled with prejudices againſt him, and contempt and diſbelief of him, which, if grace prevents not, will iſſue in their everlaſting deſtruction: but whilſt there is life, the means of grace continue, the kingdom of God is not taken away; there is hope that ſuch may be recovered from their impenitence and unbelief: *but on whomſoever it ſhall fall, it will grind him to powder.* Juſt as if a mill-ſtone, or any ſtone of ſuch-like weight and bulk, was to fall upon an earthen veſſel; or, as the ſtone cut out of the mountain without hands, by which the Meſſiah, and his kingdom, are deſigned, brake in pieces the image in *Nebuchadnezzar*'s dream, ſo that it became like the chaff of the ſummer threſhing-floor. As the former part of this verſe expreſſes the ſin of unbelievers, and the danger they are expoſed unto by it, this ſets forth their puniſhment; antl has reſpect both to the vengeance of Chriſt, on the *Jewiſh* nation, at their deſtruction, which would fall heavy from him in his ſtate of exaltation, for their evil treatment of him in his ſtate of humiliation; and to his ſevere wrath, which will be executed at the day of judgment on all unbelievers, impenitent, Chriſtleſs ſinners, who have both offended him, and been offended at him; when their deſtruction will be inevitable, their ſalvation irretrievable, and their ſouls irrecoverably loſt, and ruin'd. Some have thought, that there is an alluſion in theſe words to the manner of ſtoning among the *Jews*, which was this [e]: "the place of ſtoning was two mens heighths; one of the witneſſes ſtruck him on his loins, to throw him down from thence, to the ground: if he died, it was well; if not, they took a ſtone, which lay there, and was as much as two men could carry, and caſt it, with all their might, upon his breaſt: if he died, it was well; if not, he was ſtoned by all *Iſrael*." *Maimonides* obſerves [f], that "ſtoning, or throwing down from the high place, was, that he might fall upon the ſtone, or that the ſtone might fall upon him; and which of them either it was, the pain was the ſame."

Ver. 45. *And when the chief-prieſts and Phariſees*, &c.] Which latter, tho' not before mentioned, were many of them of the grand *Sanhedrim*, as well as the chief-prieſts, *Scribes*, and elders: *had heard his parables*; that of the two ſons being ſent into the vineyard, and that of the letting out the vineyard to huſbandmen, *they perceived that he ſpake of them*: they plainly ſaw that they were deſigned by the ſon, that promiſed to go into the vineyard, but did not; only talked of works, but did not do them: and that they were the huſbandmen that acted the ungrateful part to the houſholder, and the cruel one to his ſervants, and would to his ſon. Their own conſciences told them they were the men. They knew that the whole was levelled againſt them, and deſigned for them, and exactly hit their caſe.

Ver. 46. *But when they ſought to lay hands on him*, &c.] Not that they attempted by any outward action to apprehend him, and carry him off, or by any immediate act of violence to take away his life; but they ſecretly wiſhed, and earneſtly deſired to do it: they were ſo irritated and provoked, that they could ſcarcely keep their hands off of him, and could have been glad of an opportunity of ſatiating their revenge upon him; and whereby they would but have fulfilled what he in this parable had prophetically ſaid of them: and yet ſo hardened were they, though they underſtood his meaning, they were not deterr'd thereby, but on another account: *they feared the multitude*; which were now about Chriſt, leſt there ſhould be a tumult, and they ſhould take the part of Chriſt againſt them, to which they ſeemed inclined; when their lives, had they attempted any thing of this nature, would have been in a great deal of danger: *becauſe they took him for a prophet*; by the doctrines which he taught, by the boldneſs and freedom of ſpeech he uſed, and by the miracles he wrought: wherefore, tho' they might not all of them believe that he was the Meſſiah, or that prophet *Moſes* ſpoke of; yet ſince it was exceeding manifeſt, that he was a teacher ſent of God, and endowed with very wonderful gifts; and from whom many of them had received ſingular benefits, if not for their ſouls, yet for their bodies; being healed by him of their lameneſs, or blindneſs, or other diſeaſes; therefore would not ſuffer him to be abuſed, and ill-treated by them: ſo that, as *Mark* ſays, *they left him, and went their way*; to conſult together what was proper to be done, and wait for a better opportunity to ſeize him.

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[d] Jarchi in Jer. xiii. 17.

[e] Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 6. §. 4. T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 45. 1, 2. Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 15. §. 1. Moſes Kotſenſis Mitzvot Tora pr. Affirm. 99.

[f] In Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 6. §. 4.

CHAP.

# CHAP. XXII.

Ver. 1. AND *Jeſus anſwered and ſpake unto them again,* &c.] Not to the multitude only, but to the chief-prieſts, elders, *Scribes,* and *Phariſees:* for tho' *Mark* ſeems to intimate, that upon the delivery of the laſt parable of the vineyard, they left him, and went their way; yet ſince he does not relate the following parable, they might not leave him until they had heard that, which is ſpoken with much the ſame deſign as the former, and might increaſe their reſentment the more: or if the chief-prieſts and elders did go away, the *Phariſees* remained behind, as is clear from ver. 15. to whom he ſpake *by parables,* ſimilitudes, and compariſons, taken from earthly things, and againſt whom he directed the following one; *and ſaid,* as hereafter related.

Ver. 2. *The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king,* &c.] The Goſpel diſpenſation which had now taken place, the methods of divine grace in it, and the behaviour of men under it, may be fitly illuſtrated by the following ſimile, or parable; the deſign of which is to expreſs the great love of God the father, who is repreſented by this *certain king,* in eſpouſing any of the children of men to his own ſon: as, that he a king, who is the king of kings, and Lord of Lords, ſhould concern himſelf in this manner; and eſpecially, that he ſhould eſpouſe ſuch mean and unworthy creatures to his own, his only, and beloved ſon, his equal, and his heir: alſo, the view of it is to ſet forth the plenteous proviſions of grace made under the Goſpel diſpenſation in the word and ordinances; the great neglect and contempt of theſe by the *Jews,* who were externally called unto them; the wrath of God upon them for their abuſe of them, and ill uſage of his ſervants; the calling of the vileſt among them, or of the *Gentiles,* and how far perſons may go in a profeſſion of religion without the wedding-garment, and at laſt be loſt: *which made a marriage for his ſon:* which may be underſtood either of contracting and bringing him into a marriage-relation, or of making a marriage-feaſt on that account: in the former ſenſe, the perſons concerned are the father, the bridegroom, and the bride: the parties contracted are the ſon of God and ſinful creatures. The bridegroom is no other than the only-begotten of God the father, his only ſon and heir, the maker and governor of the univerſe, who has all the perfections of the deity, and fulneſs of the Godhead in him; and, as mediator, has all accompliſhments and excellencies: he has all the riches of grace and glory; all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge; all lovelineſs, beauty, and amiableneſs in his perſon, and every thing to recommend him as the chiefeſt among ten thouſand: on the other hand, the bride is the church, which conſiſts of a ſett of perſons choſen by God, in Chriſt, before the foundation of the world; who were conſidered as ſinleſs creatures, and viewed as ſuch when firſt betrothed to Chriſt in the everlaſting covenant; but for the further demonſtration of his love to them, were ſuffered to fall in *Adam,* with the reſt of mankind, and to be ſcattered abroad; when they loſt the image of God, came ſhort of his glory, paſs'd under a ſentence of condemnation, became liable to the curſe of the law, and eternal death; were defiled and polluted in their nature, and in their eſtate became bankrupts and beggars; and yet this hindred not the conſummation of the marriage between Chriſt and them. The perſon that contracted this relation between them, is the father of Chriſt, who choſe them for him to be his ſpouſe and bride; brought and preſented them to him, as he did *Eve* to *Adam* before the fall; and gave them to him, and made them one body and fleſh with him, in the everlaſting covenant; and draws them, and brings them to him by his powerful grace, in effectual vocation; there was a ſecret betrothing of all theſe perſons to him in eternity, at his own requeſt, and the full conſent of his father, who had the diſpoſal of them; there is an open eſpouſal of them, as particular perſons, at converſion; and there will be a more publick and general conſummate marriage of them, at the laſt day, when they are all called by grace, and brought home: moreover, this may be underſtood of the marriage-feaſt which the father makes on this extraordinary account. So the *Syriac* verſion renders the word by משתותא, *a feaſt*; and in this ſenſe is it uſed by the *Septuagint* in *Gen.* xxix. 22. by which is meant, not the latter day glory, or marriage-feaſt of the lamb, to which only ſaints will be invited, and partake of; nor the ultimate glory, when all the elect ſhall go with Chriſt into the marriage-chamber, and ſpend an eternity in endleſs joys and unſpeakable felicity with him; nor the ſpiritual bleſſings of grace enjoyed by believers now; but the external miniſtry of the word and ordinances, which are a feaſt of fat things, a rich entertainment, the particulars of which are after given; which many are invited to, who never partake thereof, and others do, and yet deſtitute of the grace of God; for both good and bad were gueſts at this feaſt. The alluſion is to the cuſtom of the *Jews,* and of other nations, in making feaſts and grand entertainments at ſuch times. The *Jews* uſed to make feaſts both at eſpouſals, and at marriage: hence we [g] read of סעודת אירוסין, *a feaſt of eſpouſals,* and of סעודת נישואין, *a marriage-feaſt:* the reference here is to the latter; and which uſed to be made at the charge of the father; for ſo runs one of their canons [h]: "a father marries his ſon, ועשה לו משתה, *and* " *makes a feaſt for him,* and the expence is the fa-" ther's, *&c.*"

Ver. 3. *And ſent forth his ſervants,* &c.] The miniſters of the Goſpel, who are the ſervants of the moſt high God, of his chuſing and ordaining, of his calling and ſending, and of his qualifying and employing, and who voluntarily and chearfully ſerve him; and may intend *John* the *Baptiſt,* and the twelve apoſtles of Chriſt, who were ſent *to call them that were bidden to the wedding;* הקרואים, *thoſe that were called,* as in 1 *Sam.* ix. 13, 22. by whom are meant the *Jews,* who were the *bidden,* or *called* ones; called of God, and therefore ſtiled *Iſrael my called, Iſ.* xlviii. 12. and by the *Targum* interpreted מזמני, *my bidden.* They were called by the name of God, and called the people of God, and the children of God, and were the children of the kingdom; and were called to many valuable and external privileges; and had previous notice of the Goſpel diſpenſation, by the prophecies concerning Chriſt, and the bleſſings of his grace under the former diſpenſation; and by the ordinances and ſacrifices of it, which in a very ſignificant manner ſet him forth to that people; and how were called to embrace him, to receive his doctrines, and ſubmit to his ordinances, by the miniſtry of *John the Baptiſt*, and the diſciples of Chriſt. It ſeems, it was ſometimes cuſtomary to give two invitations to a feaſt, or to ſend a ſecond time to the perſons bidden to the feaſt [1]; to which the alluſion is here; *and they would not come:* which ſhews the inſolence and ingratitude of men, their natural averſion to the Goſpel, and the ordinances of it; the depravity of the will of man, with reſpect to things ſpiritual and evangelical; the inſufficiency of outward means, to work with effect, upon the minds of men; and the neceſſity there is of efficacious and unfruſtrable grace to bring men to believe in Chriſt, cordially to receive his truths, and be ſubject to his commands. There is a two-fold call by the miniſtry of the word; the one is internal, and that is, when the word comes not in word only, but in power; is the power of God unto ſalvation, and the ſavour of life unto life; for by the Goſpel are the elect of God called to the obtaining of the glory of Chriſt, 2 *Theſſ.* ii. 14. This call is of grace; it ſprings from the free grace and favour of God, and it is effected by the mighty power of his grace; and it is to ſpecial bleſſings of grace; it is a fruit of God's everlaſting love, and an evidence of it; and is according to the eternal purpoſe of God, which is never fruſtrated: it is a call to the enjoyment of ſpiritual bleſſings, as peace, pardon, righteouſneſs, and everlaſting happineſs; by it men are called to light and liberty, to the grace of Chriſt, and communion with him; to all the privileges of God's houſe here, and eternal glory hereafter; to which he that calls them, gives them a right and meetneſs, and infallibly brings them to it: and therefore it is ſtiled an heavenly calling, and the high calling of God in Chriſt; for this call is ever effectual, and the ends of it are always anſwered; it is unchangeable, irreverſible, and never repented of. But beſides this, there is a bare external call to the ſons of men, through the preaching of the word; which is not to make their peace with God, a thing impoſſible to be done by them, and which is contrary to the Goſpel, and reflects diſhonour on Chriſt, the peace-maker; nor to get an intereſt in him, which, wherever poſſeſſed, is given, and not gotten; nor to regenerate themſelves; this is the work of the Spirit of God, and in which men are as paſſive, as the infant in its natural generation, conception, and birth; nor to the exerciſe of evangelical grace, as faith, love, &c. which are not in them, and no man can exerciſe that which he has not, nor ſhould he be called to it; nor to any ſpiritual vital act, ſince men are dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, and can't put forth any: but this call in the word, is to the natural duties of religion, as to hear, read, and pray; to attend on the word, to wait at wiſdom's gates, and watch at the poſts of her door, and ſo lie in the way of being effectually called by the grace of God; but this call may be where election does not go before, and where ſanctification does not follow, and where there may be no ſalvation, *Matt.* xx. 16. and is often ſlighted, neglected, and of no effect, which is the caſe here.

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[g] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 43. 1, 2.

[h] Maimon. Hilch. Nechalot, c. 9. §. 13. Vid. Miſn. Sheviith, c. 7. §. 4. & Juchaſin, fol. 88. 1.

Ver. 4. *Again he ſent forth other ſervants*, &c.] The ſeventy diſciples, and other miniſters of the Goſpel, as *Barnabas* and *Saul*, and others that were joined to, and were helpers of the apoſtles, who were ſent, and preached to the *Jews*, any time before the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*: *ſaying, tell them which are bidden*; for theſe preachers of the word were firſt ſent to the *Jews*, and preached unto them, until they by their carriage and conduct, ſhewed themſelves to be unworthy of the bleſſing. Theſe men had notice of the Goſpel-feaſt by the prophets, and were invited to it, by the forerunner of of Chriſt, by him, and his diſciples, and again by them, and others; which ſtrongly expreſſes the goodneſs, grace, and condeſcenſion of God to theſe people, and aggravates their ſtupidity, ingratitude, and wickedneſs: *behold, I have prepared my dinner.* The miniſtry of the word and ordinances under the Goſpel diſpenſation, is ſignified by a *dinner*; of God's preparing and providing; which is a full meal at noon, and in it is plenty of food, and of that which is wholeſome to the ſouls of men, ſweet and ſavoury to a ſpiritual taſte, and very nouriſhing and ſatiſfying; and this dinner is a feaſt, a rich banquet, a grand entertainment; in which are a variety of proviſions, ſuited to all ſorts of perſons, and plenty of the richeſt dainties, attended with the largeſt expreſſions of joy; and this feaſt is a marriage one, and that not for an ordinary perſon, but for the king's ſon, the ſon of the king of kings; it is large, grand, and noble, rich and coſtly, and yet all free to the gueſts; it is kept in the king's palace, the banqueting houſe, the church, is common to all, and of long continuance, it will laſt unto the end of the world. What privileges the patriarchs and prophets, and the people of the *Jews* enjoyed, in the morning of the world, before the coming of Chriſt, who made the bright and full day of the Goſpel, were but as a *breakfaſt*, a ſhort meal; the means of grace were not ſo rich and plentiful, and their knowledge of ſpiritual things not ſo large; they had but as it were, a taſte of what is plentifully beſtowed under the Goſpel diſpenſation, and therefore that is called a *dinner*; grace and truth in all their fulneſs, coming by Jeſus, by whom God has delivered at once his whole mind and will; whereas, before it was delivered by piece-meals, at ſundry times and divers manners; and this is diſtinguiſhable from the *ſupper* of the Lamb, in the evening of the world, in the latter day, when the *Jews* will be converted, and will not act the part they are repreſented to do in the parable; and the fulneſs of the *Gentiles* will be brought in, and the Goſpel will have a general ſpread all over the world. The dinner is the ſame with the feaſt of fat things, which God is ſaid to make for all people, *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, in his holy mountain the church, *Iſa.* xxv. 6. and the table which wiſdom has furniſhed, *Prov.* ix. 2. with all ſorts of ſuitable food, proper to perſons of every age: here's milk for babes, even the ſincere milk of the word, that their ſouls may grow thereby, who are new born babes, and have taſted of the grace of God; namely, the plainer and more eaſy truths of the Goſpel, to be taken in, underſtood, fed upon, and digeſted; and meat for ſtrong men, the more ſublime doctrines of it, which ſuch as are ſtrong in faith, receive, reliſh, and live upon, and are greatly refreſhed and edified with: here's the wine of God's everlaſting love ſet forth, in the election, redemption, juſtification, pardon, adoption, regeneration, and ſalvation of his people; and fruits ſerved up both new and old, for their comfort, delight, and pleaſure; in the ordinances of the Goſpel, are the fleſh and blood of Chriſt, the Lamb of God, and fatted calf, whoſe fleſh is meat indeed, and whoſe blood is drink indeed; here's every thing for delight and nouriſhment, for faith to feed and live upon; and therefore may well be called a dinner, and what is worthy of him, who is the maker of it, and exceedingly well ſuited to the perſons who are to partake of it. *My oxen and my fatlings are killed*; in alluſion to feaſts and large entertainments, when oxen and fatted calves, and the beſt of the flock were killed and dreſſed; or to the ſacrifices of oxen and other creatures, under the law, as typical of the ſacrifice of Chriſt; and may here repreſent Chriſt as crucified and ſlain, held forth in the miniſtry of the word and ordinances; who as ſuch, is ſuitable food for believers, is ſpiritual, ſolid, and ſubſtantial, and greatly to be deſired; is nouriſhing and ſtrengthening, comforting and quickening, delightful and ſatisfying: *and all things are ready*; for upon the crucifixion and death of Chriſt, and after the renewed commiſſion of Chriſt to his diſciples, to preach the Goſpel, beginning at *Jeruſalem*, it might be juſtly repreſented in the miniſtry of the word, that all things were now ready. Redemption was obtained by Chriſt; an everlaſting righteouſneſs was wrought out and brought in; pardon of ſin was procured; peace and reconciliation were made; the ſacrifice of Chriſt was offered up, and full ſatisfaction given to law and juſtice; the covenant of grace, with all the bleſſings and promiſes of it, were ratified and confirmed; and all were ready in Chriſt's hands to diſtribute, to as many as came to him; in whom are life and ſalvation, and every thing neceſſary for peace and comfort here, and eternal happineſs hereafter. This ſhows the compleatneſs and perfection of the Goſpel diſpenſation, this being that better thing, which God has provided for his people in the laſt times, that former ſaints might not be perfect without them, *Heb.* xi. 40. The law made nothing perfect; there was nothing got ready by that; the works, ſacrifices, rites, and ceremonies of it, could not juſtify mens perſons, nor ſanctify their hearts, nor purge the conſciences of the worſhippers, nor take away ſin, nor pacify God, or give ſatisfaction to his juſtice, or procure peace, pardon and ſalvation; but now all theſe things are declared to be ready in the Goſpel: but this is not owing to man, it is all of God; it is of his providing and preparing; and he is a rock, and his work is perfect; and nothing can be brought by the creature to be added to it, nor does it need it; there's every thing exhibited in the Goſpel that a poor ſinner ſtands in need of, or can deſire, even that can make him comfortable here, and happy hereafter. *Come unto the marriage*; the marriage-feaſt; come into the Goſpel diſpenſation, attend the word and ordinances: the invitation is preſſing, the arguments are ſtrong and moving, but the perſons invited were averſe, ſelf-willed, ſtubborn, obſtinate, and inflexible.

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[1] Vid. Joſeph. apud Grotium in loc.

Ver. 5. *But they made light of it*, &c.] The invitation. They neglected the miniſtry of the Goſpel; they did not care for it, nor ſhewed any regard to it: and this is the caſe, when either it is not attended on, though there is an opportunity, yet having no heart to embrace it, and no value for it, neglect attendance on it; and which often ariſes from an over-love of the world: or when it is attended on, but in a very negligent and careleſs manner; when men pull away the ſhoulder, or ſtop their ears; when they don't mind what they hear, let it ſlip and forget it; when they are unconcerned for it, and their thoughts are employed about other things: or when the Goſpel and the ordinances of it, are looked upon as things of no importance; not knowing the real worth and value of them; ſeeing no wiſdom in them, having never taſted the ſweetneſs, or felt the power of them, or ſeen the need of the things revealed by them: as alſo when there is an averſion to the Goſpel, a loathing of it, as a novel, upſtart doctrine, received but by a few, and theſe the meaneſt and moſt illiterate; as contrary to reaſon, and tending to licentiouſneſs; and eſpecially, when it is contradicted and blaſphemed, as it was by the *Jews*, and its miniſters deſpiſed: ſome men make light of it, becauſe of the loſs of time from worldly employments; becauſe of the charge attending it; becauſe it teaches them to deny ungodlineſs and worldly luſts; and becauſe they prefer their bodies to their ſouls, and things temporal, to things eternal. The aggravations of their ſin, in ſlighting and neglecting the Goſpel and Goſpel ordinances are, that this is a grand entertainment, a very expenſive proviſion, as well as a very plentiful one; that it was a wedding-dinner, a feaſt of love, they were invited to; that it was prepared by ſo great a perſon as a king, and who is the king of kings, and the only potentate; who provided this dinner of his own ſovereign good-will and pleaſure, in the everlaſting council and covenant of grace and peace; for the things of which it conſiſts, there was a ſcheme ſo early contrived to bring them about; and that this was made on the account of the marriage of his Son, the Meſſiah, who had been ſo often ſpoken of by the prophets of the Old Teſtament, theſe men profeſſed a value for; one ſo long expected by their forefathers, and is the meſſenger of the covenant, whoſe coming they themſelves deſired and ſought for; and that they ſhould be invited to it again and again, and one ſett of ſervants ſent after another, and the moſt ſtriking and moving arguments made uſe of; and yet they ſlighted and made light of all this, and were careleſs and unconcerned; to which may be added, that the things they were invited to, were ſuch as concerned their immortal ſouls, and the ſpiritual and eternal welfare of them; in ſhort, it was no other than the great ſalvation, wrought out by the great God, and our Saviour, for great ſinners, at the expence of his blood and life, which they neglected; ſee *Heb.* ii. 3. *And went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandize*: they all turned their backs on the Goſpel, and the miniſtration of it, and purſued their own worldly inclinations, ways, and methods of life: thoſe that were brought up in a rural way, lived a country life, and were concerned in meaner employments, went every one to their *village*, as the *Vulgate Latin*, and *Munſter's Hebrew* Goſpel read it, and to their farms, there to manage their cattle, and till their ground; and others, that lived in larger towns and cities, and were concerned in greater buſineſs of life, betook themſelves to trade at home, or traffick abroad; placing their happineſs in the affluence of this life, which they preferred to the word and ordinances of Chriſt. Such a diviſion of worldly employment is made by the *Jews* [k]; "the way of that hoſt is like "to a king, who makes a grand entertainment and "ſays to the children of his palace, all the reſt of "the days ye ſhall be every one in his houſe; this "ſhall do his buſineſs, ודא אזיל בסחרתיה, *and this* "*ſhall go about his merchandize*, ודא אזיל בחקליה, "*and this ſhall go to his field*, except on my day."

Ver. 6. *And the remnant took his ſervants*, &c.] They that went to their ſeveral worldly callings and occupations of life, troubled themſelves no further about the Meſſiah, his doctrines and ordinances;

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[k] Zohar in Lev. fol. 40. 2.

but others of them were more ſpiteful and injurious: they not only ſlighted the meſſage, and took no notice of the invitation, but alſo abuſed the meſſengers; ſome of the ſervants they laid hold upon, and put them in the common priſon, and detained them there a while; as they did the apoſtles quickly after our Lord's aſcenſion, particularly *Peter* and *John*: *and entreated them ſpitefully*; gave them very hard words, and reproachful language; menacing and threatening them what they would do to them, if they did not forbear preaching in the name of Jeſus; though they were not intimidated hereby, but rejoiced that they were counted worthy to ſuffer ſhame on ſuch an account; and even their malice and wickedneſs proceeded ſo far, as to take away the lives of ſome of them: *and ſlew them*; thus they ſtoned *Stephen* to death, the proto-martyr for Chriſt; and killed *James*, the brother of *John*, with the ſword; which laſt, though he was put to death by *Herod*, yet with the conſent and good liking of the *Jews*.

Ver. 7. *But when the king heard thereof*, &c.] Of this male-treatment, and barbarous uſage of his ſervants, their cries coming up into his ears, and their blood calling for vengeance at his hands; and he full well knowing what they did unto them, and upon what account, being the omniſcient God; and obſerving their malignity and wickedneſs, *he was wroth*; who, though ſlow to anger, bears much, and ſuffers long; yet was now highly incenſed and provoked, and ſtirred up all his wrath, determining to take vengeance on ſuch a vile generation of men. Chriſt, when he was here on earth, was ſometimes provoked by the *Jews*, through their unbelief, their obſtinacy, and the hardneſs of their hearts, and was angry with them, being grieved for them, *Mark* iii. 5. but then was not the proper time to execute his wrath; he then appeared as the Lamb of God, to take away the ſin of the world; he came to ſave men, and not to deſtroy their lives, nor to condemn the world: when his martyr *Stephen* was ſuffering, he was ſeen by him ſtanding at the right-hand of God, being riſen from his ſeat, as one incenſed at the uſage his ſervant met with from the wicked *Jews*; but the time of his vengeance was not yet come, more patience and forbearance were to be exerciſed towards them: but now his kingdom came with power, and he appears as the Lion of the tribe of *Judah*; and pours out his wrath to the uttermoſt upon them, deſtroys their city and temple, and puts an end to their civil and eccleſiaſtical ſtate, and cuts them off from being a nation; and now it was, that he ordered theſe his enemies, who would not have him to rule over them, brought before him, and ſlain in his preſence; and in all this, he ſhewed his kingly power and authority; and by removing the ſceptre from them, and all ſhew of dominion and government, made it fully appear that he, the Meſſiah, was come. Well had it been for them, had they taken the advice of the Pſalmiſt, *Kiſs the ſon*, the Son of God, believe in him as ſuch, embrace him as the Meſſiah, yield ſubjection and obedience to his word and ordinances, *leſt he be angry*, and *ye periſh from the way*, *when his wrath is kindled but a little*, *Pſal.* ii. 12. But now his wrath was kindled very much, and was poured out like fire, and there was no ſtanding before it; the day of the Lord burned like an oven, and deſtroyed the *Jews* root and branch: the manner and means, in and by which this utter ruin was brought about, are as follow: *and he ſent forth his armies*; not the angels, who are the armies and hoſts of heaven; nor deſolating judgments only, as peſtilence and famine, though the latter was ſeverely felt by the *Jews*, but chiefly the *Roman* armies are here meant; called *his*, becauſe they came by the Lord's appointment and permiſſion; and were uſed by him, for the deſtruction of theſe people: *and deſtroyed thoſe murtherers*; of Chriſt and his apoſtles, as their fathers had been of the prophets before them: *and burnt up their city*; the city of *Jeruſalem*, the metropolis of the *Jews*, and where the principal of theſe murtherers dwelt; and which was burnt and deſtroyed by the *Roman* army, under *Titus Veſpaſian*. And a worſe puniſhment than this, even the vengeance of eternal fire, may all the neglecters of the Goſpel, and perſecutors of the miniſters of it expect, from him, whoſe vengeance is, and who will repay it; for if judgment began at the houſe of God, the people of the *Jews* who were ſo called, what will be the end of them that obey not the Goſpel of Chriſt? how ſore a puniſhment ſhall they be thought worthy of, who trample under foot the Son of God, count his blood a common thing, and do deſpite to the Spirit of grace? if the law, when tranſgreſſed, demanded a juſt recompence of reward, or inflicted deſerved puniſhment, how ſhall the neglecters of the great ſalvation revealed in the Goſpel eſcape?

Ver. 8. *Then ſaith he to his ſervants*, &c.] That were preſerved from their rage and malice, and outlived their implacable enemies, and ſaw their utter ruin and deſtruction: *the wedding is ready*; meaning not the marriage-contract, which was ſecretly performed in eternity; or the calling of God's elect among the *Jews*, and their open eſpouſal to Chriſt, which for the preſent was now over; but the marriage-feaſt, or the Goſpel diſpenſation, which was uſhered in, and the miniſtry of it, to which nothing was wanting; all the promiſes, prophecies, types, and ſhadows, of the former diſpenſation, were now accompliſhed; the Lamb of God was ſlain, and all things to be done by him were now finiſhed; the miniſters of the Goſpel, the apoſtles, were called, their commiſſion enlarged, and they qualified with a greater meaſure of the Spirit, and were ſent to preach both to *Jews* and *Gentiles*: *but they which were bidden were not worthy*; that is, the *Jews*, who had notice of this diſpenſation by the prophets, were told by *John* the *Baptiſt*, that it was at hand; were once, and again, externally called unto it by the miniſtry of the apoſtles; but they were not only unworthy in themſelves, as all men are, of ſuch a bleſſing and privilege, but they behaved towards it in a very unworthy manner; they were ſo far from attending on it in a diligent and peaceable way, as becomes all ſuch perſons that are bleſſed with the external miniſtry of it; who, when they do ſo, may be ſaid to behave worthily, and in ſome ſenſe, to be worthy of ſuch a privilege being continued with them; ſee *Matt.* x. 13. compared with *Luke* x. 6. that they contradicted and blaſphemed it, and by their own outragious carriage, ſhewed plainly that they were unworthy of it; and were ſo judged by Chriſt and his apoſtles, who ordered them to turn from them, and go to the *Gentiles*, and which may be intended in the following words.

Ver. 9. *Go ye therefore into the high-ways*, &c.] Either of the city, which were open and publick, and where much people were paſſing to and fro; or of the fields, the high-roads, where many paſſengers were travelling; and may deſign the *Gentile* world, and *Gentile* ſinners, who, in reſpect of the *Jews*, were far off; were walking in their own ways, and in the high-road to deſtruction; and may denote their being the vileſt of ſinners, and as having nothing to recommend them to the divine favour, and to ſuch privileges as this entertainment expreſſes: *and as many as ye ſhall find, bid to the marriage*; to the marriage-feaſt, not the marriage-ſupper, but the dinner, ver. 4. their orders were to go into all the world, and preach the Goſpel to every creature, *Jew* or *Gentile*, high or low, rich or poor, outwardly righteous, or openly profane, greater or leſſer ſinners, and exhort them to attend the Goſpel miniſtry, and ordinances.

Ver. 10. *So theſe ſervants went out into the highways*, &c.] Turned from the *Jews*, and went among the *Gentiles*, preaching the Goſpel to them; particularly the apoſtle *Paul*, with *Barnabas*, and others: *and gathered together all, as many as they found, both good and bad*: the *Perſic* verſion reads it, *known* or *unknown*. The Goſpel miniſtry is the means of gathering ſouls to Chriſt, and to attend his ordinances, and into his churches; and of theſe that are gathered by it into churches, and to an attendance on outward ordinances, ſome are good and ſome bad, as the fiſhes gathered in the net of the Goſpel are ſaid to be, in ch. xiii. 47, 48. which may either expreſs the character of the *Gentiles* before converſion, ſome of them being outwardly good in their civil and moral character; cloſely adhering to the law and light of nature, doing the things of it, and others notoriouſly wicked; or rather, how they proved when gathered in, ſome being real believers, godly perſons, whoſe converſations were as became the Goſpel of Chriſt; others hypocrites, empty profeſſors, having a form of godlineſs, and nothing of the power of it; deſtitute of grace in their hearts, and of holineſs in their lives; and the whole ſets forth the diligence of the ſervants, in executing their maſter's orders, with ſo much readineſs and exactneſs: *and the wedding was furniſhed with gueſts*; that is, the wedding-chamber, or the place where the wedding was kept, and the marriage-dinner was prepared, and eat; ſo the *Syriac* renders it, בית משתותא, *the houſe of the feaſt*, or where the feaſt was kept; and ſo the *Ethiopic* verſion: the *Perſic* verſion reads it, *the houſe of the nuptial-feaſt*; which deſigns the houſe and church of God, into which large numbers of the *Gentiles* were brought, by the miniſtry of the apoſtles; ſo that it was filled with perſons that made a profeſſion of Chriſt and his Goſpel.

Ver. 11. *And when the king came in to ſee the gueſts*, &c.] Profeſſors of religion, members of churches, whom God takes particular notice of; he is an omniſcient being, and his eyes are upon all men and their actions, and eſpecially on ſuch as are called by his name: he takes notice how they behave in the exerciſe of grace, and diſcharge of duty, and diſtinguiſhes hypocrites from real believers; the latter of which he has a ſpecial affection for, makes rich and large proviſions for them, and protects and defends them: he knows them that are his, and gives them marks of reſpect; and he ſpies out ſuch as are not, and will in his own time diſcover them, to their utter confuſion and ruin. There are certain times and ſeaſons, when God may be ſaid to come in to ſee his gueſts; as ſometimes in a way of gracious viſits to his dear children, when he bids them welcome to the entertainment of his houſe, and invites them to eat and drink abundantly; and ſometimes in a way of providence, againſt formal profeſſors and hypocrites; and at the laſt judgment, when he'll ſeparate the ſheep from the goats, and diſcern between the righteous and the wicked: *he ſaw there a man which had not on a wedding garment*; by which is meant, not good works, or a holy life and converſation, nor any particular grace of the Spirit, as faith, or charity, or humility, or repentance, or any other; nor the whole work of ſanctification, nor the Holy Ghoſt, but the righteouſneſs of Chriſt: for though good works are the outward converſation garments of believers, and theſe greatly become them and adorn the doctrine of Chriſt, yet they are imperfect, and have their ſpots, and need waſhing in the blood of Chriſt, and can't in themſelves recommend them to God; and though the Holy Spirit and his graces, his work of holineſs upon the heart, make the ſaints all glorious within, yet not theſe, but the garment of Chriſt's righteouſneſs, is their cloathing of wrought gold, and raiment of needle-work, in which they are brought into the king's preſence: this, like a garment, is without them, and put upon them; and which covers and protects them, and beautifies and adorns them; and which may be called a wedding-garment, becauſe it is that, in which the elect of God were betrothed to Chriſt; in which they are made ready and prepared for him, as a bride adorned for her huſband; and in which they will be introduced into his preſence, and be by him preſented, firſt to himſelf, and then to his Father, without ſpot, or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing. This man had not on this garment, this robe of righteouſneſs; it was not imputed to him; he had no knowledge of it; or if he had any, it was only a ſpeculative one; he had no true faith in it; he had never put on Chriſt, as the Lord his righteouſneſs; he had got into a church-ſtate without it, though there's no entrance into the kingdom of heaven but by it.

Ver. 12. *And he ſaith unto him, friend*, &c.] Either in an ironical way, or becauſe he profeſſed to be a friend of God and Chriſt: *how cameſt thou in hither, not having a wedding garment?* Which way didſt thou come in hither? ſince he did not come in by faith, in the righteouſneſs of Chriſt; intimating, that he climbed up ſome other way, and was a thief and robber; or with what face, or how couldſt thou have the aſſurance to come in hither in ſuch a dreſs, having nothing but the filthy rags of thine own righteouſneſs? How couldſt thou expect to meet with acceptance with me, or to be ſuitable company for my people, not being arrayed with the garments of ſalvation, and robe of righteouſneſs, as they are? *And he was ſpeechleſs*; or muzzled; his mouth was ſtopped, he had nothing to ſay for himſelf: not but that there will be pleas made uſe of by hypocrites, and formal profeſſors, another day; who will plead either their preaching and propheſying in Chriſt's name; or their attendance on outward ordinances; or the works they have done, ordinary or extraordinary; but then theſe will all be ſuperſeded and ſilenced, their own conſciences will condemn them, their mouths will be ſtopped, and they'll have nothing to ſay in vindication of themſelves; their righteouſneſs won't anſwer for them in a time to come. The *Jews* have a tradition[1], that "*Eſau* the wicked, will veil himſelf with his "garment, and ſit among the righteous in paradiſe, "in the world to come; and the holy bleſſed God "will draw him, and bring him out from thence, "which is the ſenſe of thoſe words, *Obad.* v. 4. "*Though thou exalt thyſelf as the eagle, and though* "*thou ſet thy neſt among the ſtars, thence will I bring* "*thee down, ſaith the Lord.*"

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[1] T. Hieroſ. Nedarim, fol. 38. 1.

Ver. 13. *Then ſaid the king to his ſervants*, &c.] By whom are meant, either the miniſters of the Goſpel, and paſtors of churches, who by the order of Chriſt, and in the name of the churches, caſt out all ſuch, as appear by their bad principles and evil practices, to be without the grace of God, and righteouſneſs of Chriſt; or rather, the angels, who will bind up the tares in bundles, and burn them, and gather out of Chriſt's kingdom, all that offend and do iniquity; and ſever the wicked from the juſt, and uſe them in the manner here directed to: *bind him hand and foot*; as malefactors uſed to be, to denote the greatneſs of his crime, his unparalleled inſolence, and the unavoidableneſs of his puniſhment; ſuch methods being taken, that there could be no eſcaping it: *and take him away*; from hence, to priſon; a dreadful thing, to go out of a church of Chriſt to hell. This clauſe is not in the *Vulgate Latin*, nor in the *Syriac* and *Arabic* verſions, nor in *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel, but is in all the ancient *Greek* copies: *and caſt him into utter darkneſs, there ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of teeth*; ſee the note on *Matt.* viii. 12.

Ver. 14. *For many are called, but few choſen.*] See the note on *Matt.* xx. 16.

Ver. 15. *Then went the Phariſees*, &c.] After they had heard the parables of the two ſons being bid to go into the vineyard, of the vineyard let out to huſbandmen, and of the marriage-feaſt; for it is clear from hence, that theſe ſtaid and heard the laſt of theſe parables, in all which they ſaw themſelves deſigned; and though they were irritated and provoked to the laſt degree, they were obliged to hide their reſentments, nor durſt they uſe any violence for fear of the people; wherefore they retired to ſome convenient place, to the council-chamber, or to the palace of the high prieſt, or where the chief prieſts were gone, who ſeem to have departed ſome time before them: *and took counſel*; among themſelves, and of others, their ſuperiors; not how they ſhould behave more agreeably for the future, and eſcape due puniſhment and wrath to the uttermoſt, which the king of kings would juſtly inflict on them, very plainly ſignified in the above parables; but *how they might intangle him in* his talk, or *take hold of his words*, as in *Luke*; or *catch him in his words*, as in *Mark*: they conſulted to draw him into a converſation, on a dangerous and inſnaring ſubject; when they hoped a word might drop unwarily from him, which they might catch at, lay hold on, and improve to his diſadvantage; either with the common people, or the government, and eſpecially the latter; as is to be learned from *Luke*, who expreſsly ſays their end was, *that ſo they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor*; the *Roman* governor, *Pontius Pilate*, ſhould he ſay any thing againſt *Cæſar*, which they endeavoured to inſnare him into; by which means, they doubted not of ſetting the populace againſt him, and of ſcreening themſelves from their reſentments; and of gaining their main point, the delivery of him up into the hands of the civil government, who for treaſon and ſedition, would put him to death.

Ver. 16. *And they ſent out unto him their diſciples*, &c.] Who were trained up in the ſame way of thinking with themſelves, had imbibed the ſame tenets, and were ſtrenuous defenders of them; and no doubt they ſelected the moſt crafty and artful among them, and who were the beſt verſed in their principles and ſophiſtic method of arguing: theſe they the rather ſent, imagining they would not be known, as they themſelves were; and from their age and air of ſimplicity, might be taken for innocent perſons, who in great ſincerity, came to be inſtructed by him, *with the Herodians*: learned men are very much divided in their ſentiments, about theſe men; ſome think they were *Gentiles* under the government of *Herod*; but it is not likely, that the *Phariſees* would join themſelves with ſuch, whoſe company they carefully ſhunned; others, that they were *Gentile* proſelytes, as *Herod* was; but that on either of theſe accounts, they ſhould be called by his name, there ſeems to be no reaſon: others ſay, they were *Greeks*, whom *Herod* brought out of a deſert into his own country, and formed a ſect, which from him were called *Herodians*: this way went *Druſius*, in which he was followed by ſeveral learned men, until the miſtake was detected; who took it from a paſſage in the *Hebrew Lexicon*, called *Baal Aruch*, miſtaking the word, יונים, for *Greeks*, which ſignifies *doves*; the *Jewiſh* writer referring to a paſſage in the *Miſna* [m], which ſpeaks of, יוני הרדסיאות, *Herodian doves*; that is, tame ones, ſuch as were brought up in houſes: for that theſe are meant, is clear from the *Miſnic* and *Talmudic* writers, and their commentators [n]; and were ſo called, becauſe that *Herod* was the firſt that tamed wild doves, and brought up tame ones, in his own palace; and ſo *Joſephus* [o] ſays, that he had many towers ſtored with tame doves, which was a new thing in *Judæa*. Others, that they were *Sadducees*, which carries ſome appearance of truth in it; ſince what is ſtiled the leaven of the *Sadducees*, in *Matt.* xvi. 6. is called the leaven of *Herod*, in *Mark* viii. 15. And very probable it is, that *Herod* was a *Sadducee*, and that his courtiers, at leaſt many of them, were of the ſame ſect; but yet it is certain, that the *Sadducees* are ſpoken of, as diſtinct from theſe *Herodians*, in ver. 23. of this chapter. Others, that they were a ſett of men, that formed a new ſcheme of religion, conſiſting partly of *Judaiſm*, and partly of *Gentiliſm*, approved and eſpouſed by *Herod*, and therefore called by his name; and others, that they were ſuch as held, that *Herod* was the Meſſiah; but it is certain, that *Herod* did not think ſo himſelf, nor the people of the *Jews* in common; and whatever flatterers he might have in his life-time, it can hardly be thought, that this notion ſhould ſurvive his death, who was ſo odious to the *Jewiſh* nation: others think, that they were ſuch, who were not for paying tribute to *Cæſar*, but to *Herod*, and were encouraged and defended by him and his courtiers, as much as they could; ſince he and his family looked upon themſelves to be injured by the *Romans*, and ſecretly grudged that tribute ſhould be paid unto them: others, on the contrary, ſay, that theſe were ſuch, who pleaded that tribute ought to be paid to *Cæſar*, by whoſe means *Herod* enjoyed his government, and was ſupported in it; and were juſt the reverſe of the *Phariſees*, with whom they are here joined, in their attempts on Chriſt. The *Syriac* verſion renders the word by, דבית הרודס, *thoſe of the houſe*, or *family of Herod*, his courtiers and domeſticks: in *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel, they are called, עבדי הורודוס, *the ſervants of Herod*; and certain it is, that *Herod* was at *Jeruſalem* at this time, *Luke* xxiii. 7. We read [p] of *Menahem*, who was one while an aſſociate of *Hillell*, who with eighty more clad in gold, went

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[m] Cholin, c. 12. §. 1.

[n] T. Bab. Cholin, fol. 139. 2. & Betza, fol. 24. 1. & 25. 1. Miſn. Sabbat. c. 24. 3. & Cholin, c. 12. § 1. & Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

[o] De Bello Jud. l. 6. c. 13.

[p] Juchaſin, fol. 19. 1.

לעבודת המלך, *into the ſervice of the king*, that is, *Herod*, and hence might be called *Herodians.* Wherefore theſe ſeem rather to be the perſons deſigned, whom the *Phariſees* choſe to ſend with their diſciples, though they were of *Herod*'s party, and were on the other ſide of the queſtion from them; being for giving tribute to *Cæſar*, by whom their maſter held his government; that ſhould Chriſt be enſnared by them, as they hoped he would, into any ſeditious or treaſonable expreſſions againſt *Cæſar*, theſe might either accuſe him to *Herod*, or immediately ſeize him, and have him before the *Roman* governor. *Luke* obſerves, that theſe men, the diſciples of the *Phariſees* and the *Herodians*, were ſent forth as *ſpies, which ſhould feign themſelves juſt men*; men of religion and holineſs, and who were upright and ſincere in their queſtion, and who had ſtrong inclinations to become his diſciples: the *Jews* themſelves own, that they ſent ſuch perſons to *Jeſus*, whom they mention by name, in ſuch a diſguiſed manner to deceive him: their words are theſe[q]; “ They “ (the *Sanhedrim*) ſent unto him *Ananiah* and *Abaziah*, honourable men of the leſſer *Sanhedrim*, “ and when they came before him, they bowed “ down to him——and he thought that they be- “ lieved in him, and he received them very courte- “ ouſly.” *Saying, maſter*; as if they were his diſciples, or at leaſt were very willing to be ſo: however, they allow him to be a doctor or teacher, and a very conſiderable one: *we know that thou art true*; a true and faithful miniſter, that teacheſt truth, and ſpeakeſt uprightly; one of great integrity, and to be depended upon: *and teacheſt the way of God in truth*; rightly opens the word of God, gives the true and genuine ſenſe of the law of God, faithfully inſtructs men in the worſhip of God; and with great ſincerity, directs men to the way of coming to God, and enjoying eternal happineſs with him; having no ſiniſter ends, or worldly intereſt in view: *neither careſt thou for any man*; be he ever ſo great and honourable, in ever ſo high a ſtation, be he *Cæſar* himſelf; ſignifying, that he was a man of ſuch openneſs and integrity, that he always freely ſpoke the real ſentiments of his mind, whether men were pleaſed or diſpleaſed; being in no fear of man, nor in the leaſt to be intimidated by frowns and menaces, or any danger from men: *for thou regardeſt not the perſon of men*; as he had not the perſons of the high prieſts and elders, the grand *Sanhedrim* of the nation, who had lately been examining him in the temple: and ſeeing therefore he made no difference among men, whether learned or unlearned, rich or poor, high or low; whether they were in exalted ſtations and high offices, or not; he feared no man's face, and accepted no man's perſon, but gave his ſenſe of things, without fear or flattery; they hoped he would give a direct anſwer to the following queſtion, though *Cæſar* himſelf was concerned in it.

Ver. 17. *Tell us therefore, what thinkeſt thou*, &c.] Since, as they ſuggeſted, he was a perſon of great underſtanding and ſincerity, they earneſtly deſire that he would be pleaſed, according to his uſual frankneſs and openneſs, to give them his opinion; in which they intimate, they ſhould ſit down ſatisfied and contented: whether *is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæſar, or not?* Meaning, according to the law of God: this was a queſtion among the *Jews*; the *Herodians* were for it, the *Phariſees* were againſt it, at leaſt ſecretly; and, indeed, this latter was the general ſenſe of the nation, who looked upon themſelves to be, or however ought to be, a free people, being the children of God, and the ſeed of *Abraham*; and who urged, that according to their law, none but one of their own brethren, who was of their own nation and religion, was to be ſet as king over them; whereas *Cæſar*, the *Roman* emperor, was a ſtranger, one of another nation, and an idolater; and ſome openly refuſed it, and made mutinies and inſurrections on account of it, as *Theudas*, and *Judas* of *Galilee:* now by putting this queſtion to Chriſt, in the preſence of different parties, they hoped to get an advantage of him either way; for had he been ſilent, they would have reproached him, as not being the honeſt, faithful, frank, and open man, they pretended to take him to be; and if he had anſwered either in the affirmative or negative, they were prepared to make uſe of it to his injury; had he ſaid that it was lawful to give tribute to *Cæſar*, this being contrary to the general notions of the people, they would have improved it to draw them from him, and to ſet them againſt him; and had he affirmed it was not lawful to do it, they would then have accuſed him to the *Roman* governor, and delivered him up into his hands, to judge and condemn him, according to the *Roman* laws; which latter was what they were wiſhing for.

Ver. 18. *But Jeſus perceived their wickedneſs*, &c.] *Luke* ſays, *their craftineſs*; and *Mark* ſays, *knowing their hypocriſy*; for there was a mixture of malice, hypocriſy, and artfulneſs, in the ſcheme they had formed; but Chriſt being the omniſcient God, ſaw the wickedneſs of their hearts, knew their hypocritical deſigns, and was well acquainted with all their artifice; he judged not according to the outward appearance of their affection for him, and opinion of him, of religion, righteouſneſs, and holineſs in themſelves, and of a ſincere deſire to have their conſcience ſatisfied about this matter; the ſnare they laid was viſible to him, the maſk they put on could not ſcreen them from him, nor impoſe upon him: *and ſaid, why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?* as he might well call them, who feigned themſelves juſt perſons, pretended a great deal of reſpect for him, call him maſter, compliment him with the characters of a faithful, ſincere, and diſintereſted preacher; yet by putting the above queſtion, deſigned no other than to enſnare him, and bring him into diſgrace or trouble.

Ver. 19. *Shew me the tribute money*, &c.] Not any money, or any ſort of coin that was current among them; but that in which the tribute was uſually paid, which was *Roman* money: *and they brought unto him a penny*; not as being what was the uſual ſum that was paid for tribute at one time, but as a ſample of what ſort of money it was paid in, in *Roman* pence; one of which, was ſeven pence halfpenny of our money.

Ver. 20. *And he ſaith unto them*, &c.] Having the penny in one hand, and pointing to it with the other, *whoſe is this image and ſuperſcription?* or *inſcription?* for the penny that was brought him had an image upon it, the form of a man's head ſtruck on it, and round about it an inſcription, or writing, ſhewing who it was the image of, and whoſe money it was, and when it was coined: this is enough to ſhow, that this penny was not a *Jewiſh*, but a *Roman* one; for the *Jews*, though they put inſcriptions, yet no images on their coin; and much leſs would they put *Cæſar*'s thereon, as was on this: it is aſked[r], “ What is the coin of *Jeruſalem?* “ The anſwer is, *David* and *Solomon* on one ſide, “ and *Jeruſalem* the holy city on the other ſide, *i. e.*

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[q] Toldos Jeſu, p. 8.

[r] T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 97. 2. Vid. Bereſhit Rabba, §. 39. fol. 34. 4. & Midraſh Kohelet, fol. 95. 4.

"as the *Gloſs* obſerves, *David* and *Solomon* were "*written* on one ſide, and on the other ſide were "written *Jeruſalem* the holy city." It follows, "and what was the coin of *Abraham* our father? "an old man and an old woman, (*Abraham* and "*Sarah*) on one ſide, and a young man and a "young woman (*Iſaac* and *Rebekah*) on the other "ſide." The *Gloſs* on it is, "not that there was "on it the form of an old man, and an old wo-"man on one ſide, and of a young man and a "young woman on the other, for it is forbidden "to make the form of a man; but ſo it was writ-"ten on one ſide, an old man and an old woman, "and on the other ſide, a young man and a young "woman."

Ver. 21. *They ſay unto him, Cæſar's,* &c.] Either *Auguſtus Cæſar*'s; for there was a coin of that *Emperor's*, as Dr. *Hammond* reports, from *Occo*, which had his image or picture on it, and in it theſe words written, *Auguſtus Cæſar*, ſuch a year, *after the taking of Judæa*; which if this was the coin, was a ſtanding teſtimony of the ſubjection of the *Jews* to the *Romans*; and this being current with them, was an acknowledgment of it by them, and carried in it an argument of their obligation to pay tribute to them; or it might be *Tiberius Cæſar*'s, the then reigning *Emperor*, in the nineteenth year of whoſe reign, Chriſt was crucified; and ſeeing he had reigned ſo long, it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe, his money was very common, and moſt in uſe: we read in the *Talmud* [s], of דינרא קיסראנה, *a Cæſarean penny*, or *Cæſar*'s *penny*, the ſame ſort with this: now this penny having *Cæſar*'s image and inſcription on it, our Lord tacitly ſuggeſts, that they ought to pay tribute to him; ſince his money was allowed of as current among them, which was in effect owning him to be their king; and which perfectly agrees with a rule of their own, which runs thus [t]: "A king whoſe *coin* is *current* in "any country, the inhabitants of that country "agree about him, and it is their joint opinion, "שהוא אדוניהם והם לו עבדים, *that he is their* "*Lord, and they are his ſervants.*" This being the caſe now with the *Jews*, Chriſt's advice is, *render therefore unto Cæſar the things which are Cæſar's, and unto God the things that are God's*: give *Cæſar* the tribute and cuſtom, and fear, and honour, and obedience, which are due to him; which may be done without interfering with the honour of God, and prejudicing his intereſt and glory, when care is taken, that all the worſhip and obedience due to God are given to him: ſubjection to civil magiſtrates is not inconſiſtent with the reverence and fear of God; all are to have their dues rendered unto them, without intrenching upon one another. And the *Jews* themſelves allow, that a king ought to have his dues, whether he be a king of *Iſrael*, or of the *Gentiles*: "A publican, or tax-gatherer, "they ſay [u], that is appointed by the king, whe-"ther a king of *Iſrael*, or of the *Gentiles*, and "takes what is fixed by the order of the govern-"ment; 'tis forbidden to refuſe payment of the "tax to him, for דינא דמלכות דינא, *the right of* "*a king is right.*" Juſt and equitable, and he ought to have his right.

Ver. 22. *When they had heard theſe words*, &c.] This anſwer returned unto them, this advice which was given them, which they could not gainſay or deny to be good, *they marvelled*; were amazed and aſtoniſhed, at his prudence and wiſdom, in anſwering them, in ſuch an unexpected and cautious manner: *they left him*; being ſilenced, confounded, and diſappointed: *and went their way*; not being able to get any advantage againſt him, neither to bring him into contempt with the people, and alienate their affections from him; nor to charge him with ſedition or treaſon to the *Roman* governor; and ſo had but a very indifferent account of their ſucceſs, to report to them that ſent them.

Ver. 23. *The ſame day came to him the Sadducees*, &c.] Quickly after the *Phariſees* and *Herodians* had left him; and which ſhews, that the *Herodians* and *Sadducees* were not the ſame; but that the *Sadducees* were a diſtinct ſect, both from the *Phariſees* and the *Herodians*. Theſe underſtanding that the former had not ſucceeded, came with a knotty queſtion, with which they had often puzzled the *Phariſees*, and hoped they ſhould nonpluſs Chriſt with it, ſhewing the abſurdity of the doctrine of the reſurrection, an article which they denied; as it follows, *which ſay, that there is no reſurrection of the dead*: they denied that there were angels and ſpirits, and the immortality of the ſoul; they affirmed, that the ſoul died with the body, and that there was no future ſtate: the riſe of this ſect, and of theſe notions of theirs, was this, as the *Jews* relate [w]. "*Antigonus* a man of *Socho*, uſed to ſay, "be not as ſervants, that ſerve their maſter on ac-"count of receiving a reward, but be as ſervants "that ſerve their maſter, not on account of receiv-"ing a reward; and let the fear of heaven (God) be "upon you, ſo that your reward may be double in "the world to come: this man had two diſciples, "who altered his words, and taught the diſciples, "and the diſciples their diſciples, and they ſtood and "narrowly examined them, and ſaid, what did our "fathers ſee, to ſay this thing? Is it poſſible, that "a labourer ſhould work all day, and not take his "reward at evening? But if our fathers had known "that there is another world, and that there is, "תחיית המתים, *a reſurrection of the dead*, they "would not have ſaid thus: they ſtood and ſepa-"rated from the law, and of them there were two "parties, the *Sadducees* and *Baithuſites*; the *Sadducees* on account of *Sadoc*, and the *Baithuſites* on "account of *Baithus*." The *Syriac* verſion reads, *and they ſaid*, and the *Ethiopic* verſion alſo, *ſaying, there is no reſurrection of the dead*; taking the ſenſe to be, that they at this time declared their ſenſe of this doctrine, and according to a ſettled notion of theirs, affirmed before Chriſt, that there was no ſuch thing; that never any was raiſed from the dead, nor never will; and they were deſirous of entering into a controverſy with him about it: *and aſked him*; put the following queſtion to him, in order to expoſe the weakneſs and abſurdity of ſuch a doctrine.

Ver. 24. *Saying, maſter*, &c.] *Rabbi*, or doctor, as he was uſually called; *Moſes ſaid*, in *Deut.* xxv. 5. *if a man die having no children, his brother ſhall marry his wife, and raiſe up ſeed unto his brother*; which, though not expreſſed in the ſelf-ſame words, yet is the ſenſe of the paſſage referred to, and was a practice in uſe before the times of *Moſes*, as appears from the caſe of *Er* and *Onan*; the deſign of which was, to preſerve families, and keep their inheritances diſtinct and entire. This law only took place, when a man died without children; for if he left any children, there was no need for his brother to marry his wife; yea, as a *Jewiſh* writer obſerves [x], ſhe was forbidden, it was not lawful for him to marry her, and was the caſe if he had children of either ſex, or even grand-children: for as another of their commentators notes[y], his having no child, regards a ſon or a daughter, or a ſon's ſon, or a daughter's ſon, or a daughter's daughter; and it was the eldeſt of the brethren, or he that was next in years to the deceaſed, that was obliged by this law[z], though not if he had a wife of his own; and accordingly in the following caſe propoſed, each of the brethren married the eldeſt brother's wife in their turn, according to the courſe of ſeniority; and by this law, the firſt child that was born after ſuch marriage, was reckoned the ſeed of the deceaſed, and was heir to his inheritance. The *Jews* in their *Miſna*, or oral law, have a whole tract on this ſubject, called *Yebamot*, which contains various rules and directions, for the right obſervance of this law.

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[s] T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 6. 2.

[t] Maimon. Hilch. Gezala, c. 5. §. 18.

[u] Maimon. & Bartenora in Miſn. Nedarim, c. 3. §. 4. & Maimon. Hilch. Gezala, c. 5. §. 11.

[w] Abot R. Nathan, c. 5. fol. 3. 1.

[x] Aben Ezra, in Deut. xv. 5.

Ver. 25. *Now there were with us ſeven brethren*, &c.] That is, there was in the city, town or neighbourhood, where theſe *Sadducees* dwelt, probably at *Jeruſalem*, a family, in which were ſeven ſons, all brethren by the father's ſide; for brethren by the mother's ſide, were not counted brethren, nor obliged by this law[a]; whether this was a feigned caſe which is here and in the following verſes put, or whether it was real fact, which is poſſible, it matters not: *and the firſt, when he had married a wife, deceaſed, and having no iſſue, left his wife unto his brother:* the eldeſt of theſe ſeven brethren married a wife, and after ſome time died, having no children, ſon or daughter, by his wife; and therefore, according to the above law, leaves her to his next brother to marry her, and raiſe up ſeed unto him; which according to the *Jewiſh* canons[b], could not be done before ninety days, or three months after the deceaſe of his brother; for ſo long they were to wait and ſee, whether ſhe was with child by his brother or no; for if ſhe was, it was not neceſſary, yea, it was unlawful for him to marry her.

Ver. 26. *Likewiſe the ſecond alſo*, &c.] The eldeſt of the ſurviving brethren, having married his brother's wife, after ſome time died alſo without children, and left her to his next brother to marry her; and *the third* brother accordingly did marry her, and in proceſs of time died likewiſe, leaving no iſſue behind him; and thus they went on in courſe, *unto the ſeventh*; the fourth, fifth, and ſixth, married her in turn, and ſo did the ſeventh; and all died in the ſame circumſtances, having no children by her.

Ver. 27. *And laſt of all the woman died alſo.*] A widow and childleſs, having never married another perſon but theſe ſeven brethren; and the caſe with them being alike, no one having any child by her, upon which any peculiar claim to her could be formed, the following queſtion is put.

Ver. 28. *Therefore in the reſurrection*, &c.] As aſſerted by the *Phariſees* and by Chriſt, ſuppoſing that there will be ſuch a thing, though not granting it; for theſe men denied it, wherefore the *Ethiopic* verſion reads it hypothetically, *if therefore the dead will be raiſed*; upon ſuch a ſuppoſition, *whoſe wife ſhall ſhe be of the ſeven? for they all had her*, or were married to her. By putting this queſtion, they thought to have got ſome advantage againſt Chriſt, and in favour of their notion; they hoped, either that he would give into their way of thinking, and relinquiſh the doctrine of the reſurrection upon this, and join with them againſt the *Phariſees*, and ſo there would be no need of an anſwer to the queſtion; or they judged, that if he returned an anſwer, it would be either that he did not know whoſe wife ſhe ſhould be, and then they would traduce him among the common people, as weak and ignorant; or ſhould he ſay, that ſhe would be the wife of one of them only, naming which of them, or of them all, or of none of them, they fancied that ſuch abſurd conſequences would follow on each of theſe, as would expoſe the doctrine of the reſurrection to ridicule and contempt; but they miſſed their aim, and were ſadly diſappointed by Chriſt's anſwer and reaſonings which follow.

Ver. 29. *Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto them*, &c.] The *Sadducees:* as idle and impertinent as the caſe they put may ſeem to be and really was, our Lord thought fit to return an anſwer to them, thereby to expoſe their ignorance, and put them to ſilence and confuſion: *ye do err*; not only in that they denied the immortality of the ſoul and the reſurrection, but that ſuppoſing that there would be a reſurrection, things in that ſtate would be juſt they were in this; as particularly for inſtance, that there would be the ſame natural relation of huſband and wife, which their queſtion ſuppoſes. *Mark* reads theſe words by way of interrogation, *do ye not therefore err, becauſe?* &c. And by *Luke* they are wholly omitted, as alſo what follows, *not knowing the ſcriptures, nor the power of God.* Theſe two things were the ſpring and ſource of their errors: they had not a true knowledge, and right underſtanding of the ſcriptures; which if they had had, it muſt have appeared to them from many places in the Old Teſtament; that the ſoul remains after death, and that the body will be raiſed from the dead: they owned the authority of the ſcriptures, and allowed of all the writings of the Old Teſtament; for it ſeems to be a miſtake of ſome learned men, who think that they only received the five books of *Moſes*, and that therefore Chriſt takes his proof of his doctrine from thence; but though they had the greater eſteem for the law, and would admit of nothing that was not clearly proved from that; yet they did not reject the other writings, as what might ſerve to confirm and illuſtrate what was taught in the law; but then, though they approved of the ſcriptures, and read them, yet they did not underſtand them, and ſo fell into thoſe groſs errors and ſad miſtakes; nor did they attend to the power of God, which, as it was able to make men out of the duſt of the earth, was able to raiſe them again, when crumbled into duſt; but this was looked upon by them, as a thing impoſſible, and ſo incredible; ſee *Acts* xxvi. 8.

Ver. 30. *For in the reſurrection*, &c.] At the time of the reſurrection, and in that ſtate, when the bodies and ſouls of men ſhall be re-united, *they neither marry, nor are given in marriage*; neither the men marry wives, nor are the women given in marriage to men, which is done by their parents here, generally ſpeaking, they having the right of diſpoſing of children in marriage: *but*, as *Luke* ſays, *they which ſhall be accounted worthy*; not through their own works of righteouſneſs, but through the grace of God and righteouſneſs of Chriſt, *to obtain the world*, the world to come, a future ſtate of happineſs, *and the reſurrection of the dead*, that which will be unto everlaſting life and glory, *neither marry nor are given in marriage*; ſhall not enter into any ſuch natural and carnal relation; and this agrees with the notion of the other *Jews*, who ſay[c]; that "In *the world to come*, there is neither eating nor "drinking, ולא פריה ורביה, *nor fructification, nor "increaſe* (of children,) no receiving and giving, "(no commerce) nor envy, nor hatred, nor contention."

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[y] Jarchi in ib. Vid. Maimon. Hilch. Yebum, c. 1. §. 3.

[z] Jarchi in Deut. xxv. 5. Miſn. Yebamot, c. 2. §. 8. & 4, 5. Maimon. Hilch. Yebum, c. 2. §. 6.

[a] Maimon. ib. c. 1. §. 7.

[b] T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 47. 1. Maimon. ib. c. 1. §. 19.

[c] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 17. 1.

“tention.” *But are as the angels of God in heaven*; or, as in *Luke*, *are equal unto the angels*; and which he explains of their immortality: *neither can they die any more*; no more than the angels can: for this muſt not be extended to every thing; not in every thing will the ſaints be like, or equal to the angels; they will not be incorporeal, as the angels are, but then, even their bodies will be ſpiritual, and in ſome reſpects like ſpirits; they will not ſtand in any need of ſuſtenance, by eating and drinking, any more than the angels; nor will there be any ſuch things as marriage, and procreation of children among them, any more than among angels; for they *are the children of God, being the children of the reſurrection*: they will then appear to be the children of God by adopting grace, through their enjoying the adoption, even the redemption of their bodies; and poſſeſſing in ſoul and body, the heavenly inheritance they are heirs of: indeed, the ſouls of the ſaints before the reſurrection, during their ſeparate ſtate, are in ſome ſenſe like the angels, to which may be applied thoſe words of *Maimonides*[d]. “In the world to come, there is no body, but the ſouls of the righteous only, without a body, כמלאכי השרת, *as the miniſtring angels*; and ſeeing there is no body, there's no eating nor drinking in it, nor any of all the things which the bodies of the children of men ſtand in need of in this world; nor does any thing befal which happens to bodies in this world, as ſitting or ſtanding, or ſleep or *death*, or grief, or laughter, or the like.” And according to the ſenſe of the *Jews*, they will be like to the angels after the reſurrection: ſo God is by them introduced ſpeaking[e]; “At the appointed time known by me, to quicken the dead, I will return to thee that body which is holy and renewed, as at the firſt, to be כמלאכים קדושים, *as the holy angels*.” This was an uſual way of ſpeaking with them, to compare ſaints in a ſtate of immortality, to angels[f]. Chriſt, by making mention of angels, ſtrikes at another notion of the *Sadducees*, that there were no angels, *Acts* xxiii. 8.

Ver. 31. *But as touching the reſurrection of the dead*, &c.] In proof of that doctrine, and which will greatly ſerve to confirm and eſtabliſh it, and that it may appear that the dead are, or will be raiſed, and to put it out of all doubt, *have ye not read that which was ſpoken unto you by God*, as *Mark* adds, *in the book of Moſes*; which was written by him, the book of *Exodus*, ch. iii. 6. and though the words were ſpoke to *Moſes*, yet were deſigned for the uſe, inſtruction, and comfort of the *Iſraelites*; not only at that time, but in ſucceeding ages, they being the poſterity of *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*; whoſe God the Lord, there declares himſelf to be. Moreover, whereas theſe words were ſpoken by God to *Moſes*, there is ſome little difficulty occaſioned, by *Luke*'s repreſenting them to be the words of *Moſes*; for he ſays, *Moſes ſhewed at the buſh, when he calleth the Lord, the God of Abraham*, &c. which may be removed by obſerving, that the ſenſe is, that when *Moſes* ſhewed to the children of *Iſrael*, what he heard and ſaw at the buſh on mount *Sinai*, he called the Lord by theſe names, in which he ſpoke of himſelf to him; he recited to them what the Lord ſaid to him; and indeed he was bid to ſay to them theſe words; ſee *Exod.* iii. 14, 15, 16. *ſaying*, as follows,

Ver. 32. *I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Iſaac, and the God of Jacob*, &c.] The *Sadducees* expreſsly denied, that the reſurrection could be proved out of the law. “Says *R. Eliezer*, with *R. Joſe*[g], I have found the books of the *Sadducees* to be corrupt; for they ſay that the reſurrection of the dead is not to be proved out of the law: I ſaid unto them, you have corrupted your law, and ye have not cauſed any thing to come up into your hands, for ye ſay the reſurrection of the dead is not to be proved out of the law; lo! he ſaith, *Numb.* xv. 33. *That ſoul ſhall be utterly cut off, his iniquity ſhall be upon him*; he *ſhall be utterly cut off* in this world; *his iniquity ſhall be upon him*, is not this ſaid with reſpect to the world to come?” Hence, in oppoſition to this notion of the *Sadducees*, the other *Jews* ſay[h], that “Though a man confeſſes and believes that the dead will be raiſed, yet that it is not intimated in the law, he is an heretick; ſince it is a fundamental point, that the reſurrection of the dead is of the law.” Hence they ſet themſelves, with all their might and main, to prove this doctrine from thence, of which take the following inſtances[i]. “Says *R. Simai*, from whence is the reſurrection of the dead to be proved out of the law? From *Exod.* vi. 4. as it is ſaid, *I have alſo eſtabliſhed my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan: to you* it is not ſaid, but *to them*; from hence then, the reſurrection of the dead may be proved out of the law.” The *Gloſs* upon it is, “the ſenſe is, that the holy bleſſed God, promiſed to our fathers *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, that he would give to them the land of *Iſrael*; and becauſe he gave it to them, has he not given it to their children? But we learn from hence, that they ſhall be raiſed, and that God will hereafter give them the land of *Iſrael*.” And which, the learned Mr. *Mede* takes to be the ſenſe of the words of this text, cited by our Lord; and this the force of his reaſoning, by which he proves the reſurrection of the dead. Again, “the *Sadducees* aſked *Rabban Gamaliel*, from whence does it appear that the holy bleſſed God will quicken the dead? He ſaid unto them, out of the law, and out of the prophets, and out of the *Hagiographa*; but they did not receive him (or regard him:) out of the law, as it is written, *Thou ſhalt ſleep with thy fathers, and riſe up*, *Deut.* xxxi. 16.——And there are that ſay from this ſcripture, *Deut.* iv. 4. *But ye that did cleave unto the Lord your God, are alive every one of you this day*: as this day all of you ſtand, ſo in the world to come, all of you ſhall ſtand.” Thus our Lord having to do with the ſame ſort of perſons, fetches his proof of the doctrine of the reſurrection out of the law, and from a paſſage which reſpects the covenant relation God ſtands into his people, particularly *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*; and which reſpects not their ſouls only, but their bodies alſo, even their whole perſons, body and ſoul; for God is the God of the whole: and therefore as their ſouls now live with God, their bodies alſo will be raiſed from the dead, that they, with their ſouls, may enjoy everlaſting glory and happineſs; which is the grand promiſe, and great bleſſing of the covenant of grace. *God is not the God of the dead, but of the living*; as all the ſaints are; for though their bodies are dead, their ſouls are alive, and their bodies will be raiſed in conſequence of their covenant-intereſt in God, to enjoy an immortal life with him: ſo the *Jews* are wont to ſay, that the righteous, even in their death, are called living[k]: "from whence is it proved, ſay "they, that the righteous, even in their death, "קרויין חיים, *are called living?*" from *Deut*. xxxiv. 4. as it is written, *and he ſaid unto him, this is the land which I have ſworn to Abraham, to Iſaac, and to Jacob, ſaying*. *Menaſſeh ben Iſrael*, a learned *Jew*, of the laſt century, has produced[l] this ſame paſſage of ſcripture, Chriſt here does in proof of the immortality of the ſoul, and argues from it in much the ſame manner; having mentioned the words, he adds, "for "God is not the God of the dead, for the dead are not, "but of the living, for the living exiſt; therefore "alſo the patriarchs, in reſpect of the ſoul, may "rightly be inferr'd from hence to live."

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[d] Hilch. Teſhuba, c. 8. §. 2.

[e] Midraſh Hanneelam in Zohar in Gen. fol. 66. 4.

[f] Vid. Abot. R. Nathan, c. 1. fol. 1. 3. Caphtor, fol. 18. 2. Philo de Sacrific. Abel & Cain, p. 131.

[g] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 90. 2.

[h] Gloſſ. in ib. col. 1.

[i] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 90. 2.

Ver. 33. *And when the multitude heard this*, &c.] This wiſe and full anſwer of Chriſt to the poſing queſtion of the *Sadducees*, with which perhaps they had puzzled many, and never had met with their match before: *they were aſtoniſhed at his doctrine*; concerning the pure, perfect, and angelic ſtate of the righteous in the world to come; and how ſtrongly and nervouſly he proved the immortality of the ſoul, and the reſurrection of the dead, which were both denied by the *Sadducees*; and who were ſo confounded with his anſwer, proof, and reaſonings, that *Luke* ſays, *after that they durſt not aſk him any queſtion at all*: and the *Scribes* were ſo pleaſed therewith, that certain of them applauded him, ſaying, *maſter, thou haſt well ſaid*.

Ver. 34. *But when the Phariſees had heard*, &c.] Either with their own ears, they being ſome of them preſent; or rather from the relation of others, from the *Scribes*, who expreſſed their approbation of Chriſt's anſwer to the *Sadducees*: for the *Phariſees*, with the *Herodians*, in a body, had left him, and were gone to their reſpective places of abode; or to them that ſent them, being baffled and confounded by him: but now hearing *that he had put the Sadducees to ſilence*, or ſtopped their mouths, having nothing to reply, which, itſelf, was not diſagreeable; for they were as oppoſite as could be to them in the doctrine of the reſurrection, and in other things, and were their ſworn and avowed enemies: and yet it ſadly gravelled them, that Chriſt ſhould be too hard for, and get the victory over all ſects among them. Wherefore, conſidering that ſhould he go on with ſucceſs in this manner, his credit with the people would increaſe yet more and more; and therefore, tho' they had been ſo ſhamefully defeated in two late attempts, yet *they were gathered together* in great hurry upon this occaſion. The *Ethiopic* verſion reads it, *they were gathered to him*, that is, to Chriſt; and ſo reads the copy that *Beza* gave to the univerſity of *Cambridge*: but the other reading, as it is general, ſo more ſuitable to the place: they gathered together at ſome certain houſe, where they conſulted what to do, what methods to take, to put a ſtop to his growing intereſt with the people, and how they might bring him into diſgrace with them; and they ſeemed to have fixed on this method, that one among them, who was the ableſt doctor, and beſt ſkilled in the law, ſhould put a queſtion to him relating to the law, which was then agitated among them, the ſolution of which was very difficult; and they the rather choſe to take this courſe by ſetting a ſingle perſon upon him, that ſhould he ſucceed, the victory would be the greater, and the whole ſect would ſhare in the honour of it; and ſhould he be ſilenced, the public diſgrace and confuſion would only fall on himſelf, and not the whole body, as in the former inſtances. This being agreed to, they went unto him.

Ver. 35. *Then one of them, which was a lawyer*, &c.] Or that was *learned*, or *ſkilful in the law*, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions, and *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel read. The *Ethiopic* verſion calls him, *a Scribe of the city*, of the city of *Jeruſalem*; but I do not meet with any ſuch particular officer, or any ſuch office peculiar to a ſingle man any where: mention is made of *the Scribes of the people* in *Matt*. ii. 4. and this man was one of them, one that interpreted the law to the people, either in the ſchools, or in the ſynagogues, or both; and *Mark* expreſly calls him a *Scribe*; and ſo the *Arabic* verſion renders the word here; and from hence it may be concluded that the lawyers and *Scribes* were the ſame ſort of perſons. This man was by ſect a *Phariſee*, and by his office a *Scribe*, or interpreter of the law, and ſuitable to his office and character, *aſked him a queſtion, tempting him, and ſaying*: he put a difficult and knotty queſtion to him, and thereby making a trial of his knowledge and underſtanding of the law; and laying a ſnare for him, to entrap him if he could, and expoſe him to the people, as a very ignorant man; and delivered it in the following form.

Ver. 36. *Maſter, which is the great commandment in the law?*] He calls him *maſter*, *rabbi*, or *doctor*, as the *Sadducees* had in ver. 24. either becauſe he was uſually ſo called by his diſciples, and by the generality of the people; or merely in complaiſance to engage his attention to him, and his queſtion; and might hereby ſuggeſt, that ſhould he return a proper and ſatisfactory anſwer to it he ſhould be his maſter. The queſtion is not which of the laws was the greateſt, the oral, or the written law: the *Jews* give the preference to the law delivered by word of mouth; they prefer the traditions of the elders before the written law of *Moſes*; ſee the note on ch. xv. 2. but the queſtion was about the written law of *Moſes*; and not merely about the decalogue, or whether the commands of the firſt table were greater than thoſe of the ſecond, as was generally thought; or whether the affirmative precepts were not more to be regarded than negative ones, which was their commonly received opinion; but about the whole body of the law, moral and ceremonial, delivered by *Moſes*: and not whether the ceremonial law was to be preferred to the moral, which they uſually did; but what particular command there was in the whole law, which was greater than the reſt: for as there were ſome commands that were light, and others that were weighty, a diſtinction often uſed by them[m], and to which Chriſt alludes in chap. xxiii. 23. It was moved that it might be ſaid which was the greateſt and weightieſt of them all. Some thought the commandment of the ſabbath was the greateſt: hence they ſay[n], that he that keeps the ſabbath is as if he kept the whole law; yea, they make the obſervance of the three meals, or feaſts, which, according to the traditions of the elders, they were obliged to eat on the ſabbath, to be at leaſt one of the greateſt of them. "Theſe "three meals, ſays one of their writers[o], are a great "matter, for it is one מהמצות הגדולות שבתורה, "*of the great commandments in the law.*" Which is the very phraſeology uſed in this queſtion. Others give the preference to circumciſion, on which they beſtow the greateſt encomiums; and, among the reſt [p], ſay, it drives away the ſabbath, or that is obliged to give place unto it. Others [q] ſay of the *phylacteries*, that the holineſs of them is the greateſt of all, and the command to be arrayed with them all the day, is more excellent than all others; and even of the fringe upon the borders of their garments, others obſerve [r], that a man that is guilty of that command, is guilty of all others, and that ſingle precept is equal to all the reſt. In this multiplicity of opinions, Chriſt's is deſired on this ſubject, tho' with no good intention.

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[k] T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 4. 4. Midraſh Kokelet, fol. 78. 2. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 158. 3.

[l] De reſurrect. mort. l. 1. c. 10. §. 6.

[m] Pirke Abot, c. 2. §. 1. & c. 4. §. 2.

[n] Zohar in Exod. fol. 37. 1.

[o] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 3. 3.

Ver. 37. *Jeſus ſaid unto him*, &c.] Directly, without taking time to think of it; and though he knew with what deſign it was put to him; yet, as an anſwer to it might be uſeful and inſtructive to the people, as well as ſilence and confound his adverſaries, he thought fit to give one; and is as follows, being what is expreſſed in *Deut.* vi. 5. *thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy ſoul, and with all thy mind*; that is, with all the powers and faculties of the ſoul, the will, the underſtanding, and the affections; in the moſt ſincere, upright, and perfect manner, without any diſſimulation and hypocriſy, and above all objects whatever, for this the law requires; and which man, in his ſtate of innocence, was capable of, tho' now fallen, he is utterly unable to perform; ſo far from it, that without the grace of God, he has no true love at all to God, in his heart, ſoul, and mind, but all the reverſe; his carnal mind is enmity againſt God, and every thing that is divine and good, or that belongs unto him: and though this is now the caſe of man, yet his obligation to love the Lord in this manner is ſtill the ſame; and when the Spirit of God does produce the grace and fruit of love in his ſoul, he does love the Lord ſincerely; becauſe of the perfections of his nature, and the works of his hands, and becauſe of the bleſſings of grace beſtowed, and eſpecially for Chriſt, the unſpeakable gift of his love; and moſt affectionately does he love him, when he is moſt ſenſible of his everlaſting and unchangeable love to him, and when that is ſhed abroad by the Spirit; for *we love him, becauſe he firſt loved us*, 1 *John* iv. 19. inſtead of, *with all thy mind*, as here, in *Deut.* vi. 5. 'tis read, *with all thy might*; and which clauſe is here added by the *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, as it is in *Mark* xii. 30. The *Hebrew* phraſe ſeems to denote the vehemency of affections, with which God is to be beloved. Tho' the *Jewiſh* writers [s] paraphraſe and interpret it, *with all thy ſubſtance*, or *money*; and in the *Miſna* [t], the following interpretation is given of the whole; " *with all thy heart*, " with thy imaginations, with the good imagination, and with the evil imagination; and *with* " *all thy ſoul*, even if he ſhould take away thy " ſoul; and *with all thy ſtrength*, with all thy *mammon*, or riches; or otherwiſe, *with all thy might*, " with every meaſure he meaſures unto thee, do " thou meaſure unto him;" that is, as one of the commentators ſays [u], whether it be good or evil; or, as another [w], in every caſe that happens give thanks to God, and praiſe him. And certain it is, that as God is to be loved in the ſtrongeſt manner we are capable of, and with all we have, and are; ſo always, at all times, under all diſpenſations of his providence, and upon all accounts, and for all he does towards, in, upon, and for us.

Ver. 38. *This is the firſt and great commandment.*] Whether the object of it is conſidered, who is the firſt and chief good; or the manner in which it is to be obſerved, which requires and engroſſes the whole heart, ſoul, and mind, and all the ſtrength and power of man; or its being the principle from whence all the duties, and actions of men ſhould flow, and the end to which all are to be referred; and is not only a compendium of the duties of the firſt table of the decalogue, but of all others that can be thought to, and do, belong to God. This is the firſt command in order of nature, time, dignity, and cauſality; God being the firſt cauſe of all things, infinitely above all creatures, and love to him, being the ſource, ſpring, and cauſe of love to the neighbour; and it is the greateſt in its object, nature, manner, and end. That this command, and theſe words our Lord cites, are ſo full and comprehenſive, the *Jews* themſelves cannot deny. A noted writer of theirs [x] ſays, " the root " of *all the commandments* is, when a man loves " God with all his ſoul, and cleaves unto him." And, ſays [y] another, " in this verſe only, *thou ſhalt* " *love the Lord thy God*, &c. כלולים י הדברות, " *the ten words*, or *decalogue*, *are comprehended*."

Ver. 39. *And the ſecond is like unto it*, &c.] For there is but a ſecond, not a third: this is ſuggeſted in oppoſition to the numerous commandments in the law, according to the opinion of the *Jews*, who reckon them in all to be *ſix hundred* and *thirteen*; of which there are *three hundred* and *ſixty-five* negative ones, according to the number of the days of the year; and *two hundred* and *forty-eight* affirmative ones, according to the members of a man's body [z]. Chriſt reduces all to two, love to God, and love to the neighbour; and the latter is the *ſecond* in order of nature, time, dignity, and cauſality; the object of it being a creature; and the act itſelf being the effect of the former, yet like unto it: for tho' the object is different, yet this commandment regards love as the former, and requires that it be as that, true, hearty, ſincere, and perfect; that it be with ſingleneſs of heart, always, and to all men; and that it ſpring from love to God, and be performed to his glory: and which is expreſſed in the words written in *Lev.* xix. 18. *thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thyſelf*; as heartily and ſincerely, and as a man would deſire to be loved by his neighbour; and do all the good offices to him he would chuſe to have done to himſelf by him. This law ſuppoſes, that men ſhould love themſelves, or otherwiſe they cannot love their neighbour; not in a ſinful way, by indulging themſelves in carnal luſts and pleaſures; ſome are lovers of pleaſures more than lovers of God; but in a natural way, ſo as to be careful of their bodies, families, and eſtates; and in a ſpiritual way, ſo as to be concerned for their ſouls, and the everlaſting happineſs of them: and in like manner, ſhould men love their neighbours, in things temporal do them all the good they can, and do no injury to their perſons or property; and in things ſpiritual pray for them, inſtruct them, and adviſe as they would their own ſouls, or their neareſt and deareſt relations. And this is to be extended to every man; though the *Jews* reſtrain it to their friend and companion, and one of their own religion. " *Thy neighbour*;

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[p] Miſn. Nedarim, c. 3. §. 11.

[q] Maimon. Hilch. Tephillin, c. 4. §. 25, 26.

[r] T. Bab. Menachot, fol 43. 2.

[s] Targum Onk. & Jarchi in Deut. vi. 5.

[t] Beracot, c. 9. §. 5. Vid. Targum Jon. in Deut. vi. 5.

[u] Bartenora in Miſn. ib.

[w] Maimon. in ib.

[x] Aben Ezra in Exod. xxxi. 18.

[y] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 138. 1.

[z] T. Bab. Maccot, fol. 23. 2.

“ that is, ſay they [a], thy friend in the law; and “ *this is the great comprehenſive rule in the law*, to “ ſhew that it is not fit there ſhould be any diviſion, or ſeparation, between a man and his companion, but one ſhould judge every man in the balance of equity: wherefore, near unto it is, *I am* “ *the Lord*; for as I the Lord am one, ſo it is fit “ for you that ye ſhould be one nation without diviſion; but a wicked man, and one that does “ not receive reproof, it is commanded to hate “ him; as it is ſaid, *do not I hate them that hate* “ *me?*” But our Lord intends by it to include, that love, benevolence, and good-will, which are due to every man; and ſuggeſts, that this comprehends not only all that is contained in the ſecond table of the decalogue, but all duties that are reducible thereunto, and are obligatory on men one towards another whatever; all which ſhould ſpring from love, and be done heartily and ſincerely, with a view to the neighbour's good, and God's glory: and with this *Maimonides* agrees, ſaying [b], that “ all “ the commands, or duties, reſpecting a man, and “ his neighbour, נכנסות בגמילות חסדים, *are* “ *comprehended in beneficence.*”

Ver. 40. *On theſe two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.*] Not that all that is contained in the five books of *Moſes*, and in the books of the prophets, and other writings of the Old Teſtament, is comprehended in, and is reducible to theſe two precepts; for there are many things delivered by way of promiſe, written by way of hiſtory, *&c.* which cannot, by any means, be brought into theſe two general heads: but that every thing reſpecting duty that is ſuggeſted in the law, or is more largely explained and preſſed in any of the writings of the prophets, is ſummarily comprehended in theſe two ſayings: hence love is the fulfilling of the law; ſee *Rom.* xiii. 8, 9. *Gal.* v. 14. The ſubſtance of the law is love; and the writings of the prophets, as to the preceptive part of them, are an explanation of the law, and an enlargement upon it: hence the *Jews* have a ſaying [c], that *all the prophets ſtood on mount Sinai*, and received their prophecies there, becauſe the ſum of them, as to the duty-part, was then delivered. *Beza* thinks, that here is an alluſion to the *phylacteries*, or front-lets, which hung upon their fore-heads and hands, as a memorial of the law. And certain it is, that the firſt of theſe commands, and which is ſaid to be the greateſt, was written in theſe phylacteries. Some take the phraſe, *on theſe—hang all the law and the prophets*, to be a mere *Latiniſm*, but it is really an *Hebraiſm*, and often to be met with in the *Jewiſh* writings: ſo *Maimonides* ſays [d], “ the knowledge “ of this matter is an affirmative precept, as it is “ ſaid, *I am the Lord thy God*; and he that imagines there is another God beſides this, tranſgreſſes a negative, as it is ſaid, *thou ſhalt have no* “ *other Gods before me*; and he denies the fundamental point, for this is the great foundation, “ שהכל תלוי בו, *on which all hang*:” and ſo the word is uſed in many other places [e]. The ſenſe is plainly this, that all that are in the law and prophets are conſiſtent with, and dependant on theſe things; and are, as the *Perſic* verſion renders the word, *comprehended* in them, and cannot be ſeparated from them.

Ver. 41. *While the Phariſees were gathered together*, &c.] Or rather, *when* they were gathered together, and while they continued ſo, before they left him: for this is to be underſtood not of their gathering together, to conſult privately about him; this is expreſſed before in ver. 34. but of their gathering together about Chriſt, to hear what anſwer he would return to the queſtion their learned doctor would put to him: and he having given an anſwer to that, which the *Scribe* was obliged to allow was a good one; and he having no more to ſay, Chriſt directs his diſcourſe not to him ſingly, but to all the *Phariſees* before he parted with them, and puts a queſtion to them, in his turn; and which would lead on to another they could not anſwer, and they muſt therefore leave him once more with great ſhame and confuſion. *Jeſus aſked them*: as the lawyer put a queſtion to him ſuitable to his office and character, Chriſt puts another to the *Phariſees* ſuitable to his office and character, as a Goſpel-preacher; ſuggeſting by it, that ſalvation was not by the law, and the works of it, which they ſet up for doctors and interpreters of, and advocates for, but by the Meſſiah, who was promiſed to their fathers, and they expected.

Ver. 42. *Saying, what think ye of Chriſt*, &c.] Or the *Meſſiah*; he does not aſk them whether there was, or would be ſuch a perſon in the world. He knew, that he was ſo plainly ſpoken of in the writings of the Old Teſtament, which they had in their hands, that they could not be ignorant, that ſuch a perſon was propheſied of: he knew that they believed that he would come, and that they were in continual expectation of his coming; wherefore he aſks them what they thought of him, what were their ſentiments and opinions concerning him; as about his perſon, whether they thought him to be divine, or human, a mere man, or God, as well as man; what they thought of his work and office he came to perform, whether it was a ſpiritual, or temporal ſalvation, they expected he ſhould be the author of; and ſo of his kingdom, whether it would be of this world or not; and particularly, what thoughts they had of his ſonſhip, and who was his father; *whoſe ſon is he?* and which the *Phariſees* underſtanding only as reſpecting his lineage and deſcent as man, as, of what family he was? who were his anceſtors and progenitors? *they ſay unto him the ſon of David.* This they ſaid directly, without any heſitation, it being a generally received notion of theirs, and was very right, that the Meſſiah ſhould be of the ſeed and family of *David*: and hence he is frequently, in their writings, called by no other name, than the ſon of *David*; ſee the note on ch. i. 1. If this queſtion was put to ſome perſons, it would appear, that they have no thoughts of Chriſt at all. The atheiſt has none: as God is not in all his thoughts, nor in any of them, for all his thoughts are, that there is no God; ſo neither is Chriſt the ſon of God. The deiſt thinks nothing of him, for he does not believe the revelation concerning him. The epicure, or voluptuous man, he thinks only of his carnal luſts and pleaſures: and the worldling, or covetous man thinks nothing but of his worldly ſubſtance, and of the much good things he has laid up for many years: to ſay nothing of the heathens, who have never heard of him; others, and ſuch as bear the chriſtian name, have very wrong thoughts of Chriſt, mean, and under-valuing. The *Arrian* thinks he is a created God, of a like, but not of the ſame nature with the father. The *Socinian* thinks he is a God by office, and did not exiſt until he was born of the virgin *Mary*; and has no notion of his ſacrifice, and ſatisfaction for the ſins of men. The *Arminian* thinks meanly of his righteouſneſs, and denies the imputation of it to them that believe. And indeed, all ſuch think wrongly of Chriſt, who divide their ſalvation between their works and him, and make them their Chriſt, or their frames their Chriſt, or their graces, and particularly their believing in him; that is, that aſcribe that to them, which properly belongs to him. And as for thoſe who do not bear the name of Chriſtians, it is no wonder that they entertain wrong and low thoughts of Chriſt. The *Jews* thought him to be a mere man, and the carpenter's ſon. The *Phariſees* thought he was an *Antinomian*, a libertine, a looſe, and licentious perſon, that had no regard to the law, and good works: hence thoſe words of his, *think not that I am come to deſtroy the law, Matt.* v. 17. Yea, they thought him to be a *Samaritan*, and to have a devil, and to caſt out devils by *Beelzebub*, the prince of devils. The *Mahometans*, tho' they allow him to be a prophet, yet think that he is inferior to *Mahomet* their prophet. There are others that think well of Chriſt, admire the lovelineſs of his perſon, and the fulneſs of his grace, but are afraid Chriſt does not think well of them: they think well of the ſuitableneſs there is in Chriſt, of his righteouſneſs to juſtify, of his blood to cleanſe and pardon, and of the fulneſs of his grace to ſupply all wants, but think theſe are not for them: they often revolve in their minds his ability to ſave, and firmly believe it, but queſtion his willingneſs to ſave them: they often think of Chriſt, what he is to others, but can't think of him for themſelves; only believers in Chriſt have a good thought of him, to their own joy and comfort: faith is a good thought of Chriſt; to them that believe, he is precious; and ſuch, thro' believing in him, are filled with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory; ſuch think often, and well, of the dignity of Chriſt's perſon, of the excellency and uſefulneſs of his offices, of the virtue of his blood, righteouſneſs, and ſacrifice, and of the ſufficiency of his grace for them: they think well of what he did for them in eternity, as their ſurety, in the council and covenant of peace; and of what he has done for them in time, by ſuffering and dying for them in their room and ſtead; and of what he is now doing for them in heaven, as their advocate and interceſſor.

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[a] Moſes Kotſenſis Mitzvot Tora pr. affirm. 9.

[b] In Miſn. Peah, c. 1. §. 1.

[c] Jarchi in Iſ. xlviii. 16. & in Mal. i. 1.

[d] Hilch. Yeſode Hatorah, c. 1. §. 6.

[e] Vid. Abkath Rokel. l. 1. p. 3.

Ver. 43. *He ſaith unto them*, &c.] Not denying it to be a truth they affirmed; but rather granting and allowing it: he argues upon it, tho' he tacitly refuſes their ſenſe and meaning of the phraſe, thus, *how then doth David in ſpirit call him Lord?* that is, if he is a mere man, if he is only the ſon of *David*, according to the fleſh, if he has no other, or higher deſcent than from him, how comes it to paſs, that *David*, under the inſpiration of the Spirit of God, by which he wrote his book of Pſalms, ſee 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 1, 2. where the paſſage, after cited, ſtands, to call him Lord; which ſuppoſes him to be more than barely his ſon, and to be a greater perſon than himſelf, one ſuperior in nature and dignity to him? for the phraſe *in ſpirit*, is not to be connected with the word *Lord*; as if the deſign of it was to ſhew, that the Meſſiah was Lord, or God, in ſpirit, or with reſpect to his divine nature, but, with the word *call*, expreſſing the influence of the Spirit of God, under which *David* wrote; otherwiſe the *Phariſees* would have had a direction how to have anſwered the queſtion, which ſo much puzzled them: *ſaying*, as in *Pſ.* cx. 1.

Ver. 44. *The Lord ſaid unto my Lord*, &c.] By the *Lord* that ſaid, is meant *Jehovah* the Father, who ſaid the following words at the time of Chriſt's aſcenſion, and entrance into heaven, after he had finiſhed the great work of man's ſalvation; prophetically delivered by the *Pſalmiſt*, under the inſpiration of the Spirit of God, being what was before purpoſed and promiſed: by *my Lord*, the perſon ſpoken to, the Meſſiah is deſigned, who was *David*'s *Adon*, or Lord, by right both of creation and redemption: as God, he made him; and as the Meſſiah and Saviour redeemed him; and on both accounts had a right to rule over him. The words ſaid unto him are, *ſit thou on my right hand*; which is a figurative phraſe, and expreſſive of the exaltation, dignity, power, and authority of the Meſſiah; and of an honour done to him, which was never granted to the angels, nor to any mere man: *till I make thine enemies thy footſtool*; till all the enemies of him, and his people, are ſubdued under him; carnal profeſſors, as the *Phariſees*, and profane ſinners, who neither of them would have him to rule over them; the world, the devil, antichriſt, and all the powers of darkneſs, and the laſt enemy, death itſelf. That theſe words were ſpoken of the Meſſiah, and therefore pertinently cited, and properly applied to him, by Jeſus, is evident from the ſilence of the *Phariſees*; for had it not been the generally received ſenſe of the *Jewiſh* church, they would, at once, have objected it to him; which might, in ſome meaſure, have relieved them under that diſtreſs, into which they were brought by this paſſage propoſed unto them: but by their ſilence they acknowledged, that the pſalm was wrote by *David*; that it was wrote by him under the inſpiration of the Spirit of God; and that the *Meſſiah* was the ſubject of it. And the ſame is owned by ſome of their doctors, ancient, and modern. “Says “*R. Joden*, in the name of *R. Chijah*, in time to “come the holy bleſſed God will cauſe the king “Meſſiah to ſit at his right hand; as it is ſaid, *the* “*Lord ſaid unto my Lord*, &c.[f]” And the ſame ſays, *R. Berachiah*, in the name of *R. Levi*, elſewhere[g]. And, ſays another of their writers[h], “we “don't find any man, or prophet, whoſe birth “was propheſied of before the birth of his father “and mother, but *Meſſiah* our righteouſneſs; and “of him it is intimated, *from the womb of the* “*morning*, &c. *i. e.* before the womb of her that “bore thee was created, thy birth was propheſied “of: and this theſe words reſpect, *before the ſun,* “*his name is Yinnon*, *Pſ.* lxxii. 17. *i. e.* before the “creation of the ſun, the name of our *Meſſiah* was “ſtrong and firm, and he ſhall ſit at the right “hand of God; and this is what is ſaid, *ſit at my* “*right hand.*” In ſome writings of the *Jews*, eſteemed by them, very ancient[i], the *Adon*, or Lord, to whom theſe words are ſpoken, is interpreted of *Meſſiah ben Joſeph*, whom they make to ſit at the right hand of *Abraham*; which, tho' a falſe interpretation of the words, carries in it ſome marks and traces of the ancient ſenſe of them: yea, even ſome of the more modern *Jews*[k] have owned, that they belong to the Meſſiah, and apply them to him. Tho' others, obſerving what confuſion their fore-fathers were thrown into by Jeſus, and what improvement his followers have made of this ſenſe of the words ſince, have quitted it, and introduced ſtrange and foreign ones. Some [l] of them would have *Abraham* the patriarch to be the ſubject of this pſalm; and that it was compoſed either by *Melchizedek*, or by *Eliezer*, the ſervant of *Abraham*; or by *David*, on account of the victory *Abraham* obtained over the four kings, in reſcuing his kinſman *Lot*: but *Melchizedek* could not be the author of it, becauſe he was a far greater perſon than *Abraham*; he bleſſed him, and took tithes of him, and therefore would not call him *Lord*. *Eliezer* might indeed, as being his ſervant; but then he could not aſſign to him a ſeat at the right hand of God, or ſay of him, that he had an everlaſting prieſthood, after the order of *Melchizedek*: and tho' the *pſalm* was compoſed by *David*, yet not on the above account, for the ſame reaſons. Nor is *David* the ſubject of it, as others [m] have affirmed; for it cannot be thought that *David* would ſay this of himſelf, or call himſelf his Lord, which this ſenſe of the words makes him to do: and whereas others of them ſay, that it was wrote by one of the ſingers concerning him; it may be replied, that the title declares the contrary: beſides, *David* is not aſcended into heaven, nor is he ſet down at the right hand of God, nor had he any thing to do with the prieſthood, much leſs was he a prieſt after the order of *Melchizedek*, and that for ever: but all is true of the Meſſiah Jeſus, of whoſe kingdom and prieſthood, ſufferings, and exaltation, conqueſt of his enemies, and ſucceſs of his Goſpel, this whole pſalm is a very plain and manifeſt prophecy.

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[f] Midraſh Tillim in Pſ. xviii. 35. apud Galatin. de Cath. ver. arcan. l. 8. c. 24.

[g] R. Moſes Hadarſan in Gen. xviii. 1. apud ib.

[h] R. Iſaac Arama in Gen. xlvii. 6. apud ib. l. 3. c. 17.

[i] Zohar in Num. fol. 99. 2. & Raya Mehimna, in ib. in Gen. fol. 87. 3.

[k] R. Saadiah Gaon in Dan. vii. 13. Nachman. diſp. cum Paulo, p. 36, 55.

Ver. 45. *If David then call him Lord*, &c.] That is, the Meſſiah, which is taken for granted, nor could the *Phariſees* deny it, *how is he his ſon?* The queſtion is to be anſwered upon true and juſt notions of the *Meſſiah*, but unanſwerable upon the principles of the *Phariſees*; who expected the *Meſſiah* only as a mere man, that ſhould be of the ſeed of *David*, and ſo his ſon; and ſhould ſit upon his throne, and be a proſperous and victorious prince, and deliver them out of the hands of their temporal enemies: they were able to make anſwer to the queſtion, ſeparately conſidered, as that he ſhould be of the lineage and houſe of *David*; ſhould lineally deſcend from him, be of his family, one of his offspring and poſterity, and ſo be properly and naturally his ſon; but how he could be ſo, conſiſtent with his being *David*'s Lord, puzzled them. Had they underſtood and owned the proper divinity of the *Meſſiah*, they might have anſwered, that as he was God, he was *David*'s Lord, his maker, and his king; and, as man, was *David*'s ſon, and ſo both his root and offspring; and this our Lord meant to bring them to a confeſſion of, or put them to confuſion and ſilence, which was the conſequence.

Ver. 46. *And no man was able to anſwer him a word*, &c.] They ſaw the dilemma they were reduced to, either to acknowledge the deity of the *Meſſiah*, or confeſs their ignorance; and neither of them they cared to do, and therefore judged it to be the wiſeſt part to be ſilent. *Neither durſt any man from that day forth aſk him any more queſtions*: neither *Phariſees* nor *Sadducees*, for the ſame is obſerved by *Luke* xx. 40. of the *Sadducees* particularly, and was true of all ſorts, and every ſect of men among them: and thus our Lord was freed from a cavilling, captious, and troubleſome generation of men, from this time forward, to the time of his ſufferings, which was not very long after; for this was the third day before the paſſover, as appears from ch. xxvi. 1, 2.

# CHAP. XXIII.

Ver. 1. THEN *ſpake Jeſus to the multitude*, &c.] To the common people that were about him in the temple; the high-prieſts and elders, *Scribes*, *Phariſees*, and *Sadducees*, having left him, being all nonpluſſed and ſilenced by him: and now, leſt on the one hand, the people ſeeing the ignorance and errors of theſe men detected by Chriſt, ſhould be tempted to conclude there was nothing in religion, and to neglect the word and worſhip of God, on account of the concern theſe men had in it; and, on the other hand, becauſe of their great authority and influence, being in *Moſes*'s chair, leſt the people ſhould be led into bad principles and practices by them, he directs them in what they ſhould obſerve them, and in what not: that they were not altogether to be rejected, nor in every thing to be attended to; and warns them againſt their oſtentation, pride, hypocriſy, covetouſneſs, and cruelty; and, at the ſame time, removes an objection againſt himſelf, proving that he was no enemy to *Moſes*, and the law, rightly explained and practiſed: *and to his diſciples*; not only the twelve, but to all that believed in him, and were followers of him.

Ver. 2. *Saying, the Scribes and Phariſees*, &c.] The *Perſic* verſion adds, *the prieſts*: but Chriſt does not here ſpeak of the *ſanhedrim*, or grand council of the nation, and of their legiſlative power; but of thoſe that were the teachers of the people, and the interpreters of the law; and of thoſe, who, though they corrupted the word with their gloſſes and traditions, yet retained ſome truth, and at leaſt came nearer truth, then the *Sadducees*; who therefore are omitted, and only *Scribes* and *Phariſees* mentioned, who gave the literal and traditional ſenſe of the ſcriptures; of whom he ſays, they *ſit in Moſes*'s *ſeat*: not that they were his ſucceſſors in his office as a legiſlator and mediator; tho' the *Perſic* verſion reads it, *ſit in the place and chair of Moſes*; but they read his law, and explained it to the people: this poſt and place, as yet, they kept in the office they were, and were to continue; and the people were to regard them ſo far as they ſpoke conſiſtent with the law, until it had its full accompliſhment in Chriſt. The alluſion is not to the chairs in which the *ſanhedrim* ſat in trying and determining cauſes, but to thoſe in which the doctors ſat when they expounded the law; for tho' they ſtood up when they read the law, or the prophets, they ſat down when they preached out of them: this cuſtom of the ſynagogue was obſerved by our Lord; ſee *Luke* iv. 16, 20.

Ver. 3. *All therefore whatſoever they bid you obſerve*, &c.] This muſt be reſtrained to things that were agreeable to the chair of *Moſes*, in which they ſat, to the law of *Moſes*, which they read and explained, to other parts of ſcripture and truth in general; for otherwiſe many of their gloſſes and traditions were repugnant to the law, and ought not to be obſerved, as appears from ch. v. and ch. xv. 6. The word *obſerve*, in this clauſe, is omitted by the *Vulgate Latin*, *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, and in *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel; and *Beza* ſays, 'tis wanting in one ancient copy, but is in others;

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[l] Zohar in Gen. fol. 60. 3. Jarchi in Pſ. cx. 1. Vet. Nizzachon, p. 179, 180. R. Iſaac Chizuk Emuna, par. 1. c. 40. p. 321.

[m] Kimchi & Aben Ezra in Pſ. cx. 1.

and is retained in the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions: *that obſerve and do*; hearken to what they ſay, give diligent heed unto it, take notice of it, and act according to it: *but do not ye after their works*; let their doctrine be the rule of your lives, ſo far as it agrees with the law of *Moſes*; but let not their actions be drawn into an example by you; conform to their inſtructions, but don't imitate their practices: *for they ſay, and do not*; they talk of good works, but do none; they bid others do them, but don't practiſe them themſelves; they very ſtrictly and ſeverely enjoin them on others, but are very careleſs themſelves to obſerve them; and of this the *Jews* are ſo conſcious, that they ſuggeſt the ſame doctrine [n]. "The daughter of another (a wicked man) came before *Rabbi*; ſhe ſaid to him, *Rabbi*, ſupply me with the neceſſaries of life: he replied to her, daughter, who art thou? ſhe anſwered him, the daughter of another: he ſaid to her, is there any of his ſeed in the world? for lo! it is written, *Job* xviii. 19. *He ſhall neither have ſon, nor nephew, among his people, nor any remaining in his dwellings*: ſhe replied to him, זכור לתורתו ואל תזכור מעשין, *remember his law*, or *doctrine*, but *don't remember his works*.—— Says *R. Jochanan*, what is that which is written, *Mal.* ii. 7. *For the prieſts lips ſhould keep knowledge, and they ſhould ſeek the law at his mouth; for he is the meſſenger of the Lord of hoſts?* If the doctor is like to an angel, or meſſenger of the Lord of hoſts, they ſhould ſeek the law at his mouth; and if not, they ſhould not ſeek the law at his mouth. Says *Reſh Lekiſh*, *R. Meir* found and explained that ſcripture, *Prov.* xxii. 17. *Bow down thine ear, and hear the words of the wiſe, and apply thine heart to my knowledge*: to their knowledge it is not ſaid, but to my knowledge. *R. Chanina* ſays, hence, *Pſal.* xlv. 10. *Hearken, O daughter, and conſider, incline thine ear, forget thine own people, and thy father's houſe*: on which the *Gloſs* is, forget their works, and do not learn them: he that knows how to take care not to learn their works, may learn the law from their mouths."——And a little after, "the diſciples of the wiſe men are like to a nut; as a nut, though it is defiled with mire and filth, yet that which is within it is not to be rejected; ſo a ſcholar, or a diſciple of a wiſe man, though he act wickedly, his law, or doctrine, is not to be deſpiſed." Good doctrine is not the worſe for being taught by bad men; nor are good works to be ſlighted and neglected, becauſe they are not done by all that teach them; but it muſt be owned that examples are very uſeful and forcible, and practice greatly recommends doctrine; and it is to be wiſhed, that they both always went together.

Ver. 4. *For they bind heavy burdens*, &c.] Meaning not the rites and ceremonies of the law of *Moſes*, circumciſion, and other rituals, which obliged to the keeping of the whole law, which was a yoke men were not able to bear; but the traditions of the elders, which the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* were very tenacious of, and very ſeverely enjoined the obſervance of, and are called their *heavy* things [o]. "It is a tradition of *R. Iſhmael*, there are in the words of the law, that which is bound or forbidden, and that which is looſe or free; and there are in them light things, and there are in them heavy things; but the words of the *Scribes*, כולן חמורין הן, *all of them are heavy.*" And a little after, "the words of the elders, חמורים, *are heavier* then the words of the prophets." Hence frequent mention is made, of "the light things of the ſchool of *Shammai*, ומחומרי, *and of the heavy things of the ſchool of Hillell* [p];" two famous doctors, heads of two univerſities, in being in Chriſt's time: theſe are alſo called, מכות פרושין, *the blows, or wounds of the Phariſees* [q]; not as *Bartenora* explains them, the wounds they gave themſelves, to ſhew their humility; or which they received, by beating their heads againſt the wall, walking with their eyes ſhut, that they might not look upon women, under a pretence of great chaſtity; but, as *Maimonides* ſays, theſe are their additions and heavy things, which they add to the law. Now the binding of theſe heavy things, means the impoſing them on men, obliging them to obſerve them very ſtrictly, under great penalties, ſhould they omit them. The alluſion is, to thoſe frequent ſayings in uſe among them, ſuch a thing is *bound*, and ſuch a thing is looſed; ſuch a *Rabbi binds*, and ſuch an one looſes; that is, forbids, or allows of ſuch and ſuch things; ſee the note on *Matt.* xvi. 19. *and grievous to be born.* This clauſe is left out in the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions; but is in all the *Greek* copies, and ſerves to illuſtrate and aggravate, the burdenſome rites and inſtitutions of theſe people: and *lay them on men's ſhoulders, but they themſelves will not move them with one of their fingers*: the ſenſe is, not that they were ſo rigid and hard-hearted, that they would not move a finger, to remove theſe burdens from the ſhoulders of men, or eaſe them in the leaſt degree, or diſpenſe with their performance of them in the leaſt meaſure, upon any conſideration, though this alſo was true in many reſpects; but that they were ſo ſlothful and indolent themſelves, that though they ſo ſtrictly enjoined the obſervance of their numerous and unwritten traditions on the people, yet in many caſes, where they could without public notice, they neglected them themſelves, or at leaſt, made them lighter and eaſier to them, as in their faſtings, &c. In the *Miſna* [r], mention is made of *a crafty wicked man*, along with a woman *Phariſee*, and the blows of the *Phariſees* before ſpoken of; and in the *Gemara* [s], is explained by *R. Hona*, of one, "that makes things *light* for himſelf, and makes them *heavy* for others." Such crafty wicked men were the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*; though *R. Meir* pretended, that he made things *light* to others, and *heavy* to himſelf [t].

Ver. 5. *But all their works they do for to be ſeen of men*, &c.] All their prayers, alms-deeds, and faſtings, were all done in a publick manner, that men might behold them, and they might have applauſe and glory from them: they ſought neither the glory of God, nor the good of their fellow-creatures, nor any ſpiritual advantage and pleaſure to themſelves, in their performances; they neither attended to moral duties, nor ceremonious rites, nor the traditions of their fathers, any further than they could be ſeen by men in them, and keep up their credit and eſteem among them. Hence, *they make broad their phylacteries*: theſe were four ſections of the law, wrote on parchments, folded up in the ſkin of a clean beaſt, and tied to the head and hand. The four ſections were theſe following, *viz.* the *firſt*, was *Exod.* xiii. 2. to ver. 11. the *ſecond*, was *Exod.* xiii. 11. to ver. 17. the *third*, was *Deut.* vi. 4. to ver. 10. the *fourth*, was *Deut.* xi. 13. to

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[n] T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 15. 2.

[o] T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 3. 2.

[p] T. Hieroſ. Sota, fol. 19. 2. Yom Tob. fol. 60. 2. & Beracot, fol. 3. 2.

[q] Miſn. Sota, c. 3. §. 4.

[r] Ubi ſupra.

[s] T. Bab. Sota, fol. 21. 2.

[t] T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 3. 1.

ver. 22. Thoſe that were for the head, were written and rolled up ſeparately, and put in four diſtinct places, in one ſkin, which was faſtened with ſtrings to the crown of the head, towards the face, about the place where the hair ends, and where an infant's brain is tender; and they took care to place them in the middle, that ſo they might be between the eyes. Thoſe that were for the hand, were written in four columns, on one parchment, which being rolled up, was faſtened to the inſide of the left arm, where it is fleſhy, between the ſhoulder and the elbow, that ſo it might be over-againſt the heart [u]. Theſe they imagined, were commanded them by God, in *Exod.* xiii. 16. and *Deut.* vi. 8. whereas the ſenſe of theſe paſſages only is, that the goodneſs of God in delivering them out of *Egypt*, and the words of the law, ſhould be continually before them, in their minds and memories, as if they had tokens on their hands, and frontlets between their eyes; but they underſtood them literally, and obſerved them in the above manner. Theſe the *Jews* call *Tephillin*, becauſe they uſe them in time of prayer, and look upon them as uſeful, to put them in mind of that duty: they are here called *phylacteries*, becauſe they thought they kept them in the fear of God, preſerved in them the memory of the law, and them from ſin; yea, from evil ſpirits, and diſeaſes of the body. They imagined there was a great deal of holineſs in, and valued themſelves much upon the uſe of them [w]; and the *Phariſees*, becauſe they would be thought to be more holy and religious, and more obſervant of the law than others, wore theſe things broader than the reſt of the people; *and enlarge the borders of their garments*. Theſe were the fringes which they put upon the borders of their garments, and on them a ribband of blue, to put them in mind of the commandments, to obey them, *Numb.* xv. 38. *Deut.* xxii. 12. The obſervance of this law is of ſo much conſequence with the *Jews*, that they make all the commandments to depend on it [x]; and ſay, that it is equal to them all, and that he that is guilty of the breach of it, is worthy of death [y]: they aſcribe the like virtue to theſe fringes, as to their phylacteries, and think themſelves much the better for the wearing them; and the *Phariſees*, becauſe they would appear with a greater air of ſanctity and devotion than others, made theirs larger. We [z] read of one *Ben Tzitzith Hacceſeth*, a man of this complexion, who was ſo called, becauſe his *Tzitzith*, or fringes, were drawn upon a pillow; and there are ſome that ſay, that the pillow was bore between the great men of *Rome*: it was drawn after him, not upon the ground, but upon a cloth or tapeſtry, and the train ſupported by noblemen, as is pretended. This was one of thoſe, that enlarged the *Tzitzith*, or fringes, beyond the ordinary ſize; hence *Mark* calls it, *long cloathing*.

Ver. 6. *And love the uppermoſt rooms at feaſts*, &c.] Or the firſt and chief places to ſit, or lie down on, at ordinary meals, and eſpecially at large entertainments, where the great ones ſat, as in 1 *Sam.* ix. 22. where *Jarchi* on the place obſerves, that by the manner of their ſitting, it was known who was the greateſt; and this the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* affected. With the *Romans*, the moſt honourable place was at the upper end of the table: ſome think it was more honourable to ſit in the middle, but the maſter of the feaſt ſat at the lower end; and to ſenior men, and who were venerable with age, or excelled in prudence and authority, the firſt ſitting down, and the more honourable place, were given; and when the table was taken away, they uſed to riſe firſt [a]: the middle place was the more honourable with the *Numidians* [b], and ſo it ſeems to be with the *Romans* [c], and alſo with the *Jews*; and this the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* loved, deſired, ſought for, and were not pleaſed if they had not it. It is ſaid [d] of *Simeon ben Shetach*, a noted *Phariſee*, about, or rather before the times of Chriſt, that having fled upon a certain account from king *Jannai*, he ſent for him, and when he came, "he ſat himſelf *between* the king and the queen: the king ſaid to him, why doſt thou mock me? he replied to him, I don't mock thee, thou haſt riches and I have learning, as it is written, *Wiſdom is a defence, and money is a defence*, *Eccl.* vii. 12.——He ſaid to him, but why doſt thou *ſit between the king and queen?* He replied, in the book of *Ben Sira*, it is written, *Exalt her and ſhe ſhall promote thee, and cauſe thee to ſit among princes.* He ordered to give him a cup, that he might aſk a bleſſing; he took the cup and ſaid, bleſſed be the food that *Jannai* and his friends eat." Thus on account of their wiſdom and learning, they thought they had a right to take the upper hand of kings themſelves: *and the chief ſeats in the ſynagogues*; for theſe were different; the ſeats of the ſenior men were turned towards the people, and the backs of them were towards the ark or cheſt, in which the holy books were put; and theſe ſeem to be what the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* coveted, that they might be in the full view of the people. And ſo ſays *Maimonides* [e], "How do the people ſit in the ſynagogues? The elders ſit, *i. e.* firſt, and their faces are towards the people, and their backs are to the temple, or holy place; and all the people ſit in rows, and the faces of one row are to the backs of the row that is before them; ſo that the faces of all the people are to the holy place, and to the elders, and to the ark."

Ver. 7. *And greetings in the markets*, &c.] They uſed to ſtrole about the markets, being publick places, where there was a great concourſe of people, on purpoſe to be taken notice of before multitudes, with ſingular marks of reſpect; as ſtretching out the hand, uncovering the head, and bowing the knee: *and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi*; becauſe of their great authority, and largeneſs of their knowledge: the repetition of the word *Rabbi*, is not made in the *Vulgate Latin*, nor in the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, nor in *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel, but is in all the *Greek* copies, and very juſtly; ſince it was uſual in the ſalutations of them, to double the word. It is reported [f] of *R. Eleazar ben Simeon*, of *Migdal Gedur*, that having reproached a deformed man he met in the road; when he came to the city where the man lived, "the citizens came out to meet him, and ſaid unto him, peace be upon thee, ר רבי מורי, *Rabbi, Rabbi, Maſter, Maſter*; he (*Eleazar*) ſaid to them, who do ye call *Rabbi, Rabbi?* They replied to him, he who followed thee: he ſaid unto them, if this be a *Rabbi*, let there not be many ſuch in *Iſrael*." The *Jews* pretend, that king *Jehoſhaphat* uſed to ſalute the doctors with theſe titles; though they forget, that they were not in uſe in his time, as will be hereafter obſerved: they ſay [g], “ whenever he “ ſaw a diſciple of the wiſe men, he roſe from his “ throne, and embraced and kiſſed him, and called “ him, אבי אבי רבי רבי מרי מרי, *father*, *father*, “ *Rabbi*, *Rabbi*, *Maſter*, *Maſter*.” Where you have the three different words uſed by our Lord in this and the following verſes, by which theſe men loved to be called, and he inveighed againſt; nay, they not only ſuggeſt, that kings gave them theſe honourable titles, and they expected them from them, but even they liked to be called kings themſelves. It is ſaid [h] of *R. Hona* and *R. Chaſda*, that as they were ſitting together, one paſſed by them, “ and ſaid to them, *peace be to you kings*, “ שלמא עליכו מלכי, *peace be to you kings*: they “ ſaid to him, from whence does it appear to thee, “ that the *Rabbins* are called kings? He replied to “ them, from what is written, *by me kings reign*, “ *&c.* They ſaid to him, from whence haſt thou “ it, that we are to double or repeat peace, or ſa“ lutation to kings? He anſwered them, that *R.* “ *Judah* ſaid, that *Rab* ſaid from hence, 1 *Chron.* xii. “ 18. *Then the Spirit came upon Amaſai*, &c.” This title began but to be in uſe in the times of our Lord, or a very little while before: none of the prophets had it, nor *Ezra* the ſcribe, nor the men of the great ſynagogue, nor *Simeon* the juſt, the laſt of them; nor *Antigonus*, a man of *Socho*, a diſciple of his: and it is obſerved by the *Jews* themſelves [i], that “ the five “ couple are never called by the name of *Rabban*, “ nor by the name of *Rabbi*, only by their own “ name.” By whom are meant, *Joſeph ben Joezer*, and *Joſeph ben Jochanan*; *Joſhua ben Perachia*, ſaid to be the maſter of *Jeſus* of *Nazareth*, and *Nittai* the *Arbelite*; *Judah ben Tabai*, and *Simeon ben Shetach*; *Shemaiah* and *Abtalion*; *Hillell* and *Shammai*. The ſons, or diſciples of the two laſt, firſt took theſe titles. *Rabban Simeon*, the ſon of *Hillell*, thought by ſome to be the ſame *Simeon* that had Chriſt in his arms, is [k] ſaid to be the firſt that was called by this name; and it is alſo obſerved by them [l], that *Rabban* was a name of greater honour than *Rabbi*, or *Rab*, and that *Rabbi* was more honourable than *Rab*; and to be called by a man's own name, was more honourable than any of them. The *Karaite Jews* make much the ſame complaint, and give much the ſame account of the pride and vanity of the *Rabbinical* doctors, as Chriſt here does; for ſo one of them ſays [m]; “ The *Karaites* don't uſe to act according “ to the cuſtom of the wiſe men among the *Rab*“ *bans*, to make to themſelves Gods of ſilver, and “ guides of gold, with this view, להקרא רב, *to* “ *be called Rab*; and alſo to gather wealth and food “ to fulneſs, *&c.*”

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[u] Targ. Jon. Jarchi, & Baal Hatturim in Exod. xiii. 16. & Deut. vi. 8. Maimon. Hilch. Tephillin, c. 1. §. 1. & c. 2. §. 2. & c. 3. §. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. & c. 4. §. 1, 2.

[w] Maimon. ib. c. 4. §. 25, 26. Moſes Kotſenſis Mitzvot Tora, pr. affirm. 3. 23. Targ. in Cant. viii. 3.

[x] Maimon. Hilch. Tzitzith, c. 3. §. 12.

[y] T. Bab. Nedarim, fol. 25. 1. Shebuot, fol. 29. 1. & Menachot, fol. 43. 2.

[z] T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 56. 1.

[a] Alex. ab Alex. Genial Dier, l. 5. c. 21.

[b] Salluſt. Bell. Jugurth. p. 45.

[c] Vid. Alſtorph. de lect. vet. p. 117. Minut. Felix, p. 3, 4.

[d] T. Hieroſ. Beraçot, fol. 11. 2. Bereſh. Rabba, §. 91. fol. 78. 4.

[e] Hilchot Tephilla, c. 11. §. 4.

[f] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 20. 2.

Ver. 8. *But be not ye called Rabbi*, &c.] Don't be ambitious of any ſuch title, fond of it, or affect it, or be elated with it, ſhould it be given you; nor look upon yourſelves as men of power and authority over others; as having the dominion over mens faith, a power to make laws for others, impoſe them in a magiſterial way, and bind and looſe mens conſciences at pleaſure, as theſe men do: *for one is your maſter*, *even Chriſt*; meaning himſelf, the true *Meſſiah*, the head of the church, king of ſaints, and Lord of all; who had all power in heaven and in earth, to make laws, appoint ordinances, and oblige men to receive his doctrines, and obey his commands: the word *Chriſt*, is left out in the *Vulgate Latin*, the *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions; but is in the *Arabic* verſion, and *Munſter's Hebrew* Goſpel, and in all the ancient *Greek* copies *Beza* conſulted, excepting two: no other indeed can be meant; he is the great *Rabbi*, and doctor, that is to be hearkened to, and the maſter we are all to obey: *and all ye are brethren*; not merely as the deſcendants of *Adam*, but as being in a ſpiritual relation, the children of God, and diſciples of Chriſt, and ſo have no ſuperiority one over another: this may regard the diſciples, both as believers and chriſtians, partakers of the ſame grace, and ſtanding in the ſame relation to God, Chriſt, and one another, and having an equal right to the ſame privileges; and as apoſtles and miniſters, one as ſuch, no, not *Peter*; having no pre-eminence over the other, having the ſame commiſſion, doctrine, and authority, one as the other.

Ver. 9. *And call no man your father upon the earth*, &c.] Not but that children may, and ſhould call their natural parents, fathers; and ſuch who have been inſtrumental in the converſion of ſouls, may be rightly called by them their ſpiritual fathers; as ſervants and ſcholars alſo, may call thoſe that are over them, and inſtruct them, their maſters: our Lord does not mean, by any of theſe expreſſions, to ſet aſide all names and titles, of natural and civil diſtinction among men, but only to reject all ſuch names and titles, as are uſed to ſignify an authoritative power over mens conſciences, in matters of faith and obedience; in which, God and Chriſt are only to be attended to. Chriſt's ſenſe is, that he would have his diſciples not fond of any titles of honour at all; and much leſs aſſume an authority over men, as if they were to depend on them, as the founders of the chriſtian religion, the authors of its doctrines and ordinances; and to take that honour to themſelves, which did not belong to them; nor even chuſe to be called by ſuch names, as would lead people to entertain too high an opinion of them, and take off of their dependance on God the Father, and himſelf, as theſe titles the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* loved to be called by, did: and who were called not only by the name of *Rabbi*, but *Abba*, *father* alſo: hence we read of *Abba Saul*, or *father Saul* [n]; *Abba Joſe ben Jochanan*, a man of *Jeruſalem* [o]; *Abba Chanan* [p], *Abba Chelphetha*, a man of the village of *Hananiah* [q]; *Abba Gorion* [r], and others; and this name was, לשון כבוד כמו רבי, *a name of honour*, *even as Rabbi* [s], and of great authority: the wiſe men are ſaid to be, אבות הכל, *the fathers of all* [t], to whom all gave heed, and upon whom all depended, as ſo many oracles. There is a whole treatiſe in their *Miſna*, called *Pirke Abot*, which contains ſome of the oracles, and peculiar ſayings of theſe *fathers*, the *Miſnic* doctors, and which are preferred to the writings of *Moſes*, and the prophets. In this ſenſe, and upon this ſcore, our Lord inveighs againſt them, and cautions his diſciples againſt giving or taking all ſuch titles, in ſuch ſenſe. *For one is your father*, *which is in heaven*; who is ſo, both by creation and adoption, and is poſſeſſed of all paternal authority; and is to be honoured and obeyed by all; from whom all wiſdom and knowledge is derived, and who has the care and government of all in heaven and in earth.

Ver. 10. *Neither be ye called maſters*, &c.] Or guides and leaders; not but that the miniſters of the word, are in a ſenſe ſuch; it is their buſineſs to lead and direct ſouls to Chriſt, to guide their feet in the way of peace, and to go before them, as examples to them, in word, in converſation, faith, and purity; but then they are to guide them according to the word of God, and not their own dictates; and teach them to obſerve the rules, and obey the ordinances of Chriſt, and not what are of their own inventing and preſcribing; and to enforce the authority of their great Lord and Maſter, and not their own; and direct men to a dependance on Chriſt, as head of the church, who is the one Lord, as his faith is one, and his baptiſm one alſo: *for one is your maſter, even Chriſt*; which is ſaid before, in ver. 8. but being a matter of ſo much importance to the honour of Chriſt, and men being ſo apt to ſet up for maſters themſelves, in oppoſition to him, or in conjunction with him, or above him, it was neceſſary to repeat it; for in an authoritative ſenſe he is the one, and only maſter of the aſſemblies.

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[g] T. Bab. Maccot, fol. 24. 1. & Cetubot, fol. 103. 2.
[h] T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 62. 1.
[i] Ganz. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 21. 1.
[k] Ib. fol. 25. 1.
[l] Ib.
[m] Eliahu Adderet, c. 6. apud Trigland. de Sect. Kar. c. 10. p. 164.
[n] Pirke Abot, c. 2. §. 8.
[o] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 53. 2.
[p] Ib. fol. 64. 1.
[q] T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 94. 1. & Bava Bathra, fol. 56. 2.
[r] Maſſech. Sopherim, c. 15. §. 10.
[s] Juchaſin, fol. 31. 2. & 61. 2.
[t] Maimon in Miſn. Peah, c. 1. §. 1.

Ver. 11. *But he that is greateſt among you*, &c.] Either who really is ſo, having more grace, and greater gifts beſtowed upon him, than others; which doubtleſs was the caſe of ſome of the diſciples, or who deſired to be the greateſt, was ambitious of, and affected a ſuperiority over others, and to be in the higheſt poſt and place, as it is certain ſome of them did. This was what they were often contending about among themſelves, who ſhould be greateſt; and Chriſt here ſeems to have regard to that vain ſpirit, which appeared among them; and his view is, to check and reſtrain it: *ſhall be your ſervant*; or, *let him be your ſervant*. Service is the way to honour; he that would be moſt eſteemed, ought to do the moſt work; and the man that has the moſt grace, and the greateſt gifts, ought to employ them for the uſe and benefit of others; ſee the note on ch. xx. 27.

Ver. 12. *And whoſoever ſhall exalt himſelf*, &c.] Above his fellow-chriſtians, or fellow-miniſters, by entertaining too high an opinion of himſelf, by boaſting of his gifts, as preferable to others, and as if he had not received them; by aſſuming, or eagerly coveting titles of honour among men, or by affecting honour that don't belong to him, or abuſing what he has: *ſhall be abaſed*; or humbled by God, or men, or both; ſuch ſhall loſe the honour they have, and come greatly ſhort of what they are ambitious of; they ſhall fall into diſgrace with men, and are abominable in the ſight of God: *and he that ſhall humble himſelf*; by entertaining low thoughts, and a mean opinion of himſelf, behaving modeſtly among men; not being elated with his gifts, but acknowledging that they are owing to the grace and goodneſs of God; and uſing them in a humble manner, for the advantage of others; not coveting honour from men, nor lifted up with what is conferred on him: *ſhall be exalted*; by God, or men, or both; if not in this world, yet in the world to come: and indeed, generally ſpeaking, ſuch modeſt, humble perſons, are moſt eſteemed among men; and God gives more grace unto them, and will at laſt give them glory. This is a ſaying, often uſed by our Lord on different accounts, both with reſpect to his diſciples, for their inſtruction, and with regard to the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, for their mortification; ſee *Luke* xiv. 11. and xviii. 14. It ſeems to be a proverbial expreſſion, and much in uſe among the *Jews*: it is ſaid in ſo many words in the *Talmud* [u], as here; "whoſoever ſhall humble himſelf, the holy bleſſed "God ſhall exalt him; and whoſoever ſhall exalt himſelf, the holy bleſſed God ſhall humble "him."

Ver. 13. *But wo unto you Scribes and Phariſees, hypocrites*, &c.] It ſeems from hence, that the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* had not left him, at leaſt not all of them, notwithſtanding the confuſion they were thrown into; but were ſtill about him, obſerving what he ſaid to the people, and watching an opportunity to take every advantage againſt him; whom he addreſſes in a very awful manner, calling them *hypocrites*, as he truly might; for they were ſuch, both to God and men: he had detected them already before the people, in ſeveral inſtances of hypocriſy; and gives ſufficient reaſons, in the following part of this chapter, to ſupport the character he gives of them, and his charge againſt them; denouncing a woe upon them in this world, and that which is to come, no leſs than eight times; expreſſing his abhorrence of their wickedneſs, his commiſeration of their caſe, and their certain deſtruction: *for ye ſhut up the kingdom of heaven againſt men*; not eternal life and happineſs, the entrance into which, can neither be opened nor ſhut by men: thoſe whom God determines to bring thither, ſhall have an entrance abundantly miniſtred to them, in ſpite of the oppoſition of men and devils; though theſe men did all that in them lay, to hinder perſons enjoying everlaſting glory. But the Goſpel diſpenſation is here meant, which was opened by the miniſtry of *John* the *Baptiſt*, Chriſt and his diſciples, and which the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* did all they could to ſhut; by diſcouraging the preaching of the Goſpel, and the adminiſtration of ordinances, in which this diſpenſation lay; and prejudicing the minds of men againſt it, that they might not embrace the doctrines of it, nor ſubmit to its ordinances: they, by their office, ought to have opened and explained the ſcriptures, the prophecies of the Old Teſtament relating to the Meſſiah, and led the people into a knowledge of the myſteries of his kingdom, and encouraged them to enter into this new ſtate of things; which, according to the true intent of ſcripture, was to take place, and now did; but inſtead of this, they ſhut up the ſcriptures, took away the key of knowledge, and laid it aſide; and darkened the ſcriptures by their falſe gloſſes, and obliged the people to obſerve the traditions of the elders, and which they call, סיג לתורה, *an hedge for the law* [w]; to which *Beza* thinks, the alluſion is here, and by which men were ſhut up, and kept from the true knowledge both of law and Goſpel: *for ye neither go in yourſelves, neither ſuffer ye them that are entring to go in*: they neither believed in the *Meſſiah* themſelves, nor embraced the doctrines relating to his perſon and office: have any of the *Phariſees* believed on him? No; they received him not, they rejected him, and alſo the counſel of God againſt themſelves, not being baptized with the baptiſm of *John*, the forerunner of Chriſt; nor would they ſuffer others, that were inclined to profeſs their faith in him, and be baptized, to do it; but diſcouraged them all they could, by their reproachful treatment of the perſon, miracles, and miniſtry of Chriſt, and by their threatnings and menaces, and by their excommunications of ſuch as made a confeſſion of him.

Ver. 14. *Wo unto you Scribes and Phariſes, hypocrites*, &c.] The ſame character is given as before,

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[u] T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 13. 2. & 54. 1. & Nedarim, fol. 55. 1.

[w] Pirke Abot, c. 1. §. 1.

fore, and the ſame wo denounced, and a freſh reaſon given of it: *for ye devour widows houſes*; that is, the goods in the houſes of ſuch as were left with fatherleſs children, and but little to ſupport them; who being left alone, and none to adviſe them, and being weak, and prone to ſuperſtition; theſe greedy dogs, as *Iſaiah* calls them, who could never have enough, eaſily impoſed upon them, wormed them out of their ſubſtance, ſtripp'd them bare of the neceſſaries of life, prevailed on them to ſell their houſes and goods, and beſtow them on them; or got their little eſtates into their hands, pretending to take care, and diſpoſe of them for them, to their advantage: *and for a pretence make long prayers*; as if they were very holy, good men; or pretended that the ſubſtance of theſe widows, which they got into their hands, was for their long prayers for them; or they made long prayers for them in return for their ſubſtance. *Maimonides*[x] ſays, that “the ancient ſaints, or good men, uſed to ſtay an hour before prayer, and an hour after prayer, ויאריכם בתפלה שעה, and *prolonged*, or *held an hour in prayer*:” and this being three times a-day, nine hours every day, as is obſerved in the *Talmud*[y], were ſpent in this manner; and on this account they got the character of very devout and religious men, and hereby covered all their avarice, rapine, and oppreſſion of the poor: but God will not be mocked; *therefore ye ſhall receive the greater damnation*; both on account of their plundering and diſtreſſing the poor, the widows, and the fatherleſs; and alſo becauſe of their hypocriſy in doing this under the cover of religion and holineſs. Hence it appears, that there are degrees of puniſhment in hell, and that hypocrites, and all ſuch who oppreſs the poor, under the maſk of godlineſs, ſuppoſing gain to be that, will be partakers of the greateſt degree of it. In *Munſter's Hebrew* Goſpel it is called משפט ארוך, *a long judgment*, or *damnation*, in alluſion to their long prayers; and is the very reverſe of what they expect on account of them: they ſay[z], “three things prolong a man's days and years, המאריך בתפלתו, *he that is long in his prayer*” is the firſt metioned; and he that is long at his prayer, it is an excellency, they ſay; but inſtead of a long and happy life, he ſhall have a long damnation. This verſe is left out in ſome copies, and in others it ſtands before the former; in which order 'tis read in the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions.

Ver. 15. *Wo unto you Scribes and Phariſees, hypocrites, &c.*] The ſame character, and wo, are ſtill continued, and a new reaſon added, confirming the juſtneſs of them, in order to awaken and convince them, or, however, to caution the people againſt them: *for ye compaſs ſea and land to make one proſelyte*; that is, to the *Jewiſh* religion, and their particular ſect. There were two ſorts of proſelytes among them; one was called גר תושב, *a proſelyte of the gate*, one that might dwell in any of their towns, and cities, and who is thus deſcribed[a]; “who is a proſelyte of the gate? whoſoever takes upon him, before three neighbours, that he will not commit idolatry. *R. Meir*, and the wiſe men, ſay, whoſoever takes upon him the ſeven precepts which the ſons of *Noah* took upon them: others ſay, theſe don't come into the general rule of a proſelyte of the gate; who is then a proſelyte of the gate? this is a proſelyte, that eats what dies of itſelf, but takes upon him to fulfil all the commandments ſaid in the law, except that which forbids the eating of things that die of themſelves.” But the uſual account of ſuch an one is, who agrees to the ſeven precepts commanded the children of *Noah*[b], which were theſe[c]; the firſt forbad idolatry, the ſecond blaſphemy, the third murder, the fourth uncleanneſs, the fifth theft, the ſixth required judgments, or puniſhment on malefactors, the ſeventh forbad eating the member of any creature alive. The other proſelyte was called גר צדק, *a proſelyte of righteouſneſs*; and he was one that ſubmitted to circumciſion[d], and the reſt of the ceremonies of the law; and was in all reſpects as an *Iſraelite* himſelf; and of this ſort is the text to be underſtood. The *Ethiopic* verſion reads the words, *baptize one proſelyte, and when he is baptized*; referring to a cuſtom among the *Jews*, who baptized, or dipped their proſelytes in water, as well as circumciſed them; about which there are great diſputes in their writings; ſome alledging, that the dipping of them was neceſſary to the making them proſelytes; others affirming, that it was not: “a proſelyte that is circumciſed, and not dipped, dipped, and not circumciſed, the whole follows after, or depends on circumciſion, ſays *R. Eliezer*.” *R. Joſhua* ſays, even dipping delays it; (*i. e.* the want of it, hinders a man from being a proſelyte) but *R. Joſhua ben Levi* ſays, it ſhould go according to the tradition of *Bar Kaphra*; for the tradition of *Bar Kaphra* is, “that he that is circumciſed, and not dipped, lo! he is right; for there is no proſelyte but what is dipped, becauſe of pollutions that happen to him[e].” And elſewhere[f] this is debated in the following manner: “a proſelyte that is circumciſed, and not dipped, *R. Eliezer* ſays, lo! this is a proſelyte; for ſo we find concerning our fathers, that they were circumciſed, but not dipped. One that is dipped, and not circumciſed, *R. Joſhua* ſays, lo! this is a proſelyte; for ſo we find concerning our mothers, that they were dipped, but not circumciſed. The wiſe men ſay, one that is dipped, and not circumciſed, or circumciſed, and not dipped, is no proſelyte, until he is both circumciſed and dipped.” So the diſpute ended, and it became a ſettled point, that one ſhould never be reckoned a proſelyte, unleſs he was both circumciſed and dipped. And after this it became cuſtomary to receive proſelytes by circumciſion, dipping, and ſacrifice; and the manner was this[g]: “a ſtranger that comes to be made a proſelyte at this time, they ſay unto him, what doſt thou ſee, that thou comeſt to be made a proſelyte? doſt thou not know that the *Iſraelites* at this time are miſerable, baniſhed, drove about, and plundered, and chaſtiſements come upon them? If he ſays, I know this, but it does not ſatisfy me, they receive him immediately, and make known ſome of the light commands, and ſome of the heavy commands to him; and they acquaint him with the buſineſs of gleanings, the forgotten ſheaf, the corner of the field left ſtanding, and the poors tithe: they alſo inform him of the penalties of the commands, and ſay unto him, know thou, that before thou cameſt into this way, thou didſt eat fat, and was not puniſhed with cutting off; thou didſt profane the ſabbath, and was not puniſhed with ſtoning: but

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[x] Hilch. Tephillah, c. 4. §. 16.
[y] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 32. 2.
[z] Ib. fol. 54. 2.
[a] T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 64. 2.
[b] Maimon. Hilch. Obede Cochabim, c. 10. §. 6. & Maacalot Aſurot, c. 11. §. 7. & Iſſure Biah, c. 14. §. 7.
[c] Ib. Hilch. Melachim, c. 9. §. 1.
[d] Zohar in Exod. fol. 36. 1.
[e] T. Hieroſ. Kidduſhin, fol. 64. 4.
[f] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 46. 1, 2.
[g] Ib. fol. 47. 1, 2.

“now if thou eateſt fat, thou'lt be puniſhed with cutting off; and if thou profaneſt the ſabbath, thou'lt be puniſhed with ſtoning: and as they inform him of the penalties of the precepts, ſo they acquaint him with the giving of the rewards of them; ſaying to him, know thou that the world to come is not made but for the righteous; and the *Iſraelites* at this time can't receive neither much good, nor much puniſhment: but they don't multiply words, nor critically enquire of him; if he receives theſe things, they immediately circumciſe him; and if there remain in him obſtructions, hindering circumciſion, they circumciſe him a ſecond time; and when he is healed they immediately dip him; and two diſciples of the wiſe men ſtand over him, and acquaint him with ſome of the light commands, and ſome of the heavy commands; then he dips, and comes up, and is as an *Iſraelite* in all reſpects: if a woman, the women ſet her in water up to her neck, and two diſciples of the wiſe men ſtand by her without, and inform her of ſome of the light commands, and ſome of the heavy commands.” And, as *Maimonides*[h] adds, who gives a larger account of this matter, “ſhe ſits in the water, and after that dips herſelf before them; and they turn away their faces, and go out, ſo that they do not ſee her, when ſhe comes out of the water.” From all which it appears, that this affair was moved after our Lord's time; was not a ſettled point till a good while after; and is a cuſtom that has obtained ſince the *Jews* were drove out of their own land; tho' they pretend to ſay it was an ancient practice of their fathers, of which they can give no ſufficient proof: wherefore there could be no regard had to it in this text, and conſequently the *Ethiopic* verſion of it is not a right one; nor can the dipping of proſelytes by the *Jews* be what Chriſtian baptiſm takes its riſe from, or in any reſpect be modell'd according to it, between which, in many things, there is a wide difference. Now the *Jews* were very diligent and induſtrious, which is meant by *compaſſing of ſea and land*: they uſed all kinds of methods, ways, and means, to gain ſuch a point, and ſometimes very wicked ones. “*Rabbenu Tam*[i] allowed a daughter of *Iſrael* to change her religion, and a ſtranger to lie with her, that ſhe might confirm it, when he became a proſelyte.” And this they were ſo exceeding fond of, not out of any regard to the glory of God, or the good of the ſouls of men; nor did they really love the proſelytes: and it is often ſaid by them[k], that “proſelytes are hard, or uneaſy to *Iſrael*, as the itch or ſcab.” The *Gloſs* ſays, becauſe they were not expert in the commandments, and were the cauſe of puniſhment, and the *Iſraelites* were apt to imitate their works; but they coveted to make them, becauſe hereby either they ſtrengthened their own party, or filled their purſes with their ſubſtance, or got applauſe and credit among the common people; for the making a proſelyte was reckoned a very great action, and is aſcribed to the patriarchs *Abraham* and *Jacob*, and made equal to creation[l]. “Says *R. Eliezer*, in the name of *R. Joſe ben Zimra*, if all that come into the world were gathered together to create even one fly, they would not be able to put breath into it: but you'll object what he ſaith, *the ſouls they made in Haran*, *Gen.* xii. 5. but theſe are the proſelytes whom *Abraham* proſelyted; but why does he ſay *made*, and not proſelyted? to teach thee, that whoever brings near a ſtranger, and proſelytes him, *is as if he created him*. You will ſay *Abraham* made proſelytes, but not *Sarah*: the text is, *the ſouls which they made in Haran*; which he made is not written, but which they made: *Abraham* proſelyted the men, and *Sarah* proſelyted the women.” And a little after, “*Jacob* made proſelytes, as it is written, *Gen.* xxxv. 2. *Jacob ſaid unto his houſhold*, &c.” And in imitation of theſe they might be fond of making proſelites, but no further than their own intereſt was ſome way or other concerned: *and when he is made, ye make him two-fold more the child of hell than yourſelves*; for to their former errors in heatheniſm, ſome of which they might ſtill retain, they added new ones, they received from them, equally as bad, and were but more and more deſerving of hell, and even more than their maſters; and beſides, were trained up by them in the moſt bitter prejudices againſt Chriſt, and his Goſpel; and many of them proved more violent perſecutors of the followers of Chriſt, than the original *Jews* themſelves; ſee *Acts* xv. 50. and xiv. 2, 19. Our Lord here ſeems to oppoſe a common notion and ſaying of theirs[m], that when “one was made a proſelyte, he became entirely like a new-born babe;” but ſo far from being like one in innocence and harmleſſneſs, that he became a child of hell, filled with wrath and malice, and fitted for deſtruction; and ſo oppoſes another notion of theirs, that hell-fire has no power over their diſciples, nor even over the tranſgreſſors of *Iſrael*[n]: but they'll find it, by experience, that neither their deſcent from *Abraham*, nor their learning, nor their religion, will ſave them from the devouring flames, which their ſins have made them ſo deſerving of, and ſo are בני גיהנם, *children of hell*[o]; a *Talmudic* phraſe; the meaning of which they underſtood well enough, and which was applicable to them, and more ſo to their proſelytes; and that as owing to them, which was an aggravation of their own guilt and condemnation.

Ver. 16. *Wo unto you, you blind guides*, &c.] Meaning the ſame perſons, the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, as before, tho' not named, who pretended to be *guides of the blind*, *Rom.* ii. 19. but were themſelves blind, and ſo very unfit to be guides of others: they were as they were born, ignorant of divine things, of God in Chriſt, of the true Meſſiah, of the true meaning of the ſcriptures, of the ſpirituality of the law, and of the Goſpel of Chriſt, and the way of ſalvation by him; and their minds were blinded by the God of this world, and with a greedy and inſatiable covetouſneſs after the things of it, of which Chriſt here gives an inſtance: *which ſay, whoſoever ſhall ſwear by the temple it is nothing*; meaning, either that it was no ſin to uſe ſuch an oath, or it was not binding upon a man: he might chuſe whether he would abide by what he ſwore by the temple he would do; and thus they ignorantly and wickedly encouraged vain ſwearing and perjury. It was uſual with them to ſwear by the temple: take an inſtance, or two. “Says *R. Jochanan*[p], היכלא, *by the temple*, it is in our hands; but what ſhall I do?” The *Gloſs* upon it is; “it is an oath by the temple of God, that it is in our power to reveal the illegitimacy of the families

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[h] Hilch. Iſſure Biah, c. 14. §. 6.

[i] Piſke Toſeph. Cetubot, art. 7.

[k] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 47. 2. & 109. 2. Kidduſhin, fol. 70. 2. & Nidda, fol. 13. 2.

[l] Bereſhit Rabba, §. 39. fol. 35. 1. & §. 84. fol. 72. 3, 4. Maimon. Hilch. Iſſure Bia, c. 14. §. 11. & Eduth, c. 13. §. 2.

[m] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 22. 1. & 48. 2. & 62. 1. & 97. 2.

[n] T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 27. 1.

[o] T. Bab. Roſhhaſhanah, fol. 17. 1.

[p] T. Bab. Kidduſhin, fol. 71. 1.

“ lies of the land of *Iſrael.*” “ Says *R. Zechariah ben* “ *Hakatzab* [p], המעון הזה, *by this habitation*, (mean- “ ing the temple) her hand was not removed from “ my hand from the time the *Gentiles* entered into “ *Jeruſalem*, to the time they went out.” *Jarchi* and *Bartenora*'s note on it is, this is an oath. Again, “ ſays *R Simeon ben Gamaliel* [q], המעון הזה, *by this* “ *habitation*; I will not reſt this night until they “ (doves) are ſold for pence a-piece.” The *Gloſs* on it is, “ he ſwore by the ſanctuary.” *But whoſoever ſhall ſwear by the gold of the temple he is guilty*; or is bound, or is a debtor, to make good his oath; he cannot be excuſed, but muſt be obliged to fulfil it; or if he does not, he is guilty of perjury. This is to be underſtood not of the gold that covered any part of the temple; nor of the golden veſſels in it; but of the gold, or money, or gifts which were offered for the ſervice of the temple: and the ſenſe is, that whoſoever ſwore by *Korban*, and that this, or that ſhould be as *Korban*, he ſhould not go back from it; he was obliged to give it. This ſhewed the covetous diſpoſition of theſe men, who made nothing of oaths that were ſwore by the temple; but thoſe that were made by the *Korban*, or the gifts of it, were binding, becauſe their intereſt was in it; it was for their gain.

Ver. 17. *Ye fools, and blind,* &c.] That argue after ſo ridiculous a manner, that make uſe of ſuch thin ſophiſtry, that every body may ſee through it; who muſt be ſtupid and ſottiſh to the laſt degree, and their minds fooliſhly blinded with avarice, as to pleaſe and ſatisfy themſelves with ſo poor a diſtinction, that would by no means ſerve them, but make againſt them: *for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that ſanctifieth the gold?* the temple to be ſure: for that was the ſeat of the divine majeſty, built for him to dwell in, and in which he took up his reſidence; and was dedicated to his ſervice, and in it was divine worſhip performed unto him. The temple was ſanctified by the preſence of God in it; and the gold ſanctified by the temple, being devoted to the ſervice of it: whatever holineſs it had, it had it from the temple, and therefore the temple muſt be greater than that; and conſequently it muſt be moſt extravagantly ridiculous and fooliſh in them, to make oaths by the gold of the temple, and gifts dedicated to its ſervice, and on that ſcore ſanctified by it, more binding and ſacred than ſuch as were by the temple itſelf.

Ver. 18. *And whoſoever ſhall ſwear by the altar, it is nothing,* &c.] Theſe are again the words or ſayings of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, and expreſs their ſentiments and practice: it was uſual with them to ſwear by the altar; and this was reckoned either no ſin at all, or ſuch an oath was not accounted binding on a man; he might break, or keep it, as he thought fit: of this kind of ſwearing, we have the following inſtances. One ſaid to another [r], “ ſwear “ to me that thou wilt not diſcover me, and he “ ſwore to him; by what did he ſwear? ſays *R.* “ *Joſe bar Chanina*, במזבח הפנימי, *by the inner-* “ *moſt altar.*” Again, it is ſaid of *Zedekiah* [s], that “ he (*Nebuchadnezzar*) made him to ſwear; by “ what did he make him to ſwear? ſays *R. Joſe*, “ by the covenant he made him to ſwear; *Rabbi* “ ſays במזבח, *by the altar* he made him to ſwear.” And elſewhere [t] it is ſaid of him, “ *and he alſo re-* “ *belled againſt king Nebuchadnezzar, who made him* “ *ſwear by God*, 2 *Chron.* xxxvi. 13. By what did “ he make him ſwear? ſays *R. Joſe bar Chanina*, “ *by the horns of the innermoſt altar* he made him “ ſwear.” *But whoſoever ſweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty*; of perjury, if he does not make good his oath; he is bound to perform it, it is obligatory; whatever he ſwore ſhould be a gift for the altar, he was indiſpenſably obliged to bring it; for whatever he ſwore by *Korban*, or the gift, could never be put to any other uſe.

Ver. 19. *Ye fools, and blind,* &c.] This is very juſtly repeated, ſince this is no leſs an inſtance of their folly, blindneſs, and ſtupidity. In three copies of *Beza*'s the word *fools* is not; nor is it in the *Vulgate Latin*, nor in *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel; but the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions have it: *for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that ſanctifieth the gift?* The gift, or offering, before it was devoted to ſacred uſe, and brought, and laid upon the altar, was common, had no ceremonial ſanctity in it, and might be put to any uſe; but when it was brought, and laid upon the altar, it became holy; for, according to the law, whatever touched the altar, and indeed all, or any of the veſſels of the ſanctuary, was holy, *Exod.* xxix. 37. and xxx. 29. Chriſt ſpeaks the ſenſe of the law, and their own traditions, and in their own language, and argues from the ſame to the confutation of them: המזבח מקדש, *the altar*, they ſay [u], *ſanctifies* that which is fit for it; that is, that which is proper to be offered up upon it: “ as, *the altar* “ *ſanctifies* that which is fit for it, ſo the aſcent “ unto it ſanctifies; and as the altar, and the aſcent, “ ſanctify what is fit for them, ſo the veſſels ſanc- “ tify; the veſſels for liquids, ſanctify the liquids, “ and the dry meaſures ſanctify the dry; the veſ- “ ſels for liquids don't ſanctify the dry, nor the “ dry meaſures ſanctify the liquids; the holy veſ- “ ſels, which are bored, (or broken) when they do “ the ſervice they uſed to do, when whole, ſanctify, “ if not, they do not ſanctify; nor does any thing “ ſanctify but in the ſanctuary.” Now, ſince this is a clear caſe, that the altar ſanctifies the gift, and not the gift the altar, our Lord's queſtion is, which is the greater? A man that has the leaſt ſhare of common ſenſe will eaſily ſee, that the altar muſt be the greater: wherefore theſe *Scribes* and *Phariſees* muſt be wretchedly ſtupid to give out, that an oath made by the altar was not binding, when one that was made by the gift, or *Korban*, was binding; ſeeing the gift, or offering, received its ſanctity from the altar: hence, of the two, an oath made by the altar ſhould be more ſacred and obligatory than one made by the gift.

Ver. 20. *Whoſoever therefore ſhall ſwear by the altar,* &c.] Not that Chriſt allowed of ſwearing by the altar, or by the temple, or by heaven, or by any creature, animate or inanimate; for ſuch ſwearing is elſewhere diſapproved of by him, and forbid; but if a man did ſwear by the altar, he ought to know, and conſider, that he not only *ſweareth by it*, but by all the gifts and offerings that are brought, and laid upon it, *and by all things thereon*; whatever gifts and ſacrifices are offered upon it; which, by being put there, become holy, as the altar itſelf: ſo that he that ſwears by the altar, ſwears alſo by the gifts of the altar; and conſequently, according to their own traditions, ſuch oaths muſt be binding.

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[p] Miſn. Cetubot, c. 2. §. 9. Juchaſin, fol. 56. 1.

[q] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 166. 1. Miſn. Ceritot, c. 1. §. 7. Vid. c. 6. §. 3.

[r] Echa Rabbati, fol. 54. 1.

[s] Midraſh Kohelet, fol. 78. 1.

[t] Midraſh Megillat Eſther, fol. 89. 1.

[u] Miſn. Zebachim, c. 9. §. 7.

Ver. 21. *And whoſo ſhall ſwear by the temple*, &c.] As we have before ſeen they uſed to do, and as appears from what the poet ſays [w]:

*Ecce negas, juraſque mihi per templa tonantis*
*Non credo: jura, verpe, per Anchialum.*

in which he intimates, that if the *Jew* ſwore by the temple, he would not believe him; as well he might not, ſince ſuch an oath was accounted nothing; but bids him ſwear by *Anchialus*, that is, by חי אלוה, *Chi Eloah*, or חי עלין, *Chi Alon*, or *Elion*, *the living God*, or חי העולם, *Chi Haolam*, *he that lives for ever* [x]; and ſuggeſts, that he ſhould then believe him. Now our Lord, though he did not allow of ſuch ſwearing, yet juſtly argues, that he that ſweareth by the temple, not only *ſweareth by it*, which could not be a witneſs of what was ſwore; but he muſt be interpreted to ſwear by the inhabitant of it, *and by him that dwelleth in it*; that is, God, for whom it was built, to whom it was dedicated; where he was worſhipped, and where he vouchafed to reſide; taking up his dwelling between the cherubim upon the mercy-ſeat, in the moſt holy place; from whence he communed with men, and gave tokens of his preſence; and who only could be the proper witneſs of the truth, or falſhood, of what was ſwore; and therefore an oath, by the temple, ought to be looked upon as if made by God himſelf, and ſo to be ſacred and binding.

Ver. 22. *And he that ſhall ſwear by heaven*, &c.] As the *Jews* were wont to do in common, but did not look upon ſuch an oath as obligatory on them; ſee the note on *Matt.* v. 34. though ſuch an one *ſweareth by the throne of God*; for heaven is God's throne, where he ſits, and, in an eminent manner, diſplays the glory of his majeſty: *and by him that ſitteth thereon*, by God himſelf. Thus ſwearing by any thing that has any relation to God, is implicitly ſwearing by him; and therefore ought to be conſidered as binding, as if he was expreſſed in it; ſince an appeal can't be made to things inanimate, nor indeed to any creature, but to God, the ſearcher of hearts.

Ver. 23. *Wo unto you Scribes and Phariſees, hypocrites*, &c.] Chriſt returns to the former epithets he had very rightly given to theſe men, and very pertinently repeats them here; and which are confirmed by the inſtances of their conduct and practice here alledged, which abundantly ſhew their hypocriſy and deceit; ſince they were very ſtrict in obſerving ſome outward things, which gave them credit with the people, and eſpecially the prieſts and levites, ſome little trifling ceremonies and traditions of their elders, whilſt they neglected internal religion, and thoſe things which were of the greateſt moment and importance: *for ye take tithe of mint, and aniſe, and cummin*; which, tho' not commanded by the law, they were obliged to by the traditions of the elders. *Mint* is an herb well known, and has its name in the *Greek* from its ſweet ſmell; on account of which the *Jews* uſed to ſtrow it on the floors of their ſynagogues [y]. This was one of the herbs that was ſubject to the law of the ſeventh year [z], and is mentioned with thoſe which were to be tithed [a]. The *Ethiopic* verſion, inſtead of mint reads *hyſſop*; and which alſo was an herb that was obliged to be tithed [b]. *Aniſe* is a ſeed alſo well known, and which the *Jews* call שבת; and of which they often obſerve, that it is ſubject to tithing, both ſeed, herb, flowers, or ſtalks [c]: inſtead of this *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel has פיגם, *rue*; and which, in the *Miſna* [d], is mentioned along with mint, as it is by *Luke*, ch. xi. 42. and ſaid to be one of the things the *Phariſees* gave tithe of; tho' in their oral law it is reckoned among the things that are free from tithe [e]; and therefore this muſt be a ſort of work of ſuperoragation, to give tithe of that, which they were not obliged to. *Cummin* is a ſort of aniſe; its ſeed is much like fennel-ſeed, and which pigeons are very fond of: mention is made of it in *Iſ.* xxviii. 25, 27. and is reckoned with figs, dates, carobes, or *Egyptian* figs, and rice, which were obliged to be tithed [f], and was what was alſo bound to the offering of the firſt-fruits to the prieſt [g]. Chriſt mentions theſe particular herbs and ſeeds, as a ſpecimen of what they paid tithes of. In *Luke*, 'tis added, *and all manner of herbs*: for, according to the traditions of the elders, they were in general ſubject to tithes: and it is a common ſaying, or maxim of the *Jews*, that the tithing of corn is from the law, but מעשר ירק דרבנן, *the tithing of herbs is from the Rabbins* [h]; 'tis a conſtitution of theirs, and not of *Moſes*: *and have omitted the weightier matters of the law*. The diſtinction of the commandments of the law into lighter and heavier, or weightier, to which Chriſt here refers, is frequent with the *Jews*. When one comes to be made a proſelyte, they acquaint him with ſome of מצות קלות, *the light commands*, and ſome of מצות חמורות, *the heavy*, or *weighty commands* [i]. So again, they paraphraſe the words in *Iſ.* xxxiii. 18. *where is the Scribe?* he that numbers all the letters in the law. *Where is the receiver?* who weighs the *light* things, וחמורין שבתורה, and *heavy*, or *weighty things in the law* [k]. Again [l], "in the words of the law there are ſome things "*light*, and ſome things *heavy*, or *weighty*:" but thoſe weighty things they omitted, and regarded thoſe that were light; yea, that had no foundation in the law at all: and no wonder, ſince, in the place laſt cited, they ſay [m], that "the words of the *Scribes* "are all of them *weighty*, and that the ſayings of "the elders are more *weighty* than the words of "the prophets." The things our Lord refers to, and inſtances in, are as follow; *judgment*, *mercy*, *and faith*. *Judgment* may mean the adminiſtration of juſtice in courts of judicature; the putting in execution good judgments, righteous laws and ſtatutes; protecting, and relieving the injured and oppreſſed, and doing that which is right and equitable between man and man: but, on the contrary, theſe men devoured widows houſes, and oppreſſed the poor and fatherleſs. *Mercy* includes all acts of compaſſion to the diſtreſſed, relieving the neceſſitous, diſtributing to their wants, and ſhewing all kindneſs and beneficence to the poor and needy; which the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* very little practiſed, being a ſett of cruel, hard-hearted, and covetous perſons. *Faith* may not only deſign faithfulneſs in a man's keeping his word and promiſe, and fidelity to a truſt repoſed in him; but alſo faith in God, as the God of providence, and as the God of grace and mercy; believing in his word and promiſes, and worſhipping him, which the law requires;

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[w] Martial. Epigr. l. 11. Ep. 60.

[x] Vid. Selden. Prolegomena ad lib. de Succeſſionibus.

[y] Jarchi in Miſn. Oketzim, c. 1. §. 2.

[z] Miſn. Sheviith, c. 7. §. 1, 2.

[a] T. Hieroſ. Demai, fol. 22. 3.

[b] Miſn. Maaſerot, c. 3. §. 9.

[c] Ib. c. 4. §. 5. T. Hieroſ. Maaſerot, fol. 51. 2. T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 7. 2. Jarchi & Maimon. in Miſn. Oketzim, c. 3. §. 4.

[d] Oketzim, c. 1. §. 2.

[e] Miſn. Sheviith, c. 9. §. 1.

[f] Miſn. Demai, c. 2. §. 1.

[g] Miſn. Trumot, c. 10. §. 4.

[h] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 83. 2. & T. Hieroſ. Challah, fol. 60. 2. & Maaſerot, fol. 48. 3.

[i] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 47. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Iſſure Bia, c. 14. §. 2, 6, 9. Moſes Kotſenſis Mitzvot Tora, pr. neg. 116.

[k] T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 15. 2. & Sanhedrin, fol. 106. 2.

[l] T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 3. 2.

[m] Ib.

quires; and the rather this ſeems to be intended, becauſe *Luke*, inſtead of *faith*, puts *the love of God*, which faith includes, and works by, and is the end of the commandment, ariſing from faith unfeigned: ſo that Chriſt inſtances in the weightier matters of both tables of the law, which theſe men neglected, and the latter, as well as the former; not believing the revelation of the Goſpel, nor the Meſſiah, who was promiſed, and propheſied of by God, in the writings of the Old Teſtament: *theſe ought ye to have done*; more eſpecially, and in the firſt place, as being of the greateſt uſe and importance: *and not to leave the other undone*; meaning either the lighter matters, and leſſer commands of the law; or even their tithes of herbs: if they thought themſelves obliged to them, Chriſt would not diſpute the matter with them; if they thought fit to obſerve them, they might, ſo long as they did not interfere with, and take them off from things of greater moment. But alas! theſe men preferred the rituals of the ceremonial law, and the traditions of the elders, above the duties of the moral law; and reckoned that the latter were nothing, if the former were wanting; for they [n] ſay, that “ the words of the *Scribes*, are more lovely “ than the words of the law.” And alſo [o], that “ he that prophanes the holy things, and deſpiſes “ the ſolemn feaſts, and makes void the covenant “ of *Abraham* our father, (circumciſion) and be“ haves impudently towards the law, (ceremonial) “ although the law and good works are in his [p] hands, he has no part in the world to come.” The *Perſic* verſion renders the words thus; *theſe ought ye to do, and not them*; as if it was our Lord's ſenſe, that they ought to obſerve the weightier matters of the moral law, and not regard their tithing of herbs, and other traditions of their fathers.

Ver. 24. *Ye blind guides*, &c.] As in ver. 16. *who ſtrain at a gnat and ſwallow a camel*: the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read the words in the plural number, *gnats* and *camels*. The *Jews* had a law, which forbid them the eating of any creeping thing, *Lev.* xi. 41. and of this they were ſtrictly obſervant, and would not be guilty of the breach of it for ever ſo much. “ One that eats a flea, or a gnat, they ſay [p] is מומר, *an apoſtate*;” one that has changed his religion, and is no more to be reckoned as one of them. Hence they very carefully ſtrained their liquors, leſt they ſhould tranſgreſs the above command, and incur the character of an apoſtate; and at leaſt, the penalty of being beaten with forty ſtripes, ſave one; for, “ whoever eats a “ whole fly, or a whole knat, whether alive or “ dead, was to be beaten on account of a creeping “ flying thing [q].” Among the accuſations *Haman* is ſaid to bring againſt them to *Ahaſuerus*, and the inſtances he gives of their laws being different from the kings, this is one [r]; that “ if a fly falls “ into the cup of one of them, זורקו ושותהו, *he* “ *ſtrains it, and drinks it*; but if my Lord the king “ ſhould touch the cup of one of them, he would “ throw it to the ground, and would not drink of “ it.” *Maimonides* ſays [s], “ *He that ſtrains* wine, “ or vinegar, or ſtrong liquor, and eats *Jabchuſhin* “ (a ſort of ſmall flies found in wine-cellars [t], on ac“ count of which they ſtrained their wine,) or gnats, “ or worms, which he hath ſtrained off, is to be “ beaten on account of the creeping things of the “ water, or on account of the creeping flying “ things, and the creeping things of the water.” Moreover, 'tis ſaid [u], “ a man might not pour his “ ſtrong liquors through a ſtrainer, by the light “ (of a candle or lamp) leſt he ſhould ſeparate and “ leave in the top of the ſtrainer (ſome creeping “ thing) and it ſhould fall again into the cup, and “ he ſhould tranſgreſs the law, in *Lev.* xi. 41.” To this practice Chriſt alluded here; and ſo very ſtrict and careful were they in this matter, that to ſtrain at a gnat, and ſwallow a camel, became at length a proverb, to ſignify much ſollicitude about little things, and none about greater. Theſe men would not, on any conſideration, be guilty of ſuch a crime, as not to pay the tithe of mint, aniſe, and cummin, and ſuch like herbs and ſeeds; and yet made no conſcience of doing juſtice, and ſhewing mercy to men, or of exerciſing faith in God, or love to him. Juſt, as many hypocrites, like them, make a great ſtir, and would appear very conſcientious and ſcrupulous, about ſome little trifling things, and yet ſtick not, at other times, to commit the groſſeſt enormities, and moſt ſcandalous ſins in life.

Ver. 25. *Wo unto you Scribes and Phariſees, hypocrites*, &c.] Our Lord cannot be thought to bear too hard upon theſe men, nor does he continue this character of them, and denunciations of woe againſt them, without a reaſon: *for ye make clean the outſide of the cup and platter, but within they are full of extortion and exceſs*. The alluſion is to their traditions about waſhing their cups and pots, and brazen veſſels; ſee *Mark* vii. 4. which they ſtrictly obſerved. In their oral law is a whole tract, called *Mikvaot*, which gives rules about the places where they waſhed, the things to be waſhed, and the manner of waſhing them; about which they were very nice, pretending to much outward cleanneſs, but had no regard to inward purity. Chriſt's ſenſe is, that they took much pains, and were very careful, that the cup they drank out of, and the platter, or diſh they eat out of, ſhould be very clean; when at the ſame time, the food and drink that were within them, were got by oppreſſion and rapine; by devouring widows houſes, by making undue claims upon, and extorting unjuſt ſums from the fatherleſs, the poor, and the needy; and were abuſed by them, to luxury and intemperance. In like manner the *Jews* themſelves ſay of hypocrites [w]; “ They make ſhow of a pure and clean ſoul, but “ under it lies hid a leproſy: they are like to *veſſels* “ *full of uncleanneſs*; they are outwardly waſhed “ with the water of fraud and craftineſs; but “ whatſoever is within, in the midſt of them, is un“ clean.” The *Vulgate Latin* verſion of the text, inſtead of *exceſs*, reads *uncleanneſs*, and ſo does *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel: many copies read *unrighteouſneſs*. Exceſs is thought to be a ſin the *Phariſees* were not guilty of, though they were of extortion, injuſtice, and uncleanneſs.

Ver. 26. *Thou blind Phariſee*, &c.] Well might Chriſt call ſuch an one a blind *Phariſee*, who was ſo ſcrupulouſly careful to cleanſe his cup and platter; and yet made no conſcience of filling them with what was gotten in an unjuſt way, and ſo defiled himſelf and them: *cleanſe firſt that which is within the cup and platter, that the outſide of them may be clean alſo*: get food and drink in an honeſt way, remove all extortion and oppreſſion out of thine hands, and luxury and intemperance from thy table; and ſo ſhall the outward cleanneſs of thy cup and diſh, be no reproach unto thee, or teſtimony againſt thee, of thine hypocriſy. So the great concern of all men ſhould be, inward purity; that their hearts be purified by faith in the blood of Chriſt, and ſprinkled from an evil conſcience by the ſame; that principles of grace and holineſs, be formed in them by the Spirit of God; and then their outward lives and converſations being influenced thereby, will be honourable and agreeable to their profeſſions. Otherwiſe, an external reformation, or an outward ſhow of holineſs, and bare pretenſions to it, without internal grace, will never be of any avail in the ſight of God.

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[n] T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 3. 2. [o] T. Hieroſ. Peſachim, fol. 33. 2. [p] T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 26. 2. & Horaiot, fol. 11. 1. [q] Maimon. Hilch. Maacolot Aſurot, c. 2. §. 22. [r] T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 13. 2. Vid. T. Hieroſ. Sota, fol. 17. 1. [s] Ubi ſupra, §. 20. [t] Gloſſ. in T. Bab. Cholin, fol. 67. 1. [u] Ib. [w] R. Sol. Gabirol in Cether Malcuth apud L. Capell. in loc.

Ver. 27. *Wo unto you Scribes and Phariſees, hypocrites*, &c.] 'Tis much theſe men could bear to hear themſelves ſo often called by this name; and it ſhows great courage in our Lord, ſo freely to reprove them, and expoſe their wickedneſs, who were men of ſo much credit and influence with the people: *for ye are like unto whited ſepulchres*; or *covered with lime*, as the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions, render it. For the *Jews* uſed to mark their graves with white lime, that they might be known; that ſo prieſts, *Nazarites*, and travellers, might avoid them, and not be polluted with them. This appears from various paſſages in their writings: "The vineyard of the fourth year, they "marked with clods of earth, and an uncircum- "ciſed one with duſt, ושל קברות בסיד, *and* "*graves with chalk*, mixed (with water) and pour- "ed (on them [x].") Of this marking of the graves, the reaſon of it, the time and manner of doing it, *Maimonides* [y] gives us this account: "Whoever "finds a grave, or a dead carcaſs, or any thing "for the dead that defiles, by the tent he is "obliged to put a mark upon it, that it may "not be a ſtumbling to others; and on the inter- "mediate days of a feaſt, they go out from the "*Sanhedrim*, to mark the graves.——With what "do they mark? בסיד ממחה, *with chalk infuſed* "in water, and poured upon the unclean place: "they don't put the mark upon the top of the un- "clean place, (or exactly in it,) but ſo that it may "ſtand out here and there, at the ſides of it, that "what is pure may not be corrupted; and they "don't put the mark far from the place of the "uncleanneſs, that they mayn't waſte the land of "*Iſrael*; and they don't ſet marks on thoſe that "are manifeſt, for they are known to all; but up- "on thoſe that are doubtful, as a field in which a "grave is loſt, and places that are open, and want "a covering." Now becauſe when the rains fell, theſe marks were waſhed away, hence on the firſt of *Adar* (*February*) when they uſed to repair the highways, they alſo marked the graves with white lime, that they might be ſeen and known, and avoided; and ſo on their intermediate feaſt days [z]: the reaſon why they made uſe of chalk, or lime, and with theſe marked their graves, was becauſe it looked white like bones [a]; ſo that upon firſt ſight, it might be thought and known what it was for, and that a grave was there: hence this phraſe, *whited ſepulchres*: *which indeed appear beautiful outward*; eſpecially at a diſtance, and when new marked: *but within are full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanneſs*; worms and rottenneſs, which ariſe from the putrified carcaſſes, and are very nauſeous and defiling.

Ver. 28. *Even ſo ye alſo outwardly appear righteous*, &c.] By making broad their phylacteries, enlarging the borders of their garments, praying long prayers, compaſſing ſea and land to make one proſelyte, paying tithes of all manner of herbs, and cleanſing the outſide of the cup and platter, and doing all their works, prayers, faſtings, and almsdeeds, to be ſeen of men. This is the accommodation of the above ſimile; by reaſon of theſe things they looked like whited ſepulchres, outwardly beautiful: ſo theſe appeared outwardly righteous, they looked like righteous perſons, and were not; they were what *Hagar*, as the *Jews* ſay, charged her miſtreſs with being; for ſo they interpret theſe words, *her miſtreſs was deſpiſed in her eyes*, *Gen.* xvi. 4 [b]. "She ſaid, this *Sarah* is not "ſecretly, what ſhe is openly; ſhe appears, "כאילו היא צדקת, *as if ſhe was righteous*, and ſhe "is not righteous." The ſame they ſay of [c] *Leah*. This was a miſrepreſentation; but the repreſentation Chriſt gives of theſe men, is right; they were of that ſort of the *Phariſees*, which they call, הצבועין, *the dyed*, or *coloured* ones: it is ſaid of *Jannai* the king, that he ſhould ſay to thoſe of his family [d]; "Don't be afraid of them that are *Pha-* "*riſees*, (that are truly ſo) nor of them that are "not *Phariſees*; but of them that are, הצבועין, "*dyed*, for they are like to *Phariſees*; for their "works, are as the works of *Zimri*, (adulterers, "as theſe were) and they expect the reward as "*Phinehas*." The *Gloſs* upon it is, "the *Phari-* "*ſees* hated him, becauſe he had ſlain many of "their wiſe men, and was turned *Sadducee*; and "when he was dying, his wife was afraid of them, "leſt they ſhould take away the kingdom from "her ſons, and ſhe deſired him to ſeek their fa- "vour for her; but he ſaid unto her, don't be "afraid of the *Phariſees*, for they are *righteous*, "and will not render evil to thee, nor to thy ſons; "for they have not ſinned againſt them; nor of "them that are not *Phariſees*, for they are their "friends; but of *the dyed ones*: as if he had ſaid, "their appearance is not according to their nature, "but they are dyed without, ואין תוכן כברם, "*and their inſide is not as their outſide*; for their "works are as the work of *Zimri*, for they are "ungodly; and they expect the reward as *Phine-* "*has*, ſaying to men, to honour them as *Phine-* "*has*." But this outward ſhew and appearance of righteouſneſs, was only *unto men*, not unto God: they did not appear ſo to him, who is the ſearcher of hearts, and knows what is in man, and knew all the ſecret wickedneſs that was in them; for though they impoſed upon, and deceived men, they could not deceive God; nor was their iniquity hid from Chriſt, who adds, *but within ye are full of hypocriſy and iniquity*: and which was evident from their ambition and vain-glory, in deſiring the uppermoſt rooms at feaſts, the chief places in the ſynagogue, greetings in the markets, and titles of honour and grandeur; from their avarice and cruel oppreſſion of the widows, and fatherleſs, under a pretence of long prayers; from their neglecting the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith, and practiſing extortion and exceſs: that ſaying of theirs [e], may be applied to themſelves; "every "diſciple of a wiſe man, שאין תוכו כברו, *whoſe* "*inſide is not as his outſide*, is no diſciple of a wiſe "man." And it is expreſsly aſcribed by ſome of their writers to one ſort of the *Phariſees*, of whom they ſay [f], "they are deſirous to appear to men to "be holy, but their inſide is not as their outſide;

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[x] Miſn. Maaſer Sheni, c. 5. §. 1.

[y] Hilch. Tumath Meth, c. 8. §. 9.

[z] Miſn. Shekalim, c. 1. §. 1. & Moed Katon, c. 1. §. 2. Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

[a] Jarchi in Miſn. Moed Katon, c. 1. §. 2. & Bartenora in Miſn. Maaſer Sheni, c. 5. §. 1.

[b] Bereſhit Rabba, §. 45. fol. 40. 3. Jarchi in Gen. xvi. 4.

[c] Bereſhit Rabba, §. 71. fol. 63. 2.

[d] T. Bab. Sota, fol. 22. 2.

[e] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 72. 2.

[f] Bartenora in Miſn. Sota, c. 3. §. 4.

which is much the ſame Chriſt here ſays of them. What our Lord charges theſe men with, is owned by their own doctors; they ſay [g], that "the iniquity of thoſe that were under the firſt temple, "was open and manifeſt, but the iniquity of thoſe "that were under the ſecond temple, was not open." But as the Gloſs ſays, "the children of the ſecond "temple, רשעים היו בסתר, *were ſecretly wicked.*"

Ver. 29. *Wo unto you Scribes and Phariſees, hypocrites*, &c.] This is the ſeventh and laſt time, in which theſe words are delivered in this exact form by our Lord, in this chapter; and expreſſes the certainty, both of their ſin and puniſhment: and the inſtance annexed to it, no leſs diſcovers the hypocriſy of theſe perſons, and ſupports the character given of them; as alſo furniſhes out a ſufficient reaſon, why a woe is denounced upon them: *becauſe ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garniſh the ſepulchres of the righteous*; meaning by the *prophets* and *righteous* men, the ſame perſons, the prophets, who were righteous men; or elſe the prophets, and alſo other righteous men beſides them. Rightly is the word *build*, uſed of tombs and ſepulchres: the *Jews* have a canon, which runs thus [h]; "they "don't dig graves nor ſepulchres, on a feaſt-day." The commentators [i] on it ſay, that the graves are the holes which they dig in the earth, and the ſepulchres are the buildings over the graves. In the *Gemara* it is aſked [k], "what are the graves? and "what are the ſepulchres? Says *R. Judah*, the "graves are made by digging, and the ſepulchres "or tombs, בבנין, *by building*;" and theſe edifices which they built over the graves of ſome of their prophets, and righteous men, were very grand and beautiful. The *Cippi Hebraici*, furniſh us with many inſtances of this kind: in *Hebron*, in the land of *Canaan*, which is *Kirjath Arba*, is the cave of *Macpelah*; in which were buried the fathers of the world, *Adam* and *Eve*, *Abraham* and *Sarah*, *Iſaac* and *Rebekah*, *Jacob* and *Leah*; and over it is a wonderful, ונאה, *and beautiful* building, and it is the building of *David* the king; and over-againſt the city, in the mountain, is a *beautiful* building, and there was buried *Jeſſe*, the father of *David* the king: in the way from *Hebron* to *Jeruſalem*, is *Chalchul*, where *Gad*, *David*'s ſeer was buried; and *Tekoah*, where *Iſaiah* the prophet was buried, and over him a *beautiful* ſtructure: at the mount of *Olives* is a beautiful fabrick, which they ſay is the ſepulchre of *Huldah*, the propheteſs; at the bottom of the mount, is a very great cave, attributed to *Haggai* the prophet, and in the middle of it are many caves: near it, is the ſepulchre of *Zechariah* the prophet, in a cave ſhut up, and over it, is כיפה נאה, *a beautiful arch*, or vault of one ſtone: between *Rama* and *Jeruſalem*, are caves aſcribed to *Simeon* the juſt, and the ſeventy (elders of the) *Sanhedrim*; at *Rama*, *Samuel* was buried, alſo his father *Elkana*, and *Hannah* his mother, and in a cave ſhut up, and over the cave buildings: at *Cheres*, which is *Timnath Cheres*, in mount *Ephraim*, are buried *Joſhua* the ſon of *Nun*, and *Nun* his father, and *Caleb* the ſon of *Jephunneh*, and over them are trees. At *Avarta* is the ſchool of *Phinehas*, the ſon of *Eleazar* the prieſt, and *Eleazar* is buried upon the mountain; and below the village, between the olive-trees, *Ithamar*, and over him a large monument: at the barns is a temple of the *Gentiles*, with a vault and a cave, where they ſay are buried ſeventy elders. At *Belata*, a village about a ſabbath day's journey from *Shechem*, *Joſeph* the righteous, was buried: at mount *Carmel*, is the cave of *Elijah* the prophet, and there was buried *Eliſha*, the ſon of *Shaphat* the prophet: at *Jordan* was buried *Iddo* the prophet, and over it is a great elm-tree, and it is in the form of a lion; and there was buried *Shebuel*, the ſon of *Gerſhom*, the ſon of *Moſes*, over whom is a great oak-tree: at *Geba*, in mount *Lebanon*, is buried *Zephaniah* the prophet, in the middle of a cave ſhut up. On a mountain, a ſabbath day's journey from *Zidon*, *Zebulon* was buried, in a beautiful vault; at *Cephar Noah*, was buried *Noah* the juſt; and at *Kadeſh Nephtalim*, *Barak* the ſon of *Abinoam*, and *Deborah* his wife, and *Jael*; and at *Timnath*, *Shamgar* the ſon of *Anath*, over whom are two marble pillars. At *Cephar Cana*, is buried *Jonah*, the ſon of *Amittai*, on the top of a mountain, in a temple of the *Gentiles*, in a *beautiful* vault: at *Jakuk*, was buried in the way, *Habakkuk* the prophet; and at the north of the village of *Raam*, was buried *Obadiah* the prophet: at *Suſan* the palace, was buried *Mordecai* the *Jew*, and over him a beautiful ſtone ſtatue; and on it written, this is the ſepulchre of *Mordecai*, the ſon of *Jair*, the ſon of *Shimei*, the ſon of *Kiſh*, a man of *Jemini*; and near the river *Hiddekel*, *Ezekiel* the prophet was buried. In this account, many things may be obſerved, which confirm and illuſtrate the words of the text. And certain it is, that it was accounted very honourable and laudable in perſons, to beautify the ſepulchres of the patriarchs and prophets. Among the excellent characters given of *Benaah*, *R. Jochanan*'s maſter, it is ſaid [l], "that he was a "very wiſe man, and a judge, and underſtood "myſteries and parables; וציין מערת, *and painted* "*the cave* of *Adam* the firſt, and the cave of *Abra*-"*ham*." Though perhaps this is to be underſtood of him in a figurative ſenſe, but yet muſt allude to a literal one: the ſepulchres of the prophets, were eſpecially very ſacred: "all ſepulchres they "ſay [m], might be removed, but the ſepulchres of "a king, and the *ſepulchres of a prophet*; they ſay "unto him, were not the ſepulchres of the ſons of "*David* removed? and the ſepulchres of the ſons "of *Huldah*, were in *Jeruſalem*, and a man might "not touch them, to remove them for ever. *R.* "*Akiba* replied to them, becauſe of decency it was "forgiven, (or allowed) there, and from thence the "uncleanneſs being channelled, went out to the brook "*Kidron*." Now our Lord muſt not be underſtood, as blaming them for barely building the tombs of the prophets, and garniſhing the ſepulchres of the righteous, which they might have done without blame. But becauſe they did all this, that they might be thought to be very innocent and holy men, and far from being guilty of the crimes their forefathers were; when they were of the very ſelf-ſame bloodthirſty, perſecuting ſpirit; and did, and would do the ſame things to the prophets and apoſtles of the New Teſtament, their fathers had done to the prophets of the old. They have a ſaying [n], that "they don't erect monuments *for the righteous*; for "their words are their memorial." But this can only mean, that there is no need of monuments for them; ſince their ſayings are ſufficient to keep up the memory of them. Hence Dr. *Lightfoot* thinks, that our Lord reproves them out of their own mouths, for deſpiſing the words of the prophets; imagining they performed piety enough, by beſtowing coſt in adorning their ſepulchres; when they themſelves own, their ſayings are the beſt remembrancers of them, and therefore ought to be regarded more than their tombs.

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[g] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 9. 2.

[h] Miſn. Moed Katon, c. 1. ſ. 6.

[i] Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

[k] T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 8. 2.

[l] Juchaſin, fol. 86. 1.

[m] T. Hieroſ. Nazir, fol. 57. 4.

[n] T. Hieroſ. Shekalim, fol. 47. 1.

Ver. 30. *And ſay, if we had been in the days of our fathers*, &c.] Their anceſtors and predeceſſors: ſignifying, that if they had lived in the times they did, or had been in the ſame poſt and office with them, they ſhould have oppoſed, at leaſt not conſented to their meaſures: *we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets*; would not have joined them in perſecuting the prophets, and in ſhedding their blood, and putting them to death; but would have received them as the prophets of the Lord, have hearkened to their advice and meſſage, and have honoured and obeyed them as ſuch; and this they thought they ſufficiently declared, by building and adorning their tombs.

Ver. 31. *Wherefore ye be witneſſes unto yourſelves*, &c.] Or *againſt yourſelves*, as the *Syriac* reads; for what they ſaid was a plain acknowledgment, and a full confeſſion, what their fathers had done, and whoſe offſpring they were; and from whom better things were not to be expected; ſince they were their fathers own children, and of the ſame temper and diſpoſition with them: *that ye are the children of them that killed the prophets.* They plainly owned, that their fathers killed the prophets, and that they deſcended from them; though they meant not ſo much to reproach their anceſtors, as to give themſelves a greater character; yet it did not with thoſe, that knew them; not with our Lord: for as their own words teſtified againſt them, that they were a ſeed of evil doers; their practices ſhewed them to be of the ſame ſpirit and principles with their progenitors.

Ver. 32. *Fill ye up then the meaſure of your fathers.*] Of their ſins; for there were bounds and limits ſet how far they ſhould proceed, and no further; as yet they had not got to the end of their iniquity: their fathers had gone great lengths in ſin, but their iniquity was not yet full, as is ſaid of the *Amorites*, *Gen.* xv. 16. theſe their ſons were to fill it up. They had ſhed the blood of many of the prophets; and indeed there were none of them but they had perſecuted and abuſed, in one ſhape or another: ſome they intreated ſhamefully, others they beat; ſome they ſtoned, and others they put to death with the ſword, or otherwiſe; and now their children were about to fill the meaſure brimful, by crucifying the Son of God, which they were at this time meditating and contriving; and by perſecuting and ſlaying his apoſtles, and ſo would bring upon them the vengeance of God. The *Jews* well enough underſtood theſe words, which were ſpoken to them in an ironical way, and expreſſing what they were about, and what they would hereafter do, and what would be the iſſue and conſequence of it: they have a ſaying [o], that "the holy bleſſed God does not take vengeance on "a man, עד שתתמלא סאתו, *until his meaſure is* "*filled up*; according to *Job* xx. 22." Which the *Chaldee* paraphraſe renders, "when his meaſure is "filled up, then ſhall he take vengeance on him;" and that this is Chriſt's ſenſe, appears from what follows.

Ver. 33. *Ye ſerpents, ye generation of vipers*, &c.] The latter of theſe names, *John* the *Baptiſt* calls the *Sadducees* and *Phariſees* by, in ch. iii. 7. and Chriſt, in ch. xii. 34. both expreſs their craft and ſubtlety, their inward poiſon, and venemous nature; their fair outſide, and ſpecious pretences; their hypocriſy, malice, and wickedneſs; in which they were like to the old ſerpent, their father the devil, and to their anceſtors, that murdered the prophets; nor could any good thing be expected, from ſuch a viperous generation: *how can ye eſcape the damnation of hell!* ſignifying, that it was impoſſible that they ſhould; nor could they ſurely expect it themſelves, who muſt be conſcious to themſelves of their wickedneſs, malice, and deceit. The *Perſic* verſion reads it, *where can ye eſcape?* &c. and ſo *Beza* ſays it was read, in one antient copy of his; and the ſenſe is, whither can ye flee? to whom, or what can you have recourſe to, to ſkreen you from the wrath to come? Rocks and mountains, caves and dens, will be of no ſervice. The phraſe, דינה של גיהנם, *the judgment*, or *damnation of hell*, is a phraſe often uſed in the *Talmud* [p], and *Midraſhes* [q] of the *Jews*; and intends future torment, and the everlaſting vengeance and wrath of God, the unquenchable fire prepared for the devil and his angels, and which impenitent unbelieving ſinners cannot eſcape.

Ver. 34. *Wherefore, behold I ſend unto you prophets*, &c.] To try them, whether they would ſhew the reſpect to prophets, they pretended to have for them; by building and beautifying their ſepulchres; by exclaiming againſt their forefathers for ſhedding their blood; and by declaring, that had they lived in their days, they would not have joined with them in it; and to make it appear, that theſe were all empty words, and ſpecious pretences; and that they had the ſame malicious and bloody principles in them; and would be guilty of the ſame practices, and ſo fill up the meaſure of their fathers ſins; and bring upon them the puniſhment of everlaſting burnings hereafter, as well as ruin and deſtruction on their nation, city, and temple now. Chriſt here ſpeaks, as one having power and authority, to qualify and ſend forth men, under the ſeveral characters here mentioned, and of what he ſhould do after his reſurrection: for notwithſtanding the people of the *Jews* would crucify him, and uſe him as they did, in a barbarous manner; yet after all this, he would ſend his miniſters to them, to gather his elect out from among them, to render the reſt inexcuſable, and to ſhew his longſuffering and patience. The perſons deſigned by *prophets, wiſe men, and Scribes*, are his apoſtles: called *prophets*; becauſe they were divinely inſpired to write, and preach in his name; had the gift of foretelling future events, and of explaining with the greateſt clearneſs and exactneſs, the prophecies of the Old Teſtament; ſhewing their reſpect unto, and accompliſhment in Chriſt: *wiſe men*; becauſe they were made wiſe unto ſalvation, and capable of inſtructing others: they were filled with all ſpiritual and evangelical wiſdom, and preached the wiſdom of God in a myſtery, even the hidden wiſdom: and *Scribes*; becauſe they were well inſtructed in the kingdom of heaven, and had the true knowledge of the law, and could rightly interpret it, as well as make known the Goſpel of the grace of God. Chriſt chuſes to uſe theſe names and titles, becauſe the *Jews* pretended to have great veneration for the ancient prophets, and theſe he ſhould ſend, would not be a whit inferior to them, but in many things exceed them; and they had great eſteem for their wiſe men and *Scribes*, who would

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[o] T. Bab. Sota, fol. 9. 1.

[p] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 61. 1. Erubin, fol. 18. 2. Yebamot, fol. 102. 2. Sota, fol. 4. 2. & 5. 1. & Bava Bathra, fol. 10. 1.

[q] Bemidbar Rabba, fol. 203. 1. Shirhaſhirim Rabba, fol. 14. 2. & Midraſh Kohelet, fol. 76. 1.

be vaſtly exceeded by theſe miniſters of his, and yet would be uſed very badly by them: *and ſome of them ye ſhall kill*; as *Stephen*, the firſt martyr, who was ſtoned to death by them; and *James*, the brother of *John*, whom *Herod*, to their good liking, killed with the ſword; and the other *James* they threw headlong from off the pinnacle of the temple, and killed him with a fuller's club[r]. *And crucify*; ſo *Simeon*, the ſon of *Cleophas*, was crucified at the inſtigation of the *Jews*, as *Euſebius* relates[s]. *And ſome of them ye ſhall ſcourge in your ſynagogues*; as *John*, *Peter*, and *Paul*: *and perſecute them from city to city*; as they did *Paul* and *Barnabas*, as the *Acts* of the *Apoſtles* teſtify.

Ver. 35. *That upon you may come all the righteous blood*, &c.] Or *the blood of all the righteous men*, as the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read; for there is no righteouſneſs in blood, nor any conveyed by it: all men are of one blood, and that is tainted; they that are righteous, are not ſo naturally, nor by any righteouſneſs of their own, but by the righteouſneſs of Chriſt: and ſuch were the perſons here meant, whoſe blood being ſhed in the cauſe of righteouſneſs, God would revenge; and the puniſhment of ſuch a crime, and the vengeance of God for it, were to come upon the nation of the *Jews* by this means, through their crucifying of Chriſt, and killing, and perſecuting his apoſtles; whereby they would make it manifeſt, that they approved of, and conſented to, what others had done to all the righteous men, whoſe blood had been *ſhed upon the earth*; whether in *Judæa*, or elſewhere; and continued in the ſame wicked practices, or committed worſe, and ſo juſtly incurred the wrath of God to the uttermoſt; which would quickly come upon them, when the meaſure of their fathers ſin were filled up by them, from the beginning of time, to the preſent age: even *from the blood of righteous Abel*; who was the firſt perſon in the world that was killed, and that for righteouſneſs ſake too, becauſe his works were righteous, his perſon being ſo; not by his works, but thro' the righteouſneſs and ſacrifice of the Meſſiah, which were to be brought in; in the faith of which he offered up his ſacrifice, whereby he obtained a teſtimony from God, that he was righteous, having reſpect to his perſon in Chriſt, and ſo to his offering. This epithet of *righteous* ſeems to be what was commonly given him by the *Jews*: hence, with a peculiar emphaſis, he is called הבל הצדיק, *Abel the righteous*[t]; as he is alſo ſaid to be ראש לנהרגים, *the head of them that are killed*[u]; he being the firſt man that was ſlain; for which reaſon he is mentioned here by Chriſt; and alſo, becauſe his blood cried for vengeance, and ſtill continued to do, upon all ſuch perſons that ſhould commit the like crime. 'Tis an obſervation frequently made by the *Jews*, on thoſe words in *Gen.* iv. 10. *the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me*, that "it is not ſaid in the *Hebrew* text, *the blood of thy brother*, but *the bloods of thy brother*; his blood, and the blood of his ſeed[w]; and that from hence may be learned, that the blood of his children, and of his childrens children, and of all his offspring, to the end of all generations, that ſhould proceed from him, all ſtood and cried before the Lord[x]." The *Jeruſalem Targum* paraphraſes the words in this remarkable manner; "the price of the bloods of *the multitude of the righteous*, that ſhall ſpring from *Abel* thy brother." And *Onkelos* thus, "the voice of the blood of the ſeed that ſhall riſe from thy brother, &c." *unto the blood of Zecharias, ſon of Barachias, whom ye ſlew between the temple and the altar*. Learned men are very much divided about this perſon, who he was. Some think our Lord ſpeaks prophetically of *Zechariah*, the ſon of *Baruch*; who, as *Joſephus* ſays[y], was ſlain in the middle of the temple, juſt before the ſiege of *Jeruſalem*; and who was, as he alſo relates, a rich man, of an illuſtrious family, a hater of wickedneſs, and a friend to liberty: and becauſe, as *Abel* was the firſt man that was ſlain, and this man being killed in the temple, at the cloſe of the *Jewiſh* ſtate; and becauſe the words may be rendered, *whom ye ſhall have ſlain*, therefore he is thought to be intended: but there are ſeveral things that don't agree with him, beſides, its being a narration of a fact, as paſt, according to the uſual rendering of the word; for this *Zecharias* was the ſon of *Baruch*, and not *Barachias*, which are two different names; he was killed in the middle of the temple, not between the temple and the altar; nor does he appear to be a man of ſuch great character, as to be diſtinguiſhed in this manner; and beſides, his death was what the *Jews* did not conſent to in general, and therefore could not be charged with it; he was acquitted by the *ſanhedrim* of the charge of treachery laid againſt him, and was aſſaſſined by two zealots. Others have thought that *Zecharias*, the father of *John* the *Baptiſt*, is meant, who is ſuppoſed to be murdered by the *Jews* very lately; and it being a recent action, is mentioned by our Lord: the reaſon of it is a tradition, which ſeveral ancient writers[z] ſpeak of, and is pretended to be this; that there was a place in the temple appropriated to virgins, and that *Mary*, the mother of our Lord, after his birth, came and took her place here, as a virgin, when the *Jews*, knowing her to have a child, objected to it; but *Zechariah*, who was acquainted with the myſtery of the incarnation, ordered her to keep her place, upon which the *Jews* ſlew him upon the ſpot: but this tradition is not to be depended on; nor does it appear that there ever was any ſuch particular place in the temple aſſigned to virgins; nor that the father of this *Zecharias* was *Barachias*; or that the ſon was ſlain by the *Jews*, and in this place. Others have been of opinion, that *Zechariah* the prophet is deſigned; and indeed, he is ſaid to be the ſon of *Barachiah*, the ſon of *Iddo*, *Zech.* i. 1. and the *Jewiſh Targumiſt* ſpeaks of a *Zechariah*, the ſon of *Iddo*, as ſlain by the *Jews* in the temple. His words are theſe[a]; "as ye ſlew *Zechariah*, the ſon of *Iddo*, the high-prieſt, and faithful prophet, in the houſe of the ſanctuary of the Lord, on the day of atonement; becauſe he reproved you, that ye might not do that evil which is before the Lord." And him the *Jews* make to be the ſame with *Zechariah* the ſon of *Jeberechiah*, in *Iſ.* viii. 2. and read *Berechiah*[b]: but the *Targumiſt* ſeems to confound *Zechariah*, the ſon of *Jehoiada*, with him; for the prophet *Zechariah* was not an high-prieſt, *Joſhua* was high-prieſt in his time; nor does it appear from any writings, that he was killed by the *Jews*; nor is it probable that they would be guilty of ſuch a crime, juſt upon their return from captivity; and beſides, he could not be ſlain in ſuch a place, becauſe the temple, and altar, were not yet built: it remains, that it muſt be *Zechariah*, the ſon of *Jehoiada* the prieſt, who was ſlain in the court of the houſe of the Lord, 2 *Chron.* xxiv. 20, 21, 22. who, as *Abel* was the firſt, he is the laſt of the righteous men whoſe death is related in the ſcriptures, and for whoſe blood vengeance was required, as for *Abel*'s. He was ſlain in the court of the houſe of the Lord; and ſo the *Ethiopic* verſion here renders it, in the midſt of the holy houſe. 'Tis often ſaid by the *Jewiſh* writers[c], that "*R. Joden*, (ſometimes 'tis *R. Jonathan*) aſked *R. Acha*, "whether they ſlew *Zechariah*, in the court of the "*Iſraelites*, or in the court of the women? he an"ſwered him, neither in the court of the *Iſraelites*, "nor in the court of the women, but in the court of "the prieſts." And elſewhere they ſay[d], that they "ſlew a prieſt and a prophet in the ſanctuary; this "is *Zechariah* the ſon of *Jehoiada*." Now it ſhould be obſerved, that the temple, or ſanctuary, is ſometimes put for the whole ſacred building, with all its courts and appurtenances; and ſometimes, as in this text, for that part of it that was covered, between which, and the altar of burnt-offerings, in the court of the prieſts, which muſt be here meant, and not the altar of incenſe, in the moſt holy place, was a ſpace of twenty-two cubits[e], frequently called, in *Jewiſh* writings, the ſpace between the porch and the altar; that is, the porch which led into the temple, and the brazen altar in the court of the prieſts, which was open to the air, and is the very ſpot here intended. Now this was a very ſacred place, and is mentioned as an aggravation of the ſin of the *Jews*, that they ſhould enter where none but prieſts might; nor theſe neither that had any defect in them; and defile it alſo by ſhedding innocent blood. "The court of the *Iſraelites* is "holier than the court of the women; becauſe "thoſe that wanted atonement might not enter "there; and a defiled perſon that entered there, "was obliged to be cut off: the court of the prieſts "was holier than that; becauſe the *Iſraelites* might "not enter there, but in the time of their neceſſi"ties, for laying on of hands for atonement, for "killing and waving: the place between the porch "and the altar was holier than that; for ſuch that had "any blemiſhes, or were bare-headed, or had their "garments rent, might not enter[f]." Hence they ſay[g], that "the *Iſraelites* committed ſeven tranſ"greſſions on that day: they ſlew a prieſt, and "a prophet, and a judge; and they ſhed inno"cent blood, and they blaſphemed God, and de"filed the court, and it was a ſabbath-day, and "the day of atonement." The chief objections to its being this *Zechariah* are, that the names do not agree; the one being the ſon of *Jehoiada*, the other the ſon of *Barachias*; and the killing of him was eight hundred years before this time; when it might have been thought our Lord would have inſtanced in a later action; and this he ſpeaks of, he aſcribes to the men of that generation: to which may be replied, that as to the difference of names, the father of this *Zechariah* might have two names, which is no unuſual thing; beſides, theſe two names ſignify much the ſame thing; *Jehoiada* ſignifies praiſe the Lord, and *Barachias* bleſs the Lord; juſt as *Eliakim* and *Jehoiakim* are names of the ſame perſon, and ſignify the ſame thing, 2 *Chron.* xxxvi. 4. Moreover, *Jerom* tells us, that in the *Hebrew* copy of this Goſpel, uſed by the *Nazarenes*, he found the name *Jehoiada* inſtead of *Barachias*: and as to the action being done ſo long ago, what has been ſuggeſted already may be an anſwer to it, that it was the laſt on record in the writings of the Old Teſtament; and that his blood, as *Abel*'s, is ſaid to require vengeance: and Chriſt might the rather pitch upon this action, becauſe it was committed on a very great and worthy man, and in the holy place, and by the body of the people, at the command of their king, and with their full approbation, and conſent: and therefore, tho' this was not done by the individual perſons in being in Chriſt's time, yet by the ſame people; and ſo they are ſaid to ſlay him, and his blood is required of them: and their horrible deſtruction was a puniſhment for that load of national guilt, which had been for many hundreds of years contracting, and heaping upon them.

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[r] Euſeb. Eccl. Hiſt. l. 2. c. 23.
[s] Ib. l. 3. c. 32.
[t] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 8. 2.
[u] Juchaſin, fol. 5. 2.
[w] Bereſhit Rabba, §. 22. fol. 20. 1. Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 4. §. 5. Moſes Kotſenſis Mitzvot Tora pr. affirm. 98.
[x] Abot R. Nathan, c. 31.
[y] De Bello Jud. l. 5. c. 1.
[z] Origen. in Matth. T. 3. Homil. 26. fol. 44. Greg. Nyſſen. in diem nat. Chriſt. vol. 2. p. 777. Baſil. de human. gen. Chriſt. & Theophylact. in loc.
[a] Targum in Lam. ii. 20.
[b] T. Bab. Maccot, fol. 24. 2.

Ver. 36. *Verily I ſay unto you*, &c.] An uſual form of introducing ſomething of moment to raiſe attention to it, and to aſcertain the truth of it: *all theſe things ſhall come upon this generation*; all the things which Chriſt had foretold ſhould come to paſs in the preſent age; as that the apoſtles and miniſters of the word he ſhould ſend to them, ſome of them they would kill and crucify, and others they would ſcourge in their ſynagogues, or perſecute from place to place; and all the horrible murders and blood-ſhed in any age, committed by that people, would be placed to the account of the men of that generation; and the guilt of them imputed to them, and the puniſhment due unto them be inflicted on them. And which came to paſs, and had its full accompliſhment about forty years after this, in the utter deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, and the whole nation; ſo that many now living were perſonally involved in that temporal ruin, as well as eſcaped not the damnation of hell, ver. 33.

Ver. 37. *O Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem*, &c.] The metropolis of *Judæa*, the ſeat of the kings of *Judah*, yea, the city of the great king; the place of divine worſhip, once the holy and faithful city, the joy of the whole earth; wherefore it was ſtrange that the following things ſhould be ſaid of it. The word is repeated to ſhew our Lord's affection and concern for that city, as well as to upbraid it with its name, dignity, and privileges; and deſigns not the building of the city, but the inhabitants of it; and theſe not all, but the rulers and governors of it, civil and eccleſiaſtical; eſpecially the great *ſanhedrim*, which were held in it, to whom beſt belong the deſcriptive characters of *killing the prophets*, and *ſtoning* them that were *ſent* by God unto them; ſince it belonged to them to take cognizance of ſuch who called themſelves prophets, and to examine, and judge them, and, if falſe, to condemn them[h]; hence that ſaying of Chriſt, *Luke* xiii. 33. which goes before the ſame words, as here, *it cannot be that a prophet periſh out of Jeruſalem*: and who are manifeſtly diſtinguiſhed from their *children*; it being uſual to call ſuch as were the heads of the people, either in a civil or eccleſiaſtick ſenſe, *fathers*, and their ſubjects and diſciples *children*: beſides, our Lord's diſcourſe throughout the whole context is directed to the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, the eccleſiaſtick guides of the people, and to whom the civil governors paid a ſpecial regard. *Thou that killeſt the prophets*; that is, with the ſword, with which the prophets in *Elijah*'s time were ſlain by the children of *Iſrael*, 1 *Kings* xix. 10. and which was one of the capital puniſhments inflicted by the *Jewiſh ſanhedrim*[i]; and alſo that

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[c] T. Hieroſ. Taanioth, fol. 69. 1. Præfat. ad Echa Rabbati, fol. 36. 4. & Echa Rabbati, fol. 52. 4. & 58. 3. Midraſh Kohelet, fol. 68. 3.

[d] Echa Rabbati, fol. 55. 1.

[e] Miſn. Middot, c. 3. §. 6.

[f] Maimon. Beth. Habbechira, c. 7. §. 18, 19, 20. Bemidbar Rabba, §. 7. fol. 188. 4.

[g] T. Hieroſ. Taanioth, fol. 69. 1. Echa Rabbati, fol. 53. 1. & 58. 3. Midraſh Kohelet, fol. 68. 4.

[h] Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 1. §. 5.

[i] Ib. c. 7. §. 1.

which follows was another of them. *And ſtoneſt them which were ſent unto thee*; as particularly *Zechariah*, the ſon of *Jehoiada*, before mentioned. The *Jews* themſelves are obliged to own, that this character belongs to them: ſay [k] they, "when the "word of God ſhall come, who is his meſſenger, "we will honour him. Says *R. Saul*, did not the "*prophets* come, והרגנום, *and we killed them*, and "ſhed their blood, and how ſhall we receive his "word? or how ſhall we believe?" And a celebrated writer of theirs, on thoſe words [l], *but now murderers*, has this note; "they have killed *Uriah*, "they have killed *Zechariah*." *How often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!* Chriſt here ſpeaks as a man, and the miniſter of the circumciſion, and expreſſes an human affection for the inhabitants of *Jeruſalem*, and an human wiſh, and will for their temporal good; which he very aptly ſignifies by the hen, which is a very affectionate creature to its young, and which it endeavours to ſkreen from danger, by covering with its wings. So the *Shekinah* with the *Jews* is called, צפרא קדישא, *the holy bird* [m]; and that phraſe, לחסות תחת כנפי השכינה, *to betake ones ſelf*, or *to come to truſt under the wings of the Shekinah*, is often uſed [n] for to become a proſelyte to the true religion, and worſhip of God, as *Jethro*, and *Ruth* the *Moabiteſs* did. An expreſſion much like to this here is uſed by an *Apocryphal* writer, 2 *Eſdras* i. 30. *I gathered you as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but now, what ſhall I do unto you? I will caſt you out from my face.* It ſeems to be a ſimile much in uſe with that people. Our Lord is to be underſtood not of his divine will, as God, to gather the people of the *Jews* internally, by his ſpirit and grace, to himſelf; for all thoſe whom Chriſt would gather, in this ſenſe, were gathered, notwithſtanding all the oppoſition made by the rulers of the people; but of his human affection and will, as a man, and a miniſter, to gather them to him externally, by, and under the miniſtry of his word, to hear him preach; ſo as that they might be brought to a conviction of, and an aſſent unto him as the Meſſiah; which, tho' it might fall ſhort of faith in him, would have been ſufficient to have preſerved them from temporal ruin, threatened to their city and temple, in the following verſe. Inſtances of the human affection, and will of Chriſt, may be obſerved in *Mark* x. 21. *Luke* xix. 41. and xxii. 42. which will of his, tho' not contrary to the divine will, but ſubordinate to it, yet not always the ſame with it, nor always fulfilled; whereas his divine will, or his will as God, is always fulfilled: *who hath reſiſted his will?* this cannot be hindered, and made void; he does whatſoever he pleaſes: and farther, that this will of Chriſt to gather the *Jews* to himſelf, is to be underſtood of his human, and not divine will, is manifeſt from hence, that this will was in him, and expreſſed by him at certain ſeveral times, by intervals; and therefore he ſays, *how often would I have gathered, &c.* whereas the divine will is one continued, invariable, and unchangeable will, is always the ſame, and never begins or ceaſes to be, and to which ſuch an expreſſion is inapplicable; and therefore theſe words do not contradict the abſolute and ſovereign will of God, in the diſtinguiſhing acts of it, reſpecting the choice of ſome perſons, and the leaving of others. And it is to be obſerved, that the perſons whom Chriſt would have gathered, are not repreſented as being unwilling to be gathered; but their rulers were not willing that they ſhould, and be made proſelytes to him, and come under his wings. It is not ſaid, *how often would I have gathered you, and you would not!* nor, *I would have gathered Jeruſalem, and ſhe would not*; nor, *I would have gathered thy children, and they would not*; but, *how often would I have gathered thy children, and ye would not!* Which obſervation alone is ſufficient to deſtroy the argument founded on this paſſage in favour of free-will. Had Chriſt expreſſed his deſire to have gathered the heads of the people to him, the members of the *Jewiſh ſanhedrim*, the civil and eccleſiaſtical rulers of the *Jews*; or had he ſignified how much he wiſhed, and earneſtly ſought after, and attempted to gather *Jeruſalem*, the children, the inhabitants of it in common, and neither of them would not; it would have carried ſome appearance of the doctrine of free-will, and have ſeemed to have countenanced it, and have imputed the non-gathering of them to their own will: tho' had it been ſaid, *they would not*, inſtead of, *ye would not*, it would only have furniſhed out a moſt ſad inſtance of the perverſeneſs of the will of man, which often oppoſes his temporal, as well as his ſpiritual good; and would rather ſhew it to be a ſlave to that which is evil, than free to that which is good; and would be a proof of this, not in a ſingle perſon only, but in a body of men. The oppoſition and reſiſtance to the will of Chriſt were not made by the people, but by their governors. The common people ſeemed inclined to attend his miniſtry, as appears from the vaſt crouds, which, at different times and places, followed him; but the chief-prieſts, and rulers, did all they could to hinder the collection of them to him, and their belief in him as the Meſſiah; by traducing his character, miracles, and doctrines, and by menacing the people with curſes, and excommunications, making a law, that whoever confeſſed him ſhould be turned out of the ſynagogue. So that the plain meaning of the text is the ſame with that of ver. 13. and conſequently is no proof of mens reſiſting the operations of the ſpirit and grace of God; but only ſhews what obſtructions and diſcouragements were thrown in the way of attendance on the external miniſtry of the word. In order to ſet aſide, and overthrow the doctrine of grace, in election, and particular redemption, and effectual calling, it ſhould be proved that Chriſt, as God, would have gathered, not *Jeruſalem*, and the inhabitants of it only, but all mankind, even ſuch as are not eventually ſaved, and that in a ſpiritual, ſaving way and manner, to himſelf; of which there is not the leaſt intimation in this text: and in order to eſtabliſh the reſiſtibility of the grace of God, by the perverſe will of man, ſo as to become of no effect; it ſhould be ſhewn that Chriſt would have ſavingly converted perſons, and they would not be converted; and that he beſtowed the ſame grace upon them, he does beſtow on others who are converted: whereas the ſum of this paſſage lies in theſe few words, that Chriſt, as man, out of a compaſſionate regard for the people of the *Jews*, to whom he was ſent as the miniſter of the circumciſion, would have gathered them together under his miniſtry, and have inſtructed them in the knowledge of himſelf, as the Meſſiah; which if they had only notionally received, would have ſecured them, as chickens under the hen, from impending judgments, which afterwards fell upon them; but their governors, and not they, would not; that is, would not ſuffer them to receive him, and embrace him as the Meſſiah. So that from the whole it appears, that this paſſage of ſcripture, ſo much talked of by the *Arminians*, and ſo often cited by them, has nothing to do with the controverſy about the doctrines of election and reprobation, particular redemption, efficacious grace in converſion, and the power of man's free-will. This obſervation alone is ſufficient to deſtroy the argument, founded on this paſſage, in favour of free-will.

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[k] R. Iſaac Arama in Gen. xlvii. apud Galatin. Arcan. Cath. ver. l. 3. c. 5.

[l] Jarchi in Iſ. i. 21.

[m] Zohar in Numb. fol. 106. 3. & Imre binah in ib.

[n] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 77. 4. & 115. 2. Vid. Targum in Ruth ii. 12. Zohar in Exod. fol. 28. 3. & 29. 2.

Ver. 38. *Behold, your houſe is left unto you deſolate.*] Signifying that the city in which they dwelt, where they had their cieled houſes, and ſtately palaces, would, in a little time, within the ſpace of forty years, be deſtroyed, and become a deſert; and the temple, formerly the houſe of God, but now only theirs, and in which they truſted, would be abandoned by God, he would grant his preſence no more in it; and the Meſſiah, the proprietor of it, and who was now in it, would then take his leave of it, and never more return to it; and that alſo ſhould ſhare the ſame fate as the city, and at the ſame time. Our Lord ſeems to have in view thoſe paſſages in *Jer.* xii. 7. and xxii. 5. and which the *Jewiſh* [o] writers underſtood of the temple. The author of the *Apocryphal* book of *Eſdras* 2. in ch. i. 33. has much ſuch an expreſſion as this: *thus ſaith the almighty Lord, your houſe is deſolate, I will caſt you out as the wind doth ſtubble.*

Ver. 39. *For I ſay unto you, ye ſhall not ſee me henceforth,* &c.] Meaning in a very little time after the paſſover, from the time of his crucifixion and death; otherwiſe they ſaw him many times after this, as in the palace of the high-prieſt, in *Pilate's* judgment-hall, and on the croſs; but not after his reſurrection. This ſhows the reaſon of their houſe being deſolate, and in what ſenſe it ſhould be ſo, and immediately became ſo; namely, by being then directly, and ever after, deſtitute of his preſence: and tho' they might afterwards ſeek for, and expect the Meſſiah in it, yet they would never be able to ſee him, nor throughout their long captivity: *till ye ſhall ſay, bleſſed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord*; that is, until the time comes, that the fulneſs of the *Gentiles* ſhall be brought in, and all *Iſrael* ſhall be ſaved, the *Jews* ſhall be converted, and ſeek the Lord their God, and *David* their king; when they ſhall readily and chearfully ſay theſe words to Chriſt, who will then appear in his glory; which they were now diſpleaſed at in the multitude that followed him, and the children in the temple. Tho' ſome think this is ſaid by way of threatening, ſince the reſt that is ſpoken to them by Chriſt is of that ſort, and regards the men of that generation; and is given as a reaſon of their houſe being left deſolate: and the ſenſe is, that they ſhould never ſee him with joy and pleaſure; ſince, though they would be obliged to confeſs that he was Lord and Chriſt, they would never ſay the above words to him in faith, and holy reverence of him. The *Cambridge* exemplar of *Beza's*, and the *Perſic* verſion, read, *in the name of God.*

## CHAP. XXIV.

Ver. 1. AND *Jeſus went out, and departed from the temple,* &c.] He not only went out of it for that time, but took his final leave of it, never to return more to it; having foretold its deſolation, which he, in part, by ſo doing, immediately fulfilled: this the diſciples obſerving, and being intent on the outward ſplendor, and worldly grandeur of it, were concerned that ſo beautiful a ſtructure ſhould be deſerted; and almoſt thought it incredible, that ſo ſtrong, and firm a building could be deſtroyed. *And his diſciples came unto him*; as he went, and as ſoon as he was come out of the temple, and whilſt in view of it: *for to ſhew him the buildings of the temple*; the walls of it, and courts adjoining to it, how beautiful and firm they were: whether this was done by them to raiſe in him admiration or commiſeration, in hopes he might change the ſentence he had paſſed upon it, is not eaſy to ſay; or whether this did not expreſs their incredulity about the deſolation of it; which Chriſt's anſwer, in the next verſe, ſeems to imply. *Mark* ſays, it was *one of the diſciples* that obſerved theſe to him, who might be accompanied with the reſt, and in their name addreſs him; and who, probably, might be *Peter*, ſince he was generally their mouth; and that he ſhould ſpeak to him in this manner; *maſter, ſee what manner of ſtones, and what buildings are here? Luke* ſays, *how it was adorned with goodly ſtones, and gifts.* The *Jews* give very great encomiums of the ſecond temple, as repaired by *Herod*; and it was undoubtedly a very fine ſtructure. They ſay [p], that he built the houſe of the ſanctuary, *an exceeding beautiful building*; and that he repaired the temple, in beauty *greatly exceeding* that of *Solomon's* [q]. They moreover obſerve [r], that "he who has not ſeen the building of *Herod*, has never ſeen, בניין נאה, *a beautiful building*. With what is it built? ſays *Rabbah*, with ſtones of green and white marble. And there are others ſay, that it was built with ſtones of ſpotted green and white marble." Theſe, very likely, were the very ſtones the diſciples pointed to, and admired; and were of a prodigious ſize, as well as worth. Some of theſe ſtones were, as *Joſephus* [s] ſays, "forty-five cubits long, five high, and ſix broad." Others of them, as he elſewhere affirms [t], were "twenty-five cubits long, eight high, and twelve broad." And he alſo tells us, in the ſame place, that there were, "in the porches, four rows of pillars: the thickneſs of each pillar was as much as three men, with their arms ſtretched out, and joined together, could graſp; the length twenty-ſeven feet, and the number of them an hundred and ſixty-two, and beautiful to a miracle." At the bigneſs of thoſe ſtones, and the beauty of the work, 'tis ſaid [u], *Titus* was aſtoniſhed, when he deſtroyed the temple; at which time his ſoldiers plundered it, and took away *the gifts*, with which it is alſo ſaid to be adorned. Theſe were rich and valuable things which were dedicated to it, and either laid up in it, or hung upon the walls and pillars of it, as it was uſual in other temples [w]. Theſe may intend the golden table given by *Pompey*, and the ſpoils which *Herod* dedicated; and particularly the golden vine, which was a gift of his [x]; beſides multitudes of other valuable things, which were greatly enriching and ornamental to it. Now the diſciples ſuggeſt, by obſerving theſe, what a pity it was, ſuch a grand edifice ſhould be deſtroyed; or how unaccountable it was, that a place of ſo much ſtrength, could eaſily be demoliſhed.

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[o] Targum & Kimchi in Jer. xii. 7.

[p] Juchaſin, fol. 139. 1.

[q] Ganz. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 24. 2.

[r] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 4. 1. & Succa, fol. 51. 2.

[s] De Bello Jud. l. 5. c. 5.

[t] Antiq. Jud. l. 15. c. 14.

[u] Egeſippus, l. 5. c. 43.

[w] Vid. Ryckium de Capitol. Rom. c. 21, &c.

Ver. 2. *And Jeſus ſaid unto them, ſee ye not all theſe things?* &c.] *Theſe great buildings,* as in *Mark*; all theſe goodly ſtones, ſo beautiful and large, and ſo firmly put together: *verily, I ſay unto you, there ſhall not be left here one ſtone upon another, that ſhall not be thrown down*; or *broken*, as *Munſter's Hebrew* Goſpel reads it: which prediction had a full and remarkable accompliſhment; and which is not only atteſted by *Joſephus* [y], who relates, that both the city and temple were dug up, and laid level with the ground; but alſo by other *Jewiſh* writers; who tell us [z], that "on the ninth of *Ab*, a day prepared for puniſhments, *Turnus Rufus* the wicked, חרש את ההיכל, *plowed up the temple*, and all round about it, to fulfil what is ſaid, *Zion ſhall be plowed as a field.*" Yes, and to fulfil what Chriſt here ſays too, that not one ſtone ſhould be left upon another, which a plough would not admit of.

Ver. 3. *And as he ſat upon the mount of Olives,* &c.] Which was on the eaſt of the city of *Jeruſalem* [a], *over againſt the temple,* as *Mark* ſays, and where he could ſit and take a full view of it; for the wall on the eaſt ſide was lower than any other, and that for this reaſon; that when the high-prieſt burnt the red heifer on this mount, as he did, and ſprinkled the blood, he might have a view of the gate of the temple. 'Tis ſaid [b], "all the walls which were there, were very high, except the eaſtern wall; for the high-prieſt, when he burned the heifer, ſtood on the top of the mount of *Olives,* and directed himſelf, and looked to the gate of the temple, at the time he ſprinkled the blood." This place, very probably, our Lord choſe to ſit in, that he might give his diſciples an occaſion to diſcourſe more largely with them on this ſubject; and that he might take the opportunity of acquainting them, with what would be the ſigns and forerunners of this deſolation, and ſo it proved: *the diſciples came to him privately*; theſe four at leaſt, *Peter,* and *James,* and *John,* and *Andrew,* as *Mark* relates; and that either ſeparately from the reſt of the diſciples, or from the multitude: it might not be thought ſo proper, to aſk the following queſtions before them, and they might ſuppoſe that Chriſt would not be ſo ready to give an anſwer to them plainly, before the common people; when they might hope to be indulged with one by him, in private: *ſaying, tell us, when ſhall theſe things be?* That this houſe will be left deſolate, theſe buildings will be deſtroyed, and not one ſtone left upon another? This firſt queſtion relates purely to the deſtruction of the temple, and to this Chriſt firſt anſwers, from ver. 4. to the 23d. *And what ſhall be the ſign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?* Which two are put together, as what they ſuppoſed would be at the ſame time, and immediately follow the deſtruction of the temple. That he was come in the fleſh, and was the true Meſſiah, they firmly believed: he was with them, and they expected he would continue with them, for they had no notion of his leaving them, and coming again. When he at any time ſpake of his dying and riſing from the dead, they ſeemed not to underſtand it: wherefore this coming of his, the ſign of which they enquire, is not to be underſtood of his coming a ſecond time to judge the world, at the laſt day; but of his coming in his kingdom and glory, which they had obſerved him ſome little time before to ſpeak of; declaring that ſome preſent ſhould not die, till they ſaw it: wherefore they wanted to be informed, by what ſign they might know, when he would ſet up his temporal kingdom; for ſince the temple was to be deſtroyed, they might hope a new one would be built, much more magnificent than this, and which is a *Jewiſh* notion; and that a new ſtate of things would commence; the preſent world, or age, would be at a period; and the world to come, they had ſo often heard of from the *Jewiſh* doctors, would take place; and therefore they aſk alſo, of the ſign of the end of the world, or preſent ſtate of things in the *Jewiſh* œconomy: to this Chriſt anſwers, in the latter part of this chapter, though not to the ſenſe in which they put the queſtions; yet in the true ſenſe of the coming of the Son of man, and the end of the world; and in ſuch a manner, as might be very inſtructive to them, and is to us.

Ver. 4. *And Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto them,* &c.] Not to indulge their curioſity, but to inſtruct them in things uſeful to be known, and which might be cautions to them and others, againſt deceivers; confirm them in the faith of himſelf, when they ſhould ſee his predictions accompliſhed; and be directions to them, of what might ſhortly be expected. *Take heed that no man deceive you:* by pretending to come from God with a new revelation, ſetting himſelf up for the *Meſſiah,* after my departure; ſuggeſting himſelf to be the perſon deſigned by God, to be the deliverer of *Iſrael,* and to be ſent by him, to ſet up a temporal kingdom, in great worldly ſplendor and glory; promiſing great names, and high places of honour and truſt in it; things which Chriſt knew his diſciples were fond of, and were in danger of being enſnared by; and therefore gives them this ſuitable and ſeaſonable advice, and caution.

Ver. 5. *For many ſhall come in my name,* &c.] Not by his orders, or with delegated powers and authority from him; but ſhould aſſume the name of the *Meſſiah,* which was peculiarly his, to themſelves; and take upon them his office, and challenge the honour and dignity which belonged unto him: *ſaying, I am Chriſt, and ſhall deceive many.* This is the firſt ſign, preceding the deſtruction of the city and temple of *Jeruſalem:* as there was a general expectation among the *Jews* of a *Meſſiah*; that is, of one that ſhould ariſe and deliver them from the *Roman* yoke, which was the common *idea* tacked to that word; in this period of time, many ſet up themſelves to be deliverers and redeemers of the people of *Iſrael*; who had each of them their followers in great numbers, whom they impoſed upon, and brought to deſtruction. Of this ſort was *Theudas,* not he that *Gamaliel* ſpeaks of, *Acts* v. 36. for he was before this time; but one that was in the times of *Claudius Cæſar,* when *Cuſpius Fadus* was governor of *Judæa*; who perſuaded a great number to follow him to the river *Jordan,* which he promiſed to divide, by a word of command, and give them a paſſage over; and thereby, as the hiſtorian [c] obſerves, ϖολλȣς ηπατησεν, *he deceived many*; which is the very thing that is here predicted: but he and his company were routed by *Fadus*, and his head cut off. There was another called the *Egyptian*, mentioned in *Acts* xxi. 38. who made an uproar, and led four thouſand cut-throats into the wilderneſs; and this ſame man perſuaded thirty thouſand men to follow him to mount *Olivet*, promiſing a free paſſage into the city; but he being vanquiſhed by *Felix*, then governor of *Judæa*, fled, and many of his followers were killed and taken[d]: and beſides, there were many more magicians and impoſtors, that pretended to ſigns and wonders, and promiſed the people deliverance from their evils, by whom they were impoſed upon to their ruin. There were others alſo beſides theſe, that ſet up for deliverers, who called themſelves by the name of the Meſſiah. Among theſe, we may reckon *Simon Magus*, who gave out that he was ſome great one; yea, expreſly, that he was the word of God, and the ſon of God[e], which were known names of the *Meſſiah*; and *Doſitheus* the *Samaritan*, aſſerted himſelf to be Chriſt[f]; and alſo *Menander* affirmed, that no man could be ſaved, unleſs he was baptized in his name[g]: theſe are inſtances before the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, and confirm the prophecy here delivered.

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[x] Joſeph. Antiqu. l, 15.
[y] De Bello Jud. l. 7. c. 7.
[z] Maimon. Hilch. Taaniot, c. 5. §. 3. T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 29. 1. & Gloſſ. in ib.
[a] Bartenora in Miſn. Middot, c. 1. §. 3.
[b] Miſn. ib. c. 2. §. 4.
[c] Joſeph. Antiqu. l. 20. c. 2.

Ver. 6. *And ye ſhall hear of wars, and rumours of wars*, &c.] This is the ſecond ſign of the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*: it is obſervable that this, and ſome of the following ſigns, are given by the *Jews*, as ſigns of the *Meſſiah*'s coming; whereas they were forerunners of their ruin, for the rejection of him who was already come. They ſuppoſe the *Meſſiah* will come in the ſeventh year, or the year of reſt and releaſe: "On the ſeventh year "they ſay[h], will be מלחמות, *wars*; and in the "going out, or at the cloſe of the ſeventh year, "the ſon of *David* will come." Which wars, the *Gloſs* ſays, will be between the nations of the world, and *Iſraël*. Here wars may mean the commotions, inſurrections, and ſeditions, againſt the *Romans*, and their governors; and the inteſtine ſlaughters committed among them, ſome time before the ſiege of *Jeruſalem*, and the deſtruction of it. Under *Cumanus* the *Roman* governor, a ſedition was raiſed on the day of the paſſover, in which twenty thouſand periſhed; after that, in another tumult, ten thouſand were deſtroyed by cut-throats: in *Aſcalon* two thouſand more, in *Ptolemais* two thouſand, at *Alexandria* fifty-thouſand, at *Damaſcus* ten thouſand, and elſewhere in great numbers[i]. The *Jews* were alſo put into great conſternation, upon hearing the deſign of the *Roman* Emperor, to put up his image in their temple: *ſee that ye be not troubled*; ſo as to leave the land of *Judæa* as yet, and quit the preaching of the Goſpel there, as if the final deſtruction was juſt at hand: *for all theſe things muſt come to paſs*; theſe wars, and the reports of them, and the pannic on account of them; theſe commotions and ſlaughters, and terrible devaſtations by the ſword, muſt be; being determined by God, predicted by Chriſt, and brought upon the *Jews* by their own wickedneſs; and ſuffered in righteous judgment, for their ſin: *but the end is not yet*; meaning not the end of the world, but the end of *Jeruſalem*, and the temple, the end of the *Jewiſh* ſtate; which were to continue, and did continue after theſe diſturbances in it.

Ver. 7. *For nation ſhall riſe againſt nation, and kingdom againſt kingdom*, &c.] This ſeems to be a diſtinct and third ſign, foreboding the general calamity of the *Jews*; that there ſhould be not only ſeditions and inteſtine wars, in the midſt of their country, but there ſhould be wars in other nations, one with another; and with the *Jews*, and the *Jews* with them: and this alſo is made a ſign of the *Meſſiah*'s coming by them, for ſo they ſay[k]; "when thou "ſeeſt, מלכיות מתגרות אלו באלו, *kingdoms ſtirred* "*up one againſt another*, look for the feet of the "*Meſſiah*: know thou, that ſo it ſhall be; for ſo "it was in the days of *Abraham*: by the means of "kingdoms being ſtirred up one againſt another, "redemption came to *Abraham*." Poor blinded creatures! when theſe very things, were the forerunners of their deſtruction. And ſo it was, the *Jewiſh* nation roſe up againſt others, the *Samaritans*, *Syrians*, and *Romans*: there were great commotions in the *Roman* empire, between *Otho* and *Vitellius*, and *Vitellius* and *Veſpaſian*; and at length the *Romans* roſe up againſt the *Jews*, under the latter, and entirely deſtroyed them; compare 2 *Eſdras* xiii. 31. and xvi. 18. and ix. 3. *And there ſhall be famines*; a fourth ſign of the deſolation of the city and temple, and which the *Jews* alſo ſay, ſhall go before the coming of the *Meſſiah*: "in the ſecond "year (of the week of years) in which the ſon of "*David* comes, they ſay[l], there will be *arrows of* "*famine* ſent forth; and in the third year, "רעב גדול, *a great famine*; and men, women, "and children, and holy men, and men of buſi"neſs, ſhall die." But theſe have been already; they followed the Meſſiah, and preceded their deſtruction: one of theſe famines was in *Claudius Cæſar*'s time, was foretold by *Agabus*, and is mentioned in *Acts* xi. 28. and moſt dreadful ones there were, whilſt *Jeruſalem* was beſieged, and before its utter ruin, related by *Joſephus*. *And peſtilences*: a *peſtilence* is deſcribed by the *Jews* after this manner[m]; "a city that produces a thouſand and five "hundred footmen, as *Cephar Aco*, and nine dead "men are carried out of it in three days, one after "another, lo! זה דבר, *this is a peſtilence*; but if "in one day, or in four days, it is no peſtilence; "and a city that produces five hundred footmen, "as *Cephar Amiko*, and three dead men are car"ried out of it in three days, one after another, "lo! this is a peſtilence." Theſe commonly attend famines, and are therefore mentioned together; and when the one was, the other may be ſuppoſed ſooner or later to be: *and earthquakes in divers places* of the world; as, at *Crete*[n], and in divers cities in *Aſia*[o], in the times of *Nero*: particularly the three cities of *Phrygia*, *Laodicea*, *Hierapolis*, and *Coloſſe*; which were near to each other, and are all ſaid to periſh this way, in his reign[p]; and *Rome* itſelf felt a tremor, in the reign of *Galba*[q]."

Ver. 8. *All theſe are the beginning of ſorrows*, &c.] They were only a prelude unto them, and forerunners of them; they were only ſome foretaſtes of what would be, and were far from being the worſt that ſhould be endured. Theſe were but light, in compariſon of what befel the *Jews*, in their dreadful deſtruction. The word here uſed, ſignifies the ſorrows and pains, of a woman in travail. The *Jews* expect great ſorrows and diſtreſſes in the times of the Meſſiah, and uſe a word to expreſs them by, which anſwers to this, and call them, חבלי המשיח, *the ſorrows of the Meſſiah*;

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[d] Joſeph. Antiqu. l. 20. c. 6. [e] Jerom in loc. Iren. adv. Hæreſ. l. 1. c. 20. [f] Origen contr. Celſ. l. 1. p. 44. [g] Tertull. de preſcript. Hæret. c. 46. [h] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 97. 1. & Megilla, fol. 17. 2. Zohar in Exod. fol. 3. 3, 4. [i] Vid. Joſeph. Antiqu. l. 20. c. 6. & de Bello Jud. l. 2, &c. [k] Bereſhit Rabba, §. 42. fol. 37. 1. [l] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 97. 1. Miſn. Sota, c. 9. §. 15. [m] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 21. 1. & 19. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Taaniot, c. 2. §. 5. [n] Philoſtrat. in vit. Apollon. l. 4. c. 11. [o] Sueton. in vit. Nero, c. 48. [p] Oroſius, l. 7. c. 7. [q] Sueton. in vit. Galba, c. 18.

חבלי, they ſay [r], ſignifies the ſorrows of a woman in travail; and the *Syriac* verſion uſes the ſame word here. Theſe they repreſent to be very great, and expreſs much concern to be delivered from them. They [s] aſk, "what ſhall a man do, to be " delivered from *the ſorrows of the Meſſiah?* He " muſt employ himſelf in the law, and in liberality. " And again [t], " he that obſerves the three " meals on the ſabbath-day, ſhall be delivered from " three puniſhments; from *the ſorrows of the Meſſiah,* from the judgment of hell, and from *Gog* " and *Magog.*" But alas! there was no other way of eſcaping them, but by faith in the true Meſſiah, Jeſus; and it was for their diſbelief and rejection of him, that theſe came upon them.

Ver. 9. *Then ſhall they deliver you up to be afflicted,* &c.] Our Lord proceeds to acquaint his diſciples, what ſhould befall them in this interval; and quite contrary to their expectations, who were looking for a temporal kingdom, and worldly grandeur, aſſures them of afflictions, perſecutions, and death; that about theſe times, when theſe various ſigns ſhould appear, and this beginning of ſorrows take place; whilſt theſe will be fulfilling in *Judæa,* and other parts of the world; the *Jews* continuing in their obſtinacy and unbelief, would deliver them up to the civil magiſtrates, to be ſcourged and impriſoned by them; either to their own *Sanhedrim,* as were *Peter* and *John*; or to the *Roman* governors, *Gallio, Feſtus,* and *Felix,* as was the apoſtle *Paul. And ſhall kill you*; as the two *James*'s, *Peter, Paul,* and even all the apoſtles, excepting *John,* who ſuffered martyrdom, and that before the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem: and ye ſhall be hated of all nations for my name's ſake*; as the apoſtles and firſt chriſtians were, both by *Jews* and *Gentiles*; the latter being ſtirred up againſt them by the former, wherever they came, and for no other reaſon, but becauſe they profeſſed and preached in the name of Chriſt, as the *Acts* of the apoſtles ſhew: and their hatred proceeded ſo far, as to charge all their calamities upon them; as war, famine, peſtilence, earthquakes, *&c.* as the apologies of the firſt chriſtians declare.

Ver. 10. *And then ſhall many be offended,* &c.] That is, many who had been hearers of the apoſtles, and profeſſors of the chriſtian religion; who were highly pleaſed with it, and were ſtrenuous advocates for it, whilſt things were tolerably quiet and eaſy; but when they ſaw the apoſtles, ſome of them beaten, and impriſoned, others put to death, and others forced to fly from place to place; and perſecutions and affliction, becauſe of Chriſt and his Goſpel, likely to befall themſelves, would be diſcouraged hereby, and ſtumble at the croſs; and fall off from the faith of the Goſpel, and the profeſſion of it: *and ſhall betray one another*; meaning, that the apoſtates, who would fall off from the chriſtian religion, would prove treacherous to true believers, and give in their names to the perſecutors, or inform them where they were, that they might take them, or deliver them into their hands themſelves: theſe are the falſe brethren, the apoſtle *Paul* was in perils among: *and ſhall hate one another*; not that the true chriſtians ſhould hate theſe falſe brethren, any more than betray them; for they are taught to love all men, even their enemies; but theſe apoſtates ſhould hate them, in whoſe communion they before were, and to whom they belonged; and even to a very great degree of hatred, as it often is ſeen, that ſuch who turn their backs on Chriſt, and his Goſpel, prove the moſt bitter enemies, and moſt violent perſecutors of its preachers and followers.

Ver. 11. *And many falſe probets ſhall riſe,* &c.] Out of, from among the churches of Chriſt; at leaſt under the name of chriſtians; for falſe teachers are here meant, men of heretical principles, pretending to a ſpirit of prophecy, and to new revelations, and a better underſtanding of the ſcriptures; ſuch as *Simon Magus, Ebion,* and *Cerinthus,* who denied the proper deity, and real humanity of Chriſt; *Carpocrates,* and the *Gnoſticks* his followers, the *Nicolaitans, Hymeneus, Philetus,* and others: *and ſhall deceive many*; as they all of them had their followers, and large numbers of them, whoſe faith was ſubverted by them; and who followed their pernicious ways, being impoſed upon and ſeduced by their fair words, ſpecious pretences, and licentious practices.

Ver. 12. *And becauſe iniquity ſhall abound,* &c.] Meaning either the malice and wickedneſs of outragious perſecutors, which ſhould greatly increaſe; or the treachery and hatred of the apoſtates; or the errors and hereſies of falſe teachers; or the wickedneſs that prevailed in the lives and converſations of ſome, that were called chriſtians; for each of theſe ſeem to be hinted at in the context, and may be all included, as making up the abounding iniquity here ſpoken of; the conſequence of which would be, *the love of many ſhall wax cold.* This would be the caſe of many, but not of all; for in the midſt of this abounding iniquity, there were ſome, the ardor of whoſe love to Chriſt, to his Goſpel, and to the ſaints, did not abate: but then there were many, whoſe zeal for Chriſt, through the violence of perſecution, was greatly damped; and through the treachery of falſe brethren, were ſhy of the ſaints themſelves, not knowing who to truſt; and through the principles of the falſe teachers, the power of godlineſs, and the vital heat of religion, were almoſt loſt; and through a love of the world, and of carnal eaſe and pleaſure, love to the ſaints was grown very chill, and greatly left; as the inſtances of *Demas,* and thoſe that forſook the apoſtle *Paul,* at his firſt anſwer before *Nero,* ſhew. This might be true of ſuch, who were real believers in Chriſt; who might fall under great decays, through the prevalence of iniquity; ſince it does not ſay their love ſhall be loſt, but wax cold.

Ver. 13. *But he that ſhall endure to the end,* &c.] In the profeſſion of faith in Chriſt, notwithſtanding the violent perſecutions of wicked men; and in the pure and incorupt doctrines of the Goſpel, whilſt many are deceived by the falſe teachers that ſhall ariſe; and in holineſs of life and converſation, amidſt all the impurities of the age; and ſhall patiently bear all afflictions, to the end of his life, or to the end of ſorrows, of which the abovementioned were the beginning: *the ſame ſhall be ſaved*; with a temporal ſalvation, when *Jeruſalem,* and the unbelieving inhabitants of it ſhall be deſtroyed: for thoſe that believed in Chriſt, many of them, through perſecution, were obliged to remove from thence; and others, by a voice from heaven, were bid to go out of it, as they did; and removed to *Pella,* a village a little beyond *Jordan* [u], and ſo were preſerved from the general calamity; and alſo with an everlaſting ſalvation, which is the caſe of all that perſevere to the end, as all true believers in Chriſt will.

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[r] Gloſſ in T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 118. 2.

[s] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 98. 2.

[t] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 118. 2.

[u] Euſeb. Eccl. Hiſt. l. 3. c. 5.

Ver. 14. *And this Goſpel of the kingdom,* &c.] Which Chriſt himſelf preached, and which he called and ſent his apoſtles to preach, in all the cities of *Judah*; by which means men were brought into the kingdom of the Meſſiah, or Goſpel-diſpenſation; and which treated both of the kingdom of grace and glory, and pointed out the ſaints meetneſs for the kingdom of heaven, and their right unto it, and gives the beſt account of the glories of it: *ſhall be preached in all the world*; not only in *Judæa*, where it was now confined, and that by the expreſs orders of Chriſt himſelf; but in all the nations of the world, for which the apoſtles had their commiſſion enlarged, after our Lord's reſurrection; when they were bid to go into all the world, and preach the Goſpel to every creature; and when the *Jews* put away the Goſpel from them, they accordingly turned to the *Gentiles*; and before the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, it was preached to all the nations under the heavens; and churches were planted in moſt places, through the miniſtry of it: *for a witneſs unto all nations*; meaning either for a witneſs againſt all ſuch in them, as ſhould reject it; or as a teſtimony of Chriſt and ſalvation, unto all ſuch as ſhould believe in him: *and then ſhall the end come*; not the end of the world, as the *Ethiopic* verſion reads it, and others underſtand it; but the end of the *Jewiſh* ſtate, the end of the city and temple: ſo that the univerſal preaching of the Goſpel all over the world, was the laſt criterion and ſign, of the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*; and the account of that itſelf next follows, with the diſmal circumſtances which attended it.

Ver. 15. *When ye therefore ſhall ſee the abomination of deſolation,* &c.] From ſigns, Chriſt proceeds to the immediate cauſe of the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*; which was, *the abomination of deſolation*, or the deſolating abomination; or that abominable thing, which threatened and brought deſolation upon the city, temple, and nation: by which is meant, not any ſtatue placed in the temple by the *Romans*, or their order; not the golden eagle which *Herod* ſet upon the temple gate, for that was before Chriſt ſaid theſe words; nor the image of *Tiberius Cæſar*, which *Pilate* is ſaid to bring into the temple; for this, if true, muſt be about this time; whereas Chriſt cannot be thought to refer to any thing ſo near at hand; much leſs the ſtatue of *Adrian*, ſet in the moſt holy place, which was an hundred and thirty years and upwards, after the deſtruction of the city and temple; nor the ſtatue of *Titus*, who deſtroyed both, which does not appear ever to be ſet up, or attempted; nor of *Caligula*, which, though ordered, was prevented being placed there: but the *Roman* army is deſigned; ſee *Luke* xxi. 20. which was the, כנף שקוצים משמם, *the wing*, or *army of abominations making deſolate*, *Dan.* ix. 27. Armies are called wings, *Iſa.* viii. 8. and the *Roman* armies were deſolating ones to the *Jews*, and to whom they were an abomination; not only becauſe they conſiſted of Heathen men, and uncircumciſed perſons, but chiefly becauſe of the images of their gods, which were upon their enſigns: for images and idols, were always an abomination to them; ſo the *filthineſs* which *Hezekiah* ordered to be carried out of the holy place, 2 *Chron.* xxix. 5. is by the *Targum* called, ריחוקא, *an abomination*; and this, by the *Jewiſh* writers [w], is ſaid to be an idol, which *Ahaz* had placed upon the altar; and ſuch was the abomination of deſolation, which *Antiochus* cauſed to be ſet upon the altar, 1 *Maccab.* i. 54. And ſo the *Talmudic* writers, by the abomination that makes deſolate, in *Dan.* xii. 11. and ix. 27. to which Chriſt here refers, underſtand an image, which they ſay [x] one *Apoſtomus*, a *Grecian* general, who burnt their law, ſet up in the temple. Now our Lord obſerves, that when they ſhould ſee the *Roman* armies encompaſſing *Jeruſalem*, with their enſigns flying, and theſe abominations on them, they might conclude its deſolation was near at hand; and he does not ſo much mean his apoſtles, who would be moſt of them dead, or in other countries, when this would come to paſs; but any of his diſciples and followers, or any perſons whatever, by whom ſhould be ſeen this deſolating abomination, *ſpoken of by Daniel the prophet*: not in *Dan.* xi. 31. which is ſpoken of the abomination in the times of *Antiochus*; but either in *Dan.* xii. 11. or rather in *Dan.* ix. 27. ſince this deſolating abomination is that, which ſhould follow the cutting off of the Meſſiah, and the ceaſing of the daily ſacrifice. It is to be obſerved, that *Daniel* is here called a prophet, contrary to what the *Jewiſh* writers ſay [y], who deny him to be one; though one of [z] no inconſiderable note among them affirms, that he attained to the end, הגבול הנבואי, *of the prophetic border*, or the ultimate degree of prophecy: when therefore this that *Daniel*, under a ſpirit of prophecy, ſpoke of ſhould be ſeen, *ſtanding in the holy place*; near the walls, and round about the holy city *Jeruſalem*, ſo called from the ſanctuary and worſhip of God in it; and which in proceſs of time, ſtood in the midſt of it, and in the holy temple, and deſtroyed both; then *whoſo readeth, let him underſtand*: that is, whoever then reads the prophecy of *Daniel*, will eaſily underſtand the meaning of it, and will ſee and know for certain, that now it is accompliſhed; and will conſider how to eſcape the deſolating judgment, unleſs he is given up to a judicial blindneſs and hardneſs of heart; which was the caſe of the greater part of the nation.

Ver. 16. *Then let them which be in Judæa,* &c.] When this ſignal is given, let it be taken notice of and obſerved; let them that are in the city of *Jeruſalem*, depart out of it; or who are in any other parts of *Judæa*, in any of the towns, or cities thereof; let them not betake themſelves to *Jeruſalem*, imagining they may be ſafe there, in ſo ſtrong and fortified a place, but let them flee elſewhere; ſee *Luke* xxi. 21. and accordingly 'tis obſerved, that many did flee about this time; and 'tis remarked by ſeveral interpreters, and which *Joſephus* [a] takes notice of with ſurprize, that *Ceſtius Gallus* having advanced with his army to *Jeruſalem*, and beſieged it, on a ſudden, without any cauſe, raiſed the ſiege, and withdrew his army, when the city might have been eaſily taken; by which means a ſignal was made, and an opportunity given to the chriſtians, to make their eſcape; which they accordingly did, and went over *Jordan*, as *Euſebius* ſays [b], to a place called *Pella*; ſo that when *Titus* came a few months after, there was not a chriſtian in the city, but they had fled as they are here bidden to *flee into the mountains*; or any places of ſhelter and refuge: theſe are mentioned particularly, becauſe they are uſually ſuch; and deſign either the mountains in *Judæa*, or in the adjacent countries. The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read in the ſingular number, *into the mountain*; and it is reported that many of them did fly, particularly to mount *Libanus* [c].

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[w] R. David Kimchi, & R. Sol. ben Melech, in 2 Chron. xxix. 5.

[x] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 28. 2. & Gloſſ. in ib.

[y] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 94. 1. & Megilla, fol. 3. 1. & Tzeror Hammor, fol. 46. 4. Zohar in Num. fol. 61. 1.

[z] Jacchiades in Dan. i. 17.

[a] De Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 19. §. 7.

[b] Eccl. Hiſt. l. 3. c. 5. p. 75.

[c] Joſeph. ib.

Ver. 17. *Let him which is on the houſe-top*, &c.] Who ſhould be there either for his devotion or recreation; for the houſes of the *Jews* were built with flat roofs and battlements about them, which they made uſe of both for diverſion and pleaſure, and for private meditation and prayer, for ſocial converſation, and ſometimes for publick preaching; ſee *Matt.* x. 27. *Acts* x. 9. *not come down to take any thing out of his houſe*: that is, let him not come down in the inner way, but by the ſtairs, or ladder, on the outſide of the houſe, which was uſual. They had two ways of going out of, and into their houſes; the one they call [d], דרך פתחים, *the way of the doors*; the other, דרך גגין, *the way of the roof*: upon which the Gloſs is, "to go up on the outſide, "דרך סולם, *by way*, or *means of a ladder*, fixed "at the entrance of the door of the upper room, "and from thence he goes down into the houſe by "a ladder;" and in the ſame way they could come out; ſee *Mark* ii. 4. and let him not go into his houſe to take any of his goods, or money, or food along with him neceſſary for his ſuſtenance in his flight; leſt, whilſt he is buſy in taking care of theſe, he loſes his life, or, at leaſt, the opportunity of making his eſcape; ſo ſudden is this deſolation repreſented to be.

Ver. 18. *Neither let him which is in the field*, &c.] Ploughing, or ſowing, or employed in any other parts of huſbandry, or rural buſineſs, *return back to take his clothes*; for it was uſual to work in the fields without their clothes, as at ploughing and ſowing. Hence thoſe words of *Virgil* [e],

*Nudus ara, ſere nudus, hyems ignava colono.*

upon which *Servius* obſerves, that in good weather, when the ſun warms the earth, men might plough and ſow without their clothes: and it is reported by the hiſtorian [f] of *Lucius Quinctius Cincinnatus*, that the meſſengers who were ſent to him, from *Minutius* the conſul, whom he had delivered from a ſiege, found him ploughing naked beyond the *Tyber*: not that he was entirely naked, but was ſtripp'd of his upper garments: and it is uſual for people that work in the fields to ſtrip themſelves to their ſhirts, and lay their clothes at the corner of the field, or at the land's end; and which we muſt ſuppoſe to be the caſe here: for our Lord's meaning is not, that the man working in the field, ſhould not return home to fetch his clothes, which were not left there; they were brought with him into the field, but put off, and laid aſide in ſome part of it while at work; but that as ſoon as he had the news of *Jeruſalem* being beſieged, he ſhould immediately make the beſt of his way, and flee to the mountains, as *Lot* was bid to do at the burning of *Sodom*; and he might not return to the corner of the field, or land's end, where his clothes lay, as *Lot* was not to look behind; tho' if his clothes lay in the way of his flight, he might take them up, but might not go back for them, ſo ſudden and ſwift ſhould be the deſolation. The *Vulgate Latin* reads, in the ſingular number, *his coat*; and ſo do the *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, and *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel; and ſo it was read in four copies of *Beza*'s, in three of *Stephens*'s, and in others; and may deſign the upper coat or garment, which was put off whilſt at work.

Ver. 19. *And wo unto them that are with child*, &c.] Not that it ſhould be criminal for them to be with child; or a judgment on them; for it was always eſteemed a bleſſing to be fruitful, and bear children: but this expreſſes the miſerable circumſtances ſuch would be in, who, by reaſon of their heavy burdens, would not be able to make ſo ſpeedy a flight, as the caſe would require; or would be obliged to ſtay at home, and endure all the miſeries of the ſiege: ſo that theſe words, as the following are not expreſſive of ſin, or puniſhment, but of pity and concern for their miſery and diſtreſs: *and to them that give ſuck in thoſe days*; whoſe tender affection to their infants will not ſuffer them to leave them behind them; and yet ſuch their weakneſs, that they will not be able to carry them with them; at leaſt, they muſt be great hindrances to their ſpeedy flight. So that the caſe of theſe is much worſe than that of men on the houſe-top, or in the field, who could much more eaſily leave their goods and clothes, than theſe their children, as well as had more agility and ſtrength of body to flee. So עוברות ומיניקות, *women with child*, *and that give ſuck*, are mentioned together in the *Jewiſh* writings, as ſuch as were excuſed from certain faſts, tho' obliged to others [g].

Ver. 20. *But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter*, &c.] When days are ſhort, and unfit for long journies, and roads are bad, and ſometimes unpaſſable, thro' large ſnows, or floods of water; and when to dwell in deſart places, and lodge in mountains, muſt be very uncomfortable: wherefore Chriſt directs to pray to God, who has the diſpoſal of all events, and of the timing of them, that he would ſo order things in the courſe of his providence, that their flight might not be in ſuch a ſeaſon of the year, when travelling would be very difficult and troubleſome. Dr. *Lightfoot* obſerves, from a *Jewiſh* writer [h], that it is remarked as a favour of God in the deſtruction of the firſt temple, that it happened in the ſummer, and not in winter; whoſe words are theſe: "God vouchſafed a "great favour to *Iſrael*, for they ought to have "gone out of the land on the tenth day of the "month *Tebeth*; as he ſaith, *Ezek.* xxiv. 2. *ſon of* "*man, write thee the name of the day, even of this* "*ſame day*: what then did the Lord, holy and "bleſſed? If they ſhall now go out in the winter, "ſaith he, they will all die; therefore he prolong-"ed the time to them, and carried them away in "ſummer." And ſince therefore they received ſuch a favour from him at the deſtruction of the firſt temple, there was encouragement to pray to him, that they might be indulged with the like favour when *Jeruſalem* ſhould be beſieged again: *neither on the ſabbath-day*: the word *day* is not in the *Greek* text; and ſome [i] have been of opinion, that the *ſabbatical* year, or the ſeventh year, is meant, when no fruits would be found in the fields, and a great ſcarcity of proviſions among people; who would not have a ſufficiency, and much leſs any to ſpare to ſtrangers fleeing from their native places; but rather the ſabbath-day, or *day of the ſabbath*, as the *Perſic* verſion reads it, is deſigned; and *Beza* ſays, four of his copies read it in the genitive caſe: and ſo four of *Stephens*'s. And the reaſon why our Lord put them on praying, that their flight might not be on the ſabbath-day, was, becauſe he knew not only that the *Jews*, who believed not in him, would not ſuffer them to travel on a ſabbath-day more than two thouſand cubits; which, according to their traditions [k], was a ſabbath-day's journey;

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[d] T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 117. 1.

[e] Georgic. l. 1.

[f] Aurel. Victor. de illuſtr. viris, c. 20.

[g] T. Hieroſ. Taaniot, fol. 64. 3. Maimon. Hilch. Taanioth, c. 5. §. 10.

[h] Tanchuma, fol. 57. 2.

[i] Vid. Reland. Antiq. Heb. par. 4. c. 10. §. 1. & Hammond in loc.

[k] Maimon. Hilch. Sabbat, c. 27. §. 1.

and which would not be ſufficient for their flight to put them out of danger; but alſo, that thoſe that did believe in him, particularly the *Jeruſalem Jews*, would be all of them fond of the law of *Moſes*, and ſcrupulous of violating any part of it, and eſpecially that of the ſabbath; ſee *Acts* xxi. 20. And tho' the *Jews* did allow, that the ſabbath might be violated where life was in danger, and that it was lawful to defend themſelves againſt an enemy on the ſabbath-day; yet this did not univerſally obtain; and it was made a queſtion of, after the time of Chriſt, whether it was lawful to flee from danger on the ſabbath-day; of which take the following account[l]. "Our Rabbins teach, that he that is purſued by *Gentiles*, or by thieves, may profane the ſabbath for the ſake of ſaving his life: and ſo we find of *David*, when *Saul* ſought to ſlay him, he fled from him, and eſcaped. Our Rabbins ſay, that it happened that evil writings (or edicts) came from the government to the great men of *Tzippore*; and they went, and ſaid to *R. Eleazar ben Prata*, evil edicts are come to us from the government, what doſt thou ſay? נברח, *ſhall we flee?* and he was afraid to ſay to them *flee*; but he ſaid to them, with a nod, why do you aſk me? go and aſk *Jacob*, and *Moſes*, and *David*; as it is written, of *Jacob*, *Hoſ.* xii. 12. *and Jacob fled*; and ſo of *Moſes*, *Exod.* ii. 15. *and Moſes fled*; and ſo of *David*, 1 *Sam.* xix. 18. *and David fled, and eſcaped:* and he (God) ſays, *Iſ.* xxvi. 20. *come my people, enter into thy chambers.*" From whence, 'tis plain, 'twas a queſtion with the doctors in *Tzippore*, which was a town in *Galilee*, where there was an univerſity, whether it was lawful to flee on the ſabbath-day or no; and tho' the *Rabbi* they applied to was of opinion it was lawful, yet he was fearful of ſpeaking out his ſenſe plainly, and therefore delivered it by ſigns and hints. Now our Lord's meaning, in putting them on this petition, was, not to prevent the violation of the ſeventh day ſabbath, or on account of the ſacredneſs of it, which he knew would be aboliſhed, and was aboliſhed before this time; but he ſays this with reſpect to the opinion of the *Jews*, and *judaizing* Chriſtians, who, taking that day to be ſacred, and fleeing on it unlawful, would find a difficulty with themſelves, and others, to make their eſcape; otherwiſe it was as lawful to flee and travel on that day, as in the winter ſeaſon; tho' both, for different reaſons, incommodious.

Ver. 21. *For then ſhall be great tribulation*, &c.] This is urged as a reaſon for their ſpeedy flight; ſince the calamity that would come upon thoſe who ſhould remain in the city, what thro' the ſword, famine, peſtilence, murders, robberies, *&c.* would be *ſuch as was not ſince the beginning of the world, to this time, no, nor ever ſhall be.* The burning of *Sodom* and *Gomorrha*, the bondage of the children of *Iſrael* in *Egypt*, their captivity in *Babylon*, and all their diſtreſſes and afflictions in the times of the *Maccabees*, are nothing to be compared with the calamities which befel the *Jews* in the ſiege and deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*. Great deſolations have been made in the beſieging, and at the taking of many famous cities, as *Troy*, *Babylon*, *Carthage*, &c. but none of them are to be mentioned with the deplorable caſe of this city. Whoever reads *Joſephus*'s account will be fully convinced of this; and readily join with him, who was an eye-witneſs of it, when he ſays[m], that "never did any city ſuffer ſuch things, nor was there ever any generation that more abounded in malice or wickedneſs." And indeed, all this came upon them for their impenitence and infidelity, and for their rejection and murdering of the ſon of God; for as never any before, or ſince, committed the ſin they did, or ever will, ſo there never did, or will, the ſame calamity befal a nation, as did them.

Ver. 22. *And except thoſe days ſhould be ſhortened*, &c.] That is, thoſe days of tribulation which commenced at the ſiege of *Jeruſalem*; and therefore cannot refer to the times before it, and the ſhortening of them by it, which were very dreadful and deplorable through the murders and robberies of the cut-throats and zealots; but to thoſe after the ſiege began, which were very diſtreſſing to thoſe that were within; and which, if they had not been ſhortened, or if the ſiege had been lengthened out further, *there ſhould no fleſh be ſaved:* not one *Jew* in the city of *Jeruſalem* would have been ſaved; they muſt every one have periſhed by famine, or peſtilence, or ſword, or by the inteſtine wars and murders among themſelves: nor indeed, if the ſiege had continued, would it have fared better with the inhabitants of the other parts of the country, among whom alſo many of the ſame calamities prevailed and ſpread themſelves; ſo that, in all likelihood, if theſe days had been continued a little longer, there had not been a *Jew* left in all the land. *But for the elects ſake*; thoſe who were choſen in Chriſt, before the foundation of the world, to believe in him, and to be ſaved by him with an everlaſting ſalvation; both thoſe that were in the city, or, at leaſt, who were to ſpring from ſome that were there, as their immediate offspring, or in future ages, and therefore they, and their poſterity, muſt not be cut off; and alſo thoſe choſen ones, and real believers, who were at *Pella*, and in the mountains, and other places, for the ſake of theſe, and that they might be delivered from theſe preſſing calamities, *thoſe days ſhall be ſhortened:* for otherwiſe, if God had not preſerved a ſeed, a remnant, according to the election of grace, that ſhould be ſaved, they had been as *Sodom* and as *Gomorrha*, not one would have eſcaped. The ſhortening of thoſe days is not to be underſtood literally, as if the natural days, in which this tribulation was, were to be ſhorter than uſual. The *Jews* indeed often ſpeak of the ſhortening of days in this ſenſe, as miraculouſly done by God: ſo they ſay[n], that "five miracles were wrought for our father *Jacob*, when he went from *Beerſheba* to go to *Haran*. The firſt miracle was, that אתקצרו ליה שעוי דיומא, *the hours of the day were ſhortened for him*, and the ſun ſet before its time, becauſe his word deſired to ſpeak with him." They alſo ſay[o], that "the day in which *Ahaz* died, was ſhortened ten hours, that they might not mourn for him; and which afterwards roſe up, and in the day that *Hezekiah* was healed, ten hours were added to it." But the meaning here is, that the ſiege of *Jeruſalem*, and the calamities attending it, ſhould be ſooner ended; not than God had determined, but than the ſin of the *Jews* deſerved, and the juſtice of God might have required in ſtrict ſeverity, and might be reaſonably expected, conſidering the aggravated circumſtances of their iniquities. A like manner of ſpeech is uſed by the *Karaite Jews*[p], who ſay, "if we walk in our law,

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[l] Bemidbar Rabba, §. 23. fol. 231. 4.

[m] De Bello Jud. l. 6. c. 11.

[n] Targum Jonathan ben Uzziel, & Targum Hieroſ. in Gen. xxviii. 10.

[o] R. Sol. Jarchi in Iſ. xxxviii. 8.

[p] Chilluk M. S. apud Trigland. de ſect. Karæorum, c. 9. p. 147.

“ why is our captivity prolonged, and there is not
“ found balm for our wounds? and why are not
“ נתמעטו ימיהם, *the days* of the golden and ſilver
“ kingdom *leſſened*, for the rightouſneſs of the righ-
“ teous, which were in their days?”

Ver. 23. *Then if any man ſhall ſay unto you*, &c.] Either at the time when the ſiege ſhall be begun, and the abomination of deſolation ſtanding in the holy place; or during the days of tribulation, whilſt the ſiege laſted; or after thoſe days were ſhortened, and the city deſtroyed, and the *Roman* army was gone with their captives; when ſome, that were ſcattered up and down in the country, would inſinuate to their countrymen, that the Meſſiah was in ſuch a place: ſaying, *lo! here is Chriſt, or there, believe it not*; for both during the time of the ſiege, there were ſuch that ſprung up, and pretended to be Meſſiahs, and deliverers of them from the *Roman* power, and had their ſeveral abettors; one ſaying he was in ſuch place, and another, that he was in ſuch a place; and ſo ſpirited up the people not to fly, nor to deliver up the city; and alſo, after the city was taken and deſtroyed, one and another ſet up for the Meſſiah. Very quickly after, one *Jonathan*, a very wicked man, led many into the deſert of *Cyrene*, promiſing to ſhew them ſigns and wonders, and was overthrown by *Catullius*, the *Roman* governor[q]; and after that, in the times of *Adrian*, the famous *Barcochab* ſet up for the Meſſiah, and was encouraged by *R. Akiba*, and a multitude of *Jews*[r].

Ver. 24. *For there ſhall ariſe falſe Chriſts, and falſe prophets*, &c.] Such as the above-mentioned: theſe falſe Chriſts had their falſe prophets, who endeavoured to perſuade the people to believe them to be the Meſſiah, as *Barcochab* had *Akiba*, who applied many prophecies to him. This man was called *Barcochab*, which ſignifies the ſon of a Star, in alluſion to *Numb.* xxiv. 17. he was crowned by the *Jews*, and proclaimed the Meſſiah by *Akiba*; upon which a *Roman* army was ſent againſt him, and a place called *Bitter* was beſieged, and taken, and he, and a prodigious number of *Jews* were deſtroyed. This deceiver was afterwards, by them, called *Barcoziba*, the ſon of a lye: *and ſhall ſhew great ſigns and wonders*; make an appearance of doing them, tho' they really did them not: ſo that *Jonathan*, before mentioned, pretended to ſhew ſigns and ſights; and *Barcochab* made as if flame came out of his mouth; and many of the *Jewiſh* doctors in theſe times, and following, gave themſelves up to ſorcery, and the magic art; and are, many of them often ſaid[s] to be, מלומדים בנסים, *expert in wonders*, or miracles: *if it were poſſible they ſhall deceive the very elect*. By whom we are to underſtand, not the choiceſt believers, or the perſevering chriſtians: not but that ſuch who are truly converted, are choice believers in Chriſt, and perſevering chriſtians are undoubtedly the elect of God; but then the reaſon why they are elect, and why they are ſo called, is not becauſe they are converted, are choice believers, and perſevering chriſtians; but, on the contrary, the reaſon why they are converted, become true believers, and perſevere to the end, is, becauſe they are elected; converſion, faith, and perſeverance being not the cauſes or conditions, but the fruits and effects of election: beſides, to talk of the final ſeduction of a perſevering chriſtian, is a contradiction in terms. Such an interpretation of the phraſe muſt be abſurd and impertinent; for who knows not, that a perſevering chriſtian cannot be finally and totally deceived? But by the elect are meant, a ſelect number of particular perſons of *Adam*'s poſterity, whom God, of his ſovereign good-will and pleaſure, without reſpect to their faith, holineſs, and good works, has choſen, in Chriſt, before the foundation of the world, both to grace and glory: and to deceive theſe finally and totally, is impoſſible, as is here ſuggeſted; not impoſſible, conſidering their own weakneſs, and the craftineſs of deceivers, who, if left to themſelves, and the power of ſuch deception, and the working of ſatan with all deceivableneſs of unrighteouſneſs, might eaſily be ſeduced; but conſidering the purpoſes and promiſes of God concerning them, the proviſions of his grace for them, the ſecurity of them in the hands of Chriſt, and their preſervation by the mighty power of God, their final and total deception is not only difficult, but impoſſible. They may be, and are deceived before converſion; this is one part of their character whilſt unregenerate, *fooliſh, diſobedient, deceived*, *Tit.* iii. 3. yea, they may be, and often times are, deceived after converſion; but then this is in part only, and not totally; in ſome leſſer, and not in the greater matters of faith; not ſo as to let go their hold of Chriſt their head, and quit the doctrine of ſalvation by him, or fall into damnable hereſies: they may be ſeduced from the ſimplicity of the Goſpel, but not finally; for they ſhall be recovered out of the ſnare of the devil, and not be left to periſh in ſuch deceivings. This clauſe, as it expreſſes the power of deceivers, and the efficacy of ſatan, ſo the influence and certainty of electing grace, and the ſure and firm perſeverance of the ſaints, to the end, notwithſtanding the cunning and craft of men and devils; for if theſe, with all their ſigns and wonders, could not deceive them, it may be pronounced impoſſible that they ever ſhould be finally and totally deceived.

Ver. 25. *Behold, I have told you before.*] Meaning not before in this diſcourſe, tho' he had in ver. 5, 11. ſignified alſo, that falſe Chriſts, and falſe prophets ſhould ariſe, but before theſe things came to paſs; ſo that they had ſufficient notice and warning of them, and would be inexcuſable if they were not upon their guard againſt them; and which, when they came to paſs, would furniſh out a conſiderable argument in proof of him, as the true Meſſiah, againſt all theſe falſe ones, ſhewing him to be omniſcient; and ſo would ſerve to eſtabliſh their faith in him, and be a means of ſecuring them from ſuch deceivers.

Ver. 26. *Wherefore if they ſhall ſay unto you*, &c.] Any of the falſe prophets, or the deluded followers of falſe Chriſts: *behold, he is in the deſert, go not forth*: that is, ſhould they affirm that the *Meſſiah* is in ſuch a wilderneſs, in the wilderneſs of *Judæa*, or in any other deſert place, don't go out of the places where you are to ſee, or hear, and know the truth of things; leſt you ſhould, in any reſpect, be ſtumbled, enſnared, and brought into danger. It was uſual for theſe impoſtors to lead their followers into deſerts, pretending to work wonders in ſuch ſolitary places: ſo, during the ſiege, *Simon*, the ſon of *Giora*, collected together many thouſands in the mountainous and deſert parts of *Judæa*[t]; and the above-mentioned *Jonathan*, after the deſtruction of the city, led great multitudes into the deſert: *behold, he is in the ſecret chambers, believe it not*; or ſhould others ſay behold, or for certain, the Meſſiah is in ſome one of the ſecret and fortified places of the temple; where, during ſome time of the ſiege, were *John* and *Eleazar*, the heads of the zealots[u]; don't believe them. Some reference may be had to the chamber of ſecrets, which was in the temple[w]; for "in the ſanctuary there were two chambers, one was "called לשכת חשאים, *the chamber of ſecrets*, and "the other the chamber of veſſels. Or elſe ſome reſpect may be had to the notions of the *Jews*, concerning the Meſſiah, which they imbibed about theſe times, and ever ſince retained, that he was born the day *Jeruſalem* was deſtroyed, but is hid, for their ſins, in ſome ſecret place, and will in time be revealed[x]. Some ſay, that he is hid in the ſea; others, in the walks of the garden of *Eden*; and others, that he ſits among the lepers at the gates of *Rome*[y]. The *Syriac* verſion here reads in the ſingular number, *in the bed-chamber*; in ſome private apartment, where he remains till a proper time of ſhewing himſelf offers, for fear of the *Romans*: but theſe are all idle notions, and none of them to be believed. The true Meſſiah is come, and has ſhewed himſelf to *Iſrael*; and even the giving out theſe things diſcovers a conſciouſneſs, and a conviction that the Meſſiah is come.

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[q] Joſeph. Antiq. l. 7. c. 12.

[r] Ganz. Tzemach David. par. 1. fol. 28. 2.

[s] T. Bab. Meila, fol. 17. 2. Juchaſin, fol. 20. 1, 2. & 42. 2. & 56. 2. & 77. 1. & 96. 2.

[t] Joſeph. de Bello Jud. l. 5. c. 7.

Ver. 27. *For as the lightening cometh out of the eaſt*, &c.] The eaſtern part of the horizon, *and ſhineth even unto the weſt*; to the weſtern part of it, with great clearneſs; in a moment; in the twinkling of an eye, filling the whole intermediate ſpace: *ſo ſhall alſo the coming of the ſon of man be*; which muſt be underſtood not of his laſt coming to judgment, tho' that will be ſudden, viſible, and univerſal; he will at once come to, and be ſeen by all, in the clouds of heaven, and not in deſerts and ſecret chambers: nor of his ſpiritual coming in the more ſudden, and clear, and powerful preaching of the Goſpel all over the *Gentile* world; for this was to be done before the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*: but of his coming in his wrath and vengeance to deſtroy that people, their nation, city, and temple: ſo that after this to look for the Meſſiah in a deſert, or ſecret chamber, muſt argue great ſtupidity and blindneſs; when his coming was as ſudden, viſible, powerful, and general, to the deſtruction of that nation, as the lightning that comes from the eaſt, and, in a moment, ſhines to the weſt.

Ver. 28. *For wherefoever the carcaſs is*, &c.] Not Chriſt, as he is held forth in the Goſpel, crucified and ſlain, thro' whoſe death is the ſavour of life, and by whom ſalvation is, and to whom ſenſible ſinners flock, encouraged by the miniſtry of the word; and much leſs Chriſt conſidered as riſen, exalted, and coming in great glory to judgment, to whom the word *carcaſs* will by no means agree, and but very illy under the former conſideration: but the people of the *Jews* are deſigned by it, in their fallen, deplorable, miſerable, and lifeleſs ſtate, who were like to the body of a man, or any other creature, ſtruck dead with lightning from heaven; being deſtroyed by the breath of the mouth, and brightneſs of the coming of the ſon of man, like lightning, juſt as antichriſt will be at the laſt day: *there will the eagles be gathered together*: not particular believers here, or all the ſaints at the day of judgment; tho' theſe may be, as they are, compared to eagles for many things; as their ſwiftneſs in flying to Chriſt, their ſagacity and the ſharpneſs of their ſpiritual ſight, ſoaring on high, and renewing their ſpiritual ſtrength and youth: but here the *Roman* armies are intended, whoſe enſigns were eagles; and the eagle ſtill is, to this day, the enſign of the *Roman* empire: formerly other creatures, with the eagle, were uſed for enſigns; but *C. Marius*, in his ſecond conſulſhip, baniſhed them, and appropriated the eagle only to the legions: nor was it a ſingle eagle that was carried before the army, but every legion had an eagle went before it, made of gold or ſilver, and carried upon the top of a ſpear[z]: and the ſenſe of this paſſage is this, that where-ever the *Jews* were, whether at *Jeruſalem*, where the body and carcaſs of them was, in a moſt forlorn and deſperate condition; or in any other parts of the country, the *Roman* eagles, or legions, would find them out, and make an utter deſtruction of them. The *Perſic* verſion, contrary to others, and to all copies, renders it *vultures*. Tho' this creature is of the ſame nature with the eagle, with reſpect to feeding on carcaſſes: hence the proverb, cujus vulturis hoc erit cadaver? *what vulture ſhall have this carcaſs?* It has a very ſharp ſight, and quick ſmell, and will, by both, diſcern carcaſſes at almoſt incredible diſtance: it will diligently watch a man that is near death; and will follow armies going to battle, as hiſtorians relate[a]: and it is the eagle which is of the vulture kind, as *Ariſtotle*[b] obſerves, that takes up dead bodies, and carries them to its neſt. And *Pliny*[c] ſays, it is that ſort of eagles only which does ſo; and ſome have affirmed, that eagles will by no means touch dead carcaſſes; but this is contrary not only to this paſſage of ſcripture, but to others; particularly to *Job* xxxix. 30. *her young ones alſo ſuck up blood, and where the ſlain are, there is ſhe*: an expreſſion much the ſame with this in the text, and to which it ſeems to refer; ſee alſo *Prov.* xxx. 17. Tho' *Chryſoſtom*[d] ſays, both the paſſage in *Job*, and this in *Matthew*, are to be underſtood of vultures; he doubtleſs means the eagles that are of the vulture kind, the *Gypæetos*, or vulture-eagle. There is one kind of eagles, naturaliſts ſay[e], will not feed on fleſh, which is called the bird of *Jupiter*; but, in common, the eagle is repreſented as a very rapacious creature, ſeizing, and feeding upon the fleſh of hares, fawns, geeſe, *&c.* and the rather this creature is deſigned here; ſince, of all birds, this is the only one that is not hurt with lightning[f], and ſo can immediately ſeize carcaſſes killed thereby; to which there ſeems to be an alluſion here, by comparing it with the preceding verſe: however, the *Perſic* verſion, tho' it is not literally a proper one, yet from the ſeveral things obſerved, it is not to be overlooked and ſlighted.

Ver. 29. *Immediately after the tribulation of thoſe days*, &c.] That is, immediately after the diſtreſs the *Jews* would be in thro' the ſiege of *Jeruſalem*, and the calamities attending it; juſt upon the deſtruction of that city, and the temple in it, with the whole nation of the *Jews*, ſhall the following things come to paſs; and therefore cannot be referred to the laſt judgment, or what ſhould befal the church, or world, a little before that time, or ſhould be accompliſhed in the whole intermediate time, between the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, and the laſt judgment: for all that is ſaid to account for ſuch a ſenſe, as that it was uſual with the prophets to ſpeak of judgments afar off as near; and that the apoſtles often ſpeak of the coming of Chriſt, the laſt judgment, and the end of the world, as juſt at hand; and that one day with the Lord is as a thouſand years, will not anſwer to the word *immediately*, or ſhew that that ſhould be underſtood of two thouſand years after: beſides, all the following things were to be fulfilled before that preſent generation, in which Chriſt lived, paſſed away, ver. 34. and therefore muſt be underſtood of things that ſhould directly, and immediately take place upon, or at the deſtruction of the city and temple. *Shall the ſun be darkened:* not in a literal, but in a figurative ſenſe; and is to be underſtood not of the religion of the *Jewiſh* church; nor of the knowledge of the law among them, and the decreaſe of it; nor of the Goſpel being obſcured by hereticks and falſe teachers; nor of the temple of *Jeruſalem*, ſenſes which are given into by one or another; but of the *Shekinah*, or the divine preſence in the temple. The glory of God, who is a ſun and a ſhield, filled the tabernacle, when it was reared up; and ſo it did the temple, when it was built and dedicated; in the moſt holy place, *Jehovah* took up his reſidence; here was the ſymbol of his preſence, the mercy-ſeat, and the two cherubim over it: and tho' God had for ſome time departed from this people, and a voice was heard in the temple before its deſtruction, ſaying, *let us go hence*; yet the token of the divine preſence remained till the utter deſtruction of it; and then this ſun was wholly darkened, and there was not ſo much as the outward ſymbol of it: *and the moon ſhall not give her light*; which alſo is to be explained in a figurative and metaphorical ſenſe; and refers not to the *Roman* empire, which quickly began to diminiſh; nor to the city of *Jeruſalem*; nor to the civil polity of the nation; but to the ceremonial law, the moon, the church is ſaid to have under her feet, *Rev.* xii. 1. ſo called becauſe the obſervance of new moons was one part of it, and the *Jewiſh* feſtivals were regulated by the moon; and eſpecially, becauſe, like the moon, 'twas variable and changeable. Now, tho' this, in right, was aboliſhed at the death of Chriſt, and ceaſed to give any true light, when he, the ſubſtance, was come; yet was kept up by the *Jews*, as long as their temple was ſtanding; but when that was deſtroyed, the daily ſacrifice, in fact, ceaſed, and ſo it has ever ſince; the *Jews* eſteeming it unlawful to offer ſacrifice in a ſtrange land, or upon any other altar than that at *Jeruſalem*; and are, to this day, without a ſacrifice, and without an ephod: *and the ſtars ſhall fall from heaven*; which phraſe, as it elſewhere intends the doctors of the church, and preachers falling off from purity of doctrine and converſation; ſo here it deſigns the *Jewiſh Rabbins* and doctors, who departed from the word of God, and ſet up their traditions above it, fell into vain and ſenſeleſs interpretations of it, and into debates about things contained in their *Talmud*; the foundation of which began to be laid immediately upon their diſperſion into other countries: *and the powers of the heavens ſhall be ſhaken*; meaning all the ordinances of the legal diſpenſation; which ſhaking, and even removing of them, were foretold by Haggai, chap. ii. 6. and explained by the author of the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, chap. xii. 26, 27. whereby room and way were made for Goſpel-ordinances to take place, and be eſtabliſhed; which ſhall not be ſhaken, ſo as to be removed, but remain till the ſecond coming of Chriſt. The *Jews* themſelves are ſenſible, and make heavy complaints of the great declenſions and alterations among them, ſince the deſtruction of the temple; for after having taken notice of the death of ſeveral of their doctors, who died a little before, or after that; and that upon their death ceaſed the honour of the law, the ſplendor of wiſdom, and the glory of the prieſthood, they add [g]; "from "the time that the temple was deſtroyed, the wiſe "men, and ſons of nobles, were put to ſhame; "and they covered their heads; liberal men were "reduced to poverty; and men of violence and "calumny prevailed; and there were none that ex-"pounded, or enquired, or aſked. *R. Eliezer* "the great, ſaid, from the time the ſanctuary were "deſtroyed, the wiſe men began to be like *Scribes*, "and the *Scribes* like to the *Chazans*, (or ſextons "that looked after the ſynagogues) and the *Cha-*"*zans* like to the common people, and the com-"mon people grew worſe and worſe, and there "were none that enquired, and aſked;" that is, of the wiſe men; there were no ſcholars, or very few that ſtudied in the law.

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[u] Joſeph. de Bello Jud. c 6. l. 4.
[w] Miſn. Shekalim, c. 5. §. 6.
[x] Aben Ezra in Cant. vii. 5. Targum in Mic. iv. 8.
[y] Vid. Buxtorf. Synag Jud. c. 50.
[z] Plin. Nat. Hiſt. l. 10 c. 4. Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 4. c. 2.
[a] Ælian de Animal. Natura, l. 2. c. 46.
[b] De Hiſt. Animal. l. 9. c. 32.
[c] Hiſt. Nat. l. 10. c. 3.
[d] In Matt. Homil. 49.
[e] Ælian de Animal. l. 9. c. 10.
[f] Plin. Nat. Hiſt. l. 2. c. 55.

Ver. 30. *And then ſhall appear the ſign of the ſon of man in heaven*, &c.] Not the ſound of the great trumpet, mentioned in the following verſe; nor the clouds of heaven in this; nor the ſign of the croſs appearing in the air, as it is ſaid to do in the times of *Conſtantine:* not the former; for tho' to blow a trumpet is ſometimes to give a ſign, and is an alarm; and the feaſt, which the *Jews* call the day of blowing the trumpets, *Numb.* xxix. 1. is, by the *Septuagint*, rendered ημερα σημασιας, *the day of ſignification*; yet this ſign is not ſaid to be ſounded, but to appear, or to be ſeen, which does not agree with the ſounding of a trumpet: much leſs can this deſign the laſt trumpet at the day of judgment, ſince of that the text does not ſpeak; and, for the ſame reaſon, the clouds cannot be meant in which Chriſt will come to judgment; nor are clouds in themſelves any ſign of it: nor the latter, of which there is no hint in the word of God, nor any reaſon to expect it, nor any foundation for it; nor is any miraculous ſtar intended, ſuch as appeared at Chriſt firſt coming, but the ſon of man himſelf: juſt as circumciſion is called the ſign of circumciſion, *Rom.* iv. 11. and Chriſt is ſometimes called a ſign, *Luke* ii. 34. as is his reſurrection from the dead, *Matt.* xii. 39. and here the glory and majeſty in which he ſhall come: and it may be obſerved, that the other Evangeliſts make no mention of the ſign, only ſpeak of the ſon of man, *Mark* xiii. 26. *Luke* xxi. 27. and he ſhall appear, not in perſon, but in the power of his wrath and vengeance, on the *Jewiſh* nation; which will be a full ſign and proof of his being come: for the ſenſe is, that when the above calamities ſhall be upon the civil ſtate of that people, and there will be ſuch changes in their eccleſiaſtical ſtate; it will be as clear a point, that Chriſt is come in the fleſh, and that he is alſo come in his vengeance on that nation, for their rejection and crucifixion of him, as if they had ſeen him appear in perſon in the heavens. They had been always ſeeking a ſign, and were continually aſking one of him; and now they'll have a ſign with a witneſs; as they had accordingly. *And then ſhall the tribes of the earth*, or land, *mourn*; that is, the land of *Judæa*; for other lands, and countries, were not uſually divided into tribes, as that was; neither were they affected with the calamities and deſolations of it, and the vengeance of the ſon of man upon it; at leaſt not ſo as to mourn on that account, but rather were glad and rejoiced: *and they ſhall ſee the ſon of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory*. The *Arabic* verſion reads it, *ye ſhall ſee*, as is expreſſed by Chriſt, in ch. xxvi. 64. where the high-prieſt, chief-prieſts, *Scribes*, and elders, and the whole *ſanhedrim* of the *Jews* are ſpoken to: and as the ſame perſons, namely, the *Jews* are meant here as there; ſo the ſame coming of the ſon of man is intended; not his coming at the laſt day to judgment; though that will be in the clouds of heaven, and with great power and glory; but his coming to bring on, and give the finiſhing ſtroke to the deſtruction of that people, which was a dark and cloudy diſpenſation to them: and when they felt the power of his arm, might, if not blind and ſtupid to the laſt degree, ſee the glory of his perſon, that he was more than a mere man, and no other than the ſon of God, whom they had deſpiſed, rejected, and crucified; and who came to ſet up his kingdom and glory in a more viſible and peculiar manner, among the *Gentiles*.

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[g] Miſn. Sotah, c. 9. § 15.

Ver. 31. *And he ſhall ſend his angels,* &c.] Not the angels, *i. e.* miniſtring ſpirits, ſo called, not from their nature, but their office, as being ſent forth by God and Chriſt; but men-angels, or meſſengers, the miniſters and preachers of the Goſpel, whom Chriſt would call, qualify, and ſend forth into all the world of the *Gentiles*, to preach his Goſpel, and plant churches there ſtill more, when that at *Jeruſalem* was broken up and diſſolved. Theſe are called *angels*, becauſe of their miſſion, and commiſſion from Chriſt, to preach the Goſpel; and becauſe of their knowledge and underſtanding in ſpiritual things; and becauſe of their zeal, diligence, and watchfulneſs. *With a great ſound of a trumpet,* meaning the Goſpel; ſee *Iſa.* xxvii. 13. ſo called, in alluſion either to the ſilver trumpets which *Moſes* was ordered to make of one piece, and uſe them for the calling of the aſſembly, the journeying of the camps, blowing an alarm for war, and on their ſolemn and feſtival days, *Numb.* x. 1.——10. The Goſpel being rich and precious, all of a piece, uſeful for gathering ſouls to Chriſt, and to his churches; to direct ſaints in their journey to *Canaan's* land; to encourage them to fight the Lord's battles; and is a joyful ſound, being a ſound of love, grace, and mercy, peace, pardon, righteouſneſs, life and ſalvation, by Chriſt: or elſe ſo called, in alluſion to the trumpet blown in the year of *jubilee*; which proclaimed reſt to the land, liberty to priſoners, a releaſe of debts, and reſtoration of inheritances; as the Goſpel publiſhes reſt in Chriſt, liberty to the captives of ſin, ſatan, and the law, a payment of debts by Chriſt, and a releaſe from them upon that, and a right and title to the heavenly inheritance. The *Vulgate Latin* reads it, *with a trumpet, and a great voice*; and ſo does *Munſter's Hebrew* Goſpel; and ſo it was read in four of *Beza's* copies: *and they ſhall gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other*; that is, by the miniſtration of the Goſpel, the Spirit of God accompanying it with his power and grace, the miniſters of the word ſhould gather out of the world unto Chriſt, and to his churches, ſuch perſons as God had before the foundation of the world, choſen in Chriſt, unto ſalvation, through ſanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth; wherever they are under the whole heavens, from one end to another; or in any part of the earth, though at the greateſt diſtance; for in *Mark*, ch. xiii. 27. 'tis ſaid, *from the uttermoſt part of the earth, to the uttermoſt part of the heaven.* The *Jews* [h] ſay, that "in the after redemption (*i. e.* by the Meſſiah) all *Iſrael* ſhall be "gathered together by the ſound of a trumpet, "from the four parts of the world."

Ver. 32. *Now learn a parable of the fig-tree,* &c.] Take a ſimilitude, or compariſon from the fig-tree, which was a tree well known in *Judæa*; and the putting forth of its branches, leaves, and fruit, fell under the obſervation of every one: *when its branch is yet tender*; through the influence of the ſun, and the motion of the ſap, which was bound up, and congealed in the winter-ſeaſon: *and putteth forth leaves*; from the tender branches, which ſwell, and open, and put forth buds, leaves, and fruit: *ye know the ſummer is nigh*; ſpring being already come: the fig-tree putting forth her green figs, is a ſign that the winter is paſt, the ſpring is come, and ſummer is at hand; ſee *Cant.* ii. 11, 13.

Ver. 33. *So likewiſe ye, when ye ſhall ſee all theſe things,* &c.] That are mentioned above, relating to the ſigns of the deſtruction of the temple and city, and the deſtruction itſelf, with all thoſe ſeveral things that ſhould directly take place upon it; this is an accommodation of the above parable, ſimilitude, or compariſon: *know that it is near, even at the doors*; meaning, either that *he is near*, as the *Ethiopic* verſion reads it, the ſon of man is near, even at the doors; or as the *Vulgate Latin* renders it, *in the gates*, or *doors*, and ſo does *Munſter's Hebrew* Goſpel; and ſignifies, that he was already come; for to be in the doors, or within the gates, is more than to be at the doors, or at the gates: and thus the fig-tree putting forth its leaves, is a ſign that ſummer is not only nigh, but is already come, even that part of it we call ſpring; for the ſcripture divides the whole year only into two parts, ſummer and winter; ſo theſe calamities and deſolations on the *Jews*, were a ſign that the ſon of man was come, was in the gates, diſplaying his power and his glory: or the redemption and deliverance of the people of God was at hand, from the perſecutions of the *Jews*; for till the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, the perſecutions of the chriſtians were chiefly from the *Jews*, or occaſioned by them; but now, they being deſtroyed, the ſummer of deliverance was at hand: or elſe the kingdom of God, or a more enlarged ſtate of the Goſpel diſpenſation was near; the winter of the legal diſpenſation was over, the ſpring of the Goſpel diſpenſation was come, through the preaching of *John* the *Baptiſt*, Chriſt and his apoſtles; and now the ſummer of it was at hand, through the general ſpread of it, all over the *Gentile* world. So the ſecond coming of Chriſt, will be a ſummer of joy and comfort to the ſaints: Chriſt will appear moſt lovely and amiable to them, he will be glorified by them, and admired in them; great grace will be brought unto them, and great glory will be put upon them; they'll then enjoy full redemption and ſalvation: the winter of ſorrows, afflictions, and perſecutions, and of coldneſs, darkneſs, and deſertion, will be over; the ſun ſhall no more go down, nor the moon withdraw itſelf, but the Lord will be the everlaſting light of his people.

Ver. 34. *Verily I ſay unto you, this generation ſhall not paſs,* &c.] Not the generation of men in general; as if the ſenſe was, that mankind ſhould not ceaſe, until the accompliſhment of theſe things; nor the generation, or people of the *Jews*, who ſhould continue to be a people, until all were fulfilled; nor the generation of chriſtians; as if the meaning was, that there ſhould be always a ſett of chriſtians, or believers in Chriſt in the world, till all theſe events came to paſs; but it reſpects that preſent age, or generation of men then living in it; and the ſenſe is, that all the men of that age ſhould not die, but ſome ſhould live *till all theſe things*

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[h] Zohar in Lev. fol. 47. 1.

*things were fulfilled*; ſee *Matt*. xvi. 28. as many did, and as there is reaſon to believe they might, and muſt, ſince all theſe things had their accompliſhment, in and about forty years after this: and certain it is, that *John*, one of the diſciples of Chriſt, outlived the time by many years; and, as Dr. *Lightfoot* obſerves, many of the *Jewiſh* doctors now living, when Chriſt ſpoke theſe words, lived until the city was deſtroyed; as *Rabban Simeon*, who periſhed with it, *R. Jochanan ben Zaccai*, who outlived it, *R. Zadoch*, *R. Iſhmael*, and others: this is a full and clear proof, that not any thing that is ſaid before, relates to the ſecond coming of Chriſt, the day of judgment, and end of the world; but that all belong to the coming of the ſon of man, in the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, and to the end of the *Jewiſh* ſtate.

Ver. 35. *Heaven and earth ſhall paſs away*, &c.] This is either an aſſertion, which will be true at the end of time; not as to the ſubſtance of the heavens and earth, which will always remain, but as to the qualities of them, which will be altered: they will be renewed and refined, but not deſtroyed; the bad qualities, or evil circumſtances, which attend them through the ſin of man, will be removed and paſs away, but they themſelves will continue in being: or is a comparative expreſſion, and the ſenſe is, that the heavens and the earth, and the ordinances thereof, than which nothing can be more firm and ſtrong, being fixed and ſupported by God himſelf, ſhall ſooner paſs away, than any thing aſſerted and predicted by Chriſt ſhall: *but my words ſhall not paſs away*; be vain and empty, and unaccompliſhed; which is true of any thing, and every thing ſpoken by Chriſt; and eſpecially here regards all that he had ſaid concerning the calamities that ſhould befal the *Jews*, before, at, or upon the deſtruction of their nation, city, and temple; and the deſign of the expreſſion, is to ſhew the certainty, unalterableneſs, and ſure accompliſhment of theſe things; ſee *Jer*. xxxi. 36.

Ver. 36. *But of that day and hour knoweth no man*, &c.] Which is to be underſtood, not of the ſecond coming of Chriſt, the end of the world, and the laſt judgment; but of the coming of the ſon of man, to take vengeance on the *Jews*, and of their deſtruction; for the words manifeſtly regard the date of the ſeveral things going before, which only can be applied to that cataſtrophe, and dreadful deſolation: now, though the deſtruction itſelf was ſpoken of by *Moſes* and the prophets, was foretold by Chriſt, and the believing *Jews* had ſome diſcerning of its near approach; ſee *Heb*. x. 25. yet the exact and preciſe time was not known: it might have been calculated to a year by *Daniel*'s weeks, but not to the day and hour; and therefore our Lord does not ſay of the year, but of the day and hour no man knows; though the one week, or ſeven years being ſeparated from the reſt, throws that account into ſome perplexity; and which perhaps is on purpoſe done, to conceal the preciſe time of *Jeruſalem*'s deſtruction: nor need it be wondered at, notwithſtanding all the hints given, that the fatal day ſhould not be exactly known beforehand; when thoſe who have lived ſince, and were eyewitneſſes of it, are not agreed on what day of the month it was; for, as Dr. *Lightfoot*[i] obſerves, *Joſephus*[k] ſays, "that the temple periſhed the *tenth* "day of *Lous*, a day fatal to the temple, as hav-"ing been on that day conſumed in flames, by the "king of *Babylon*." And yet *Rabbi Jochanan ben Zaccai*, who was alſo at the deſtruction of it, as well as *Joſephus*, with all the *Jewiſh* writers, ſay it was on the *ninth* of *Ab*; for of this day they[l] ſay, five things happened upon it: "On the *ninth* of "*Ab* it was decreed concerning our fathers, that "they ſhould not enter into the land (of *Canaan*,) "the firſt and ſecond temple were deſtroyed, *Bi-*"*ther* was taken, and the city plowed up." Though the words of *R. Jochanan*, cited by the doctor, refers to the firſt, and not to the ſecond temple, and ſhould have been rendered thus: "If "I had been in the generation, (which fixed the "faſt for the deſtruction of the firſt temple) I "would not have fixed it but on the tenth (of *Ab*;) "for, adds he, the greateſt part of the temple was "burnt on that day; but the *Rabbins* rather regard-"ed the beginning of the puniſhment[m]." And ſo the faſting of *Rabbi*, and *R. Joſhua ben Levi*, on the *ninth* and *tenth* days, were on account of the firſt temple; for they were under the ſame difficulty about the one, as the other: *no, not the angels of heaven*; who dwell there, always behold the face of God, ſtand in his preſence ready to do his will, and are made acquainted with many of his deſigns, and are employed in the executing of them, and yet know not the time of God's vengeance on the *Jews*: to this agrees the ſenſe that is given of the day of vengeance in *Iſ*. lxiii. 4. 'tis aſked[n], "what's the meaning "of theſe words, *the day of vengeance is in my heart?* "Says *R. Jochanan*, to my heart I have revealed "it, to the members I have not revealed it: ſays "*R. Simeon ben Lakiſh*, to my heart I have revealed "it, למלאכי השרת לא גליתי, *to the miniſtring an-*"*gels I have not revealed it*." The *Ethiopic* verſion adds here, *nor the ſon*, and ſo the *Cambridge* copy of *Beza*'s; which ſeems to be tranſcribed from *Mark* xiii. 32. where that phraſe ſtands; and muſt be underſtood of Chriſt as the ſon of man, and not as the ſon of God; for as ſuch, he lay in the boſom of the Father, and knew all his purpoſes and deſigns; for theſe were purpoſed in him: he knew from the beginning who would betray him, and who would believe in him; he knew what would befal the rejecters of him, and when that would come to paſs; as he muſt know alſo the day of the laſt judgment, ſince it is appointed by God, and he is ordained to execute it: but the ſenſe is, that as he, as man and mediator, came not to deſtroy, but to ſave; ſo it was not any part of his work, as ſuch, to know, nor had he it in commiſſion to make known the time of *Jeruſalem*'s ruin: *but my Father only*; to the excluſion of all creatures, angels and men; but not to the excluſion of Chriſt as God, who as ſuch, is omniſcient; nor of the Holy Spirit, who is acquainted with the deep things of God, the ſecrets of his heart, and this among others.

Ver. 37. *But as the days of Noe were*, &c.] So *Noah*, is uſually called *Noe* by the *Septuagint*: the ſenſe is, as were the practices of the men of that generation, in which *Noah* lived, ſo will be the practices of the men of that age, in which the ſon of man comes; or as the flood, which happened in the days of *Noah*, was ſudden and unexpected; it came upon men thoughtleſs about it, though they had warning of it; and was univerſal, ſwept them all away, excepting a few that were ſaved in the ark: *ſo ſhall alſo the coming of the ſon of man be*; to take vengeance on the *Jews*, on a ſudden, at an unawares, when they would be unthoughtful about it; though they were forewarned of it by Chriſt and his apoſtles, and their deſtruction be as univerſal; all would be involved in it, excepting a few, that were directed a little before, to go out of the city of *Jeruſalem* to *Pella*; where they were ſaved, as *Noah* and his family were in the ark.

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[i] In Mark xiii. 32.
[k] De Bello Jud. l. 6 c. 26.
[l] Miſn. Taanith, c. 4. §. 7. T. Hieroſ. Taanioth, fol. 68. 3. & Maimon. Hilch. Taanioth, c. 5. § 2.
[m] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 29. 1.
[n] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 99. 1.

Ver. 38. *For as in the days that were before the flood*, &c.] Not all the days before the flood, from the creation of the world; but thoſe immediately preceding it, a century or two before it: they *were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage:* not that theſe civil actions of life were criminal in themſelves, had care been taken that they were not abuſed. It is lawful to eat and drink, provided it be in moderation, and not to exceſs; and to marry, and give in marriage, when the laws, rules, and ends thereof, are obſerved: and therefore this muſt be underſtood, either of their wholly giving themſelves up to the pleaſures of life, and luſts of the fleſh, without any concern about the affairs of religion, the worſhip and glory of God, the welfare of their ſouls, and their approaching danger, of which *Noah* had given them warning; or of their luxury and intemperance, in eating and drinking, and of their libidinous and unlawful marriages; for the word here uſed for eating, ſignifies eating after the manner of brute beaſts: they indulged themſelves in a brutiſh way, in gluttony and drunkenneſs; and it is certain from the account given of them, in *Gen.* vi. 2, 4. that they entered into unlawful marriages, and unclean copulations: wherefore theſe things may be ſpoken of them, as what were really ſinful and wicked, and denote a courſe of ſinning, a conſtant practice of theſe ſins of intemperance and luſt, and which is ſtill more fully expreſſed, in the next clauſe: *until the day that Noe entered into the ark.* The *Arabic* verſion renders it, *the ſhip*; the veſſel which God directed him to make, for the ſaving of himſelf and family. Now the men of that generation perſiſted in their wicked courſe of living, after, and notwithſtanding, the warning God had given them by *Noah*, of the flood that would come upon them; and all the while the ark was building, even to the very day that *Noah* and his family, by the order of God, went into the ark.

Ver. 39. *And knew not until the flood came*, &c.] That is, they did not advert or give heed, to what *Noah* ſaid to them about it: they ſlighted and deſpiſed his warnings; they did not believe, that what he ſaid of the flood was true; they had notice of it, but they would not know it, and therefore God gave them up to judicial blindneſs and hardneſs of heart; and ſo they remained, until it came upon them at once: *and took them all away*; the whole world of the ungodly, every man, woman, and child, except eight perſons only; *Noah* and his wife, and his three ſons and their wives; for the deluge was univerſal, and reached to all the inhabitants of the world, who all periſhed in it, excepting the above perſons. *So ſhall alſo the coming of the ſon of man be:* ſuch ſhall be, as it was, the caſe of the *Jews*, before the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem:* they gave themſelves up to all manner of wickedneſs and uncleanneſs; they diſregarded the warnings of Chriſt and his apoſtles; they were careleſs and ſecure of danger; they would not believe their ruin was at hand, when it was juſt upon them; they buoyed themſelves up to the very laſt, that a deliverer would ariſe, and ſave them; they cried peace, peace, when ſudden deſtruction was nigh; even of them all, their nation, city, and temple, a few only excepted, as in the days of *Noah:* and though they were ſo much like the men of that generation, yet they themſelves ſay of them, that "the generation of the flood have no part in the world to come, nor ſhall they ſtand in judgment, according to *Gen.* vi. 3. [o]"

Ver. 40. *Then ſhall two be in the field*, &c.] About their proper buſineſs, of huſbandry, plowing, or ſowing, or any other rural employment: *the one ſhall be taken*; not by the preaching of the Goſpel, into the kingdom of God, or Goſpel diſpenſation; though ſuch a diſtinction God makes, by the miniſtry of the word, accompanied by his Spirit and power; nor by angels, to meet Chriſt in the air, and to be introduced into his kingdom and glory; but by the eagles, the *Roman* army, and either killed or carried captive by them: *and the other left*; not in a ſtate of nature and unregeneracy, as many are, to whom the Goſpel is preached; nor with devils at the laſt day, to be thruſt down by them into the infernal regions; but by the *Romans*, being by ſome remarkable providence, or another, delivered out of their hands; which was the caſe of ſome few, and theſe of the meaner ſort; and therefore perſons of a rural life and occupation, are inſtanced in.

Ver. 41. *Two women ſhall be grinding at the mill*, &c.] Though the word *women* is not in the *Greek* text, yet it is rightly ſupplied by our tranſlators, as it is in the *Perſic* verſion; for the word rendered *grinding*, is in the feminine gender, and was the work of women, as appears both from the ſcripture, *Exod.* xi. 5. *Iſa.* xlvii. 1, 2. and from ſeveral paſſages in the *Jewiſh* writings, concerning which their canons run thus [p]: "Theſe are the works which a woman is to do for her huſband, טוחנת, *ſhe muſt grind*, and bake, and waſh, and boil, and make his bed, *&c.*" And elſewhere 'tis aſked [q], "how does ſhe grind? ſhe ſits at the mill, and watches the flour, but ſhe does not grind, or go after a beaſt, that ſo the mill may not ſtop; but if their cuſtom is to grind at a hand-mill, ſhe may grind. The *Sanhedrim* order this to poor people; for if ſhe brings one handmaid, or money, or goods, ſufficient to purchaſe, ſhe is not obliged to grind, *&c.*" Frequent mention is made, of women grinding together at the ſame mill: a caſe is put concerning two women grinding at an hand-mill [r], and various rules are given about it; as, that [s] "a woman may lend her neighbour that is ſuſpected of eating the fruits of the ſeventh year after time, a meal-ſieve, a fan, a mill, or a furnace, but ſhe mayn't winnow, nor *grind with her*." Which it ſuppoſes ſhe might do, if ſhe was not ſuſpected: again [t], "the wife of a plebeian, טוחנת, *may grind* with the wife of a learned man, in the time that ſhe is unclean, but not when ſhe is clean." Nor was this the cuſtom of the *Jews* only, for women to grind, but alſo of other countries, as of the *Abyſſines* [u], and of both *Greeks* and *Barbarians* [w]: *the one ſhall be taken, and the other left*; as before, one ſhall be taken by the *Romans*, and either put to death, or carried captive; and the other ſhall eſcape their hands, through the ſingular providence of God. The *Ethiopic* verſion, and *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel add, *two ſhall be in one bed, one ſhall be taken, and the other left*; but theſe words are not in the copies of *Matthew* in common, but are taken out of *Luke* xvii. 34. though they are in the *Cambridge* copy of *Beza*'s, and in one of *Stephens*'s.

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[o] Miſn Sanhedrin, c. 11. §. 3.

[p] Miſn. Cetubot, c. 5. §. 5. Vid. T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 47. 2. & 48. 1.

[q] Maimon. Hilch. Iſhot, c. 21. §. 5, 6.

[r] T. Bab. Nidda, fol. 60. 2.

[s] Miſn. Sheviith, c. 5. 9. & Gittin, c. 5. §. 9.

[t] T. Hieroſ. Terumot, fol. 46. 3. T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 61. 2. & Cholin, fol. 6. 2. Miſn. Taharot, c. 7. §. 4.

[u] Ludolph. Hiſt. Ethiop. l. 4. c. 4.

[w] Plutarch. apud Beza in loc.

Ver. 42. *Watch therefore*, &c.] Since the time of this deſolation is ſo uncertain, and ſince it will come upon the *Jews* unawares, and ſome will eſcape, whilſt others periſh; for the words are plainly an inference from what precedes, and clearly relates to things going before, and are not a tranſition to a new ſubject: *for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come*; to avenge himſelf of the unbelieving *Jews*, and fulfill what he in perſon, and by his apoſtles, had predicted and warned them of: though I will not deny, but that what follows, may be much better accommodated and applied to the ſecond coming of Chriſt, and the laſt judgment, and the behaviour of men with regard to both, than any thing ſaid before; and it may be our Lord's intention, to lead his diſciples gradually, and as it were imperceptibly, to the laſt ſcene of things on earth, to make way for the parables and deſcription of the future judgment, in the next chapter; ſtill keeping in view, and having reference to, the ſubject he had been ſo long upon.

Ver. 43. *But know this*, &c.] Or you do know this: this may be illuſtrated by ſuppoſing a caſe well known to men, and in which common prudence would direct a man how to behave: *that if the good man of the houſe*, or houſholder, or maſter of the family, *had known in what watch the thief would come*; whether at the firſt, ſecond, third, or fourth watch; for the night was divided into four watches; had he any previous notice given by any of the aſſociates of the thief, or by thoſe that had overheard, or by any means had got intelligence of his deſign and meaſures, and the time of his purſuing them, *he would have watched*; in every watch, either in perſon, or by employing others, or both: *and would not have ſuffered his houſe to be broken up*, or *dug through*; ſee *Job* xxiv. 16. concerning which, there is a law in *Exod*. xxii. 2. and and is explained by the *Jewiſh* canoniſts thus: "He " that comes in by digging, whether by day or " by night, there's no blood for him, (*i. e.* to be " ſhed for him, if he is killed) but if the maſter " of the houſe, or any other man kill him, they " are free; and every man has power to kill him, " whether on a week day, or on a ſabbath day; " and with whatſoever death he can put him to, " as it is ſaid, *there's no blood for him*, *Exod*. xxii. " 2. And one that comes in, במחתרת, *by digging*, or a thief that is found in the midſt of a " man's roof, or in his court, or within his hedge, " whether in the day or in the night, (may be " killed;) and wherefore is it called digging? be- " cauſe it is the way of moſt thieves to come in by " digging in the night [x]." Wherefore no doubt ſince the maſter of the houſe had ſuch a law on his ſide, he would never ſuffer, if poſſible, his houſe to be entered by digging, when he had, eſpecially, any previous notice of it. Now the application of this caſe, or parabolical way of ſpeaking, is to the coming of Chriſt, and the watchfulneſs of every good man who has notice of it, that he mayn't be ſurprized with it, but be in a readineſs to receive him. The coming of the ſon of man, is here repreſented by the coming of the thief in the night: but when he is compared to a thief, this is not to be underſtood in a bad ſenſe, in which ſatan is called one, who comes to kill and to deſtroy the ſouls of men; and likewiſe hereticks and falſe teachers, and every one that climbs up, and gets into the church of God in a wrong way; but this only reſpects the manner of Chriſt's coming, which is like that of a thief, ſecretly, ſuddenly, and at unawares. The *good man of the houſe*, or houſholder, is every chriſtian, or believer in Chriſt, who has a houſe to look after, his own ſoul, the ſpiritual affairs and everlaſting ſalvation of it, things of moment and concern unto him: and as the chriſtians, before the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, had notices of Chriſt's coming in that way, by our Lord's predictions, by the hints the apoſtles gave, to refreſh their memories with them, and by the ſigns of the times and voices that were heard; ſo the ſaints have of Chriſt's coming to judgment: wherefore as it became the one, ſo it does the other, to *watch*, to be upon their guard, to be in a readineſs, to have their loins girt about, and their lights burning, and they like men that wait for their Lord; that ſo when he comes, their houſes may not be broken up, may not be ſurprized, and the ſeveral powers and faculties of their ſouls may not be thrown into diſorder and confuſion; wherefore it follows,

Ver. 44. *Therefore be ye alſo ready*, &c.] Or prepared for the coming of the ſon of man; which as it is ſaid to be like a thief in the night, expreſſes the ſuddenneſs of it, may excite to watchfulneſs and readineſs; which readineſs is to be underſtood, not of a readineſs to do the will and work of God, though this is abſolutely neceſſary; as to watch and pray, to hear the word preached, to confeſs Chriſt, and give a reaſon of the hope that is in us, to communicate to the ſupport of the cauſe and intereſt of Chriſt, and to ſuffer for his ſake; but of a preparedneſs to meet the Lord in the way of his judgments, when deſolating judgments are coming on the earth, ſuch as theſe in *Jeruſalem*; by faith and truſt in the power, providence, and care of God; by humiliation before him, and reſignation to his will: and if this can be applied to a readineſs for a future ſtate after death, for the ſecond coming of Chriſt, and laſt judgment; this lies not in a dependance on the abſolute mercy of God; nor in an external humiliation for ſin; nor in an abſtinence from groſſer ſins, or in mere negative holineſs; nor in any outward, legal, civil, and moral righteouſneſs; nor in a ſubmiſſion to Goſpel ordinances; nor in a mere profeſſion of religion; but in being in Chriſt, having on his righteouſneſs, and being waſhed in his blood; and alſo in regeneration and ſanctification, in having true knowledge of Chriſt, and faith in him; for all which it becomes men to be concerned, as alſo all believers to be actually, as well as habitually ready; being in the lively exerciſe of grace, and chearful diſcharge of duty, though without truſting to either. And ſuch a readineſs in either branch of it, is not of themſelves, but lies in the grace of God, which gives a meetneſs for glory; and in the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, the fine linnen, clean and white, which being granted by him, his people are made ready for him: and as for their faith, and the exerciſe of it, and their conſtant performance of duty, theſe are not from the ſtrength of nature and the power of free-will, but from the Spirit of God and his grace; who makes ready a people prepared for the Lord, and all according to the ancient ſettlements of grace, in which proviſion is made for the veſſels of mercy, afore prepared for glory: though there ſhould be a ſtudious concern in men for ſuch readineſs, for nothing is more certain than death, and nothing more uncertain than when it will be; and after death, no readineſs can be had, but he that is then righteous,

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[x] Maimon. Hilch. Genibah, c. 9. §. 7, 8.

eous, ſhall be righteous ſtill, and he that is filthy, ſhall be filthy ſtill, and a death-bed is by no means to be truſted to; and though a perſon may not be ſnatched away ſuddenly, but may have ſpace given him to repent, yet if grace is not given him, to repent and believe in Chriſt, he never will: the grave is ready for men, and in a little time all will be brought to this houſe, appointed for all living, where there is no wiſdom, knowledge, and device; and therefore whatever we are directed to do, ſhould be now done, with all that might, and ſtrength, and grace, that is given us; to which may be added, that after death comes judgment: the day is fixed, the judge is appointed, and all muſt ſtand before his judgment ſeat; and nothing is more ſure, than that Chriſt will come a ſecond time, to judge both quick and dead; and happy will thoſe be that are ready; they will be received by Chriſt into everlaſting habitations, and be for ever with him; and miſerable will thoſe be, who will not be ready, who will not have the oil of grace in their hearts with their lamps, nor the wedding garment on them; they'll be ſhut out, and bid to depart into everlaſting burnings: how fit and proper is ſuch an advice and exhortation as this, *be ye alſo ready*. A readineſs the *Jews* report *Bath Kol*, or the voice from heaven, gave out concerning the *Iſraelites*. “ *Bath Kol*, ſay [y] they, went out, and ſaid to them, “ כולכם מזומנין לחיי העולם הבא, *ye are all of* “ *you ready for the life of the world to come*.” And elſewhere 'tis ſaid of *Bath Kol*, that it went forth and affirmed of ſome particular *Rabbins*, that they were ready for eternal life; as of *Ketiah bar Shalom*, *R. Eleazar ben Durdia*, and *R. Chanina* [z]: *for in ſuch an hour as ye think not, the ſon of man cometh*: this is true of his coming in power to deſtroy *Jeruſalem*, and of his ſecond coming to judgment. The *Jews* ſay much the ſame of the coming of the *Meſſiah*, whom they expect: “ there are three things “ they ſay [a], which come, בהיסח הדעת, *without* “ *knowledge*, or unthought of, at an unawares; and “ they are theſe, the Meſſiah, any thing that is “ found, and a ſcorpion.”

Ver. 45. *Who then is a faithful and wiſe ſervant*, &c.] The *Vulgate Latin* adds, *do you think?* and is a queſtion put to the diſciples, which they might apply to themſelves: in *Luke* xii. 42. 'tis ſpoken in anſwer to a queſtion of *Peter*'s, in relation to the above exhortation, whether it was ſpoken to them, or to all; and by this anſwer, it looks as if it was more eſpecially deſigned for them, though it may be applied to others. The *ſervant* is there called a *ſteward*, for ſuch a ſervant is meant; and a name that is very proper for the apoſtles and miniſters of the word, who are ſtewards of the myſteries of Chriſt, and of the manifold grace of God; and whoſe characters are, that they are *faithful*: for this is required in ſtewards, that they be faithful to the truſt repoſed in them; as miniſters are, when they preach the pure Goſpel of Chriſt, and the whole of it; conceal no part, nor keep back any thing of it; ſeek not to pleaſe men, but God; neither ſeek their own things, their eaſe, honour, and profit, but the glory of God, the honour of Chriſt, and the good of ſouls; and abide by the truths, cauſe, and intereſt of a Redeemer, at all hazards. And they are *wiſe*, who know and are well inſtructed in divine things; who make Chriſt the main ſubject of their miniſtry; who improve their talents and time for their maſter's uſe, and the advantage of thoſe that are under their care; who ſeek for, and deliver acceptable words and matter; and manage their whole truſt, ſo as to be able to give in a good account of their ſtewardſhip another day. The poſt that ſuch a perſon is put in, and the work he is to do, follow: *whom his Lord hath made ruler over his houſhold*; or *family*, the church of God, which is the houſhold of God, and of faith, in which are believers of various growths and ſizes; ſome fathers, ſome young men, ſome children; and over theſe, the miniſters are, by their Lord, made and placed as rulers; not as lords and tyrants over God's heritage, to govern them in an arbitrary way, but as over them in the Lord, to rule them according to the word of God, and the laws of his houſe; by preaching the Goſpel, adminiſtring ordinances, and keeping up his worſhip and the diſcipline of the church; and whoſe principal buſineſs it is, *to give them meat in due ſeaſon*; even *their portion* of it, as in *Luke*: for the word of God is to be cut and rightly divided, and every one in the family, according to his age, appetite, and digeſtion, is to have his proper part and portion given him: it muſt be meat, proper food, ſuch as is ſolid, ſubſtantial, and nouriſhing; even the wholeſome words of Chriſt Jeſus, that muſt be given them, and not huſks and empty traſh; and all in due ſeaſon, in its proper time, as their caſes and circumſtances require, and call for; as whether weary, or uncomfortable, or in the dark, or under temptations and afflictions; for a word fitly and ſeaſonably ſpoken, how uſeful is it!

Ver. 46. *Bleſſed is that ſervant whom his Lord when he cometh*, &c.] Whether in a way of judgment, as againſt *Jeruſalem*; or at death, when he comes to remove him out of time, into eternity; or at the day of judgment, when he, the righteous judge, will give the crown of righteouſneſs to him: *ſhall find ſo doing*; acting the faithful and wiſe part, ruling the houſhold of God well; giving to all wholeſome food, a proper portion of it, and that in the right time.

Ver. 47. *Verily I ſay unto you*, &c.] Nothing is a greater truth, more certain, or to be depended on, than this; all ſuch wiſe, faithful, diligent, and induſtrious ſervants may expect it: *that he ſhall make him ruler over all his goods*; will honour him with greater gifts, beſtow a larger degree of Goſpel light and knowledge on him, make him more uſeful in the church below, and at laſt cauſe him to inherit all things in the other world, all glory, happineſs, and bliſs.

Ver. 48. *But and if that evil ſervant*, &c.] Or ſhould there be an evil ſervant, an unwiſe and faithleſs one, who though he may have gifts and talents, yet deſtitute of the grace of God; and though he may be in the higheſt poſt and office in the church of God; for ſometimes wicked and graceleſs men are in ſuch places; yet if he *ſhall ſay in his heart*; ſecretly to himſelf, and with pleaſure to his mind, and ſtrengthen himſelf in a full perſuaſion of this, *my Lord delayeth his coming*; and begins to think that either he will not come at all, to call him to an account for the uſe of his time, gifts, and talents; or if he does, it will be long firſt e'er he will come, and viſit the people of the *Jews*, by deſolating calamities; or by death, to ſummon him to his bar; or at judgment, to give in his account of his ſtewardſhip.

Ver. 49. *And ſhall begin to ſmite his fellow ſervants*, &c.] By abuſing the power lodged in him, uſurping a dominion over their faith, and impoſing on their conſciences, things which Chriſt has never commanded; vexing and burdening them with trifling rites and ceremonies, and other unneceſſary things; wounding, grieving, offending weak minds by his conduct and example; or perſecuting the ſaints, ſuch of them as cannot come into every thing in his way of believing and practiſing: *and to eat and drink with the drunken*; giving himſelf up to luxury and intemperance; feeding himſelf inſtead of the family; ſerving his own belly, and not his Lord and Maſter Chriſt; living an ungodly and licentious life, altogether unbecoming the Goſpel of Chriſt: ſuch ſervants and ſtewards have been, and are in the church of God; but ſad will be their caſe, when their Lord comes, as follows. Reſpect ſeems to be had either to the eccleſiaſtical rulers among the *Jews*, who went under the name of the ſervants of the Lord, but perſecuted the apoſtles, and thoſe that believed in Chriſt; or the *judaizing* chriſtians, and falſe teachers, that were for impoſing the ceremonies of the law upon believers; or *Simon Magus*, and his followers, a ſett of licentious men; or all of them; who lived in this period of time, between the death of Chriſt, and the deſtruction of the temple.

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[y] T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 9. 1.

[z] T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 10. 2. & 17. 1. & 18. 1. & Callah, fol. 17. 2. & Cetubot, fol. 103. 2.

[a] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 97. 1.

Ver. 50. *The Lord of that ſervant*, &c.] Not by redemption and grace, but by creation and profeſſion; *ſhall come in a day when he looked not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of*: ſuddenly and unexpectedly: ſuch was his coming in wrath and vengeance on the *Jewiſh* nation; and ſuch is his coming oftentimes by death; and ſuch will be his coming at the day of judgment.

Ver. 51. *And ſhall cut him aſunder*, &c.] The *Perſic* verſion renders it, *he ſhall ſeparate him from himſelf*; he ſhall ſeparate ſoul and body by death; he ſhall take away all his gifts and talents from him; and remove him from his place and office, and from the church of God, and communion of the ſaints, and out of this world. Some think the alluſion is to the cutting up of the ſacrifices, and dividing them into pieces; and the ſenſe is, that this wicked ſervant ſhould have no ſhare in the ſacrifice of Chriſt; but ſhould fall himſelf a victim to divine juſtice, and be uſed as ſacrifices were; or, in other words, be ſeverely puniſhed for his ſins: tho' the alluſion ſeems rather to be to the manner of puniſhing treacherous and unfaithful perſons, by diſmembring them, cutting them in pieces, or in two: and ſo the *Arabic* verſion renders it, *he ſhall cut him in the middle*: this was certainly a way of putting perſons to death; though ſome ſay it was not known to the *Jews*; but the following inſtances ſhew the contrary. Mention is made of ſome that were ſawn aſunder, *Heb.* xi. 37. and the *Jews* ſay[b], that *Iſaiah* was ſawn aſunder by *Manaſſeh*; and ſuch a kind of death is ſpoken of in the *Targum*[c]; where it is ſaid, that “the prieſts went before *Mordecai*, and pro- “claimed, ſaying, whoever does not ſalute, or “wiſh proſperity to *Mordecai*, and to the *Jews*, “הדמין יתעביד, *he ſhall be cut into pieces*, and his “houſe be made a dunghill.” And elſewhere[d] it is ſaid of a wicked man, that they put him upon a carpenter's block, and מנסרים בו, *ſawed him aſunder*; and he cried out, wo, wo, wo, that I have provoked my creator. This was alſo a puniſhment uſed among the heathens, as *Gataker*[e], and others out of heathen writers, have ſhewn. It muſt not here be underſtood literally, that this wicked ſervant ſhould be put to ſuch a corporal death; but that he ſhould be puniſhed in the ſevereſt manner, and ſhould be the object of the fierce wrath and ſore diſpleaſure of God; *and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites*. *Luke* ſays, *with the unbelievers*: very likely both phraſes were uſed by Chriſt; intimating, that ſuch as make a profeſſion of him, and have only a form of godlineſs, without the power of it, and are wicked and hypocritical men, will ſhare the ſame fate with thoſe that believe not; and the portion of theſe is the lake which burns with fire and brimſtone; ſee *Rev.* xxi. 8. or all ſuch perſons are intended, who put on the maſk of religion, and do not anſwer to the character they bear; and are unfaithful to the truſt repoſed in them, and therefore will be made examples of righteous judgment, and have their part in the loweſt hell: *there ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of teeth*; ſee the note on ch. xiii. 42.

## CHAP. XXV.

Ver. 1. THEN *ſhall the kingdom of heaven*, &c.] The Goſpel church-ſtate; ſee the note on ch. xiii. 24. either as it would be a little before the coming of the ſon of man to take vengeance on the *Jews*; or as it will be a little before his ſecond coming to judgment; for the parable is manifeſtly connected with, and refers to the preceding chapter, which chiefly treats of *Jeruſalem*'s deſtruction: but tho' the *Jews* were in great ſecurity before their utter ruin, yet it does not appear that the Chriſtian church was then in ſuch a lukewarm, drowſy, and ſleepy condition, as this parable repreſents: and ſince, in the latter part of the preceding chapter, there are ſome hints of Chriſt's ſecond and laſt coming; when the ſervant found doing his Lord's will, will be greatly honoured, and the wicked, cruel, and licentious ſervant will be ſeverely puniſhed; and ſince, at the cloſe of this, and the following parable, there is a very lively deſcription given of the laſt judgment; as alſo, becauſe it appears elſewhere, that ſuch will be the formal, lukewarm, cold, indifferent, ſecure, and ſleepy ſtate of the church, before the ſecond coming of Chriſt; it ſeems right and beſt to underſtand this parable, and the following, as having reſpect to that: and that the deſign of it is to ſhew, what will be the caſe of profeſſors at that time; the difference between nominal and real chriſtians; how far perſons may go in a profeſſion of religion, and yet, at laſt, be ſhut out of heaven; as alſo the ſuddenneſs of Chriſt's coming; the neceſſity of being ready for it; and how watchful the ſaints ſhould be, that they be not ſurprized with it. Now ſome time before this, the Goſpel church-ſtate, or the body of profeſſing Chriſtians, will *be likened unto ten virgins*; to *virgins* for quality; being betrothed ones to Chriſt, at leaſt in profeſſion; and becauſe of the ſingleneſs of their love, and chaſte adherence to him, however, as they will declare, and which, in ſome of them, will be fact; and for their beauty, comelineſs, and gay attire, being, as they will profeſs, clothed with the righteouſneſs of Chriſt; with that fine linen, clean and white, with cloth of gold, and raiment of needle-work, and ſo perfectly comely through his comelineſs; and for their purity and incorruptneſs of doctrine, worſhip, and converſation, at leaſt in appearance, and which will be true of many of them; and all, from their profeſſion, will bear the ſame character: theſe for their quantity and number, are compared to *ten* virgins; which may, perhaps, denote the ſmall number of profeſſors at this time; ſee *Gen.* xviii. 32. that there will be but few, that will then name the name of Chriſt, and fewer ſtill who will not have defiled their garments, and be virgins indeed. The number *ten* was greatly taken notice of, and uſed among the *Jews*: a congregation, with them, conſiſted of ten perſons, and leſs than that number did not make one[f]; and whereever there were ten perſons in a place, they were obliged to build a ſynagogue[g]. Ten elders of the city were witneſſes of *Boaz*'s taking *Ruth* to be his wife, *Ruth* iv. 2, 9, 10. Now it may be in reference to the former of theſe, that this number ten is here expreſſed, ſince the parable relates to the congregated churches of Chriſt, or to Chriſt's viſible church on earth: moreover, they ſay, that "with leſs than ten "they did not divide the *ſhema*, (i. e. *hear, O Iſrael*, "and ſay any part of the bleſſings that went be-"fore it); nor did (the meſſenger of the congrega-"tion) go before the ark (to pray); nor did (the "prieſts) lift up their hands (to bleſs the people); "nor did they read in the law (in the congrega-"tion); nor did they diſmiſs (the people) with (a "paſſage out of one of) the prophets; nor did "they make a ſtanding, and a ſitting (when they "carried the dead to the grave, which uſed to be "done ſeven times, to weep over the dead); nor "did they ſay the bleſſing of the mourners, nor "the comforts of the mourners (when they re-"turn'd from the grave, and ſtood in a row to "comfort the mourner; and there was no row leſs "than ten); וברכת חתנים, *nor the bleſſing of the* "*bridegrooms*," which conſiſted of ſeven bleſſings, and this was not ſaid but in the preſence of *ten* perſons[h]; to which there may be an alluſion here: for the whole alludes to the ſolemnities of a marriage among the *Jews*, when the bridegroom fetched home his bride from her father's houſe, attended with his friends, the children of the bride-chamber, and which was uſually done in the night; and, at the ſame time, the bride was waiting for him, accompanied with virgins, or bride-maids; ſee *Pſ.* xlv. 14. who, when they perceived the bridegroom coming, went out with lamps, or torches, to meet him, and conduct him to her; hence it follows, *which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom*. The *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, and *Perſic* verſions, add, *and the bride*, contrary to the *Greek* copies, excepting the *Cambridge* copy of *Beza*'s. Nor do the *Arabic* and *Ethiopic* verſions ſo read; nor *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel; nor does it agree with the above cuſtom. By *the bridegroom* is meant Chriſt, who ſtands in this relation to his church and people; he ſaw them in the glaſs of the purpoſes and decrees of God, and loved them, and aſked them of his father to be given him as his ſpouſe and bride; and who did give them to him, when he ſecretly betrothed them to himſelf, in the everlaſting covenant, as he does their particular perſons at converſion, and will conſummate the marriage of them all at the laſt day; and, in the mean while, acts the part of a bridegroom to them: he loves them as a bridegroom loves his bride, with a love prior to theirs, free and unmerited; with a love of complacency and delight; which is ſingle and chaſte, ſtrong and affectionate; conſtant and perpetual, wonderful, matchleſs, and unconceivable: he ſympathizes with them, nouriſhes, and cheriſhes them as his own fleſh; providing ſpiritual food, and rich clothing for them; and indulging them with intimate communion with himſelf, and intereſts them in all he has; and when he comes again a ſecond time, he'll appear under this character. His firſt appearance was mean, in the form of a ſervant, in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh, in garments rolled in blood; but when he comes a ſecond time, he'll appear as a bridegroom in his nuptial robes: all his elect will be prepared for him, beautified and adorned as a bride for her huſband; when he'll come and take them home to himſelf, and will avow them to be his before his father, and his holy angels; and which will be a time of great glory, and great joy. Now theſe virgins are ſaid to take their lamps, and go forth to meet him: by their *lamps* are meant, either the word of God, the ſcriptures of truth, particularly the Goſpel, and the doctrines of it; which, like a lamp, were lighted in the evening of the *Jewiſh* diſpenſation, and will ſhine the brighteſt towards the end of the world: theſe are like lamps both to walk by, and work by, and were a light to all theſe virgins: ſome were ſavingly enlightened into them, and by them; and others only notionally, but were taken up, owned, and profeſſed, as the rule of faith and practice, by them all; and that in order to meet and find the bridegroom, for they teſtify of him: or rather an external profeſſion of religion is deſigned by the lamps, which is diſtinct from the oil of grace, and the veſſel of the heart, in which that is; and is that into which the oil is put and burns, ſo as to become viſible; and muſt be daily recruited, and trimmed with freſh ſupplies of grace from Chriſt, without which it can't be kept up, nor will be of any uſe and ſervice; and is what may go out, or be dropp'd and loſt, as ſome of theſe lamps. Now this was what was taken up by them all: they all made a profeſſion of Chriſt, and his Goſpel; ſome of them took it up aright, upon an experience of the grace of God, and principles of grace wrought in their ſouls; others, without any experience, and without conſidering the nature, importance, and conſequences of a profeſſion; and ſo they all went forth to meet the bridegroom: ſome in the exerciſe of faith on him, and in his coming; in love to him, and his appearance; deſiring, and longing to ſee him; expecting, and waiting for him: others only in a way of a viſible profeſſion of religion, and an outward attendance on ordinances. The cuſtom here alluded to of meeting the bridegroom, and attending the bride home to his houſe in the night, with lighted torches, or lamps, and ſuch a number of them as here mentioned, was not only the cuſtom of the *Jews*, but of other eaſtern nations. *Jarchi* ſays[k], it was the cuſtom of the *Iſhmaelites*; his words are theſe: "it was a cuſtom, in the land of "*Iſhmael*, to bring the bride from her father's houſe "to her huſband's houſe, בלילה, *in the night*, be-"fore ſhe entered the nuptial-chamber; and to "carry before her בעשר קונדסין, *about ten ſtaves*; "and upon the top of the ſtaff was the form of a "brazen diſh, and in the midſt of it, pieces of "garments, oil, and pitch, which they ſet fire to "and lighted before her." Something like this is the cuſtom of the *Eaſt-Indians* now, which is thus related [l]: "on the day of their marriage, the huſband and wife being both in the ſame *palki*, or *palanquin*, (which is the ordinary way of carriage in the country, and is carried by four men upon their ſhoulders) go out between ſeven and eight o'clock *at night*, accompanied with all their kindred and friends; the trumpets and drums go before them; and they are *lighted* by a multitude of *maſſals*, which are a kind of flambeaus; immediately behind the *palanquin* of the new-married couple, walk many *women*, whoſe buſineſs is to ſing verſes, wherein they wiſh them all kind of proſperity.—The new-married couple go abroad in this equipage, for the ſpace of ſome hours; after which they return to their own houſe, where the *women* and domeſticks wait for them: the whole houſe is enlightened with little lamps, and many of theſe *maſſals*, already mentioned, are kept ready for their arrival, beſides thoſe that accompany them, and go before their *palanquin*. This ſort of lights are nothing elſe, but many pieces of old linen ſqueezed hard againſt one another, in a round figure, and forcibly thruſt down into a mould of copper: thoſe who hold them in one hand, have, in the other, a bottle of the ſame metal, with the mould copper, which is full of oil; and they take care to pour out of it, from time to time, upon the linen, which otherwiſe gives no light."

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[b] T. Hieroſ. Sanhedrin, fol. 28. 3. & T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 49. 2.

[c] Targum in Eſth. viii. 15.

[d] Bereſhit Rabba, ſ. 65. fol. 58. 4.

[e] Adverſaria, p. 455.

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[f] Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 1. §. 6. T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 11. 3.

[g] Maimon. Hilch. Tephillah, c. 11. §. 1.

[h] Miſ Megilla, c. 4. §. 3. Maimon. Hilch. Tephilla, c. 8. §. 4, 5.

[i] Bartenora in Miſn. Megilla, c. 4. §. 3. T. Bab. Cet bot, fol. 8. 2.

[k] In Miſn. Celim, c. 2. §. 8.

Ver. 2. *And five of them were wiſe*, &c.] The order of theſe words is inſerted in ſome verſions, as in the *Vulgate Latin*, *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic*, and in *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel, which read, *and five of them were fooliſh, and five of them were wiſe*; but this is of no great conſequence. There is a parable of *R. Jochanan ben Zaccai* [m], who lived before, and after the deſtruction of the ſecond temple, which bears ſome likeneſs to this part of the parable, and others in it, and is this; "a certain king invited his ſervants, but did not fix any time for them; thoſe of them that were פקחים, *wiſe*, adorned themſelves, and ſat at the gate of the king's houſe, and ſaid, is there any want at the king's houſe? but thoſe of them that were טפשים, *fools*, went and did their work, and ſaid, is there any feaſt without trouble? on a ſudden, the king enquired after his ſervants: the wiſe went in before him, as they were, adorned; but the fools went in before him, as they were, filthy: the king rejoiced at meeting the wiſe, and was angry at meeting the fooliſh; and ordered, that thoſe who had adorned themſelves for the feaſt ſhould ſit and eat, and thoſe that had not adorned themſelves for the feaſt ſhould ſtand." The wiſe virgins are ſuch, who are wiſe, not in their own conceits, which is the caſe of natural men, and empty profeſſors; nor in the things of nature, or in the things of the world, of which the ſaints are oftentimes leſs knowing than others; nor in notional and ſpeculative knowledge, much leſs in things that are evil: but they are ſuch who are wiſe unto ſalvation; who not only know the ſcheme of it, but are ſenſible of their need of it; apply to Chriſt for it; venture their ſouls on him, and commit them to him: they truſt in his righteouſneſs for juſtification; in his blood for pardon; in his ſacrifice for atonement; in his fulneſs for daily ſupplies; in his grace and ſtrength to perform every duty; and expect eternal life in, and from him: they know him, prize him, and value him as their ſaviour; rejoice in him, and give him all the glory; and they are ſuch who are alſo wiſe in the buſineſs of a profeſſion, as well as in the affair of ſalvation; they are ſuch who take up a profeſſion of religion aright, upon principles of grace, and after mature thought and deliberation; and when they have ſo done, hold it faſt without wavering, walk becoming it in their lives and converſations; and yet do not depend on it, or truſt to it: *and five were fooliſh*; not in their own apprehenſion, in which they might be wiſe enough; nor in the judgment of others; nor in natural knowledge; or with reſpect to the things of the world; nor in ſpeculative notions of the Goſpel; nor merely ſo called, becauſe unconverted; every unconverted man being a fooliſh man: but they were ſo in the buſineſs of ſalvation; as all are who build their hopes of it on birth privileges; on a carnal deſcent from good men; on a religious education; on their own righteouſneſs; or on the abſolute mercy of God; and not on Chriſt, the one only, and ſure foundation: they are ſuch who know not themſelves; the impurity of their hearts, and nature; their impotency to that which is ſpiritually good; and the imperfection and inſufficiency of their own righteouſneſs: they know not Chriſt, and his ſalvation, neither the worth, nor want of him, or that; and are altogether ſtrangers to the power of godlineſs, and ſpiritual experience: and are alſo as fooliſh in the affair of a profeſſion, which they take up without a work of the Spirit of God upon their ſouls, and without conſidering the coſt and charge of it; and either in a little time wholly drop it, or, if they hold it, they fooliſhly depend upon it, or lead lives unſuitable to it. The number of wiſe and fooliſh virgins being equal, does not imply that there will be juſt the ſame number of nominal, as of real believers in the churches, in the latter day, a little before the coming of Chriſt; only that there will be a large number of ſuch among them.

Ver. 3. *They that were fooliſh took their lamps*, &c.] The *Vulgate Latin*, and *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel, read, *the five fooliſh*, whoſe folly is here expoſed; and which lay not merely, or only in taking up the lamps of a profeſſion in a wrong way, and upon a wrong bottom, but chiefly in what follows; *and took no oil with them*: by *oil* is meant, not temporal bleſſings, nor ſpiritual ones, nor the Goſpel, nor the gifts of the Spirit, all which are ſometimes ſignified by oil; but either the Spirit of God himſelf, who is the oil of gladneſs, and the anointing which teacheth all things; or the regenerating and ſanctifying grace of the Spirit, even all the graces which are implanted by him in converſion: this is ſo called, in alluſion to the anointing oil under the law, in its excellent nature, its coſtly matter, its curious make, and particular application; and in the uſe of it to anoint both things, the tabernacle and its veſſels, and perſons, prophets, prieſts, and kings; ſee *Exod.* xxx. 23, *&c.* The grace of the Spirit being of an holy and ſanctifying nature, exceeding valuable and precious, and a curious piece of workmanſhip, and what is only applied unto, and beſtowed on the elect of God; and with which all the veſſels of mercy, ſmall and great, are anointed, and are made prophets, prieſts, and kings, and is what is, as that was, laſting and abiding: or elſe with reſpect to the precious oil, or ointment poured on *Aaron*'s head, which was emblematical of the grace of the Spirit, which was poured forth, without meaſure, on Chriſt, and from him deſcends to all his members: or to the lamp-oil for the candleſtick in the tabernacle, which was oil-olive, oil-olive, pure, beaten, and was for light, to cauſe the lamp to burn always; and fitly repreſented grace, which comes from Chriſt, the true olive-tree; is pure, and of a purifying nature; and comes thro' a bruiſed, crucified Chriſt; and being put into the heart, cauſes the light of good works, and a becoming converſation, to ſhine forth: or elſe to oil in common, which is of a chearing and refreſhing nature, is beautifying and adorning, ſuppling and healing, feeding and fattening, ſearching and penetrating, and will not mix with any thing elſe; upon all which accounts grace may be compared to it. Now theſe fooliſh virgins, though they took up a lamp of a profeſſion, yet were unconcerned for the oil of grace, to fill, maintain, and trim this lamp: they were ignorant of the nature and uſe of true grace; they ſaw no need of it, and therefore did not aſk for it, or about it; they neglected it, made light of it, and denied it as uſeleſs; and being deſtitute of it, took up their profeſſion without it; and in this lay their folly.

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[l] The agreement of cuſtoms between the *Eaſt-Indians* and *Jews*, art. 17. p. 68, 69.

[m] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 153. 1.

Vid. R. David Kimchi in Iſ. lxv. 13.

Ver. 4. *But the wiſe took oil*, &c.] They were concerned for the true grace of God, being enlightened by the Spirit of God; they ſaw their need of the grace of God, and being directed by him where it was to be had, went to Chriſt for it; and having received it from him, thro' the power of the Holy Ghoſt, exerciſed it on him; and herein lay their wiſdom: for a ſtock of this in the heart, daily renewed by Chriſt, will ſupply the lamp of a profeſſion well. This they had *in their veſſels*, their oil-veſſels; by which are meant their hearts; ſo called in alluſion either to the veſſels in which the oil was put, when preſſed out of the olives, *Jer.* xl. 10. or to the oil-veſſels of the candleſtick, *Numb.* iv. 9. Theſe are veſſels of God's making, tho' thro' ſin are become impure, and empty of all ſpiritual good: they are indeed large and capacious; here's room for Father, Son, and Spirit, and for abundance of grace; they are capable of comprehending much of the love of God, and beſides natural, a great deal of ſpiritual knowledge: here, *in* theſe veſſels, ſanctified by the Spirit of God, the wiſe virgins had the oil of grace, which is an internal thing: it is nothing in the head, in the tongue, or in the hand, but ſomething in the heart: it does not lie in notion, in talking, nor in doing; a man may know much, ſay a great deal, and do many external works, and yet be deſtitute of the grace of God; nothing external is that: it is not a mere outward reformation of life, an external humiliation for ſin, an abſtinence from the groſſer ſins of life, or a conformity to the ordinances of the Goſpel, or a profeſſion of religion: it is a principle of light, life, love, and holineſs wrought in a man's heart; it has its ſeat in the mind, underſtanding, and judgment, in the will, conſcience, and the affections. This oil of grace was not naturally in them; nor was it obtained by the power of their free-will; but was freely given unto them, and powerfully wrought in them: the caſe is this; all grace was put into Chriſt's hands for them; the Spirit of God was ſent down to apply it to them, and work it in them; which is generally done by means, which they made uſe of by his direction and aſſiſtance, and ſo may be ſaid to take it: *with their lamps*, of an external profeſſion; they did not take up a profeſſion before they had grace, or without it; but when they received the one, they took up the other; and which was acting the wiſe part.

Ver. 5. *While the bridegroom tarried*, &c.] The ſpace of time here referr'd to, is either from the aſcenſion of Chriſt, to his coming to take vengeance on the *Jews*; or from thence to his ſecond coming; or rather from the time of ſome general expectation by the ſaints, of the near approach of Chriſt, till ſuch time he does come: for as there was a general expectation of the coming of Chriſt before he came in the fleſh, ſo there will be a general expectation of Chriſt being near at hand ſome time before his ſecond coming; and becauſe ſuch an expectation will not be anſwered, or Chriſt will not come ſo ſoon as was hoped for, and expected, a general drowſineſs, and ſecurity, and unconcernedneſs, eſpecially about the coming of Chriſt, will fall upon the churches. Thus, in the laſt century, there was among the people of God, in theſe kingdoms, a general expectation of Chriſt's ſpeedy coming; but being in this diſappointed, profeſſors of all ſorts are fallen aſleep, and do not at all, or very little, at leaſt very few, concern themſelves about it: in a word, this interval of time ſeems to regard that period which is pointed out by the *Laodicean* church-ſtate, which will uſher in the coming of Chriſt, and the laſt judgment. Now Chriſt, the bridegroom, may be ſaid to tarry, not with reſpect to the time fixed by the father and himſelf; for as this is ſettled, tho' unknown to man, it will not be paſſed by him; he does not, nor will he tarry beyond the appointed time: but either with reſpect to the time fixed by men; or with reſpect to the declaration of Chriſt, and his apoſtles, that he would come *quickly*, and the length of time ſince; or rather with reſpect to the expectations of the ſaints, and their impatience. The reaſon why he tarries is, becauſe his time is not come, and there are many things to be done firſt; there is to be a glorious ſpread of the Goſpel all over the world; all the elect muſt be gathered in, both among *Jews* and *Gentiles*; and the man of ſin muſt be deſtroyed; and the ungodly muſt fill up the meaſure of their iniquities; and Chriſt tarries to try the graces of his people, who ſhould exerciſe faith in his coming, by looking, watching, and waiting for it, deſirous of it, and haſtening unto it; being ready for him, prepared to receive him, and to go in with him to the nuptial-chamber; but inſtead of this *they all ſlumbered and ſlept*: which is not to be underſtood as if that one only ſlumbered, and the other ſlept; that is, that the wiſe virgins ſlumbered, and the fooliſh virgins ſlept; for the wiſe virgins, or true believers, are elſewhere ſaid to ſleep, and formal profeſſors to ſlumber; but both theſe are ſpoken of them all: and by this ſlumber, and ſleep, is not meant a natural death; tho' that is ſometimes called a ſleep, and to which true believers are ſubject, as well as others; yet all at the coming of Chriſt will not be aſleep in this ſenſe: and were this intended, their reſurrection would be deſigned by their *ariſing*, in the ſeventh verſe; and ſo the reſurrection of the ſaints, and of others, would be together, which is not true, for the dead in Chriſt will riſe firſt; and would be alſo before the coming of Chriſt, whereas the reſurrection of the ſaints is not till at his coming; and it would look, by the account in ſome following verſes, as if grace might be had, or, at leaſt, be thought to be had, after the reſurrection: nor is this to be underſtood of the dead ſleep of ſin: a death in ſin may be ſignified by ſleeping, and be ſo called, and conviction be an awakening out of it; but the fooliſh virgins were always aſleep in this ſenſe, and were never truly and thoroughly awaked; and wiſe virgins never do, nor can, fall into this ſleep; for being quickened by Chriſt, they never die again: nor of a judicial ſlumber and ſleep, which the ſaints are never given up to; but a dead, lifeleſs, and ſleepy frame of ſpirit in the wiſe virgins: which lies in grace not being in exerciſe; in a ſlothfulneſs to perform religious duties; in taking up a ſatisfaction with the outward parts of religion; in an indifference about the intereſt of Chriſt; in an unconcernedneſs at the omiſſion of duty, or commiſſion of ſin; and in an entire eaſe of mind with regard to ſuch a frame and ſtate: the cauſes of it are a body of ſin; an anxious care of the world; a being weary of ſpiritual exerciſes, and a leaving them off; abſtaining from an awakening miniſtry, and ſpiritual converſation; and keeping company with ſleepy and ſlothful profeſſors, or the men of the world: and often it ariſes from eaſe, peace, and liberty; and ſometimes from long watchfulneſs, and waiting for the bridegroom's coming; in which, being diſappointed, ſuch a frame of ſpirit enſues: and alſo in the fooliſh virgins it intends great carnal ſecurity in themſelves; a reſt and confidence in their external profeſſion; and a laying aſide all thoughts of Chriſt, and his coming to judgment: for a difference there is between the ſleep and ſlumbering of the one and of the other; the wiſe virgins are children of the day, and not of the night; tho' they ſleep, their hearts wake, and they ſleep with grace in their hearts; neither of which can be ſaid of the fooliſh virgins, or formal profeſſors: as to the phraſeology here uſed, the *Jews* would diſtinguiſh upon it, for they make a difference between ſlumbering and ſleeping: "they do not diſmiſs (the company) after the paſſover with the ſweet-meats: if ſome "of them ſleep, they may eat, but if all of them, "they may not eat. *R. Joſe* ſays, נתנמנמו, *if* "*they ſlumber* they may eat; נרדמו, *if they ſleep* "they may not eat[n]:" which *Maimonides* thus[o] explains, "*if they ſlumber*; that is, if they begin to "ſleep, but are not yet over-whelmed with ſleep, "but hear when others ſpeak to them, and anſwer "immediately to them that call them: *if they* "*ſleep*; if they are oppreſſed with a deep ſleep." Tho' the phraſe ניים ושכיב, which I ſhould chuſe to render, *he ſlumbered and ſlept*, is often ſaid[p] of the ſame perſon, without any diſtinction, as here.

Ver. 6. *And at midnight there was a cry made*, &c.] Which is no other than the following notice of the bridegroom's coming, expreſſed in theſe words: *behold the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him*; which ſuppoſes that then all things will be ready for his coming: all things reſpecting this world; all the ſtrange and ſurprizing events that were to come to paſs, before the coming of Chriſt, will now be accompliſhed; an end put to all the monarchies of the earth; and all the preparations in nature, for the burning of the world finiſhed: all things reſpecting the ungodly of the world; they will have filled up the meaſure of their iniquities, and finiſhed their perſecutions of the ſaints: and all things reſpecting the elect of God, they will be all born, and born again; they will have gone thro' all their ſufferings for Chriſt, and have all their graces tried and perfected; for when the bridegroom comes, he will come to eſpouſe them openly to himſelf, for which they muſt be prepared and adorned, and to take them to himſelf, that they may be for ever with him. It alſo ſuppoſes, that his coming will be very nigh at hand; it was ſo repreſented long ago; it is greatly deſired by the ſaints to be quickly; and it will be in a very ſhort time after this notice: and it ſignifies that there will be ſome notice given of it, a little before he comes; and that partly for the glory of his majeſty; and that his own people, the wiſe virgins, may be ready; and that the fooliſh ones may be left without excuſe: and this being prefaced with a *behold*, ſhews the certainty of his coming, than which nothing is more certain, and to be depended on; as appears from *Enoch*'s prophecy, and others of the Old Teſtament; from Chriſt's own promiſe; from the teſtimony of angels; from the words of the apoſtles; and from the ordinance of the Lord's ſupper: and alſo the importance of it; for things of the greateſt moment will follow on it; ſuch as the reſurrection of the dead, the judgment of the whole world, the compleat happineſs of the ſaints, and the deſtruction of the wicked: and likewiſe, that it will be wonderful and aſtoniſhing; Chriſt will come in amazing glory, in his own, in his father's, and in the glory of the holy angels, and of his power and authority, as the judge of quick and dead. And in this notice advice is given to the virgins, *go ye out to meet him*; ſee *Cant*. iii. 11. and may intend either a going forth internally, as the wiſe virgins did in the exerciſe of grace, of faith in the coming of Chriſt, of love of his appearance, and earneſt deſire after it; or a going forth externally, as all the virgins did in a way of viſible profeſſion, taking up and trimming their lamps; or literally and corporally, as the ſaints will, that will be found alive at Chriſt's coming. Now this notice is called a *cry*; and refers not to the voice of Chriſt in raiſing the dead, for this will be before the coming of Chriſt, whereas that will be when he is come; and for the ſame reaſon, not to the voice of the archangel, if he can be thought to be diſtinct from Chriſt. Some think it regards a ſecret general impulſe, that will be upon the ſpirits of the people of God, with reſpect to the bridegroom's coming, but this don't ſeem to anſwer to a cry; rather it ſhould intend ſome remarkable providence, as the earthquake in *Rev*. xi. 13. when a tenth part of the city ſhall fall, ſeven thouſand men of note be ſlain, and the reſt affrighted; or the ſounding of the ſeventh angel, ver. 15. or, what is moſt likely, the voice of a great multitude, as of many waters, and of mighty thunderings, declaring, that the marriage of the lamb was come, and the bride ready, ch. xix. 6, 7. and will be a very loud one: it will awaken all the virgins, and will be the cry, not of one, but of many; and will be very ſudden and ſurprizing, tho' joyful to the ſaints: this cry will be made, not by the virgins, for they'll be aſleep; nor by Chriſt himſelf, for he'll not be come; nor by the angels, for they'll come with him, and not before; rather by the miniſters of the Goſpel, who are the angels ſo often ſpoken of in the book of the *Revelations*, who ſound the trumpets at different times, and on different occaſions; who alſo will ſound this trumpet, and give this laſt and general notice of Chriſt's coming; who will be all at once apprized of it, and give an univerſal alarm of it together in all the churches: thus, as the notice of Chriſt's firſt coming was made by the prophets, the notice of his ſecond coming will be made by the miniſters of the Goſpel: and this will be *at midnight*; which expreſſes the ſtate of the church a little before the coming of Chriſt: it will be a night-ſeaſon with it, a time of darkneſs both with reſpect to Goſpel-light, and the preſence of God with his people; a time of coldneſs and lukewarmneſs, as to zeal for God, love to his people, and concern for the intereſt of Chriſt; a time of drowſineſs and ſleep, of inſenſibility and ſecurity, of indolence and inactivity: ſo as the coming of Chriſt will be later than was firſt expected; it will be ſudden, and at unawares, and like a thief in the night; but whether it will be literally in the night-ſeaſon, as his firſt coming, is not certain. The *Jews* expect[q], that at the end of the world *Moſes* and Meſſiah will come in the night, the one from the wilderneſs, and the other from *Rome*: and they make frequent mention of God's going into the garden of *Eden*, or paradiſe, at midnight, and there rejoicing with good men. It is ſaid[r], that *R. Eliezer* and *R. Joſe*, "were ſitting one night, and ſtudying in the law, and about midnight, a man cried (or the cock crowed), bleſs ye the bleſſing; ſays *R. Eliezer*, now is the time that the holy, bleſſed God goes into the garden of *Eden*, to rejoice with the righteous."

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[n] Miſn. Peſachim, c. 10. §. 8. & Maimon. Hilch. Chametz Umetzah, c. 8. §. 14.

[o] In Miſn. ib.

[p] T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 47. 2. & 65. 1. & 67. 2.

Ver. 7. *Then all theſe virgins aroſe*, &c.] Not out of their graves; for the righteous and wicked will not riſe together; the dead in Chriſt will riſe firſt, and this firſt reſurrection will not be till Chriſt is come; nor will grace be to be had, or be thought to be had after the reſurrection; nor will there be any trimming of lamps then, in order to meet the bridegroom, for he will be come: nor out of the graves of ſin; for the wiſe virgins were not in ſuch a ſtate, and the fooliſh virgins were never brought out of it: but the meaning is, that they aroſe out of their ſleepy and ſlumbering frame. True believers may fall into a very low condition, with reſpect to the exerciſe of grace, and diſcharge of duty; but they ſhall ariſe again, for they are held and upheld by the right hand of God: it is ſometimes midnight with them, and they are fallen faſt aſleep, but they ſhall be awaked, and ariſe; which ariſing here, as it reſpects them, ſignifies, that they were thoroughly awaked, that they quitted their former place and poſture, were upon their feet, and ready to meet the bridegroom. The fooliſh virgins alſo aroſe; which may intend ſome awakenings of conſcience, and reformation of life, and a more diligent attendance on duties and ordinances; all which they did to make them meet for Chriſt, and to obtain ſalvation; but after all it appears, they were deſtitute of the oil of grace: *and trimmed their lamps*; both wiſe and fooliſh: the former by removing what hindered the clear burning of them; by caſting off the works of darkneſs, and cauſing the light of good works to ſhine before men, in the diſcharge of them, from a principle of grace; and chiefly by applying to Chriſt for freſh ſupplies of the oil of grace, to fill their lamps, revive their light and heat, and keep them burning: and the latter, only by a few outward decorations, and external performances; to make their outward profeſſion of religion look as bright as poſſibly they could.

Ver. 8. *And the fooliſh ſaid unto the wiſe, give us of your oil*, &c.] A graceleſs perſon may be able to ſee the grace of God in others, be convinced of it, and acknowledge it, as theſe fooliſh virgins did: they ſaw that the wiſe virgins had oil, that is, grace; this they knew by the bright burning of their lamps, by their readineſs in trimming them, and that in a different way from them; by their ſedate compoſure of mind, and confidence of ſoul, notwithſtanding the midnight cry; and by their ardent and affectionate deſire to meet the bridegroom. A graceleſs perſon may alſo ſee a need of grace: theſe fooliſh virgins had no ſuch ſenſe, when they firſt took up their profeſſion; they went on a long time in a courſe of religion, without any thoughts of it; and the ſenſe they had now was not of the need of it, in the veſſels of their hearts, but in their lamps only; nor was it from the Spirit of God, but thro' the ſurprize and terror of the midnight cry. Such perſons may alſo be deſirous of the grace of God; not becauſe of the intrinſic nature and worth of it, nor for the ſervice and glory of God, but from a mere principle of ſelf-love; and when they can go on no longer with the lamp of profeſſion; and then they deſire to have it any where, rather than from Chriſt, as did theſe fooliſh virgins; and who betrayed their folly by applying to ſaints for it. Had they aſked their advice in this their diſtreſs, it would have been wiſely done; or had they deſired their prayers for them; or that they would impart ſome ſpiritual inſtructions to them; but to aſk their grace of them was exceeding fooliſh; when grace only comes from God, who is the God of all grace, thro' Chriſt as mediator, in whom the fulneſs of it dwells, and by the Spirit, who is a Spirit of grace and of ſupplication; but is never to be had from men, no, not from the beſt men on earth, nor from the angels in heaven. The reaſon of this their requeſt follows, *for our lamps are gone out*; which may be ſaid to be when profeſſors neglect the duties of religion, drop, or deny the doctrines of the Goſpel formerly profeſſed by them, become bad in their principles, and ſcandalous in their lives, or withdraw themſelves from the churches of Chriſt; tho' neither of theſe ſeem to be the caſe here: wherefore this going out of their lamps ſeems to intend the inſufficiency of an external profeſſion of religion to meet the bridegroom, and ſupport a perſon with confidence and intrepidity in his preſence: theſe fooliſh virgins now ſaw, when too late, that their lamps availed them nothing; they were gone out, and become uſeleſs and unprofitable, becauſe they had not the oil of grace with them; or what they had was only counterfeit grace, or only an appearance of it; a mere form of godlineſs, without its power; or only gifts which are periſhable, and now failed, ceaſed, and were vaniſhing away; wherefore this is no inſtance of the loſs of true grace, nor at all militates againſt the perſeverance of the ſaints.

Ver. 9. *But the wiſe anſwered, ſaying, not ſo*, &c.] A flat denial; and which ſprung not from want of compaſſion; for the ſaints are taught not only to compaſſionate one another, and to pity fallen profeſſors, but even to regard their very enemies in diſtreſs; nor from a narrow, niggardly ſpirit, ſince ſuch are directed and exhorted to communicate freely, both in things temporal and ſpiritual, they are capable of, to them that are in need, and even to lay down their lives for the brethren; nor from an uncivil, moroſe, and churliſh diſpoſition; or from a careleſs and indolent one, as being unconcerned what became of theſe perſons; but from an indignation at the honour put upon them, and the ſlight put upon God and Chriſt, and the Spirit of grace: ſaints know that all grace comes from Father, Son, and Spirit; and frankly own, that what they have is from thence; and they give God all the glory of it, and can't bear any ſuch application to them for it, as this; but ſhew the ſame ſpirit, as *Paul* and *Barnabas* did, when the *Lyſtrians* were going to ſacrifice to them. Moreover, this denial aroſe from a conſciouſneſs of inſufficiency to help them in this reſpect: it is the ſaints mercy that they can't loſe the grace they have, nor can any take it away from them, and it is not in their power to give it away;

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[q] Targum Hieroſ. in Exod. xii. 42.

[r] Zohar in Exod. fol. 76. 4. & in Lev. fol. 21. 1. & 28. 2.

nor can any be ſanctified, or juſtified, or ſaved, by another man's grace: the reaſon alledged by them is, *leſt there be not enough for us and you:* ſaints have a large abundance of grace communicated to them; ſome have more, others leſs; at leaſt it ſo appears, as to exerciſe; but they that have the moſt, have none to ſpare, and ſee their need of more; and aſk for more, being ſenſible that preſent grace in them, is not ſufficient for time to come, but grace in Chriſt only; wherefore their anſwer, and the reaſon of it, were like themſelves, wiſe; and this deſtroys the notion of ſupererogation: *but go ye rather to them that ſell, and buy for yourſelves.* This advice is thought by ſome, to be ironical and ſarcaſtic; but it ſeems rather to be ſerious, and in good earneſt; directing them to go to proper perſons for grace; not to men, even miniſters of the Goſpel, nor to angels; but to God the Father, the Father of mercies, and God of all comfort, who ſits on a throne of grace, and gives it liberally to them that come to him for it through Chriſt, and aſk it of him; and to Chriſt the Mediator, who is full of grace and truth, and counſels perſons to buy of him gold tried in the fire, grace more precious than the pureſt gold; and to the Spirit of grace, who gives it to all ſeverally as he will: who are ſaid to *ſell*, and *men* to buy; not in a proper ſenſe, by giving any valuable conſideration for the grace of God, which is impoſſible to be done; but in an improper ſenſe, without money and without price; or in other words, by giving and receiving freely.

Ver. 10. *And while they went to buy*, &c.] The fooliſh virgins ſo far took the advice of the wiſe, as to go forth to buy oil for themſelves: they not only had ſome thoughts about it, and reſolutions to do it, but they really did go out to buy; which may deſign their attendance on the word and ordinances, where they ſtopped: they did not go to Chriſt for grace, for if they had gone directly to him, they had met him; but they went another way, and miſſed him; they took buying in a proper ſenſe, and thought to have obtained grace by their own works: wherefore, though they went to buy, they did not, nor could they, their attempts were vain and fruitleſs; and while they were employing themſelves in this way, to no purpoſe, *the bridegroom came*; in perſon, to raiſe the ſaints that were dead, to change the living ones, to eſpouſe them all openly, and take them all to himſelf, and to judge the world; for this muſt be underſtood of his ſecond and perſonal coming: *and they that were ready*; not by a mere profeſſion of religion, or ſubmiſſion to Goſpel ordinances, or by an external righteouſneſs, or negative holineſs, and abſtinence from the groſſer ſins of life, or an outward humiliation for them, or by a dependance on the abſolute mercy of God; but through being clothed with the wedding garment, waſhed in the blood of Chriſt, being regenerated and ſanctified, and having the oil of grace in their hearts, a ſpiritual knowledge of Chriſt, faith in him, and intereſt in him: ſuch are ready for every good work, and to give a reaſon of their faith and hope, to confeſs Chriſt, and ſuffer for his ſake; and are ready for death and eternity, and to meet the bridegroom, and for the marriage of the Lamb, to enter into the new *Jeruſalem*. The *Jews* ſay [s], that "the *Jeruſalem* of the world "to come, is not as the *Jeruſalem* of this world: "the *Jeruſalem* of this world, every one may go "into it that will; but the *Jeruſalem* of the world "to come, none may go into it, but המזומנין לה, "*thoſe that are prepared for it.*" And theſe *went in with him to the marriage:* the *Syriac* reads it, *into the wedding houſe*, and the *Perſic*, *the nuptial parlour*; the marriage-chamber, where the bridegroom and bride celebrated their marriage; kept their marriage-feaſt; and where were received the bride-maids, and friends of the bridegroom, called in *Talmudic* language, בני עלייה, *the children of the bride-chamber* [t]. Such as were theſe that went in: and *the marriage* may here denote, either heaven, Chriſt's Father's houſe, and the manſions of glory in it, which the ſaints ſhall enter into along with Chriſt; or the act of celebrating the marriage between Chriſt and the Lamb, and the whole body of the elect; when theſe virgins will not be bare ſpectators and witneſſes, but parties concerned; and which will only be a publication before his Father and the holy angels, of what has been already done: for theſe were ſecretly betrothed to him from everlaſting, and were particularly eſpouſed to him, one by one, in converſion; but it now will be declared of them all together, that they are his ſpouſe and bride: or the marriage-feaſt, or ſupper, is here intended; and which deſigns not the proviſion of the Goſpel in Chriſt's houſe, or church on earth, in general, nor the ordinance of the Lord's ſupper in particular, nor the feaſt in the latter day, but the heavenly glory; and happy are thoſe, who are called to the marriage-ſupper of the Lamb, and who will be ready when he comes: theſe ſhall partake of it; they'll go in with Chriſt, and be for ever with him, and never return more. *And the door was ſhut*; which expreſſes both the happy and comfortable caſe of the wiſe virgins, and the ſad and miſerable ſtate of the fooliſh ones. The door being ſhut, the wiſe virgins will at once be freed from the diſagreeable company of profane ſinners, and formal profeſſors; their ſtate and condition will be everlaſtingly ſettled, their communion with Chriſt will be free and uninterrupted, and that for ever; no enemy of their ſouls can follow them, to give them any diſturbance; and they ſhall never return to a ſtate of ſin, ſorrow, and imperfection: and it alſo repreſents, the woeful and miſerable condition of the fooliſh virgins, in whatſoever ſenſe the word *door* is taken. The church is a door, *Cant.* viii. 9. and an open one, to receive in proper perſons, and will be ſo more eſpecially in the latter day; but this will be ſhut, when all the elect of God are called and gathered in; there will be no longer a church-ſtate on earth, or ordinances.——Chriſt himſelf is called a door, *John* x. 7. he is the door into the church, and into the bleſſings of grace, and into heaven itſelf; and which ſtands open in the miniſtry of the word, to receive ſinners, but will now be ſhut; Chriſt will be no more preached, and held forth in the word, as God's ſalvation: and there is the door of faith, *Acts* xiv. 27. which is the Goſpel, ſo called, becauſe faith is hereby let into the ſoul, and ſouls are by it let into the doctrine of faith; and this is ſometimes an open door, when miniſters have a fair opportunity of preaching it, and have freedom and liberty in it; when attention is given to it, and many ſouls are gathered in by it; and this will be ſhut when Chriſt comes; there will be no more preaching: and there is alſo the door of hope, *Hoſea* ii. 15. which now ſtands open, whilſt the Goſpel church-ſtate laſts: whilſt Chriſt is preached, the word and ordinances adminiſtered, and whilſt there is life, and Chriſt not yet come, there is hope of ſalvation, pardon, and eternal life; but when Chriſt comes, either by death, or at judgment,

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[s] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 75. 2.

[t] T. Bab. Succa, fol. 45. 2. & Sanhedrin, fol. 97. 2.

ment, and finds perſons in a graceleſs ſtate, there's then no hope: add to all this, that the door of Chriſt's heart is now open, to receive all coming ſinners; but then will be ſhut, againſt all their cries, intreaties, ad importunities: it will be ſhut by himſelf, who opens and no man ſhuts, ſhuts and no man opens; and that againſt all wicked and profane ſinners, all hypocrites and formal profeſſors; even all without his righteouſneſs, and the grace of the Spirit of God.

Ver. 11. *Afterwards came alſo the other virgins,* &c.] The *other five virgins*, as the *Perſic* verſion reads. The *other*; that were only virgins in name, not in reality; they were different from the wiſe, they were fooliſh ones; they were other than thoſe that were ready, they were unprepared ones; and in another ſituation than thoſe that entered in; they were without, they were now ſeparated from the company of the wiſe virgins, with whom they had been ſo long; and what was worſt of all, they were to be ſo for ever. Theſe *alſo came*; from buying oil: they went about, and came juſt as they went, without any; they came to the door of the bride-chamber, being deſirous to be let in, and hoping to partake of the marriage-feaſt, and join in the ſolemnity: but alas! they came too late, they came *afterwards*; after the bridegroom was come, after they that were ready had entered in, and after the door was ſhut; *ſaying, Lord, Lord, open to us.* They do not call him their Lord, for they had no intereſt in him, nor could they claim any; though the *Syriac* verſion reads it, *our Lord, our Lord:* they give him the title, and the bare title, without having yielded that obedience, which was due unto him. They double the word, to ſhew their importunity, earneſtneſs, ſenſe of danger, and confuſion: this title or character is the rather uſed, becauſe Chriſt will then appear more clearly to be Lord and God, and every tongue ſhall confeſs him to be ſuch: their requeſt to him is, that he would *open* the door unto them, and let them in: they were ſenſible that the door was ſhut, and that none but Chriſt could open it; they did not at once conclude that their caſe was deſperate, but were willing to hope the door might be opened, through their intreaties, and what they had to ſay for themſelves; for though no pleas or arguments are here mentioned, yet, as elſewhere, ſuch as theſe will be made by the fooliſh virgins; namely, propheſying in the name of Chriſt, caſting out devils in his name, doing many wonderful works in his name, hearing his word preached, and eating and drinking in his preſence; but all in vain, and to no purpoſe.

Ver. 12. *But he anſwered and ſaid,* &c.] The Lord and Bridegroom from within, thought fit to give them an anſwer, but an unexpected and awful one to them: *verily I ſay unto you, I know you not*; which muſt be underſtood in conſiſtence with the omniſcience of Chriſt: he knew their perſons, conduct, and ſtate; he knew they were fooliſh virgins, graceleſs profeſſors, who had made no account of him and his righteouſneſs; but had truſted to, and depended upon, their external profeſſion of religion: they were none of the people whom he fore-knew, or knew as his own, and loved with an everlaſting love; he never knew them as his Father's choice in him, or as his Father's gift to him; he never knew them in the everlaſting covenant, or as his ſheep, for whom he died; he never knew them believe in him, or love him; nor ever exalt his perſon, blood and ſacrifice, at his table, nor do any good work with a ſingle eye to his glory; he never approved of them, liked their perſons, or their conduct; or ever owned them as the true companions, either of his bride, or of himſelf: which anſwer implies, that as the door was ſhut, ſo it ſhould remain; there was no admittance for them, nor any to be hoped for; and it is all one as if he had ſaid, be gone, and depart hence. The *Perſic* verſion adds ſuch a clauſe, *be gone from my door.*

Ver. 13. *Watch therefore,* &c.] In ordinances, in prayer, publick and private, in hearing the word, at the Lord's ſupper, and in every religious exerciſe; over the heart, the thoughts and affections of it; over words, actions, life, and converſation; and againſt all ſin and unbelief, ſatan's temptations, the world, and its charms and ſnares, falſe teachers and their doctrines, and for the bridegroom's coming. This is the uſe and application of the whole parable, and ſhews the general deſign of it: the reaſon to enforce watchfulneſs follows: *for ye know neither the day nor the hour*; of death, or of judgment, or of the coming of the Son of man, of one or the other; for 'tis added, *wherein the Son of man cometh:* that he will come is certain, and that quickly; the time is fixed, but when it will be is unknown; and therefore it becomes us to be on our watch and guard. This laſt clauſe is not in the *Vulgate Latin*, nor in the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, and was wanting in three of *Beza*'s copies, but is in moſt *Greek* copies, and in *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel, and ſeems to be neceſſary.

Ver. 14. *For* the kingdom of heaven is *as a man travelling*, &c.] Our Lord adds another parable to illuſtrate the Goſpel diſpenſation, or its viſible church-ſtate; or the ſtate of things reſpecting the church of Chriſt, before, and at his ſecond coming, and during the interval between his aſcenſion and that: for by the *man* here, is meant Chriſt, who in the everlaſting covenant agreed to become man, was propheſied of as ſuch, frequently appeared in human form, under the Old Teſtament diſpenſation; and in the fullneſs of time, really became man; though he was not a mere man, but was God as well as man; having all the perfections and fullneſs of the godhead dwelling bodily in him: this man is ſaid to travel *into a far country*; by which heaven is deſigned, and is ſo called, not only becauſe of its great diſtance from the earth, and which is very great indeed; but becauſe the better country and land afar off, is out of ſight; and what views we have of it, are very diſtant ones; and is afar off, in reſpect of our ſtate of pilgrimage in this world, in which whilſt Chriſt was here, he was a pilgrim and a ſtranger too; who might be ſaid to be as a *man travelling*, whilſt he was in it, and when going out of it, and aſcending to heaven: he came from thence, and ſtaid here a while, walking up and down, and doing good; and when he had finiſhed what he came about, he aſcended on high, went to his God and Father, entered into heaven, where he is received until the times of the reſtitution of all things: *who called his own ſervants*; before he took his journey, to commit ſome things to their truſt and management; and to give them ſome inſtructions how to behave during his abſence: for, according to the *Jewiſh* [u] canons, "a maſter that had a mind to go out of the land (of *Iſrael*) could not take his ſervant with him, unleſs he pleaſed; and this is a rule at all times, even at this time, that the land is in the hand of the *Gentiles*." And here no mention is made of any going with him, only how they were to be employed whilſt he was gone: by *his own ſervants* are meant, not all mankind; for though they are all in ſome ſenſe his ſervants, or ought to be, yet they are not ſo called in ſcripture, much leſs with ſuch an emphaſis, his *own* ſervants; and beſides, more than what are in the kingdom of heaven, or Goſpel church-ſtate, cannot be intended; ſince the parable reaches to, and concerns no other: nor all the elect of God only, or all are not the elect of God that are deſigned; for though theſe are the ſervants of Chriſt, and his own peculiarly, yet all intruſted with talents, are not ſuch; one of theſe was wicked, ſlothful, graceleſs, and at laſt was eternally loſt, and periſhed; which is not true of any one of the elect: but miniſters of the word are here meant, who are eminently the ſervants of Chriſt, his own, whom he has called, qualified, commiſſioned, and ſent forth; for the miniſters of the word, whether faithful or ſlothful, good or bad, are in a very lively manner deſcribed in this parable, which is a diſtinct one from the former; for whereas that gives an account of the different members of the viſible church, this deſcribes the ſeveral miniſters of it: nor can it be any objection to this ſenſe of it, that theſe ſervants are all of them ſaid to be his own ſervants, and called, commiſſioned, and gifted by him; ſince *Judas*, as well as the reſt, was called, ordained, qualified, and ſent forth by Chriſt, as an apoſtle. *And delivered unto them his goods*; the Goſpel, that rich treaſure of divine truths, the diſpenſation of it, and gifts to preach it; all which are Chriſt's goods and his gifts, and not man's; and which was in a very eminent manner done, when Chriſt aſcended on high, and received gifts for, and gave them unto men. Juſt before it, as he was ready to go, he gathered his diſciples together; he renewed and enlarged their commiſſion to preach the Goſpel; and quickly after it, gave them greater and larger gifts of the Spirit than before; and has been ever ſince giving miniſterial gifts to men, to ſome more, others leſs, and which are ſignified by the talents following.

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[u] Maimon Hilch. Abadim, c. 8. §. 9.

Ver. 15. *And unto one he gave five talents*, &c.] A *talent* with the *Jews*, if of ſilver, was according to *Brerewood* [w], of the value of 375 *l.* of our money; according to Biſhop *Cumberland*, 353 *l.* 11 *s.* 10 *d.* halfpenny; and if of gold, was equal to 4500 *l.* and according to the latter, 5075 *l.* 15 *s.* 7 *d.* halfpenny: ſo that five of theſe talents, if of ſilver, were 1875 *l.* and if of gold, 22,500 *l.* according to *Brerewood*; a very large ſum, for one ſervant to be intruſted with. The *Perſic* verſion reads *pounds*, as in *Luke* xix. 13. By theſe talents, ſpecial grace is not meant; for the parable ſpeaks not of what was wrought in theſe ſervants, but of what was committed to their truſt, and of what might lie uſeleſs by them, and be taken away from them; whereas ſpecial grace is internal, ſomething implanted in man, and is an incorruptible ſeed, that can never be loſt, or will be taken away; and it is certain, that one of theſe ſervants had not ſpecial and ſaving grace, but was wicked, ſlothful, and unprofitable, and was caſt into utter darkneſs: but outward gifts are deſigned by the talents; and theſe not merely the gifts of natural knowledge and riches, the gifts of nature and of providence; nor the external miniſtry of the word, Goſpel, ordinances, and opportunities of enjoying them; but miniſterial gifts, ſuch as fit and qualify men to be preachers of the Goſpel; as appears from their name, *talents*; they being the greateſt gifts for uſefulneſs and ſervice in the church, as talents were the greateſt of weights and coins among the *Jews*; from the nature of them, being what may be improved or loſt, and for which men are accountable; from the perſons to whom they were delivered, the ſervants of Chriſt; from the time of their delivery, when Chriſt went into a far country, to heaven, when he aſcended on high, and received gifts for men, and gave them to them; and from the unequal diſtribution of them, being given to ſome more, and others leſs; all which perfectly agree with miniſterial gifts: for it follows, *to another two, and to another one*; and theſe were given *to every man, according to his ſeveral ability*, or *according to his own power*; his proper power that belonged to him, as the Lord of theſe ſervants: for the ſenſe is, not that he gave theſe talents, or gifts, according to the different capacities, abilities, ſtations, and employments of theſe men; but according to that power and authority, which he, as Mediator, had, to diſpenſe theſe gifts ſeverally as he would; to ſome more, others leſs, as he knew would beſt ſubſerve his intereſt and kingdom: *and ſtraightway took his journey*; after he had ſignified, that all power in heaven and earth was given to him, by virtue of which he ordered them to go into all the world, and preach his Goſpel, and adminiſter his ordinances; for which he had, and would abundantly qualify them; with a promiſe of his preſence with them to the end of the world; he took his leave of them, bleſſed them, and was parted from them, and went up into heaven.

Ver. 16. *Then he that had received the five talents*, &c.] The largeſt meaſure of gifts; an account is firſt given of him, how he behaved, and conducted in his Lord's abſence, and what uſe he made of the gifts beſtowed upon him: this muſt be underſtood, not of a ſingle man, but of that ſort of the ſervants of Chriſt, who have the greateſt miniſterial gifts: he *went*; it denotes immediate application to buſineſs, and ſignifies that ſuch ſervants went according to their commiſſion, preached the Goſpel to every creature, and adminiſtred the ordinances to proper ſubjects; they went directly, as ſoon as they had their talents; they did not ſtay to conſult with fleſh and blood, whether it would be for their intereſt and credit or no; they did not ſtick at any difficulties and diſcouragements, nor were deterred by the croſs, reproaches, and perſecutions; but went forth with courage and boldneſs, not in their own name and ſtrength, but in the name and ſtrength of Chriſt, who ſent them, and promiſed them his preſence and aſſiſtance, on which they depended: *and traded with the ſame*; with the five talents, or their miniſterial gifts. The miniſters of the Goſpel are traders, not in their own name, nor on their own ſtock, and for themſelves, but for Chriſt, and for the good of immortal ſouls: they cloſely attend unto, and work at, their buſineſs and employment; by conſtant reading, and diligent ſearch into the word of God; by ſtudious meditation on it; by frequent prayer; and continual preaching the Goſpel, and adminiſtring ordinances; and their ſucceſs follows: *and made them other five talents*; that is, increaſed in ſpiritual knowledge; gifts were improved and enlarged; a greater ſtock of divine things were laid in; and many ſouls gained to Chriſt: ſuch are they whom Chriſt has ordained to go forth, and bear and bring forth fruit in their miniſtry, and whoſe fruit remain.

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[w] De Nummis Jud. c. 4.

Ver. 17. *And likewiſe he that received two,* &c.] Talents, or a leſſer meaſure of miniſterial gifts: *he alſo gained other two*; he worked and laboured, and traded, in proportion to the gifts he had received; and his improvements and ſucceſs, under a divine bleſſing, were anſwerable.

Ver. 18. *But he that received one,* &c.] Talent, or the leaſt degree of gifts, for the miniſtry of the word: *went and digged in the earth, and hid his Lord's money*. The *Syriac* and *Arabic* verſions read, *ſilver*, and the *Ethiopic*, *gold*; but whether theſe talents were ſilver or gold, is not certain. Where he buried it; that is, he neglected the gift that was in him, he made no uſe of it, either to his own advantage, or to the good of others, and the intereſt of his Lord; he either never went into the miniſtry, or if he did, he left it as *Demas* did, having too great affection for the world, and the things of it: he minded earth and earthly things, and employed himſelf in them, and not in his maſter's work and ſervice. The phraſe ſeems to point out the earthly mindedneſs of the man, his worldly diſpoſition, and his eager purſuit after the things of life; which were the reaſon why he diſregarded his talent, and made no uſe of his miniſterial gifts: he could not deny worldly ſelf, nor leave all to follow Chriſt; but rather than drop the world, he choſe to bury his talent in it: it was his Lord's money and not his own, and he was accountable to him for it, and ſhould have uſed it in another manner.

Ver. 19. *After a long time, the Lord of theſe ſervants cometh,* &c.] Either in a providential way, by a fit of illneſs, or in a time of perſecution, and awakens the conſcience, and calls them to give an account of their ſtewardſhip; or by death, when their trading or working time is over, and they become accountable for their whole conduct, throughout their miniſtrations; or rather, at the laſt judgment, when all muſt appear before the judge of quick and dead, miniſters as well as others, and give an account of their gifts, and the uſe of them, to their Lord, from whom they have received them, and whoſe ſervants they profeſs to be. Which coming of his is after a long time; for ſeventeen hundred years are now paſt, and he is not yet come; which is a long time in man's account, though not in God's account, with whom a thouſand years are as one day; and in the apprehenſion of the ſaints, who love, long for, and haſten to, the coming of Chriſt, are deſirous of it, and impatient for it. But though it may ſeem long, he'll certainly come: he ſtays long, to give time to his laborious miniſters to exerciſe all thoſe gifts he has beſtowed upon them, and to leave ſlothful ones without excuſe. It is not to be inferred from his delay, that he will not come: he is not unmindful of his promiſe, or ſlack concerning it; though he tarries long, he'll not tarry beyond the appointed time; at the end he will come, though it is long firſt: *and reckoneth with them*; what talents they received from him, what they had done with them, and what they had gained by them. The things that miniſters of the word are entruſted with, are things of value; the Goſpel is a pearl of great price, or rich treaſure, that is put into their earthen veſſels; it is the unſearchable riches of Chriſt; gifts to preach it are ſpiritual, and preferable to gifts of nature, and providence; and the ſouls of men committed to their care, are of great worth and eſteem with Chriſt; nor are any of theſe their own, but Chriſt's, and therefore muſt give an account of them: this ſhews both the awfulneſs and uſefulneſs of the Goſpel miniſtry.

Ver. 20. *And ſo he that had received five talents,* &c.] Or the greateſt gifts: as this man is the firſt to whom his Lord gave any talents, and the firſt that went and traded with them; he is alſo the firſt that is reckoned with; who *came and brought other five talents*: he *came* freely and chearfully, with a holy confidence and intrepidity of mind, and gave in his account very readily, both of what he had received, and of what he had gained; *ſaying, Lord, thou deliveredſt unto me five talents, behold I have gained beſides them five talents more*. True miniſters of the Goſpel frankly own, that what gifts they have are delivered to them by Chriſt; and ſuch are willing that he ſhould have all returned to him, principal and increaſe: it is not to be imagined that this will be ſaid in ſo many expreſs words by them, nor will there be any need thereof; for Chriſt will not be ignorant of what they have been doing, and of what uſe they have been of; but the ſenſe is, that as all will be manifeſt to Chriſt the ſearcher of hearts, with whom they have to do, ſo the account will ſtand fair and open; and it will be ſeen and known by all, that ſuch and ſuch faithful miniſters of Chriſt, have behaved in this agreeable manner, and have been thus and thus ſerviceable in his intereſt.

Ver. 21. *His Lord ſaid unto him, well done,* &c.] Goſpel miniſters do not ſay ſo to themſelves; they know they can do nothing well of themſelves, and when they have done all they can, they own they are but unprofitable ſervants; they acknowledge all they do is owing to the grace of God, and ſtrength of Chriſt, and that no praiſe is due to them; nor do they expect or ſeek for ſuch eulogiums from men: but this is ſaid, to ſhew how acceptable a diligent laborious miniſtry is to Chriſt; and to encourage induſtry in the preachers of the word, whoſe works will follow them, though not go before them: *thou good and faithful ſervant*: ſuch may be ſaid to be *good*, who have the grace of God implanted in them, ſome good thing in them towards the Lord God; a good work begun in their hearts, without which men can never be good miniſters of Chriſt; and who have good abilities, not only natural and acquired parts, but miniſterial gifts; which are the good things committed to them, and that dwell in them, which they are to keep by the Holy Ghoſt; and who make a good uſe of them, and freely communicate and impart their ſpiritual gifts, as good ſtewards of the manifold grace of God; and who being employed in a good work, as that of the miniſtry is, do it well, and abide in it: and ſuch may be ſaid to be *faithful*, who preach the pure Goſpel of Chriſt, and the whole of it; who neither mix it with the inventions of men, nor keep back any part of it from the ſaints; who ſeek not to pleaſe men, but their Lord and Maſter; and not their own honour and applauſe, but his glory; and who abide by him and his cauſe, notwithſtanding all reproaches, afflictions, and perſecutions. In ſuch language as this, the *Jews* uſed to praiſe their ſervants, "הוי איש טוב ונאמן, *O man! good and* "*faithful*, and from whoſe labour one had [x] profit." *Thou haſt been faithful over a few things*; not as conſidered in themſelves; for the truths of the Goſpel which miniſters are intruſted with, and in which they are faithful, are neither few, nor inconſiderable; they are the manifold grace of God, and the unſearchable riches of Chriſt: nor are their gifts mean and deſpicable; nor are their labours worthleſs, and of no account; but in compariſon of the unſeen and eternal things of glory, which are

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[x] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 16. 2.

prepared and laid up for them; ſo that there's no proportion between their works, and the glory that ſhall be revealed in them: *I will make thee ruler over many things*; either on earth, where they ſhall reign with Chriſt a thouſand years; and when the kingdom, and the dominion, and the greatneſs of it, will be given to the ſaints of the moſt high; and when they who have turned many to righteouſneſs, ſhall ſhine as the ſtars in that kingdom: or elſe in heaven, where as kings, they ſhall inherit the kingdom prepared for them, ſit down with Chriſt in his throne, and wear the never fading crown of glory, life, and righteouſneſs: *enter thou into the joy of thy Lord*; not their own, or what was of their own procuring, but their Lord's; which Jehovah the Father has prepared for his people, and gives unto them; which the Son poſſeſſes for them, and will beſtow on them; and which the Holy Spirit makes them meet for; and which will chiefly lie in the enjoyment of Chriſt their Lord: this happineſs of theirs is expreſſed by *joy*, which will be full and perfect, and without any interruption or mixture; will be unſpeakable and glorious, and continue for ever; for when the ſaints ſhall *enter* into it, as into an houſe, or manſion, they ſhall take poſſeſſion of it, and abide in it for ever. It was uſual with the *Jews* to expreſs the happineſs of the world to come by *joy*; not only that which is from the Lord, but that with which he himſelf rejoices with his people; for they ſay [y], "there's no joy "before, or in the preſence of the holy bleſſed "God, ſince the world was created, כאותה שמחה "*like that joy*, with which he will rejoice with the "righteous, in the world to come."

Ver. 22. *He alſo that had received two talents*, &c.] A leſſer degree of miniſterial gifts; and who as he received next to the other, and was the next, who in proportion to what he had received, had traded and gained, he is mentioned in the next place, as giving in his account; who *came and ſaid, Lord, thou deliveredſt unto me two talents, behold I have gained two other talents beſides them*: his account, abating the ſum and gains, is given in, in the ſame form as the other.

Ver. 23. *His Lord ſaid unto him*, &c.] The ſame words as he did to the other ſervant, *well done good and faithful ſervant, thou haſt been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord*: where the ſame commendation is made, and the ſame characters are given, as before; for a man that has leſſer gifts, and is of leſs uſefulneſs, may be as good and as faithful in his ſervice, and as praiſeworthy, as a man of greater gifts, and more extenſive uſefulneſs; and the ſame happineſs is beſtowed on one, as the other, which in neither is of merit, but of grace; and whatever difference may be made between the ſaints, or between one miniſter and another in the *Millennium* ſtate, yet in the ultimate glory, their joy, bliſs, and happineſs, will be alike. It is not to be eſtabliſhed from this parable, that man has a power to improve the ſtock of ſufficient grace given him, and by his improvement procure eternal happineſs to himſelf; ſince ſuch a ſtock of grace is not deſigned by the talents; nor is that either gotten or improved, by the induſtry of man; nor does the parable ſuggeſt, that men by their improvement of the talents committed to them, do, or can, procure eternal happineſs: *good and faithful* ſervants are indeed commended by Chriſt, and he graciouſly promiſes great things to them, which are not proportioned to their deſerts; for whereas they have been *faithful over a few things*, he promiſes to make them *rulers over many things*; and bids them *enter into the joy of their Lord*; into the joy, which of his grace and goodneſs, he has provided for them, and not which they have merited and procured for themſelves: nor is it to be inferred from hence, that true grace once given, or implanted, may be taken away or loſt; for the parable ſpeaks not of what is wrought in men, but of goods and talents beſtowed on them, and committed to their truſt; which may be loſt or taken away, or be wrapped up in a napkin, and lie uſeleſs by them; when true grace is the incorruptible ſeed which never dies, but always remains; that good part which ſhall never be taken away nor loſt, but is inſeparably connected with eternal glory.

Ver. 24. *Then he which had received the one talent came*, &c.] For he that has the leaſt gifts, is accountable for them; and therefore ought to make uſe of them to the good of his fellow-creatures, and the intereſt of his Lord and Maſter; though theſe often lie neglected, and frivolous, and even wicked pretences are formed, to excuſe ſuch neglect, as here: *and ſaid, Lord, I knew that thou art an hard man*: he calls him *Lord*, though he had not ſerved him, and pretends he *knew* him; but if he had, he would have had a true affection for him, faith in him, and would have obſerved his commands; and he would alſo have appeared altogether lovely to him, and of an amiable character, and not in ſuch a light as he repreſents him; which makes it a clear caſe, that he was ignorant of him, or he would never have ſaid, that he was an hard, ſevere, or auſtere man; one very difficult of being pleaſed, cruel and uncompaſſionate to his ſervants, unjuſtly witholding from them what was due unto them, and rigorouſly exacting ſervice that could not be performed by them: all which is the reverſe of Chriſt's true character; who accepts of the meaneſt ſervices of his people; and takes what is done, though ever ſo little, as even a cup of cold water, given to the leaſt of his diſciples, as done to himſelf; is merciful and compaſſionate, both to the bodies and ſouls of men; and is not unrighteous to forget any labour of love, ſhewn to him or his; and makes his ſtrength perfect in the weakneſs of his ſervants, and his grace always to be ſufficient for them: but this wicked ſervant goes on to traduce him, and adds, *reaping where thou haſt not ſown, and gathering where thou haſt not ſtrawed*: which ſeem to be proverbial expreſſions; ſee *John* iv. 37. deſcribing either a covetous man, that is deſirous of that which does not belong to him; or an hard maſter, that requires work to be done, and gives neither tools nor matter to work with; like the *Egyptian* taſk-maſters, who demanded the full tale of bricks, but gave no ſtraw: whereas Chriſt is neither niggardly, nor exacting; he requires nothing that is not his, and gives his grace, and beſtows his gifts liberally, and upbraids not; nor does he call any to ſervice, of whatſoever ſort, but he gives them grace, ſtrength, and abilities, proportionate to it; and as he has promiſed, he makes it good, that as their day is, ſo ſhall their ſtrength be.

Ver. 25. *And I was afraid*, &c.] The *Perſic* verſion adds, *to negotiate with thy money*: he was afraid, leſt by trading he ſhould not gain what his Lord expected; and moſt of all, leſt he ſhould loſe the talent itſelf; and dreaded his Lord's auſterity, ſhould that be the caſe, fearing that he would have no mercy on him. This was his pretence; but the true cauſes were ſloth and earthly-mindneſs: *and went and hid his talent in the earth*; that it might not be loſt, tho' it lay uſeleſs, and turned to no account. The *Arabic* verſion renders it, *and buried thy goods in the earth:* he owned the money to be his Lord's, and thought he did very well, and enough, that he preſerved it, tho' he had not improved it; and this he hoped would be a ſufficient excuſe, and on which he laid the greateſt ſtreſs: *lo! there thou haſt that is thine:* he again acknowledges, that the gifts he had were not his own, but his maſter's; and whereas he had kept them entire, as he had received them, and there was the full ſum he was intruſted with, he hoped no more would be required: but it is not ſufficient to retain what is given, it muſt be made uſe of and improved; for every ſpiritual gift is given to profit with: and beſides, there ſeems to be a degree of rudeneſs in theſe words; he does not bring the talent with him, and return it, but only ſignifies that he had hid it in the earth, in ſuch a place, and *there* it was, where his Lord might take it, and have it again, if he pleaſed.

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[y] Midraſh Haneelam in Zohar in Gen. fol. 69. 4.

Ver. 26. *His Lord anſwered, and ſaid unto him,* &c.] Reſenting, as he well might, not only his indolence and ſloth, his neglect of his duty, and his worldly diſpoſition, but the abuſive character he had given of him, in order to cover his own wickedneſs: *thou wicked and ſlothful ſervant*; a very juſt character of him: he was a *wicked* ſervant; all men in a ſtate of nature are wicked; they lie in wickedneſs, and are under the power of the wicked one; and there are many wicked men among profeſſors of religion, and many wicked miniſters, who, tho' not openly profane, yet either truſting to their works, or doing the work of the Lord deceitfully, or wholly neglecting it, juſtly merit this character. This man's wickedneſs lay in his ſlothfulneſs, in not doing the good he might, and had gifts and abilities for; and in entertaining wrong thoughts of, and in bringing falſe charges againſt his Lord: and he might be truly ſaid to be *ſlothful*; ſince he took no pains to improve in ſpiritual knowledge; and inſtead of digging for that, as for ſilver and hid treaſure, dug in the earth, and hid his talent there: he neglected the gift that was in him; did not ſtir it up, or ſtudy to ſhew himſelf a workman that needeth not to be aſhamed; did not give himſelf up to reading, meditation, and prayer; but truſted to, and depended on what other men had done; ſtole away his neighbour's words, reaped that for which he had not laboured, and entered into the labours of others; and being afraid of difficulties, indulged himſelf in eaſe and pleaſure, ſerved his own belly, and not the Lord Jeſus; he gratified his worldly luſts, and had no regard to his maſter's intereſt. *Thou knoweſt that I reap where I ſowed not, and gather where I have not ſtrawed:* not granting that he was ſuch an one, and that his ſervant knew him to be ſuch, and had given a true character of him; but ſuppoſing he was ſuch a perſon he had wickedly repreſented him to be; he turns the argument upon him, that therefore he muſt needs know, that he expected to have had his money improved, and to have received it with an increaſe; and that upon ſuch a conſideration he ought to have been the more diligent and induſtrious, in uſing and improving his talent, and not to have indulged ſloth and idleneſs; and thus he convicts, judges, and condemns him, as a wicked, ſlothful ſervant, by his own words.

Ver. 27. *Thou oughteſt therefore to have put my money to the exchangers,* &c.] *Trapezites*, or *tablers*, the ſame whom the *Jews*[z] call שולחנים, and is the ſame word which is here uſed in *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel; who were ſo called from the table that ſtood before them, on which they told, and paid their money, and the exchange and uſe: hence all the *Oriental* verſions here read, *thou ſhouldſt have put my money to, or on the table*; put it into the hand of theſe bankers, where it would have been not only ſafe, as in the earth, where it was hid, but alſo would have made ſome increaſe, and would have been returned with profit; *and then at my coming I ſhould have received my own with uſury:* this is ſaid not ſo much to encourage uſury, tho' it may be lawful; and it ſeems to have been a practice in thoſe times to put money out to uſe upon a reaſonable intereſt; but to reprove the ſloth and inactivity of this ſervant, upon his own reaſonings, and the character he had given of his maſter.

Ver. 28. *Take therefore the talent from him,* &c.] This ſhews it was not ſpecial grace, which is intended by the talent; for the gifts and calling of ſpecial grace are without repentance, and are that good part which ſhall not be taken away: but gifts may fail, ceaſe, and vaniſh; they may be taken away from men, and men from them; a right arm may be clean dried up, and a right eye be utterly darkened: *and give it unto him which hath ten talents*; for to diligent and laborious miniſters of the word, more ſpiritual light and knowledge is given: but this is not to be underſtood, as tho' other mens gifts are, properly ſpeaking, taken away from them, and beſtowed on them; but that their gifts appear the more illuſtrious through the ſlothfulneſs of others.

Ver. 29. *For unto every one that hath ſhall be given,* &c.] This ſeems to be a frequent ſaying of Chriſt's, or a common maxim of his, which he made uſe of on different occaſions; ſee the note on *Matt.* xiii. 12. and accords with ſome uſual ſayings, and proverbial expreſſions of the *Jews*: who ſay[a], that "the bleſſed God does not give wiſdom, but "to him that has wiſdom;" and of a man, in other reſpects, they uſe this as a common proverb[b], "if he adds or increaſes, they add unto him, and "if he leſſens, they leſſen to him:" and ſo here; he that has gifts, and talents, ſhall have an addition to them. *And he ſhall have abundance*, of ſpiritual gifts and knowledge; *but from him that hath not, ſhall be taken away, even that which he hath.* The *Vulgate Latin* reads, *that which he ſeemed to have*, and ſo reads *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel, and ſo it is read in ſome *Greek* copies; tho' it ſeems to be taken out of *Luke* viii. 18.

Ver. 30. *And caſt ye the unprofitable ſervant,* &c.] All the ſervants of Chriſt are unprofitable with reſpect to God; for no man can be profitable to him, as he that is wiſe may be profitable to himſelf, or others; or in a way of merit, ſince when they have done the moſt and beſt, they have done but their duty: but this man was unprofitable with reſpect to himſelf, having not improved the gift and talent beſtowed on him; and with reſpect to men, being of no uſe for the converſion of ſinners, or the comfort of ſaints, or the edifying of the body of Chriſt; and brought no honour to his maſter, and was of no ſervice for the ſpreading of his Goſpel, and the enlargement of his kingdom and intereſt; and therefore, as one good for nothing, the miniſtring angels are bid to take him, and caſt him *into outer darkneſs, there ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of teeth:* he ſhall be turned out of doors into outer darkneſs, to be a companion of other unhappy creatures; who are alſo without, bewailing their miſerable condition, and reflecting on their paſt conduct; whilſt faithful, diligent, and laborious ſervants will be within, partaking of a rich entertainment, prepared by their Lord, accompanied with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory; ſee the note on *Matt.* viii. 12.

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[z] Maimon. Hilch. Shekalim, c. 1. §. 9. & c. 2. §. 1.

[b] Vajikra Rabba, §. 30. fol. 170. 2.

[a] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 55. 1. Zohar in Exod. fol. 89. 4.

Ver. 31. *When the ſon of man ſhall come in his glory,* &c.] What is before ſignified in the two preceding parables, is here clearly and diſtinctly repreſented without a parable: and it ſhould be obſerved, that as the foregoing parables only regard the Goſpel church-ſtate, and the miniſters and members of it, good and bad, or all ſorts of Chriſtian profeſſors; ſo this account of the laſt judgment only concerns them; for tho' all men that ever have been, are, or ſhall be in every nation under heaven, from *Adam* to the laſt man that will be born, will be judged; yet the part of it here deſcribed, tho' it gives a general and lively idea of the whole, only regards the judgment and final ſtate of ſuch who have made a profeſſion of the Chriſtian religion. The judge himſelf is firſt deſcribed, who is ſaid to be *the ſon of man*; a name by which Chriſt is frequently called, and by which he ſtiles himſelf in his ſtate of humiliation; expreſſing both the truth of his human nature, and the meanneſs of it in that ſtate: but as deſpicable as he appeared then in human nature, in the form of a ſervant, a man of ſorrows, deſpiſed by men, and ſubject to ſufferings and death; yet when he comes again, it will be in another guiſe manner: he will appear *in his glory*; in the glory of the only-begotten of the Father, in the glory of his proper deity, in the glory of all the perfections of the divine nature; which glory was, in a great meaſure, and from moſt perſons, hid in the days of his fleſh, tho' he was in the form of God, and equal with him. He'll alſo come in his mediatorial glory, which he had with the father before the world was, and with all the honour, power, and authority of the judge of the whole earth, to execute judgment upon men; and in the glory of his human nature, of which his transfiguration on the mount was a pledge and emblem. *And all the holy angels with him*; which ſplendid retinue will add to the glory of his appearance; and who will accompany him not merely, or only as his attendants, to make the ſolemnity more grand, pompous, and magnificent; but as miniſtring ſpirits, who will be employed by him in gathering all before him, ſeparating the wicked from the good, and conducting each to their ſeveral apartments of bliſs or woe: and when he thus appears, *then ſhall he ſit upon the throne of his glory*; or glorious throne, upon the clouds of heaven, where he'll ſit as judge, and be viſible to all.

Ver. 32. *And before him ſhall be gathered all nations,* &c.] That is, all that have profeſſed the chriſtian religion in all the nations of the world, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, high or low, rich or poor, wiſe and fooliſh, ſuch as have had greater or leſſer talents; tho' it is alſo true of every individual of mankind of every nation, tribe and family, of every ſex, age, and ſtate, that ever has been, is, or will be. Yet chriſtian profeſſors ſeem only here intended, as the following diſtinction of them, their final ſtate, and the reaſons of it ſhew. This collection of them before Chriſt, the righteous judge, will be made by the holy angels, who will come with him for this purpoſe; and being mighty, as they are, will be able to accompliſh ſo great a work; and eſpecially as being under the direction, influence, and authority of ſo divine, glorious, and illuſtrious a perſon, as the ſon of man will then to all appear to be. *And he ſhall ſeparate them one from another; as a ſhepherd divideth his ſheep from the goats:* they ſhall be gathered before him, as they were together in their viſible church-ſtate, as being all under a profeſſion of religion; ſome wiſe, ſome fooliſh virgins; ſome ſheep, and others goats; ſome induſtrious, diligent, faithful, and laborious ſervants; others wicked, ſlothful, and unprofitable ones; many of whom paſs undiſtinguiſhed and undiſcovered now: but then the judge, who is of quick underſtanding, will eaſily diſcern the one from the other; ſuch as have the oil of grace in the veſſels of their hearts, together with their lamps, from ſuch as have only the outward viſible lamp of a profeſſion, but deſtitute of the grace of God; and good and faithful ſervants, who have made a right uſe of their gifts, from ſuch who have been negligent, careleſs, and remiſs; and tho' theſe have been folded together, ſheep and goats, in the ſheep-fold of the church, where they have all bore the character of the ſheep of Chriſt; yet now when the chief ſhepherd appears, who knows his own ſheep, and calls them by name, he'll as eaſily ſeparate the one from the other, and more ſo, than any ſhepherd, among men, can part a flock conſiſting of ſheep and goats. Hypocrites in *Zion* ſhall now be no more, nor ſinners ſtand any longer in the congregation of the righteous, nor both together as one body, and on one ſide in judgment.

Ver. 33. *And he ſhall ſet the ſheep on his right hand,* &c.] That is, the elect of God, and true believers, ſuch as have the grace of God truly implanted in them; the ſheep the father gave unto Chriſt, and made his care and charge, whom he, as the good ſhepherd laid down his life for; and who know his voice in effectual calling, and follow him in the way of his ordinances and appointments; and are comparable to ſheep for their meekneſs and innocence, their ſimplicity and uſefulneſs, and their harmleſs and inoffenſive lives, and converſations: theſe Chriſt will ſet on his right hand, as a token of his affection for them, and a mark of reſpect and honour ſhewn them, and as a pledge of that exaltation and glory he will be about to raiſe them to. *But the goats on the left*; that is, the fooliſh virgins, wicked, and ſlothful ſervants, graceleſs profeſſors, who, becauſe of the impurity of their hearts, the filthineſs of their lives, and their offenſiveneſs to Chriſt, are compared to goats: theſe he'll place at his left hand, in token of his diſaffection for them, as a brand of diſgrace upon them, and as an intimation of that diſhonour and miſerable condition they will quickly be in. Theſe different ſituations plainly pre-ſignify how things will go with each, that one will be acquitted, and made happy, the other will be condemned, and become miſerable. Agreeable to which the *Jews* ſay [c], that there is a right hand and a left hand with the Lord: they that are on the right hand, are ſuch as have done well, and are לזכות, *for abſolution*; and they that are on the left hand are criminals, and are לחובה.

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[c] Jarchi in Gen. i. 26. Kimchi in 1 Kings xxii. 19. Lex. Cabaliſt. p. 132. Zohar in Numb. fol. 93. 4.

לחובה, *for condemnation*. Some think the alluſion is to the two *Scribes* in the *ſanhedrim*, who ſtood before the judges, one on the right hand, and the other on the left, and wrote the ſentences; the one of thoſe that were acquitted, and the other of thoſe that were condemned[d].

Ver. 34. *Then ſhall the king ſay unto them on his right hand*, &c.] Before Chriſt is called *the ſon of man*, now *the king*; who is not only king of ſaints, but king of the whole world; the king of kings, and lord of lords, the judge of all the earth; he appearing in glory and majeſty, ſitting on a throne of glory, being attended with his glorious angels, and all nations gathered before him, waiting for the final ſentence to be pronounced upon them by him; and who accordingly begins with thoſe on his right hand, his ſheep, the choſen, redeemed, and called of God, ſaying to them, *come*. The *Arabic* verſion adds, *to me*: by ſuch a phraſe he ſometimes had invited, and incouraged poor ſenſible ſinners to come and partake of his grace; and here by it he calls the righteous, and beſpeaks them in the moſt tender and endearing manner, and yet with the majeſty of a king, and the authority of a judge, to come near unto him, with intrepidity and confidence, and take poſſeſſion of a glorious kingdom; beſtowing on them this high and illuſtrious character, *ye bleſſed of my father*: ſo called, partly becauſe they were his father's, not only by creation, but by his choice of them to grace and glory, and therefore moſt happy and bleſſed; and partly, becauſe, as ſuch a choice ſhews, they were dear unto him, highly in his favour, and loved by him with an everlaſting love; as alſo, becauſe they were bleſſed by him as the father of Chriſt, and theirs, with all the ſpiritual bleſſings of the everlaſting covenant in him; with the pardon of their ſins, the juſtification of their perſons, the ſanctification of their nature, with adoption, and a right unto, and meetneſs for the eternal inheritance: hence it follows, *inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world*. The happineſs of the ſaints, in the other world, is here expreſſed by a *kingdom*, becauſe of the glory, riches, grandeur, and magnificence of it; as it is ſometimes by a crown, for the ſame reaſon, ſuitable to their character and dignity, who are made kings and prieſts by Chriſt: and is likewiſe repreſented as an *inheritance*, as it is elſewhere, being not acquired by induſtry, or obtained by merit; but is the gift of their heavenly father, and in right of adoption, as the children of God, being made ſuch by his free grace and favour, and denotes the ſtability and perpetuity of it: and this is ſaid to be *prepared*, not only appointed and deſigned in the council, purpoſes, and decrees of God, but got ready; 'tis a kingdom erected, an inheritance reſerved, and a crown of righteouſneſs laid up in heaven; a glory really provided and ſecured in an everlaſting covenant, and that *for you*: for ſome, and not others; for the ſheep on the right hand, and not the goats on the left; for the peculiar favourites of God, the objects of his love and choice, the redeemed of the Lamb, and that are born of the Spirit; and that for them, *from the foundation of the world*. The place itſelf, where this happineſs is to be enjoyed, was actually made on the firſt day of the creation, when the heavens were formed, and the foundations of the earth were laid, and the glory itſelf long before. The *Ethiopic* verſion here reads, *before the world*; and the *Perſic*, *before the foundation of the world was laid*; and *Grotius* himſelf owns, that the phraſe is the ſame as *before the foundation of the world*; and Dr. *Hammond*'s paraphraſe is, *before all eternity*; for as early were theſe perſons, the beloved, the choſen, and bleſſed of the father: ſo that this glory muſt be of free grace, and not merit, or owing to any works of righteouſneſs done by men; ſince it was not only deſigned and appointed, but prepared and laid up for perſons before they had a being, and had done neither good or evil. The *Jews*[e] ſpeak of the law being an inheritance for all *Iſrael*, from the ſix days of the creation; but a much more glorious one is here ſpoken of: nearer to this is what they ſay[f], that *Bathſheba* was appointed to be *David*'s wife from the day that the world was created; and add, but the myſtery of the thing is, מלכותא דלעילא, *the kingdom that is above*, which is called by her name. So in 2 *Eſdras* ii. 13. *the kingdom is already prepared for you*.

Ver. 35. *For I was an hungred and ye gave me meat*, &c.] This, and the following, are not mentioned as cauſes of the kingdom being prepared for them, or of their being entitled to it, or of their being put into the poſſeſſion of it; but as deſcriptive of their characters, and as teſtimonies and evidences of the grace of God in them; by which it appeared, that they were the bleſſed of his father, having his ſpecial grace vouchſafed unto them; and that they were the children of God, to whom the inheritance of the kingdom belonged, and for whom it was prepared: for what was done by them in time, could never be the cauſe of what was done for them in eternity, or before, or from the foundation of the world; nor is there any proportion between a kingdom, and ſuch ſervices as here mentioned: and beſides, this kingdom is by inheritance, and not merit; is prepared by God, and not procured by men, and was got ready for them before they had a being; and therefore could not be cauſed by any actions of theirs: what is here, and in the following inſtances, ſaid to be done to Chriſt, is not to be underſtood of him perſonally, but myſtically, of the members of his body, as he himſelf explains it, ver. 40. and the ſenſe is, that when ſome of the ſervants of Chriſt, miniſters, or private chriſtians, were in diſtreſs for want of the neceſſaries of life, theſe gracious ſouls ſupplied them with food; which to do, eſpecially in a time of perſecution, ſhewed not only love to Chriſt, but great faith in him, and that they were not aſhamed of him, and their profeſſion of him, nor of his poor miniſters and members; for this was done by them, not as the effect of mere humanity to the poor in general, but as an inſtance of affection to Chriſt's poor; and was done for his ſake, and becauſe they belonged to him, were preachers of his Goſpel, and profeſſors of his name; and therefore was conſidered as if done to himſelf perſonally: *I was thirſty, and ye gave me drink*; not gall and vinegar, as the *Jews* did, but a cup of cold water in the name of a diſciple, prophet, and righteous perſon, and becauſe belonging to Chriſt: this is taken notice of with acceptance by him; and ſuch ſhall not loſe the reward of grace. The *Targumiſt*[g] has a paſſage which may be compared with this: "*Solomon* ſaid, by a "ſpirit of prophecy from before the Lord; the "Lord of the world ſhall ſay to all the righteous in "the preſence of every one, go taſte, with joy, thy "bread which is returned unto thee, for thy bread "which thou haſt given to the poor and needy, "who were hungry; and drink with a good heart the wine which is laid up for thee in paradiſe, inſtead of thy wine, which thou haſt mingled for the poor and needy, who were thirſty; for, lo! now are thy works accepted before the Lord." *I was a ſtranger and ye took me in*, or *gathered me*; an *Hebraiſm*; ſee 2 *Sam.* xi. 27. and the *Septuagint* there. Such ſervants of Chriſt as were obliged to quit their habitations thro' the violence of perſecution, and were ſcattered abroad, or went about preaching the Goſpel; ſuch were by theſe righteous ones taken into their houſes, and provided for with food and lodging, and every convenience of life; as they were by *Gaius*, and others.

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[d] Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 4. §. 3. Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 1. §. 9. Moſes Kotſenſis Mitzvot Tora pr. affirm. 97.

[e] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 91. 2.

[f] Zohar in Exod. fol. 44. 3.

[g] In Eccl. ix. 7.

Ver. 36. *Naked, and ye clothed me*, &c.] For in ſuch a condition ſometimes are the dear children of God, and members of Chriſt; ſee 1 *Cor.* iv. 11. when others, who, *Dorcas* like, have made coats and garments for them, and clothed them with them; and which will be ſhewn another day, or taken notice of as the fruits, and ſo evidences of the grace of God in them. *I was ſick and ye viſited me*, or *looked after me*, or *over me*; or, as the *Perſic* verſion renders it, *ye had the care of me*; and which is the true ſenſe and import of the word: for it not only intends viſits paid to ſick perſons in a chriſtian manner, relieving them with their ſubſtance, giving good advice, or ſpeaking comfortable words to them; but attending them, and waiting on them, and doing ſuch things for them, which, in their weak ſtate, they are not capable of doing for themſelves. Viſiting of the ſick was reckoned, by the *Jews*, a very worthy action: they ſpeak great things of it, and as what will be highly rewarded hereafter. "Six things, they ſay [h], a man eats the fruit of them in this world, and there is a ſtable portion for him in the world to come:" and the two firſt of them are, הכנסת אורחין, *the taking in of travellers*, or *ſtrangers*, which is mentioned in the preceding verſe, and ביקור חולים, *viſiting the ſick*. One of their Rabbins [i] ſays, "he that does not viſit the ſick, is as if he ſhed blood: ſays another, he that viſits the ſick is the cauſe of his living; and he that does not viſit the ſick, is the cauſe of his death: and, ſays a third, whoever viſits the ſick ſhall be preſerved from the damnation of hell." *I was in priſon, and ye came unto me*; which has been often the lot of the ſaints, as it was frequently of the apoſtle *Paul*, who had this reſpect ſhewn him by many of the people of God, as by the houſe of *Oneſiphorus*, and by *Epaphroditus*, who brought him a preſent from the *Philippians*, when in bonds; and which will be remembered another day.

Ver. 37. *Then ſhall the righteous anſwer him*, &c.] From whence it appears, that only ſuch ſhall be at the right hand of Chriſt, who are righteous perſons, who have the righteouſneſs of Chriſt imputed to them; and, in conſequence of which, are created a-new unto righteouſneſs and true holineſs; and, under the influence of divine grace, live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly: and thoſe, upon hearing ſuch works aſcribed unto them, will, with wonder and aſtoniſhment, reply, *ſaying, Lord, when ſaw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirſty, and gave thee drink?* which anſwer ariſes partly from not attending to, or thoroughly underſtanding the words of Chriſt, which they ſeem to take in ſuch ſenſe, as if he meant theſe things were perſonally done to him; whereas the far greater part of them had never ſeen him in the fleſh, and much leſs in ſuch circumſtances as required ſuch things to be done to him; and partly from ſurprize and aſtoniſhment, that he ſhould take notice of ſuch mean actions, and ſo highly extol them, and graciouſly reward them; as alſo from a forgetfulneſs of them, their left hand not knowing what their right hand had done: which ſhews, that they had put no confidence in their works, or depended upon them for their juſtification before God, and acceptance with him; theſe were out of ſight, and mind; their only truſt being in the perſon, blood, righteouſneſs, and ſacrifice of Chriſt.

Ver. 38. *When ſaw we thee a ſtranger, and took thee in?* &c.] As they had never ſeen him hungry and thirſty in his own perſon, tho' he was both in the days of his fleſh, and were miniſtred to both by angels, and by good women out of their ſubſtance; ſo they had never ſeen him a ſtranger, and took him into their houſes; yet they had ſeen him hungry and thirſty, and as a ſtranger in his members, and had done theſe good offices to him in them, and to them for his ſake: *or naked, and clothed thee?* for ſo Chrſt in perſon never was, until ſtripp'd of his raiment by the ſoldiers, and officers; but they had ſeen many of his poor ſaints without cloathing, and had covered their nakedneſs.

Ver. 39. *Or when ſaw we thee ſick, or in priſon, and came unto thee?*] For tho' he bore the ſickneſſes of his people, yet we never read of his being ſick himſelf, nor was he ever caſt into priſon; but this has been the caſe of many of his ſervants, as *John* the *Baptiſt*, *Peter*, and *Paul*, and multitudes of others, who have been tenderly and affectionately uſed by their fellow-chriſtians.

Ver. 40. *And the king ſhall anſwer, and ſay unto them*, &c.] Chriſt, tho' a king, and now appearing in great glory and majeſty, yet ſuch will be his goodneſs and condeſcenſion, as to return an anſwer to the queries of his people; bluſhing, and aſtoniſhed at his notice of their poor ſervices, which they know to be ſo imperfect, and are always ready to own themſelves unprofitable ſervants: and this he'll do in the following manner: *verily I ſay unto you*; a way of ſpeaking often uſed by him, when here on earth, when he, in the ſtrongeſt manner, would aſſeverate any thing as truth, and remove all doubt and heſitation about it. *Inaſmuch as ye have done it unto one of the leaſt of theſe my brethren, ye have done it unto me:* which is to be underſtood, not in ſo limited a ſenſe, as to regard only the apoſtles, and the leaſt of them, for theſe were not the only brethren of Chriſt; nor in ſo large a ſenſe, as to include all in human nature; but the ſaints only, the children of God, and houſhold of faith: for though acts of charity and humanity are to be done to all men, yet eſpecially to theſe; and indeed, theſe only can be conſidered as the brethren of Chriſt, who are born of God, and do the will of Chriſt; for ſuch he accounts his mother, brethren, and ſiſters; and who are not only of the ſame human nature, but in the ſame covenant with him, and the ſons of God, not by nature, as he is the ſon of God, but by adoption, and ſo are heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Chriſt: now he that does any of the above acts of kindneſs to theſe *brethren* of Chriſt, and becauſe they ſtand in ſuch a relation to him, even the *leaſt* of them; though he is not an apoſtle, or a martyr, or a preacher of the Goſpel, or has any conſiderable gifts and abilities for uſefulneſs, but is a weak believer in ſpiritual things, as well as poor in temporals; and tho' it is but to *one* of theſe, opportunity and circumſtances not allowing it to be done to more; yet as ſuch is the humility and condeſcenſion of this great king, as to account ſuch mean perſons his brethren; ſuch alſo is his grace and goodneſs, as to reckon every inſtance of kindneſs and reſpect ſhewn to them, as done to himſelf in perſon; and will take notice of it, accept and reward it, as if it had been ſo done.

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[h] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 127. 1.

[i] T. Bab. Nedarim, fol. 40. 1. Vid. Maimon. Hilch. Ebel, c. 14. §. 4, 5, 6.

Ver. 41. *Then ſhall he alſo ſay unto them on his left hand*, &c.] The goats, the fooliſh virgins, and ſlothful and wicked ſervants, *depart from me:* a like expreſſion is uſed by him to preachers of the word, and profeſſors of religion, that are mere nominal ones, *Matt.* vii. 23. and ſuch are intended here, who profeſſed to be on Chriſt's ſide, had been in his viſible church, and hoped to have been with him for ever; but having nothing but the lamp of a profeſſion, and ſome external works to truſt to, they are bid to be gone from him; they are baniſhed his preſence, which is what is commonly called the puniſhment of loſs; the loſs of the preſence of God, Father, Son, and Spirit, angels, and ſaints; and is thought to be greater than the puniſhment of ſenſe, hereafter expreſſed. The character given of them, which is the reverſe of the former, is, *ye curſed*; for having ſinned againſt God, and his righteous law, they are curſed by it, which curſes every one that is under its works, as theſe were, and do not perfectly fulfil whatſover it requires; and ſo were juſtly rejected of God, and hated by him; and therefore are adjudged and ſent, *into everlaſting fire:* by which is meant, the wrath of God; and the phraſe expreſſes the intolerable fierceneſs of it, and its perpetual continuance; the ſenſe of which, without intermiſſion, will ever be felt in the conſcience; and is the puniſhment of ſenſe, the wicked will for ever endure: it may alſo intend the pit and priſon of hell, where theſe torments will be for ever inflicted; and ſo hell is called by the *Jews* [k], the hell of, יקידות עלם, *eternal fire*, or *everlaſting burning:* and is here ſaid to be *prepared for the devil and his angels*; for *ſatan*, or *Beelzebub*, the prince of devils, and all his principalities and powers under him: it is not ſaid to be prepared for theſe perſons, though it was, and who were foreordained to this condemnation, but for the devil and his angels; ſhewing, that the ſame puniſhment will be inflicted on hypocrites and carnal profeſſors, as on the devils themſelves; and 'tis indeed of ſuch, that the devouring fire, and everlaſting burnings are ſpoken, in *Iſa.* xxxiii. 14. to which this paſſage ſeems to have ſome reſpect; for no where elſe is mention made of this everlaſting fire: it is not ſaid neither when it was prepared. It is a notion of the *Jews* [l], that the angels were created on the ſecond day; and it ſhould ſeem by them, that they fell the ſame day: hence it is a prevailing opinion among them [m], that hell was made on the ſecond day of the creation; though at other times, they reckon hell among the ſeven things which were created before the world was [n], and which may be reconciled together: for as heaven, the place of the ſaints happineſs, was prepared from the foundation of the world, or on the firſt day of its creation, though the happineſs itſelf was provided long before; ſo hell, the place of the torments of the devils and wicked, though it was not made or prepared until the ſecond day of the creation, when, according to this opinion, the angels were made and fell; yet the puniſhment they were to endure there, was appointed before the world was; and ſo hell is ſaid to, מסדרא מן עלמין, *be ordained from eternity*, becauſe of their ſins [o].

Ver. 42. *For I was an hungred and ye gave me no meat*, &c.] Hence it appears, that theſe were ſuch as dwelt among chriſtians, and profeſſed the chriſtian name, and yet diſregarded the poor members of Chriſt in diſtreſs, when it was in the power of their hands to help them; but when they were hungry and ready to ſtarve for want of food, did not communicate to them for Chriſt's ſake; which ſhowed that they had no true faith in him, and love to him, and therefore are juſtly condemned by him; whereas ſuch who never knew Chriſt, nor any of his people, or any obligation they were under to regard any for Chriſt's ſake, theſe will never be condemned for the non-performance of theſe things: *I was thirſty, and ye gave me no drink*; as not the leaſt morſel of bread to eat, ſo not ſo much as a cup of cold water to drink; which with what follows, are manifeſt tokens and evidences, that they did not belong to Chriſt, were not true believers in him, nor had they any real love to him: the grace of God was not in them, and therefore had neither right unto, nor meetneſs for, the kingdom of heaven; but were righteouſly baniſhed from the preſence of the Lord, and ſent to dwell among everlaſting burnings; for righteous it was, that ſuch as they who would not ſhew any love to him here, ſhould not dwell with him for ever hereafter.

Ver. 43. *I was a ſtranger and ye took me not in*, &c.] Did not take the poor members of Chriſt into their houſes, and take care of them in their families, when they were obliged to flee from their places of abode, or wandered about preaching the Goſpel; and who muſt have periſhed in the ſtreets, if others that bore the chriſtian name, had not been more compaſſionate than they: *naked and ye clothed me not, ſick and in priſon and ye viſited me not:* their conduct, behaviour, and character, are juſt the reverſe of the righteous, and therefore 'tis no wonder that their ſentence is different.

Ver. 44. *Then ſhall they alſo anſwer him*, &c.] As well as the righteous, being likewiſe aſtoniſhed at what he had ſaid, but on a different account; *ſaying, Lord, when ſaw we thee an hungred or a thirſt, or a ſtranger, or naked, or ſick, or in priſon, and did not miniſter to thee?* Hence it is clear again, that theſe men were nominal chriſtians, who had made a profeſſion of Chriſt: they own him as Lord, and ſuggeſt that they had ſeen him, and known him, though never in ſuch circumſtances; for if they had, ſuch was their love to him, and great reſpect and veneration for him, as they pretend, they would, to be ſure, have miniſtred unto him; and if ever they had ſeen him in ſuch a caſe, which they could not call to mind, they could not believe, but they muſt have ſupplied him with all things neceſſary and convenient.

Ver. 45. *Then ſhall he anſwer them*, &c.] With a ſtern countenance, in great reſentment, as one highly offended, and with the authority of a judge: *ſaying, verily I ſay unto you, inaſmuch as ye did it not to one of the leaſt of theſe, ye did it not unto me:* ſince they had given no food not to the leaſt of his brethren and friends, that ſtood at his right hand, no not to any one of them; not ſo much as the leaſt bit of bread to them when hungry, nor a drop of water to them when thirſty; had not taken them into their houſes, nor provided the meaneſt lodging for them, when they were expoſed in the ſtreets to the inclemency of the weather, and inſults of men; nor gave them the leaſt rag to cover them, when they were almoſt naked, and ready to periſh; nor did they miniſter to their wants, either phyſic, or food, or give attendance, when on ſick beds, and in priſon-houſes; therefore he reckoned this neglect of them, and want of compaſſion to them, all one as if he himſelf in perſon had been ſo treated: and if then judgment will righteouſly proceed againſt men for ſins of omiſſion, much more for ſins of commiſſion; and if ſuch will be dealt with in this manner, who have taken no notice, and ſhewn no reſpect to the members of Chriſt; what will the end be of thoſe, who are injurious to them, their perſons, and properties, and perſecute and kill them?

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[k] Targum in Iſa. xxxiii. 14.

[l] Targum Jon. in Gen. i. 26. Pirke Eliezer, c. 4.

[m] Targum in Cant. viii. 6. T. Bab. Peſach. fol. 54. 1. Zohar in Gen. fol. 13. 3. & 30. 2. & in Exod. fol. 61. 4. & in Deut. fol. 120. 1. Bereſhit Rabba, §. 4. fol. 4. 1. & §. 11. fol. 10. 1. & §. 21. fol. 19. 1. Shemot Rabba, §. 15. fol. 101. 4. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 1, 2. & 121. 1, 2. & 130. 3.

[n] T. Bab. Peſach. fol. 54. 1. & Nedar. fol. 39. 2. Zohar in Lev. fol 14. 4. Targum Jon. in Gen. iii. 24.

[o] Targum in Iſa. xxx. 33.

Ver. 46. *And theſe ſhall go away into everlaſting puniſhment*, &c.] Their excuſes will not be regarded, their pleas will be of no avail, their pretenſions to intereſt in Chriſt, and love to him, will be ſet aſide; the ſentence will remain irrevocable, and there will be no appeal from it, for there's no higher tribunal to bring the cauſe before; judgment having paſſed, the execution of it immediately follows: theſe goats, or formal profeſſors, ſhall be obliged, whether they will or no, to depart from the preſence of Chriſt; the angels will be ordered to take and caſt them into everlaſting burnings; they'll be driven by them into hell, the place appointed for them; where they ſhall endure, עונש נצחי, *everlaſting puniſhment*, as the *Jews* [p] alſo expreſs it; and that both in ſoul and body, as the juſt deſert of ſin; which being committed againſt an infinite God, cannot be ſatisfied for by a finite creature; who therefore muſt ever bear the puniſhment of it, becauſe its pollution and guilt will always remain: *but the righteous into life eternal*; ſuch as are juſtified by the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and who, though they have done works of righteouſneſs under the influence, and by the aſſiſtance of the grace of God, yet have not depended upon them, but upon Chriſt, for life and ſalvation: theſe ſhall go into heaven, the place appointed for them, to enjoy that eternal life in ſoul and body, which is the free gift of God, through Chriſt; and will be a life free from all the ſorrows of the preſent one; a life of perfect holineſs and knowledge, and inconceivable pleaſure; a life of viſion of God, and communion with him, and which will continue for ever; and which aſcertains the eternity of the puniſhment of the wicked: for as the happineſs of the righteous will be eternal, the puniſhment of the wicked will be ſo too; for no reaſon can be given why the word which is the ſame in both clauſes, ſhould be taken in the one for a limited time, and in the other for an eternal duration. The *Jews* have a ſaying [q] which agrees with this laſt clauſe, "the world to come is not made but for the "righteous."

## CHAP. XXVI.

Ver. 1. AND *it came to paſs when Jeſus had finiſhed all theſe ſayings*, &c.] Meaning either all that are recorded by this Evangeliſt, all the ſermons and diſcourſes of Chriſt, delivered both to the people of the *Jews*, and to his diſciples; his converſation with the former, and his divine inſtructions and prudent advice to the latter, together with all his excellent parables, which are largely related in this book; or elſe what is ſaid in the two preceding chapters, concerning the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, and the end of the world, the ſtate of the church, and conduct of his ſervants to the end of time, expreſſed in the parables of the virgins and talents, and concerning the laſt judgment and final ſtate of all men: *he ſaid unto his diſciples*; who now were alone with him: having finiſhed his prophetic, and being about to enter on his prieſtly office, he gives his diſciples ſome intimations of its near approach.

Ver. 2. *Ye know that after two days is* the feaſt of *the paſſover*, &c.] Which was kept in commemoration of the deliverance of the *Iſraelites* from *Egypt*; and was typical of Chriſt the paſſover, who was now to be ſacrificed for his people. This was ſaid on *Tueſday*, and on the *Thurſday* following, the paſſover began. Chriſt ſpeaks of this as a thing well known to the diſciples, as it muſt be, ſince it always began on a certain day, the fourteenth of the month *Niſan*; which month anſwered to part of our *March*, and part of our *April*; and though there was very frequently an intercalation of a whole month in a year, made by the *Sanhedrim*, to keep their feſtivals regularly in the proper ſeaſon of the year; yet previous publick notice was always given of this, either by fixing a paper upon the door of the *Sanhedrim* [r], ſignifying ſuch an intercalation made, which ſerved for the inhabitants of *Jeruſalem*; or by ſending meſſengers with letters into all diſtant places [s], acquainting them with it. So that the time of theſe feſtivals were always well known; even to the common people: *and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified*; it muſt not be thought that this was equally known by the diſciples, as the former; for though they might know, or at leaſt remember, that Chriſt had told them that he ſhould ſuffer many things of the prieſts, *Scribes*, and elders, who would deliver him to the *Gentiles*, to be crucified; yet might not underſtand that this paſſover was to be the time, when this ſhould be done: by *the Son of man*, Chriſt means himſelf, who was truly and really man, the ſeed of the woman, the ſon of *Abraham* and of *David*; a character by which the *Meſſiah* is deſcribed in the Old Teſtament, *Pſal.* lxxx. 17. *Dan.* vii. 13. and hence frequently uſed by Chriſt of himſelf; which, as it expreſſes the truth of his human nature, ſo the weakneſſes and infirmities he bore in it; and is very properly uſed here, when he is ſpeaking of his being to be betrayed and crucified. What he ſays of himſelf is, that he *is betrayed*; that is, is to be betrayed, or will be betrayed, meaning at the paſſover, which was to be in two days time. Chriſt ſpeaks of his being betrayed, as if it was already done; not only becauſe it was ſo near being done, there being but two days before it would be done; but becauſe it was a ſure and certain thing, being determined in the purpoſe of God, and foretold in prophecy that it ſhould be; and beſides, *Judas* had now reſolved upon it within himſelf, and was forming a ſcheme how to bring it about. And this reſpects not only the act of *Judas* in betraying him into the hands of the chief prieſts, but alſo the delivery, as the word here uſed ſignifies, of him by them, to the *Roman* governors; for they, as *Stephen* ſays, were alſo his betrayers and murderers; yea, it may include the delivery of him by *Pilate*, to the *Jews* and *Roman* ſoldiers; and the rather, becauſe it follows, *to be crucified*; which was a *Roman*, and not a *Jewiſh* puniſhment. This was typified by the lifting up the brazen ſerpent on a pole, and foretold by the prophets of the Old Teſtament, *Pſal.* xxii. 16. *Zech.* xii. 10. and predicted by Chriſt himſelf, ſometimes more covertly, *John* xii. 32, 33. and ſometimes in expreſs words, *Matt.* xx. 19. and was a very painful and ſhameful death, and which ſhewed him to be made a curſe for his people. It appears from hence, that the crucifixion and death of Chriſt, were not caſual and contingent events, but were determined by the counſel of God, with all circumſtances attending: the betraying and delivery of him were by the determinate counſel and foreknowledge of God; and not only his death, but the manner of it by crucifixion, was pointed out in prophecy, and was a certain thing; and the very time of his death was fixed; which ſhews the early concern of God for the ſalvation of his people, and his wonderful grace and mercy to them: and it is clear from hence, that Chriſt had perfect knowledge of all this: he knew not only that he ſhould be betrayed, but he knew from the beginning who would betray him; he not only knew that he ſhould die, but he knew what kind of death he ſhould die, even the death of the croſs; and he knew the exact time when he ſhould die, that it would be at the following paſſover, which was juſt at hand; and he had ſuggeſted this to his diſciples, and therefore he ſpeaks of it as a thing known unto them; at leaſt what they might have known, and concluded from what he had ſaid to them, *Matt.* xx. 18, 19. and the whole is a conſiderable proof of his being God omniſcient. And he thought fit to put his diſciples in mind of it, becauſe the time drew nigh; that their memories being refreſhed with it, they might be prepared for it, and not be ſurprized, ſhocked, and offended at it, when it came to paſs; which ſhows the tender concern our Lord had for them.

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[p] Caphtor, fol. 113. 1. Shalſhelet Hakabala, fol. 71. 1.

[q] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 47. 1.

[r] Targum in Cant. vii. 4.

[s] Maimon. Hilch. Kidduſh Hachodeſh, c. 4. §. 17.

Ver. 3. *Then aſſembled together the chief prieſts*, &c.] About the ſame time, two days before the paſſover, that Jeſus ſaid theſe things to his diſciples, as is plain from *Mark* xiv. 1. By *the chief prieſts* are meant, either ſuch who had been high prieſts, or ſuch as were the heads of the twenty-four courſes of the prieſts; or rather, the principal men of the prieſthood, who were choſen out of the reſt, to be members of the great *Sanhedrim*: *and the Scribes*; the doctors of the law, who wrote out copies of the law for the people, and interpreted it to them in a literal way: this clauſe is left out in the *Vulgate Latin*, and in *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel, and in the *Arabic* and *Ethiopic* verſions, and in the *Alexandrian* copy, and ſome others, but is retained in the *Syriac* verſion; and no doubt, but theſe men had a place in this grand council: *and the elders of the people*; theſe were the civil magiſtrates; ſo that this aſſembly conſiſted both of eccleſiaſticks and laymen, as the *Sanhedrim* did, of prieſts, *Levites*, and *Iſraelites* [t]: theſe came *unto the palace of the high prieſt, who was called Caiaphas*; his name was *Joſeph*, but his ſurname *Caiaphas*; a word not of the ſame original with *Cephas*, as *Camero* thought; for theſe two words begin with different letters, nor are the reſt the ſame. Now, though a king of *Iſrael* might not ſit in the *Sanhedrim*, yet an high prieſt might, provided he was ſufficiently qualified with wiſdom [u]. The preſident of this grand council at this time, ſhould be *Rabban Gamaliel*, *Paul*'s maſter; unleſs it was *Caiaphas*, at whoſe houſe they were: how they came to meet at the high prieſt's palace, deſerves enquiry; ſince their proper and uſual place of meeting, was a chamber in the temple, called *Gazith* [w], or the paved chamber: now let it be obſerved, that according to the accounts the *Jews* themſelves give, the *Sanhedrim* removed from this chamber, forty years before the deſtruction of the temple [x]; and which, as Dr. *Lightfoot* conjectures, was about a year and a half before the death of Chriſt; and as others ſay [y], four years; at leaſt three years and a half before that time: but then, though the *Sanhedrim* removed from the paved chamber, they met at *Chanoth*, *the ſheds*, which was a place within the bounds of the temple, in the mountain of the houſe; and the queſtion ſtill returns, how came it to paſs they did not meet there? To me the reaſon ſeems to be, that they choſe not to meet there, but at the high prieſt's palace, becauſe of privacy, that it might not be known they were together, and about any affair of moment; and particularly this: the high prieſt's houſe was always in *Jeruſalem*, and he never removed from thence; nor did he go from the temple thither only in the night, or an hour or two in the day; for he had an apartment in the temple, which was called the chamber of the high prieſt, where he was the whole day [z].

Ver. 4. *And conſulted that they might take Jeſus by ſubtlety*, &c.] The *Jews* had often attempted his life, but he eſcaped out of their hands; they had ſent officers to apprehend him, but to no purpoſe; they therefore meet and conſult together, to form ſome ſcheme, and make uſe of ſome ſtratagem, that they might lay hold on him, and keep him; they were for doing this in the moſt private manner they could: *and kill him*; not with their own hands, nor privately; but their ſcheme was to apprehend him privately, by ſome ſecret artifice, and then deliver him to the *Roman* governor, to put him to death, according to law, publickly, for crimes they had to charge him with; hereby *Pſal.* ii. 2. had its accompliſhment, at leaſt in part.

Ver. 5. *And they ſaid, not on the feaſt day*, &c.] Upon mature deliberation, it was an agreed point with them, at leaſt it was carried by a majority, that nothing of this kind ſhould be attempted to be done on the feaſt day, on any of the days of the feaſt of paſſover, which was now at hand; though this was contrary to their common rules and uſages: for, a perſon that ſinned preſumptuouſly, and ſuch an one they accounted Jeſus to be, they ſay [a], "they don't put him to death by the order of the "*Sanhedrim* of his own city, nor by the *Sanhedrim* "of *Jabneh*; but they bring him up to the great "*Sanhedrim* at *Jeruſalem*, and keep him *until the* "*feaſt*, and put him to death, ברגל, *on a feaſt* "*day*; as it is ſaid, *Deut.* xvii. 13. *and all the* "*people ſhall hear and fear*, &c." But what influenced them at this time to take another courſe, is the reaſon following; *leſt there be an uproar among the people*: they had no fear of God before their eyes, or in their hearts, only the fear of the people; many of whom believed in Chriſt, and others that did not, yet had a great veneration for him, having ſeen his miracles, and received favours from him; themſelves, or their friends and relations, being cured by him of various diſeaſes: beſides, at the feaſt, people from all parts came up to *Jeruſalem*; and they knew that large numbers from *Galilee*, where he had the greateſt intereſt, would be preſent; and they feared, ſhould they attempt any thing of this nature at this time, the people would riſe, and reſcue him out of their hands. But God had determined otherwiſe, and his counſel ſhall ſtand; 'twas his pleaſure, that he ſhould be put to death at this feaſt, that the truth might anſwer the type of the paſſover lamb; and that all *Iſrael*, whoſe males now met together, might be witneſſes of it: and ſo it was, that though theſe men had concluded otherwiſe in their council; yet an opportunity offering by *Judas*, to get him into their hands, they embrace it; and riſque the danger of the peoples riſing, who they found compliant enough to their wiſhes.

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[t] Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 2. §. 1. [u] Ib. §. 4. [w] Miſn. Middot. c. 5. §. 3. [x] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 15. 1. Avoda Zara, fol. 8. 2. Sanhedrin, fol. 41. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 14. §. 13. Juchaſin, fol. 21. 1. [y] Edzard. not. in Avoda Zara, c. 1. p. 236. [z] Maimon. Cele Hamikdaſh, c. 5. §. 7. [a] Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 10. §. 4. Maimon. Hilch. Memarim, c. 3. §. 8.

Ver. 6. *Now when Jeſus was in Bethany*, &c.] Which was about fifteen furlongs from *Jeruſalem*, *John* xi. 18. or about two miles from it. The time of Chriſt's death being at hand, he keeps nigh to *Jeruſalem*, where he was to ſuffer and die, in the room and ſtead of ſinners: *in the houſe of Simon the leper*; ſo called, to diſtinguiſh him from others of the name. This epithet was either a family one, ſome perſon of note in it having been a leper; or elſe he is ſo named, becauſe he himſelf had been one, but was now cured; though the reaſon interpreters give for this, that otherwiſe he would not have been ſuffered to live in a town, is not a good one; for lepers, according to the *Jewiſh* [b] canons, were only forbid *Jeruſalem*, and towns and cities that were walled around, and not others, ſuch as the village of *Bethany*. There were many lepers healed by Chriſt, which, among other things, was an evidence of his being the Meſſiah, and a proof of his deity, and this *Simon* was one of them; whether the ſame mention is made of in *Matt.* viii. 1. is not certain, nor very probable; ſince that man lived in *Galilee*, at, or near *Capernaum*, this at *Bethany*, near *Jeruſalem*: however, he was one of thoſe lepers that had a ſenſe of his mercy, and was grateful for it, as appears by his entertaining Chriſt at his houſe; and may teach us thankfulneſs to Chriſt, who has healed all our diſeaſes; and particularly, the ſpreading leproſy of ſin, with which all the powers and faculties of our ſouls were infected; and which was not in our own power, or any creatures, to cure, but his blood cleanſes from it: and it may be obſerved, that Chriſt goes in and dwells with ſuch whom he heals, and with ſuch he is always welcome.

Ver. 7. *There came unto him a woman*, &c.] By ſome thought to be the ſame that is ſpoken of in *Luke* vii. 37. and by moſt, to be *Mary*, the ſiſter of *Lazarus*, *John* xii. 3. which may be true; for 'tis poſſible that one and the ſame woman, might perform a like action at different times; for to neither of the above, at the ſame time, will the following agree: not to the former, for though that was done in the houſe of one *Simon*, yet not *Simon* the leper, but *Simon* the *Phariſee*; who though he had a particular reſpect for Chriſt, which few of that ſect had, yet appeared to be then of a *Phariſaical* ſpirit; that was done in *Galilee*, this near *Jeruſalem* in *Bethany*; the woman there anointed the feet of Chriſt, but this woman poured the ointment on his head; nor did any ſuch converſation as here follow upon it, between Chriſt and his diſciples; but what diſcourſe was had on that occaſion, was between *Simon* and Chriſt. Not to the latter, for that does not appear to be done in *Simon*'s houſe, but rather in the houſe of *Lazarus*; no mention is made of the alabaſter box, nor was the ointment poured on his head, but on his feet; beſides, that was done ſix days before the paſſover, whereas this was but two; moreover, *Judas* only objected to that, but the diſciples in general, had indignation at this; and though the objections to it, and Chriſt's defence of it, are much in the ſame language, in one place as in the other, yet it was no unuſual thing with Chriſt, to make uſe of the ſame words on a like incident, or when the ſame objections were made. The fact here recorded, is the ſame as in *Mark* xiv. 3. where it ſtands in the ſame order as here, and ſeems to have been done at the ſupper, of which mention is made, *John* xiii. 2. when ſatan entered into *Judas*, and put it into his heart to betray his maſter, the account of which follows this here: *having an alabaſter box of very precious ointment*; *Mark* calls it, *ointment of ſpikenard*, which was very odorous, and of a very fragrant ſmell; ſee *Cant.* i. 12. Some there render it, *pure nard*; unadulterated, unmixed, ſincere and genuine; others, *liquid nard*, which was drinkable, and eaſy to be poured out; and ſome *Piſtic* nard, ſo called, either from *Piſta*, the name of a place in *India*, from whence it was brought, as ſome think; or as Dr. *Lightfoot*, from פיסתקא, *Piſtaca*, which is the maſte of a tree [c], and of which, among other things, *Pliny* ſays [d], the ointment of nard was made. The *Perſic* verſion in both places read it, *ointment of Gallia*; and the juſt now mentioned writer [e], ſpeaks of *nardum Gallicum*, *Gallic nard*, which is what may be meant by that interpreter; but be it what ointment it will, it was ointment, *very precious*: very coſtly, and of a very great price; for the diſciples obſerve, it might have been ſold for more than three hundred pence: and for the better preſerving of ſuch ointments incorrupt, they uſed to be put into veſſels made of *alabaſter* [f]; though ſome think not the matter, but the form of theſe veſſels is referred to; and obſerve, that veſſels of gold, ſilver, and glaſs, for this uſe, being made in the form of *alabaſters*, were called by that name; and that this might be made of the latter, ſince *Mark* ſays, that *ſhe brake the box*; not into pieces, for then ſhe could not be ſaid to pour it out; but either the top, or ſide of it: though ſome criticks obſerve, that the word ſignifies no more, than that ſhe ſhook it, that the thicker parts of the ointment might liquify, and be the more eaſily poured out. The *Arabic* verſion has omitted that clauſe, and the *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic*, read it, *ſhe opened it*; that is, as the *Perſic* adds, *the top of the veſſel*: ſhe took off the covering of the box, or took out the ſtopple, *and poured it on his head, as he ſat at meat*: which was uſually done at feſtivals, or at any conſiderable entertainments, as at weddings, *&c.* "Says *Rab*, they *pour ointment on the heads* "*of the doctors*; (the *Gloſs* is, the women put "ointment on the heads of the ſcholars;) ſays *R.* "*Papa* to *Abai*, does the doctor ſpeak of the oint-"ment of the bride-chamber? He replies, thou "orphan, did not thy mother cauſe for thee, that "*they poured out ointment on the heads of the doctors*, "at thy wedding? for lo! one of the *Rabbins* got "a wife for his ſon, in the houſe of *R. bar Ula*; "and they ſay, that *R. bar Ula* got a wife for

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[b] Miſn. Celim, c. 1. §. 7. Maimon. Beth Hamikdaſh, c. 3. §. 8.

[c] T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 69. 1. Gloſſ. in ib.

[d] Hiſt. Nat. l. 13. c. 1.

[e] Ib. c. 2. & l. 12. c. 12.

[f] Plin. Nat. Hiſt. l. 13. 2. & 36. 8.

“ his ſon in the houſe of one of the *Rabbins*, “ ודרדיג מישחא ארישא דרבנן, *and poured oint*“*ment on the head of the doctors*[g]:” to this cuſtom are the alluſions in *Pſ.* xxiii. 5. *Eccl.* ix. 8. The pouring of this ointment on the head of Chriſt was emblematical of his being anointed with the oil of gladneſs above his fellows; of his having the holy Spirit, and his gifts and graces without meaſure; which, like the ointment poured on *Aaron*'s head, that ran down to his beard, and the ſkirts of his garments, deſcends to all the members of his myſtical body: and was a ſymbol of the Goſpel, which is like ointment poured forth; and of the ſweet ſavour of the knowledge of Chriſt, which was to be diffuſed throughout all the world, by the preaching of it; and was done by this woman in the faith of him, as the true Meſſiah, the Lord's anointed, as the prophet, prieſt, and king of his church.

Ver. 8. *But when his diſciples ſaw it,* &c.] What the woman did, what a coſtly box of ointment it was, and with what profuſion ſhe uſed it, *they had indignation*: *Mark* ſays, *within themſelves*; either among themſelves, or their indignation was ſecret in their breaſts; their reſentment was private, tho' it might be betrayed by their looks, and afterwards ſhewed itſelf in words. This indignation was either at the woman, for the Evangeliſt *Mark* obſerves, that *they murmured againſt her*, that ſhe ſhould act ſuch an imprudent part, and be guilty of ſuch extravagance; or at Chriſt himſelf, for ſuffering ſuch an action to be done unto him; for ſo the *Syriac* verſion reads the above clauſe in *Mark*, *and they murmured* בה *againſt him*; ſo *De Dieu* obſerves it ſhould be rendered; tho' *Tremellius*, *Boderianus*, and others, tranſlate it, *againſt her*: or elſe their indignation was neither at Chriſt, whom they dearly loved; nor at the woman, they being taught to love their enemies, and much more the friends of Chriſt; but at the action, which they looked upon as an ill-judged thing, that ſprung from miſguided zeal, and which they thought could never be acceptable to their maſter, who was not uſed to encourage ſuch profuſeneſs and extravagance. *Saying, to what purpoſe is this waſte,* or *loſs?* They call that waſte, or loſs, which was ſpent on Chriſt himſelf; whereas, whatever is laid out for the honour of Chriſt, or the good of his intereſt, ought not to be reckoned loſs, for it will be returned with great increaſe and advantage; but they could not ſee what end was to be anſwered by this expence. It is eaſy to obſerve the variableneſs and inconſtancy of the diſciples: one time, becauſe the inhabitants of a certain village did not receive Chriſt, they were for calling for fire from heaven to deſtroy them; and here is a poor woman that exceeds, as they thought, in her reſpects to him, and they are filled with indignation.

Ver. 9. *For this ointment might have been ſold for much,* &c.] *Mark* ſays, *for more than three hundred pence*: now if this is to be underſtood of *Roman* pence, each penny being ſeven pence half-penny of our money, three hundred pence come to nine pounds, ſeven ſhillings, and ſix-pence; but if it is to be underſtood of the penny of the ſanctuary, which was one ſhilling and three-pence, they come to juſt as muſt more: it might well be called very precious and coſtly ointment; and this was the reaſon of the diſciples indignation, that ſo much coſt and expence ſhould be thrown away, as they thought, in ſuch a manner, which might have been applied, in their opinion, to a better purpoſe. For had it been ſold for its worth, ſo much might have been had for it, *and given to the poor*; which was a very plauſible objection to the action; and which they ſeem to have taken from *Judas*, who had made the ſame, on a like occaſion, about four days before this, and he might inſtigate the diſciples now; which ſhows what miſchief an hypocrite may do in a church, and what influence he may have over good men to draw them into his meaſures, under the ſpecious pretences of carefulneſs, frugality, and doing good to the poor. It ſeems our Lord inured his diſciples to this good work of relieving the poor: they kept one common purſe, and one of them, who was *Judas*, was appointed the bearer of it; whatever they collected, or was made a preſent to them, they put into this purſe; out of which they were provided with the neceſſaries of life; and the reſt expended on the poor.

Ver. 10. *When Jeſus underſtood it,* &c.] The indignation of his diſciples at this action of the woman's; which he might know, as man, partly by their looks, and partly by their words; tho' without theſe, as God, he knew the ſecret indignation, and private reſentment of their minds: *he ſaid unto them, why trouble ye the woman?* by blaming her, and cenſuring the action ſhe had done; as it muſt, no doubt, greatly trouble her to meet with ſuch treatment from the diſciples of Chriſt: had any of the *Phariſees* blamed her conduct, it would have given her no pain or uneaſineſs; but that Chriſt's own diſciples ſhould ſhew indignation at an action done by her from a ſincere love to Chriſt, and to do honour to him, muſt cut her to the heart: and ſo it is when either miniſters of the Goſpel, or private believers, are blamed for their honeſt zeal in the cauſe of Chriſt, by any that profeſs to love him; this grieves them more than all the enemies of religion ſay or do unto them: *for ſhe hath wrought a good work upon me*; upon his body, by pouring the ointment on it: the *Perſic* verſion reads it, *according to my mind*: it was done in the faith of him, as the *Meſſiah*; it ſprung from real and ſincere love to him, and was deſigned for his honour and glory; and ſo had the eſſentials of a good work in it. This is the firſt part of our Lord's defence of the woman: he goes on,

Ver. 11. *For ye have the poor always with you,* &c.] This is ſaid in anſwer to the objection of the diſciples, that the ointment might have been ſold, and the money given to the poor. Chriſt ſeems to have reſpect to *Deut.* xv. 11. and which, agreeable to the ſenſe of the *Jews*, refers to the times of the Meſſiah: for they ſay[h], “there is no difference “between this world (this preſent time) and the “times of the Meſſiah, but the ſubduing of king“doms only; as it is ſaid, *Deut.* xv. 11. *for the* “*poor ſhall never ceaſe out of the land*: the *Gloſs* “on it is, from hence it may be concluded, that “therefore, לעולם יש עניות, *for ever there will be* “*poverty*, and riches.” Our Lord's words alſo ſhew, that there will be always poor perſons in the world; that there will be always ſuch with his people, and in his churches; for God has choſen, and he calls ſuch by his grace; ſo that men may always have opportunities of ſhewing kindneſs and reſpect to ſuch objects: in *Mark* 'tis added, *and whenſoever ye will ye may do them good*; by relieving their wants, and diſtributing to their neceſſities: *but me ye have not always*; referring not to his divine and ſpiritual preſence, which he has promiſed to his people, churches, and miniſters, to the end of the world, but to his corporal preſence; for he was to be but a little while with them, and then go to the father; be taken up to heaven, where he now is, and will be until the reſtitution of

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[g] T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 17. 2.

[h] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 63. 1.

all things; ſo that the time was very ſhort, in which any outward reſpect could be ſhown to him in perſon, as man.

Ver. 12. *For in that ſhe hath poured this ointment*, &c.] Which was ſo very precious, and coſt ſo much, *upon my body:* for being poured on his head, it ran down all over his body. *She did it for my burial*; not for the interment of his body, but for the embalming of it, previous to it: the *Jews* uſed to embalm their dead, to ſhew their conſtant reſpect to the deceaſed, and their belief of the reſurrection; at leaſt not only uſed to waſh them, but anoint them with oil; for ſo runs one of their canons[i]: "they do all things neceſſary to the dead, "(*i. e.* on the ſabbath-day) סכין, *they anoint him*; "that is, as *Bartenora* adds, *with oil*; and they "waſh him"; but the body of Chriſt, when dead, was not to be ſo uſed: the women intended it, and prepared materials for it, but the ſabbath coming on, they reſted according to the commandment; though, according to this canon, they might have anointed him, but they waited till the ſabbath was over; and early on the firſt day, in the morning, they came to the ſepulchre, in order to do it, but it was too late, Chriſt was riſen; ſee *Luke* xxiii. 56. and xxiv. 1. *Mark* xvi. 1. Now either this woman had ſome revelation made to her, that the death of Chriſt was near at hand, and ſhe feared, or knew, ſhe ſhould not be able to anoint him when dead; and therefore, as *Mark* has it, *ſhe hath done what ſhe could*; *ſhe is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying:* or if ſhe had no knowledge of all this, nor any ſuch intention, yet the Holy Ghoſt directed her to this action, with this view, as it were, for the performing of theſe funeral rites before he was dead; and ſo the *Syriac* verſion renders it, *ſhe hath done it*, איך דלמקברני, *as it were, to bury me.*

Ver. 13. *Verily I ſay unto you*, &c.] The following words are prefaced in this manner, to excite attention, and command belief: *whereſoever this Goſpel ſhall be preached in the whole world.* The *Syriac* verſion reads it, סברתי, *my Goſpel*; and ſo the *Perſic* verſion; and has reſpect chiefly to the doctrine of his death, burial, and reſurrection, which this action of the woman had relation to; for tho' the incarnation of Chriſt, and all the actions of his life, and whatſoever he did for the good, and in the room and ſtead of his people, are good news and glad tidings to the ſons of men, and ſo the Goſpel; yet his dying for ſin, and making atonement for it, thereby ſatisfying juſtice, fulfilling the law, deſtroying death, and him that had the power of it, and his lying in the grave, and leaving the ſins of his people behind him, and riſing again for their juſtification, which were the ends of his coming into the world, make up the moſt glorious and principal part of the Goſpel: and theſe words of Chriſt ſhew that *this* Goſpel ſhould be preached; for which purpoſe he gave a commiſſion and gifts to his diſciples, and has done ſo, more or leſs, to men, ever ſince, for the converſion of ſinners, and the edification of ſaints, and the glory of his name; and that this Goſpel ſhall be preached all over the world, as it was by the apoſtles, agreeable to the commiſſion; and will be again, towards the cloſe of time, when the earth ſhall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord: and then *there ſhall alſo this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her*; of her faith, love, and gratitude; for the memory of the juſt is bleſſed, and the righteous are had in everlaſting remembrance. Chriſt ſuggeſts, that, tho' the diſciples blamed this action, it ſhould be ſpoken of by others to her praiſe and commendation, in all ſucceeding ages, throughout the world: *a good name*, the wiſe man ſays, is *better than precious ointment.* This woman got a good name, and obtained a good report by her precious ointment; and if this woman's action was to be told for a memorial of her, much more what Chriſt has done and ſuffer'd ſhould be told as a memorial of him.

Ver. 14. *Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iſcariot*, &c.] Who was provoked and exaſperated, to the laſt degree, by this action of the woman, and Chriſt's defence of it, and becauſe the ointment was not ſold, and the money put into his hand; and being inſtigated by ſatan, who had now entered into him, formed a ſcheme in his mind to betray his maſter, and was reſolved to put it in execution, whereby he might, in ſome meaſure, ſatisfy both his avarice, and revenge; and, as an aggravation of this his wickedneſs, he is deſcribed, as *one of the twelve:* of his twelve diſciples; ſo the *Perſic* and *Ethiopic* verſions: this is a way of ſpeaking uſed by the *Jews*[k]; they call the twelve leſſer prophets, שנים עשר, or תרי עשר, *the twelve*, without any other word added thereunto. He was not an open enemy, nor one of Chriſt's common hearers, nor one of the ſeventy diſciples, but one of his twelve apoſtles, whom he made his intimates and aſſociates; whom he ſelected from all others, and called, qualified, and ſent forth to preach his Goſpel, and perform miracles: it was one of theſe that meditated the delivery of him into the hands of his enemies, and never left purſuing his ſcheme till he had effected it, even *Judas Iſcariot* by name; ſo called, to diſtinguiſh him from another diſciple, whoſe name was alſo *Judas.* This man *went to the chief-prieſts*; of his own accord, unaſked, from *Bethany*, to *Jeruſalem*, to *Caiaphas*'s palace, where the chief-prieſts, the implacable enemies of Chriſt, with the *Scribes*, and elders of the people, were met together, to conſult his death: *Mark* adds, *to betray him unto them*, which was manifeſtly his intent in going to them; and *Luke*, that he *communed* with them *how he might betray him unto them*; in the ſafeſt, and moſt private manner; and both obſerve that *they were glad*; for nothing could have fallen out more to their wiſhes, who were met together on this deſign. The *Jews*, in their blaſphemous account of Jeſus[l], ſay as much: they own, that *Judas*, or *Juda*, as they call him, offered to betray him into the hands of the wiſe men, ſaying to them; almoſt in the words expreſſed in the following verſe, "if you will hearken unto me, אמסור אותו, "*I will deliver him* into your hands to-morrow;" and which agrees very well with the time alſo: for it was two days before the paſſover that *Jeſus* was in *Bethany*, where he ſupped with his diſciples, and waſhed their feet, and had the box of ointment poured on his head; and on the night of the day after all this was done, *Judas* ſet out from thence to *Jeruſalem*; ſee *John* xiii. 30. ſo that it muſt be the next day before he could meet the high-prieſts, and on the morrow, at night, he delivered him into their hands; on the propoſal of which, they ſay, that *Simeon ben Shetach*, whom they make to be preſent at this time, and all the wiſe men and elders, שמחו שמחה גדולה, *rejoiced exceedingly.*

Ver. 15. *And ſaid* unto them, *&c.*] Tho' the words, *to them*, are not in the original text, they are rightly ſupplied; as they are by the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, and in *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel; and mean the chief-prieſts to whom *Judas* went, and to whom he made the following propoſal; *what will ye give me, and I will deliver him to you?* They did not aſk him to do it, he firſt made the motion; a barbarous and ſhocking one! to deliver his Lord and Maſter, with whom he had familiarly converſed, and from whom he had received ſo many favours, into the hands of thoſe that hated him; nor was he concerned what they would do to him, or what would become of him, when in their hands: all his view, and what he was intent upon, was, what they would give him for doing it. They did not tempt him, by firſt offering him ſo much money, if he would betray him; but he himſelf firſt moves it to them, and tempts them with it to offer him an handſome reward: and it is to be obſerved, that he does not mention the name of *Jeſus*, either becauſe they might be talking of him, when he came into their company; or elſe as ſuiting his language to theirs, who, when they ſpake of him, uſually ſaid, *he*, or *that man*, or *this fellow*. And in the ſame rude way *Judas* now treats his maſter: *and they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of ſilver*; that is, thirty ſhekels of ſilver; for it is a rule with the *Jews*, that when mention is made in ſcripture of pieces of ſilver, without expreſſing the ſpecies, ſhekels are meant: ſo *Onkelos*, and *Jonathan ben Uzziel*, in their *Targums* on *Gen.* xx. 16. and xlv. 22. render pieces of ſilver, by ſhekels of ſilver; ſo pieces of gold ſignify ſhekels of gold: thus the 1700 pieces of gold in *Judg.* viii. 26. are, in the *Septuagint*, *Arabic*, and *Vulgate Latin* verſions, called ſo many ſhekels of gold; and our verſion ſupplies the word *ſhekels* alſo, as it does in 2 *Chron.* ix. 15, 16. and yet ſome learned men have aſſerted[m], that there were no ſhekels of gold among the *Jews*, though expreſs mention is made of them in 1 *Chron.* xxi. 25. The value of a ſhekel of gold, according to *Brerewood*[n], was, of our money, *fifteen ſhillings*; and ſome make it to come to a great deal more; to *one pound, ſixteen ſhillings, and ſix-pence* ſterling: had theſe thirty pieces been pieces, or ſhekels of gold, they would have amounted to a conſiderable ſum of money; but they were pieces of ſilver, and not talents, or pounds, but ſhekels. The ſilver ſhekel had on one ſide enſtamped upon it, the *pot of manna*, or, as others think, a *cenſer*, or incenſe-cup, with theſe words around it, in *Samaritan* letters, *ſhekel Iſrael, the ſhekel of Iſrael*; and, on the other, *Aaron*'s *rod* budding, with this inſcription about it, *Jeruſalem Hakeduſhah, Jeruſalem the holy*[o]. As for the weight and value of it, *R. Gedaliah* ſays[p], we know by tradition that the holy ſhekel weighs 320 grains of barley of pure ſilver; and the ſame writer obſerves[q], that the *ſelah*, or holy ſhekel, is four *denarii*, or pence; that is, *Roman* pence, each being of the value of ſeven pence half-penny of our money: and to this agrees what *Joſephus*[r] ſays, that a *ſhekel* is a coin of the *Hebrews*, which contains four *Attic* drachms, or drams; and an *Attic* dram is of the ſame value with a *Roman* penny: ſo that one of theſe ſhekels was worth about *half a crown*; and it uſually weighed half an ounce, as not only ſome *Jewiſh* writers affirm, who profeſs to have ſeen them, and weighed them themſelves, as *Jarchi*[s], *Gerundenſis*[t], *Abarbinel*[u], and *Gedaliah ben Jechaiah*[w]; but other writers alſo, as *Maſius*[x], *Arias Montanus*[y], *Waſerus*[z], and Biſhop *Cumberland*. Now thirty ſhekels of ſilver were the price of a ſervant, *Exod.* xxi. 32. So[b] *Maimonides* obſerves, that the "atonement *of ſervants*, whether great or ſmall, whether male or female, the fixed ſum in the law *is thirty ſhekels of good ſilver*, whether *the ſervant* is worth an hundred pound, or whether he is not worth but a farthing," and which was in value of our money about *three pounds fifteen ſhillings*. This was the *goodly price*, which Chriſt, who appeared in the form of a ſervant, was prized at, according to the prophecy in *Zech.* xi. 12, 13. and which the high-prieſts thought a very ſufficient one; and the wretch *Judas*, as covetous as he was, was contented with.

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[i] Miſn Sabbat, c. 23. §. 5.

[k] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 14. 2. & 15. 1.

[l] Toldos Jeſu, p. 16.

Ver. 16. *And from that time he ſought opportunity to betray him.*] *Luke* adds, *in the abſence of the multitude*; in the moſt private manner, when he was alone, and in ſome ſolitary place, that no tumult might ariſe, and that there might be no danger of a reſcue: for ſo he, and the chief-prieſts, had conſulted, and ſettled it, as what would be moſt prudent and adviſeable; and therefore, from that time forward, being prompted on by ſatan, and the lucre of the money he was to receive, he narrowly watched, and diligently obſerved, the beſt and moſt fitting ſeaſon to perform his enterprize, and which very quickly offered.

Ver. 17. *Now the firſt day of the feaſt of unleavened bread*, &c.] There were ſeven of theſe days, and this was the firſt of them, in which the *Jews* might not eat leavened bread, from the fourteenth, to the twenty-firſt of the month *Niſan*; in commemoration of their being thruſt out of *Egypt*, in ſo much haſte, that they had not time to leaven the dough, which was in their kneading-troughs: wherefore, according to their canons[c], on the night of the fourteenth day; that is, as *Bartenora* explains it, the night, the day following of which is the fourteenth, they ſearch for leaven in all private places and corners, to bring it out, and burn it, or break it into ſmall pieces, and ſcatter it in the wind, or throw it into the ſea. *Mark* adds, *when they killed the paſſover*; and *Luke* ſays, *when the paſſover muſt be killed*; which was to be done on the fourteenth day of the month *Niſan*, after the middle of the day; and this was an indiſpenſable duty, which all were obliged to: for ſo they ſay[d], "every man, and every woman, are bound to obſerve this precept; and whoever makes void this commandment preſumptuouſly, if he is not defiled, or afar off, lo! he is guilty of cutting off." The time of killing the paſſover was after the middle of the day; and 'tis ſaid[e], that "if they killed it before the middle of the day it was not right; and they did not kill it till after the evening ſacrifice, and after they had offered the evening incenſe; and after they had trimmed the lamps, they began to ſlay the paſſovers, or paſchal lambs, unto the end of the day; and if they ſlay'd after the middle of the day, before the evening ſacrifice, it was right." The reaſon of this was, becauſe the lamb was to be ſlain between the two evenings; the firſt of which began at noon, as ſoon as ever the day declined: and this was not done privately, but in the temple; for thus it is[f] affirmed,

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[m] Waſerus de numis Heb. l. 2. c. 3. [n] De numis Jud. c 3. [o] Waſer. ib. & Ar. Montan. Ephron. ſive de Siclo in Jud. Antiq. p. 126. Bererewood de ponder. & pret. vet. num. c. 1. [p] Shalſhelet Hakabala, fol. 72. 2. [q] Ib. [r] Antiq. l. 3. c. 8. §. 2. [s] Peruſh in Exod. xxi. 32. [t] Ad fin. Expoſ. in Pentateuch. [u] Comment. in 1 Reg. 7. fol. 221. 2. [w] Shalſhelet Hakabala, fol. 72. 2. [x] In Joſua, 7. 21. p. 135. [y] De Siclo, ut ſupra. [z] De numis Heb. l. 2. c. 3. [b] Hilch. Niſke Mammon. c. 11. §. 1. [c] Miſn. Peſach. c. 1. §. 1. Maimon. Chametz Umetzah, c. 2. §. 3, 4. & 3. 11. [d] Maimon. Hilch. Korban Peſach. c. 1. §. 1, 2. [e] Ib. §. 4. Moſes Kotſenſis Mitzvot Tora pr. affirm. 39. [f] Maimon. Ib. §. 3.

"they don't kill the paſſover but in the court, as "the reſt of the holy things." The time and manner of killing the lamb, and by whom, of the ſprinkling of the blood, and of their fleaing it, and taking out the fat, and burning it on the altar, may be ſeen in the *Miſna*[g]. *The diſciples came to Jeſus*; that is, *Peter* and *John*, as may be learnt from *Luke* xxii. 8. for theſe only ſeem to have had any notion of *Judas*'s betraying Chriſt, from what had been ſaid at the ſupper in *Bethany*, two days before: the reſt thought he was gone to prepare for the feaſt, and therefore were under no concern about it; but theſe two judged otherwiſe, and therefore came to Chriſt to know his mind concerning it; for it was high time that a preparation ſhould be made; for this was *Thurſday* morning, and the lamb was to be killed in the afternoon, and eat at even. *Saying unto him, where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the paſſover?* This queſtion in *Luke* follows upon an order which Chriſt gave to theſe diſciples: *ſaying, go and prepare us the paſſover, that we may eat*; for maſters uſed to give their ſervants orders to get ready the paſſover for them; and which were expreſſed in much ſuch language as this[h]: "he that ſays to his ſervant, "צא ושחוט עלי את פסח, *go and ſlay the paſſover* "*for me:* if he kills a kid, he may eat of it; if "he kills a lamb, he may eat of it." It is reported[i] of "Rabban *Gamaliel*, that he ſaid to his "ſervant *Tabi*, צא וצלה, *go and roaſt* the paſſover "for us upon an iron grate." The diſciples having received ſuch an order from their maſter, enquire not in what town or city they muſt prepare the paſſover, for that was always eat in *Jeruſalem*; ſee *Deut.* xvi. 5, 6, 7. *Luke* ii. 41, 42. where they were obliged, by the *Jewiſh* canon[k], to lodge that night; tho' they might eat the unleavened bread, and keep the other days of the feaſt any where, and in every place[l]; but they enquire in what houſe he would have it got ready: for they might make uſe of any houſe, and the furniture of it, where they could find room, and conveniency, without any charge; for they did not let out their houſes, or any of their rooms, or beds, in *Jeruſalem*; but, at feſtivals, the owners of them gave the uſe of them freely to all that came[m]: and it is[n] obſerved among the wonders and miracles done at *Jeruſalem*, that tho' there were ſuch multitudes at their feaſts, yet "a man could never ſay to his friend, I have "not found a fire to roaſt the paſſover-lambs in "*Jeruſalem*, nor I have not found a bed to ſleep "on in *Jeruſalem*, nor the place is too ſtrait for "me to lodge in, in *Jeruſalem*."

Ver. 18. *And he ſaid, go into the city to ſuch a man*, &c.] That is, to ſuch a man in the city of *Jeruſalem*; for, as yet, they were in *Bethany*, or at the mount of *Olives* however, without the city: he does not mention the man's name, but deſcribes him, as *Mark* and *Luke* ſay, and tells them, *there ſhall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water, follow him into the houſe, where he entreth in*; who ſeems to be not the maſter of the houſe, but a ſervant, that was ſent on ſuch an errand. This is a very conſiderable inſtance of our Lord's preſcience of future contingencies: he knew before-hand, that exactly at the time that the diſciples would enter *Jeruſalem*, ſuch a man belonging to ſuch a houſe, would be returning with a pitcher of water in his hand; and they ſhould meet him, and follow him, where he went, which would be a direction to them what houſe to prepare the paſſover in: *and ſay unto him*; not to the man bearing the pitcher of water; but, as the other Evangeliſts ſay, to the good man of the houſe, the owner of it, who probably might be one of Chriſt's diſciples ſecretly: for many of the chief rulers in *Jeruſalem* believed on Chriſt, though they did not openly confeſs him, for fear of the *Phariſees*, as *Nicodemus*, and *Joſeph* of *Arimathea*; and this man might be one of them, or ſome other man of note and wealth; ſince they were to find, as they did, a large upper room furniſhed and prepared. For, it ſeems, that without mentioning his name, the man would know him by their language, he dictates to them in the following clauſe, who they meant; *the maſter ſaith*; the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read, *our maſter*; thine and ours, the great maſter in *Iſrael*, the teacher ſent from God: *my time is at hand*; not of eating the paſſover, as if it was diſtinct from that of the *Jews*, and peculiar to himſelf, for he eat it at the uſual time, and when the *Jews* eat theirs; and which time was fixed and known by every body, and could be no reaſon to move the maſter of the houſe to receive him: but he means the time of his death, that he had but a little while to live; and that this inſtance of reſpect would be the laſt he would have an opportunity of ſhewing him whilſt living, and the laſt time Chriſt would have an opportunity of ſeeing him; and he might ſay this to prepare him to meet the news of his death with leſs ſurprize: *I will keep the paſſover at thy houſe with my diſciples*; not with him and his family, but with his diſciples, who were a family, and a ſociety of themſelves, and a ſufficient number to eat the paſſover together; for there might be two companies eating their diſtinct paſſovers in one houſe, and even in one room: concerning which is the following rule, "שתי חבירות שהין אוכלים בבית אחד, *two ſo-* "*cieties that eat in one houſe*; the one turn their "faces this way and eat, and the other turn their "faces that way and eat, and an heating-veſſel (in "which they heat the water to mix with the wine) "in the middle; and when the ſervant ſtands to "mix, he ſhuts his mouth, and turns his face till "he comes to his company, and eats; and the "bride turns her face and eats[o]."

Ver. 19. *And the diſciples did as Jeſus had appointed them*, &c.] They went into the city of *Jeruſalem*; they met the man carrying a pitcher of water home; they followed him into the houſe he entred; they addreſſed the maſter of the houſe, in the manner Chriſt directed, who ſhewed them a large upper room, prepared with all proper furniture for ſuch an occaſion, as Chriſt had foretold: *and they made ready the paſſover*; they went and bought a lamb; they carried it to the temple to be ſlain in the court, where it was preſented as a paſſover-lamb for ſuch a number of perſons; they had it flead, cut up, the fat taken out, and burnt on the altar, and its blood ſprinkled on the foot of it; they then brought it to the houſe where they were to eat it; here they roaſted it, and provided bread, and wine, and bitter herbs, and a ſauce called *charoſeth*, into which the herbs were dipped; and, in ſhort, every thing that was neceſſary.

Ver. 20. *Now when the even was come*, &c.] The ſecond evening, when the ſun was ſet, and it was dark, and properly night; for "on the evenings

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[g] Peſachim, c. 5. §. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10.
[h] Ib. c. 8. 2.
[i] Ib. c. 7. §. 2.
[k] T. Bab. Peſach. fol. 95. 2. & Gloſſ. in ib.
[l] Maimon. Hilch. Chametz Umetzah, c. 6. §. 1.
[m] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 12. 1. Megilla, fol. 26. 1. & Gloſſ. in ib. Maimon. Hilch. Beth Habbechira, c. 7. §. 14. & Ceſeph Miſna in ib.
[n] Abot R. Nathan, c. 35. Pirke Abot, c. 5. §. 5.
[o] Miſn. Peſachim, c. 7. §. 13.

“ of the paſſovers near the *Minchah*, a man might “ not eat עד שתחשך, *until it was dark* [p].” This was according to the rule, *Exod.* xii. 8. *he ſat down with the twelve*, his twelve diſciples; ſo the *Vulgate Latin*, and all the *Oriental* verſions, and *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel; and which alſo adds, *at table*; even all the twelve apoſtles, who were properly his family, and a ſufficient number for a paſſover-lamb [q]: for “ they don't kill the paſſover for a “ ſingle man, according to the words of *R. Judah*, “ though *R. Joſe* permits it; yea, tho' the ſociety “ conſiſts of an hundred, if they can't eat the “ quantity of an olive, they don't kill for them; “ nor do they make a ſociety of women, ſervants, “ and little ones.” *Judas* was now returned again, and took his place among the diſciples, as if he was as innocent, and as friendly, as any of them: this he might chuſe to do, partly to avoid all ſuſpicion of his deſigns; and partly that he might get intelligence where Chriſt would go after ſupper, that he might have the opportunity he was waiting for, to betray him into the hands of his enemies. *He ſat*, or *lay down* with them, as the word ſignifies; for the poſture of the *Jews*, at the paſſover-table eſpecially, was not properly ſitting, but reclining, or lying along on couches, not on their backs, nor on their right-ſide, but on their left; of which ſee the note on *John* xiii. 23. The firſt paſſover was eaten by them ſtanding, with their loins girt, their ſhoes on, and ſtaves in their hands, becauſe they were juſt ready to depart out of *Egypt*: but in after paſſovers theſe circumſtances were omitted; and particularly ſitting, or lying along, was reckoned ſo neceſſary to be obſerved, that it is ſaid [r], that “ the pooreſt man in *Iſrael* might not “ eat, עד שיסב, *until he lies along*, or leans;” that is, as ſome of their commentators [s] note, either upon the couch, or on the table, after the manner of free men, and in remembrance of their liberty: and another of them [t] ſays, “ we are bound to eat “ בהסבה, *lying along*, as kings and great men eat, “ becauſe it is a token of liberty.” Hence they elſewhere ſay [u], “ it is the way of ſervants to eat “ ſtanding; but here (in the paſſover) to eat, “ מסובין, *ſitting*, or *lying along*, becauſe they (the “ *Iſraelites*) went out of bondage to liberty. Says “ *R. Simon*, in the name of *R. Joſhua ben Levi*, that “ which a man is obliged to in the paſſover, tho' “ it be but the quantity of an olive, he muſt eat “ it, מוסב, *lying along*.” The account *Maimonides* gives of this uſage, is in theſe words [w]: “ even “ the pooreſt man in *Iſrael* may not eat until *he* “ *lies along*: a woman need not lie; but if ſhe is a “ woman of worth and note, ſhe ought to lie: a “ ſon by a father, and a ſervant before his maſter “ ought to lie; *but a diſciple before his maſter does* “ *not lie, except his maſter gives him leave* (as Chriſt “ did his); and lying on the right hand is not lying; and ſo he that lies upon his neck, or upon “ his face, this is not lying; and when ought they “ to lie? at the time of eating, the quantity of an “ olive, of unleavened bread, and at drinking of “ the four cups; but at the reſt of eating and “ drinking, if he lies, lo! it is praiſe-worthy; but “ if not, there is no neceſſity.” This cuſtom was ſo conſtantly and uniformly obſerved at the paſſover, that it is taken particular notice of in the declaration, or ſhewing forth of the paſſover by the maſter of the family, when he ſays [x], “ how different is this night from all other nights, *&c.*” and among the many things he mentions, this is one; “ in all other nights we eat either ſitting, or lying “ along; that is, which way we pleaſe, but this “ night all of us מסובין, *lie along*.”

Ver. 21. *And as they did eat*, &c.] The paſſover-lamb, the unleavened bread, and bitter herbs: *he ſaid*: it was uſual, whilſt they were thus engaged, to diſcourſe much about the reaſon and deſign of this inſtitution. What they talked of may be learnt from what follows [y]: “ it is an affirmative precept “ of the law, to declare the ſigns and wonders “ which were done to our fathers in *Egypt*, on the “ night of the fifteenth of *Niſan*, according to “ *Exod.* xiii. 3. *remember this day*, &c. and from “ whence on the night of the fifteenth? from ver. 8. “ *and thou ſhalt ſhew thy ſon*, &c. at the time that “ the unleavened bread, and bitter herbs lie before “ thee. And tho' he has no ſon, or tho' they are “ wiſe, and grown up, they are bound to declare “ the going out of *Egypt*; and every one that enlarges, or dwells long on the things that happened, and came to paſs, lo! he is praiſe-worthy. It is a command to make known to children, even tho' they do not aſk; as it is ſaid, “ *and thou ſhalt ſhew thy ſon*: according to the ſon's “ knowledge, his father teaches him; how if he is “ a little one, or fooliſh? he ſays to him my ſon, “ all of us were ſervants, as this handmaid, or this “ ſervant, in *Egypt*; and on this night the holy, “ bleſſed God redeemed us, and brought us into “ liberty: and if the ſon is grown up, and a wiſe “ man, he makes known to him what happened “ to us in *Egypt*, and the wonders which were done “ for us by the hands of *Moſes*, our maſter; all according to the capacity of the ſon. And it is “ neceſſary to make a repetition on this night, that “ the children may ſee, and aſk, and ſay, how “ different is this night from all other nights? “ until he replies to them, and ſays to them, ſo “ and ſo it happened, and thus and thus it was.— “ If he has no ſon, his wife aſks him; and if he “ has no wife, they aſk one another, how different “ is this night? and tho' they are all wiſe men, “ every one aſks himſelf alone, how different is “ this night? and it is neceſſary to begin with reproaches, and end with praiſe, how? he begins “ and declares, how at firſt our fathers were in the “ days of *Terah*, and before him, deniers (of the “ divine being), and wandring after vanity, and “ following idolatrous worſhip; and he ends with “ the law of truth, how that God brought us near “ to himſelf, and ſeparated us from the nations, “ and cauſed us to draw nigh to his unity; and ſo “ begins and makes known, that we were ſervants “ to *Pharaoh* in *Egypt*, and all the evils he recompenſed us with; and ends with the ſigns and “ wonders which were wrought for us, and with “ our liberties: and he that expounds from—*a Syrian was my father, ready to periſh*, till he has “ finiſhed the whole ſection; and every one that “ adds and enlarges in expounding this ſection, lo! “ he is praiſe-worthy. And every one that does “ not ſay theſe three words on the night of the “ fifteenth, cannot be excuſed from blame; and “ they are theſe, the paſſover, the unleavened “ bread, and the bitter herbs: *the paſſover*, becauſe “ God paſſed over the houſes of our fathers in “ *Egypt*, as it is ſaid, *Exod.* xii. 27. *the bitter herbs*, “ becauſe the *Egyptians* made bitter the lives of “ our fathers in *Egypt*: *the unleavened bread*,

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[p] Miſn. Peſachim, c. 10. §. 1. [q] Ib. c. 8. §. 7. [r] Ib. c, 10. §. 1. [s] Jarchi & Bartenora in ib. [t] Maimonides in ib. [u] T. Hieroſ. Peſach. fol 37. 2. [w] Hilch. Chametz Umetzah, c. 7. §. 8. [x] Maimon ib. c. 8. 2. Haggadah Shel Peſach. p. 5. [y] Maimon. ib. c. 7. §. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Vid c 8. 2, 3, 4, 5. & Haggadah Shel Peſach, p. 5, 6, 7, 8.

“ becauſe they were redeemed: and theſe things “ all of them are called the declaration, or ſhewing forth.” Chriſt now took up ſome part of the time, at leaſt, whilſt they were eating, in diſcourſing with his diſciples about the traitor: *he ſaid, verily I ſay unto you, that one of you ſhall betray me*; meaning, to the chief prieſts and *Scribes*, who ſhould condemn him to death, and deliver him to the *Gentiles*, to be mocked, ſcourged, and crucified, as he had told them ſome time before, *Matt.* xx. 18, 19. though he did not tell them as now, that it ſhould be done by one of them: he had indeed ſignified as much as this two days before, at the ſupper in *Bethany*, but none ſeemed to underſtand whom he meant, but *Peter* and *John*, and the thing wore off their minds; and therefore he mentions it again to them, with great ſeriouſneſs, and in the moſt ſolemn manner, declaring it as a certain and undoubted truth.

Ver. 22. *And they were exceeding ſorrowful*, &c.] Partly that Chriſt ſhould be betrayed at all, into the hands of his enemies, by whom they knew he would be ill uſed; and partly, that ſo vile an action ſhould be done, by one from among themſelves; and greatly, becauſe they knew not, nor could not conceive, who of them could be guilty of ſuch an horrid ſin: *and began every one of them to ſay unto him, Lord, is it I?* excepting *Judas*, who afterwards ſpoke for himſelf. This they ſaid, though conſcious to themſelves the thing had never entered into their hearts; nor had they taken any ſtep towards it, but with their whole ſouls abhorred it; yet, as knowing the treachery and deceitfulneſs of their hearts, which they could not truſt to; and fearing leſt ſhould they be left thereunto, they might commit ſuch a dreadful iniquity; and as deſirous of being cleared by Chriſt from any ſuch imputation, and even from all ſuſpicion of any thing of this kind.

Ver. 23. *And he anſwered and ſaid*, &c.] In order to make them eaſy, and point out the betrayer to them, *he that dippeth his hand with me in the diſh, the ſame ſhall betray me*. This ſeems to refer to the dipping of the unleavened bread, or bitter herbs, or both, into the ſauce called *Charoſeth*, which the *Jews* [z] ſay, “ was made of figs, “ nuts, almonds, and other fruits; to which they “ added apples; all which they bruiſed in a mortar, “ and mixed with vinegar; and put ſpices into it, “ calamus and cinnamon, in the form of ſmall long “ threads, in remembrance of the ſtraw; and it “ was neceſſary it ſhould be thick, in memory of “ the clay.” The account *Maimonides* [a] gives of it is, “ the *Charoſeth* is a precept from the words “ of the *Scribes*, in remembrance of the clay in “ which they ſerved in *Egypt*; and how did they “ make it? They took dates, or berries, or raiſins, and the like, and ſtamped them, and put “ vinegar into them, and ſeaſoned them with ſpices, “ as clay in ſtraw, and brought it upon the table, in “ the night of the paſſover.” And in this he ſays, the maſter of the family dipped both the herbs, and the unleavened bread [b], and that both ſeparately and conjunctly; for he ſays [c], that “ he rolled “ up the unleavened bread and bitter herbs together, ומטבל, and *dipped them* in the *Charoſeth*.” And this was twice done in eating the paſſover; for ſo it is obſerved [d] among the many things, which diſtinguiſhed this night from others: “ in all other “ nights we dip but once, but in this night twice.” By this action, Chriſt gave his diſciples a ſignal; whereby they might know the betrayer: for this is not a general deſcription of one, that ſat at the table, and eat of his bread with him, and ſo fulfilled the prediction, in *Pſal.* xli. 9. though this is true too; but then, this was ſaying no more than he had before done, when he ſaid, *one of you ſhall betray me*: though the phraſe is ſo [e] uſed; for inſtance, “ if a man goes and ſits at table with them, “ וטובל עמהן, and *dips with them*, though he does “ not eat the quantity of an olive, they bleſs for “ him.” But this refers to a particular action then performed by *Judas*, juſt at the time Chriſt ſpoke theſe words; and who might ſit near him, and dip into the ſame diſh he did; for ſince there were thirteen of them, there might be more diſhes than one; and two or three might have a diſh to themſelves, and *Judas* dip in the ſame diſh with Chriſt.

Ver. 24. *The Son of man goeth*, &c.] Meaning himſelf, not to the mount of *Olives*, or *Gethſemane*, or the garden, whither he went a little after this, but out of the world, to his Father: the phraſe is expreſſive of his death, as in *Joſh.* xxiii. 14. *Pſal.* xxxix. 13. and denotes the voluntarineſs of it, and which is no ways inconſiſtent with the divine determinations about it; nor the violence that was offered to him by his enemies. *As it is written*; in the book of God's eternal purpoſes and decrees; for *Luke* ſays, *as it was determined*: or as it was recorded in the books of the Old Teſtament; in the *twenty-ſecond Pſalm*, in the *fifty-third* of *Iſaiah*, and in the *ninth* of *Daniel*; for Chriſt died for the ſins of his people, in perfect agreement with theſe ſcriptures, which were written of him: *but wo unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed*; for God's decrees concerning this matter, and the predictions in the bible founded on them, did not in the leaſt excuſe, or extenuate the blackneſs of his crime; who did what he did, of his own free-will, and wicked heart, voluntarily, and to ſatisfy his own luſts: *it had been good for that man if he had not been born*. This is a *Rabbinical* phraſe, frequently uſed in one form or another; ſometimes thus; as it is ſaid [f] of ſuch that ſpeak falſe and lying words, and regard not the glory of their Creator, טב לין דלא ייתון לעלמא, *it would have been better for them if they had never come into the world*; and ſo of any other notorious ſinner, it is at other times ſaid [g], טב ליה דלא אברי, or [h], נוח לו שלא נברא, *it would have been better for him if he had not been created*; ſignifying, that it is better to have no being at all, than to be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction; and which was the dreadful caſe of *Judas*, who fell by his tranſgreſſion, and went to his own place.

Ver. 25. *Then Judas which betrayed him*, &c.] Or *that was about to betray him*, as the *Ethiopic* verſion reads it: he had taken a ſtep towards it, was ſeeking an opportunity to do it, and at length effected it: the *Perſic* verſion reads, *Judas Iſcariot*; who after all the reſt had put the queſtion, *anſwered and ſaid, Maſter, is it I?* Who, though he knew what he had been doing, and what he further reſolved to do, and was conſcious to himſelf he was the man; nay, though he had been pointed out as the perſon, and the moſt dreadful wo denounced on him, that ſhould be the betrayer, in his hearing; yet all this did not at all affect his marble heart; but in the moſt audacious manner, and without any concern of mind, or ſhew of guilt, aſks if he was the perſon; ſuggeſting, that ſurely he could not mean him. It is obſerved by ſome, that the word *Rabbi*, uſed by *Judas*, is a more honourable name than that of *Lord*, uſed by the diſciples; thereby feigning to give Chriſt more honour, and exceed in his reſpect to him, than the reſt of the diſciples; in order if he could, to cover his wicked deſigns: *he ſaid unto him, thou haſt ſaid*: that is, ’tis as thou haſt ſaid; thou haſt ſaid right, thou art the man; a way of ſpeaking uſed, when what is aſked is aſſented to as truth: thus it being “ ſaid to a certain “ perſon, is *Rabbi* dead? He replied to them, “ אתון אמריתון, *ye have ſaid*; and they rent their “ cloaths [i].” Taking it for granted, by that anſwer, that ſo it was.

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[z] Bartenora in Miſn. Peſach c. 10. §. 3. Vid. Maimon. & Yom Tob, in ib. & Piſke Toſ. Peſach. art. 322.

[a] Hilch. Chametz Umetzah, c. 7. §. 11.

[b] Ib. c. 8. §. 2. 8.

[c] Ib. §. 6. & T. Bab. Peſach. fol. 115. 1.

[d] Miſn. Peſach c. 10. §. 4. Maimon. Chametz Umetzah. c. 8. §. 2. Haggadah Shel Peſach, p. 5.

[e] Bereſhit Rabba, §. 91. fol. 78. 4.

[f] Zohar in Gen. fol. 41. 1. Vid. Miſn. Chagiga, c. 2. §. 1. T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 16. 1.

[g] Zohar in Gen. fol. 46. 4. & in Exod. fol. 1. 4. & 36. 3. & 62. 3. & 66. 3. & 105. 4. & 106. 1.

[h] T. Hieroſ. Sabbat, fol. 3. 2. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 17. 1. & Erubin, fol. 13. 2. Midraſh Kohelet, fol. 79. 1.

Ver. 26. *And as they were eating*, &c.] The paſchal lamb, and juſt concluding the whole ſolemnity, which was done by eating ſome of the [k] lamb: for “ laſt of all he (that kept the paſſover) eats of “ the fleſh of the paſſover, though it be but the “ quantity of an olive, and he does not taſte any “ thing after it; and at the ſame time he eats the “ quantity of an olive of unleavened bread, and “ does not taſte any thing after it: ſo that his meal “ endeth, and the ſavour of the fleſh of the paſſ- “ over, or of the unleavened bread, is in his “ mouth; for the eating of them is the precept.” So that the paſchal ſupper was now concluded, when Chriſt entered upon the inſtitution of his own ſupper: *Jeſus took bread*; which lay by him, either on the table, or in a diſh. Though this ſupper is diſtinct from the *paſſover*, and different from any ordinary meal, yet there are alluſions to both in it, and to the cuſtoms of the *Jews* uſed in either; as in this firſt circumſtance, of *taking* the bread: for he that aſked a bleſſing upon bread, uſed to take it into his hands; and it is a rule [l], that “ a man does “ not bleſs, עד שיתפוס הלחם בידו, *until he takes* “ *the bread into his hand*, that all may ſee that he “ bleſſes over it.” Thus Chriſt took the bread and held it up, that his diſciples might obſerve it: *and bleſſed* it; or aſked a bleſſing over it, and upon it; or rather bleſſed and gave thanks to his Father for it, and for what was ſignified by it; and prayed that his diſciples, whilſt eating it, might be led to him, the bread of life, and feed upon him in a ſpiritual ſenſe; whoſe body was going to be broken for them, as the bread was to be, in order to obtain eternal redemption for them: ſo it was common with the *Jews*, to aſk a bleſſing on their bread: the form in which they did it was this [m]: “ Bleſſed “ art thou, O Lord, our God, the king of the “ world, that produceth bread out of the earth.” What form our Lord uſed, is not certain; no doubt it was one of his compoſing, and every way ſuitable to the deſign of this ordinance. It was cuſtomary alſo when there were many at table, that lay down there, however, as Chriſt and his diſciples now did, for one to aſk a bleſſing for them all; for ſo runs the rule [n], “ if they ſit to eat, “ every one bleſſes for himſelf, but if they lie along, “ אחד מברך לכלם, *one bleſſes for them all*.” Moreover, they always bleſſed, before they brake: “ Says *Rabba* [o], he bleſſes, and after that he “ breaks:” this rule Chriſt likewiſe carefully obſerves, for it follows, *and brake it*. The rules concerning breaking of bread, are theſe [p]: “ The “ maſter of the houſe recites and finiſhes the bleſ- “ ſing, and after that he breaks:——no man that “ breaks, is allowed to break, till they have “ brought the ſalt, and what is to be eaten with “ the bread, before every one——and he does not “ break neither a ſmall piece, leſt he ſhould ſeem “ to be ſparing; nor a large piece, bigger than an “ egg, leſt he ſhould be thought to be famiſhed; “ ——and on the ſabbath day he breaks a large “ piece, and he does not break, but in the place “ where it is well baked: it is a principal com- “ mand to break a whole loaf.” Chriſt broke the bread, as a ſymbol of his body, which was to be broken by blows, and ſcourges, thorns, nails, and ſpear, and to be ſeparated from his ſoul, and die as a ſacrifice for the ſins of his people: and having ſo done, he *gave it to the diſciples*; which being a diſtinct act from breaking the bread, ſhews that the latter does not deſign the diſtribution of the bread, but an act preceding it, and a very ſignificant one; and which ought not to be laid aſide: according to the *Jewiſh* [q] uſages, “ He that broke “ the bread, put a piece before every one, and the “ other takes it in his hand; and he that breaks, “ does not give it into the hand of the eater, un- “ leſs he is a mourner; and he that breaks, ſtretches “ out his hand firſt and eats, and they that ſit, or “ lie at the table, are not allowed to taſte, until “ he that bleſſes, has taſted; and he that breaks, “ is not allowed to taſte, until the *Amen* is finiſhed “ out of the mouth of the majority of thoſe that “ ſit at table.” *And ſaid, take, eat, this is my body*: in *Luke* ’tis added, *which is given for you*; that is, unto death, as a ſacrifice for ſin; and by the apoſtle *Paul*, 1 *Cor*. xi. 24. *which is broken for you*; as that bread then was, and ſo expreſſive of his wounds, bruiſes, ſufferings, and death, for them. Now when he ſays, *this is my body*, he cannot mean, that that bread was his real body; or that it was changed and converted into the very ſubſtance of his body; but that it was an emblem and repreſentation of his body, which was juſt ready to be offered up, once for all: in like manner, as the *Jews* in the eating of their paſſover, uſed to ſay [r] of the unleavened bread, “ הא לחמא דעניא, *this is* “ *the bread of affliction*, which our fathers eat in “ the land of *Egypt*.” Not that they thought that was the ſelf-ſame bread, but that it reſembled it, and was a repreſentation of the affliction and diſtreſs their fathers were in at that time; to which ſome think our Lord here alludes: though rather, the reference is to the paſſover lamb, which is frequently, in *Jewiſh* writings, called *the body* of the lamb: thus mention being made of the bringing of the herbs, the unleavened bread, and the ſauce *Charoſeth*, with other things to the maſter of the houſe, ’tis added [s]; “ and in the ſanctu- “ ary (whilſt that ſtood) they bring unto him, “ גופו של פסח, *the body of the lamb*.” Again, elſewhere [t] ’tis ſaid, “ they bring a table furniſhed, “ and on it the bitter herbs, and other greens, “ and the unleavened bread, and the ſauce, “ וגופו של כבש הפסח, *and the body of the paſchal* “ *lamb*.” And a little further [u], “ he recites the “ bleſſing, bleſſed art thou, O Lord, *&c.* for the “ eating,

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[i] T. Hieroſ. Kilaim, fol. 32. 2.

[k] Maimon. Hilch. Chametz Umetzah, c. 8. §. 9. Vid. Bartenora in Miſn. Peſach, c. 10. §. 8.

[l] Levuſh hattecheleth Num. 167. §. 3. & Shylchan Aruch in Buxtorf. Exercit. de Cœna Dominic. Theſ. 45.

[m] Haggadah Shel Peſach, fol. 249. 2. Ed. Baſil. Miſn. Beracot, c. 6. §. 1.

[n] Ib. §. 6. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 42. 2. & 43. 1.

[o] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 39. 2.

[p] Maimon. Hilch. Beracot, c. 7. §. 2, 3, 4. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 47. 1.

[q] Ib. §. 5.

[r] Haggadah Shel Peſach, p. 4. Ed. Rittangel. fol. 242. 2. Ed. Baſil.

[s] Miſn. Peſach, c. 10. §. 3.

[t] Maimon. Chametz Umetzah, c. 8. §. 1.

[u] Ib. §. 7.

" eating of the paſſover, and he eats, מגופו של פסח, " *of the body of the paſſover.*" And now it is, as if Chriſt had ſaid, you have had *the body* of the lamb ſet before you, and have eaten of it, in commemoration of the deliverance out of *Egypt*, and as a type of me the true paſſover, quickly to be ſacrificed; and this rite of eating the body of the paſchal lamb is now to ceaſe; and I do here by this bread, in an emblematical way, ſet before you *my body*, which is to be given to obtain ſpiritual deliverance, and eternal redemption for you; in remembrance of which, you, and all my followers in ſucceſſive generations, are to take and eat of it, till I come. The words, *take, eat*, ſhew that Chriſt did not put the bread into the mouths of the diſciples, but they took it in their hands, and eat it; expreſſive of taking and receiving Chriſt by the hand of faith, and feeding on him in a ſpiritual manner.

Ver. 27. *And he took the cup and gave thanks*, &c.] For the *Jews* bleſſed, or gave thanks for their wine, as well as for their food, and generally did it in this form [w]: " Bleſſed art thou, O Lord, " our God, the king of the world, who haſt creat- " ed the *fruit of the vine*." Hence the phraſe, *the fruit of the vine*, in ver. 29. not that we are to ſuppoſe, that Chriſt uſed or confined himſelf to this form of words: and it is to be obſerved, that they not only gave thanks for their wine before food, and whilſt they were eating [x], but alſo after meat; and as this relates to the bleſſing of the cup after eating, or as the apoſtle *Paul* ſays, *when he had ſupped*, 1 *Cor.* xi. 25. I ſhall only tranſcribe what the *Jews* ſay [y] concerning that: " When " wine is brought to them after food, if there is " but that cup there, the houſe of *Shammai* ſay, " מברך על היין, *he bleſſes*, or gives thanks *for* " *the wine*, and after that gives thanks for the " food: the houſe of *Hillell* ſay, he gives thanks " for the food, and after that gives thanks for the " wine." And as this was uſual at ordinary meals, to bleſs or give thanks for the wine, ſo at the paſſover; and which our Lord continued in his ſupper, and is to be practiſed by us. It ſhould be further known, that the wine at the paſſover, and ſo what Chriſt uſed at his ſupper, was red. " Says *R. Je-* " *remiah* [z], it is commanded to perform this duty, " ביין אדום, *with red wine*." And elſewhere 'tis ſaid [a], " that it is neceſſary, that there ſhould be " in it (the wine) taſte, and look." The *Gloſs* on it is, שיהא אדום, *that it ſhould be red*: and which, as it moſt fitly repreſented the blood ſprinkled on the door-poſts of the *Iſraelites*, when the Lord paſſed over their houſes; ſo the blood of Chriſt, ſhed for the remiſſion of the ſins of his people. It is ſcarcely worth obſerving the meaſure of one of the cups, that was uſed at ſuch a time: they ſay [b], that the four cups which were drank at this feaſt, held an *Italian* quart of wine, ſo that one cup contained half a pint. More particularly, they aſk how much is the meaſure of a cup? the anſwer is, two fingers ſquare, and a finger and a half and the third part of a finger deep; or as it is elſewhere [c], the fifth part of a finger: *and gave it to them, ſaying, drink ye all of it*; for this is not to be reſtrained from one ſort of communicants, and only partook of by another; but all are to drink of the cup, as well as eat of the bread: whether here is not an alluſion to the cuſtom of the *Jews* at the paſſover, when they obliged all to drink four cups of wine, men, women, and children, and even the pooreſt man in *Iſrael*, who was maintained out of the almsdiſh [d], may be conſidered.

Ver. 28. *For this is my blood of the New Teſtament*, &c.] That is, the red wine in the cup, was an emblem and repreſentation of his precious blood, whereby was exhibited a new diſpenſation, or adminiſtration of the covenant of grace; and by which it was ratified and confirmed; and whereby all the bleſſings of it, ſuch as peace, pardon, righteouſneſs, and eternal life, come to the people of God: the alluſion is to the firſt covenant, and the book of it being ſprinkled with the blood of bulls, and therefore called the blood of the covenant, *Exod.* xxiv. 8. But the ſecond covenant, or the new adminiſtration of the covenant of grace, for which reaſon it is called the New Teſtament, is exhibited and eſtabliſhed in the blood of Chriſt the teſtator. It was uſual, even among the heathens, to make and confirm their covenants by drinking human blood, and that ſometimes mixed with wine [e]. *Which is ſhed for many, for the remiſſion of ſins*; that is, was very ſhortly to be ſhed, and ſince has been, for all the elect of God; for the many that were ordained to eternal life, and the many that were given to Chriſt, the many that are juſtified by him, and the many ſons he'll bring to glory; whereby the full forgiveneſs of all their ſins was procured, in a way conſiſtent with, and honourable to the juſtice of God; full ſatisfaction being made to the law of God, for all their tranſgreſſions.

Ver. 29. *But I ſay unto you, I will not drink henceforth*, &c.] From whence it ſeems natural to conclude, that Chriſt had drank of the cup in the ſupper, as well as at the paſſover; and it is reaſonable to believe, that he alſo eat of the bread; ſince it appears from what has been obſerved above, ſee the note on ver. 26. that none might eat, till he that bleſſed and brake the bread, had taſted of it: the reaſon why wine is here called, *the fruit of the vine*, and not wine, ſee for in the note on ver. 27. The deſign of this expreſſion is to ſhew, that his ſtay would be very ſhort: the cup he had juſt drank of, was the laſt he ſhould drink with them: he ſhould drink no more wine at the paſſover; he had kept the laſt, and which now of right was to ceaſe; nor in the Lord's ſupper, for though that was to continue to his ſecond coming, he ſhould be no more preſent at it corporally, only ſpiritually; nor in common converſation, which is not contradicted by *Acts* x. 41. Since, though the apoſtles drank with him in his preſence, it does not neceſſarily follow, that he drank with them; and if he did, it was not in a mortal ſtate, nor in the ordinary manner and uſe of it, but to confirm his reſurrection from the dead; nor can it be proved, that he drank of the fruit of the vine: the deſign of the phraſe, as before obſerved, is to ſignify his ſpeedy departure from his diſciples. The alluſion is to an uſage at the paſſover, when after the fourth cup, they taſted of nothing elſe all that night, except water [f]; and ſo Chriſt declares, that he would drink no more, not only that night, but never after. *Until the day I drink it new with you, in my Father's kingdom*: *Mark* ſays, *in the kingdom of God*; and *Luke*, *until the kingdom of God come*; and both the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read it here, *in the kingdom of God*; by which is meant, ſomething diſtinct from the kingdom of the Son, or of the *Meſſiah*, which was already come; and appeared more manifeſtly after the reſurrection of Chriſt, upon his aſcenſion to heaven, and the effuſion of the Holy Spirit, and the ſucceſs of the Goſpel, both among *Jews* and *Gentiles*; and which will be more glorious in the latter day: and when all the elect of God are gathered in, and have been preſented to Chriſt by himſelf, he'll then deliver up the kingdom to the Father, and God ſhall be all in all; and then the kingdom of the Father will take place here mentioned, and which is no other than the ultimate glory; ſo called, becauſe it is of the Father's preparing and giving, and in which he'll reign, and dwell, and the ſaints with him, to all eternity; which muſt not be underſtood to the excluſion of Chriſt, for it is called his kingdom alſo, *Luke* xxii. 30. in this ſtate, Chriſt will drink *new wine*, not literally, but ſpiritually underſtood; and which deſigns the joys and glories of heaven, the beſt wine which is reſerved whilſt laſt: which is ſometimes ſignified by a feaſt, of which wine is a principal part; by ſitting down as at a table, in the kingdom of heaven, with *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, *Matt.* viii. 12. and expreſſed by *wine*, becauſe of its refreſhing and exhilarating nature, in God's preſence is *fulneſs of joy*; and by *new* wine, becauſe theſe joys are the moſt excellent, becauſe they are always new, and never change; they are *pleaſures for evermore*: to *drink* hereof, denotes the full enjoyment of them, which Chriſt, as man and mediator, and his people with him, ſhall be poſſeſſed of; and is different from the ſuperficial *taſte of the powers of the world to come*, *Heb.* vi. 5. which hypocrites have, and thoſe real prelibations of glory which ſaints have in this life; there being a difference between drinking and taſting, *Matt.* xxvii. 34. and this will be ſocial; Chriſt and his true diſciples ſhall be together, and drink this new wine together; or enjoy the ſame glory and felicity in the higheſt meaſure and degree, they are capable of; and which ſociety therein will yield a mutual pleaſure to each other, as the words here ſuggeſt. The *Jews* often expreſs the joys of the world to come, by ſuch like figurative phraſes: they make mention of, יין דעלמא דאתי, *the wine of the world to come* [g]; and of שכר רוחני, *a ſpiritual drink*, in the laſt days, which is called the world to come [h]: and ſo they explain [i] after this manner, *Iſa.* lxiv. 4. *Neither hath the eye ſeen, O God*, &c. זה יין, *this is the wine*, which is kept in the grapes from the ſix days of the creation; of which they often ſpeak in their writings [k].

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[w] Haggadah Shel Peſach, fol. 241. 1.

[x] Vid. Miſn. Beracot, c. 6. §. 1. 6.

[y] Ib. c. 8. §. 8.

[z] T. Hieroſ. Peſach. fol. 37. 3. & Sabbat fol. 11. 1.

[a] T. Bab. Peſach. fol. 108. 2. & R. Samuel ben Meir in ib.

[b] T. Hieroſ. Sabbat, fol. 11. 1.

[c] T. Bab. Peſach. fol. 109. 1.

[d] Miſn. Peſach. c. 10. §. 1. T. Bab. Peſach. fol. 108. 1. Mitzvot Torah, pr. affirm. 41.

[e] Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 5. c. 3.

[f] Maimon. Chametz Umetzah, c. 8. §. 10. Piſke Toſeph. Peſach. art. 328.

Ver. 30. *And when they had ſung an hymn*, &c.] The *Hallell*, which the *Jews* were obliged to ſing on the night of the paſſover; for the paſſover they ſay [l], was טעון חלל, *bound to a hymn*. This *Hallell*, or ſong of praiſe, conſiſted of ſix Pſalms, the cxiiith, cxivth, cxvth, cxvith, cxviith, and cxviiith [m]: now this they did not ſing all at once, but in parts. Juſt before the drinking of the ſecond cup and eating of the lamb, they ſung the firſt part of it, which contained the cxiiith and cxivth Pſalms; and on mixing the fourth and laſt cup, they compleated the *Hallell*, by ſinging the reſt of the Pſalms, beginning with the cxvth Pſalm, and ending with the cxviiith; and ſaid over it, what they call the *bleſſing of the ſong*, which was *Pſal.* cxlv. 10, *&c.* and they might, if they would, mix a fifth cup, but that they were not obliged to, and ſay over it the *great Hallell*, or *hymn*, which was the cxxxvith Pſalm [n]. Now the laſt part of the *Hallell*, Chriſt deferred to the cloſe of his ſupper; there being many things in it pertinent to him, and proper on this occaſion, particularly *Pſal.* cxv. 1. and cxvi. 12, 13, 14, 15. and cxviii. 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27. and the *Jews* themſelves ſay [o], that חבלו של משיח, *the ſorrows of the Meſſiah* are contained in this part: that this is the hymn which Chriſt and his diſciples ſung, may be rather thought, than that it was one of his own compoſing; ſince not only he, but all the diſciples ſung it, and therefore muſt be what they were acquainted with; and ſince Chriſt in moſt things conformed to the rites and uſages of the *Jewiſh* nation; and he did not riſe up from table and go away, until this concluding circumſtance was over; though it was allowed to finiſh the *Hallell*, or hymn, in any place they pleaſed, even though it was not the place where the feaſt was kept [p]: however, as ſoon as it was over, *they went out to the mount of Olives*; he and his diſciples, excepting *Judas*: firſt he himſelf alone, and then the diſciples followed him, according to *Luke* xxii. 39. and the *Perſic* verſion here reads it, *he went out*. This ſeems to be contrary to a *Jewiſh* canon; for the paſſover was טעון לינה, *bound to lodging a night* [q]; that is, as the *Gloſs* explains it, "the firſt night (*i. e.* of the "paſſover) a man muſt lodge in *Jeruſalem*; thence-"forward it was lawful to dwell without the wall, "within the border." And a little after, the ſame phraſe, *being bound to lodge*, is explained, *one night in the midſt of the city*: but Chriſt had more important buſineſs to attend unto, than to comply with this rule, which was not obligatory by the word of God, though the *Jews* pretend to found it on *Deut.* xvi. 7 [r]. The place where he went with his diſciples, was the mount of *Olives*, which was on the eaſt ſide of *Jeruſalem*; and was the place where the high prieſt ſtood, and burnt the red heifer, and ſprinkled its blood [s]: now from the temple, or from the mountain of the houſe, there was a cauſeway, or bridge on arches, made to the mount of *Olives*, in which the high prieſt and the heifer, וכל מסעדיה, *and all his aſſiſtants*, (the prieſts that helped him in this ſervice) went to this mount [t]: in this ſame way 'tis very probable, went Chriſt the great high prieſt, who was typified by the red heifer, and his companions the diſciples, to the ſame place, where he had his bloody ſweat, and where his ſorrows and ſufferings began.

Ver. 31. *Then ſaith Jeſus unto them*, &c.] Either before they went out of the houſe, where they had been eating the paſſover, and the ſupper; or as they were going along to the mount of *Olives*; which latter rather ſeems to be the caſe: *all ye ſhall be offended becauſe of me this night*. The words are ſpoken to the eleven diſciples; for *Judas* was now gone to the high prieſts, to inform them where Jeſus was going that night, and to receive of them a band of men and officers to apprehend him; which is what would be the occaſion of all the reſt of the diſciples being offended: for when they ſhould ſee their maſter betrayed by one of themſelves, and the officers ſeize him and bind him, and lead him away as a malefactor, our Lord here ſuggeſts, that they would be filled with ſuch fear and dread, that every one of them would forſake him and run away, and provide for their own ſafety; yea, would be ſo ſtumbled at this unexpected event, that they would begin to ſtagger and heſitate in their minds, whether
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[g] Zohar in Lev. fol 17. 2. [h] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 3. 4. En Iſrael, fol. 30. 1. [i] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 34. 2. & Sanhed. fol. 99. 1. [k] Targum in Cant. viii. 2. Zohar in Gen. fol. 81. 4. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 39. 3. [l] Miſn. Peſach. c. 9. 3. T. Bab. Peſach. fol. 95. 1, 2. [m] Seder Tephillot, fol. 101, &c. Ed. Amſtelod. [n] Maimon. Hilch. Chametz Umetzah, c. 8. §. 5. 10. [o] T. Bab. Peſachim, fol. 118. 1. [p] Maimon. ut ſupra. [q] T. Bab. Peſach. fol. 95. 2. [r] Talmud ib & Jarchi in Deut. xvi. 7. [s] Miſn Middot, c. 2. §. 4. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 16 1. [t] Miſn. Parah, c. 3. §. 6. & Midot, c. 1. §. 3. & Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

he was the Meſſiah, or no, as the two diſciples going to *Emmaus*, ſeem to intimate; they would be ſo ſhocked with this ſad diſappointment, and ſo offended, or ſtumble, as to be ready to fall from him; and their faith in him muſt have failed, had he not prayed for them, as he did for *Peter*; for they thought of nothing elſe but a temporal kingdom, which they expected would now quickly be ſet up, and they be advanced to great honour and dignity; but things taking a different turn, it muſt greatly ſhock and affect them: and it was to be the caſe not of one or two only, but of all of them; and that becauſe of him, whom they dearly loved, and with whom they had been eating the paſſover, and his own ſupper, and had had ſuch a comfortable opportunity together; and becauſe of his low eſtate, his being ſeized and bound, and led away by his enemies; as the *Jews* were before offended at him, becauſe of the meanneſs of his parentage and education: and this was to be that very night; and it was now very late, it may reaſonably be ſuppoſed to be midnight: for ſince the laſt evening, or ſunſetting, they had eat the paſſover, the ceremonies of which took up much time, and after that the Lord's ſupper; then the *Hallell*, or hymn was ſung, when Chriſt diſcourſed much with his diſciples, and delivered thoſe conſolatory and inſtructive ſermons, about the vine and other things, occaſioned by the fruit of the vine, they had been juſt drinking of, recorded in the xvth and xvith chapters of *John*; and put up that prayer to his Father for them, which ſtands in the xviith chapter; and indeed within an hour or two after, ſee *Mark* xiv. 37. this prediction of Chriſt's had its accompliſhment, and which he confirms by a prophetic teſtimony: *for it is written*, in *Zech.* xiii. 7. *I will ſmite the ſhepherd, and the ſheep of the flock ſhall be ſcattered.* This text is miſerably perverted by the *Jewiſh* writers; though they all agree, that by *the ſhepherd*, is meant ſome great perſon, as a king; ſo the *Targum* renders it, *kill the king, and the princes ſhall be ſcattered:* one[u] of them ſays, that a wicked king of *Moab* is deſigned; another[w], a king of the *Iſhmaelites*, or of the *Turks*; and a third[x], that any, and every king of the *Gentiles* is meant; a fourth ſays[y], 'tis a prophecy of the great wars that ſhall be in all the earth, in the days of *Meſſiah ben Joſeph*; and a fifth[z], after having taken notice of other ſenſes, mentions this as the laſt: that "the words *my ſhepherd, and the man my fellow*, in the former part of the verſe, are to be underſtood of *Meſſiah*, the ſon of *Joſeph*; and becauſe he ſhall be ſlain in the wars of the nations, therefore the Lord will whet his glittering ſword againſt the nations, to take vengeance on them; and on this account ſays, *awake, O ſword, for my ſhepherd, and for the man my fellow:* as if the Lord called the ſword and vengeance to awake againſt his enemies, becauſe of *Meſſiah ben Joſeph*, whom they ſhall ſlay; and who ſhall be the ſhepherd of the flock of God, and by reaſon of his righteouſneſs ard perfection, ſhall be the man his fellow; and when the nations ſhall ſlay that ſhepherd, the ſword of the Lord ſhall come and ſmite the ſhepherd; that is, every ſhepherd of the *Gentiles*, and their kings; for becauſe of the ſlaying of the ſhepherd of *Iſrael*, every ſhepherd of their enemies ſhall be ſlain, and their ſheep ſhall be ſcattered; for through the death of the ſhepherds, the people that ſhall be under them, will have no ſtanding." Now though this is a moſt wretched perverſion of the paſſage, to make the word *ſhepherd* in the former part of it, to ſignify one perſon, and in the other part of it another; yet ſhews the conviction of their minds, that the *Meſſiah* is not to be excluded from the prophecy, and of whom, without doubt, it is ſpoken, and rightly applied by him, who is concerned in it, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; who feeds his flock like a ſhepherd, is the great ſhepherd of the ſheep, the chief ſhepherd, the good ſhepherd, that laid down his life for the ſheep; which is intended by the ſmiting of him: in the text in *Zechary*, it is read, *ſmite the ſhepherd*; being an order of *Jehovah* the Father's, to juſtice, to awake its ſword, and ſheath it in his Son, his equal by nature, his ſhepherd by office; and here, as his own act, and what he would do himſelf, *I will ſmite the ſhepherd*; for his ordering juſtice to ſmite, is rightly interpreted doing it himſelf. The *Jews* can't object to this, when their own interpreters in general explain it thus, השם יכרית, *God ſhall cut off the ſhepherd*[a]. The ſufferings of Chriſt, which are meant by the ſmiting him, were according, not only to the determinate counſel and foreknowledge of God, the will of his good pleaſure, but according to his will of command; which juſtice executed, and Chriſt was obedient to, and in which *Jehovah* had a very great hand himſelf: he bruiſed him, he put him to grief, he made his ſoul an offering for ſin; he ſpared him not, but delivered him up into the hands of men, juſtice, and death, for us all: the latter clauſe, *and the ſheep of the flock ſhall be ſcattered*, reſpects the diſciples, and their forſaking Chriſt, and fleeing from him, when he was apprehended; for then, as was foretold in this prophecy, and predicted by Chriſt, they all forſook him and fled, and were ſcattered every man to his own, and left him alone. In *Zechary* 'tis only ſaid, *the ſheep ſhall be ſcattered*; here, *the ſheep of the flock*; though the Evangeliſt *Mark* reads it, as in the prophet, and ſo the *Arabic* here, and the ſenſe is the ſame; for the ſheep are the ſheep of the flock, Chriſt's little flock, the flock of ſlaughter, committed to his care; unleſs it may be thought proper, to diſtinguiſh between the ſheep and the flock; and by *the flock* underſtand, all the elect of God, and by *the ſheep*, the principal of the flock; *the rams of his ſheep*, or *flock*, as the *Syriac* verſion renders it; the apoſtles of Chriſt, who are chiefly, if not ſolely intended; though others of Chriſt's followers might be ſtumbled, offended, and ſtaggered, as well as they; as *Cleophas* was, one of the two that went to *Emmaus*.

Ver. 32. *But after I am riſen again*, &c.] This he ſays for their comfort, that tho' he, their ſhepherd, ſhould be apprehended, condemned, and crucified, ſhould be ſmitten with death, and be laid in the grave, yet he ſhould riſe again; and tho' they ſhould be ſcattered abroad, yet ſhould be gathered together again by him, their good ſhepherd; who would, after his reſurrection, appear to them, be at the head of them, and go before them, as a ſhepherd goes before his ſheep: for it follows, *I will go before you into Galilee*; the native place of moſt, if not all of them. This the women that came to the ſepulchre after Chriſt's reſurrection, were bid, both by the angel, and Chriſt himſelf, to remind the diſciples of, and ordered them to go into *Galilee*, where they might expect to ſee him: accordingly they did go thither, and ſaw and worſhipped him; ſee *Matt.* xxviii. 7, 10, 16, 17.

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[u] R. Sol. Jarchi, in Zech. xiii. 7.
[w] R. Iſaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 1. c. 37. p. 310.
[x] R. David Kimchi, in Zech. xiii. 7.
[y] R. Aben Ezra in ib.
[z] Abarbinel, Maſhmia Jeſhua, fol. 74. 4.
[a] R. Aben Ezra, R. David Kimchi, & Miclol Yophi in loc.

Ver. 33. *Peter anſwered and ſaid unto him*, &c.] Who was always a forward man, free to ſpeak his mind, and was often the mouth of the reſt; obſerving what Chriſt had affirmed concerning all of them, that that very night, in a very ſhort ſpace of time, they would be offended becauſe of him; and knowing the ſtrong love he had for Chriſt, and being perſuaded it could never be his caſe, thus addreſſes him; *tho' all men ſhall be offended becauſe of thee, yet will I never be offended:* his ſenſe is, that tho' all the men in the world, friends, and foes, though even all the reſt of the diſciples, who were his moſt intimate friends, moſt cloſely attached to him, and who dearly loved him, and ſincerely believed in him, ſhould be ſo ſtumbled at what ſhould befal him, as to flee from him, and be tempted to relinquiſh his cauſe, and intereſt; yet nothing ſhould ever cauſe him, in the leaſt, to ſtumble and fall, to deſert him, or heſitate about him, or cauſe him to take the leaſt umbrage and offence at what might come upon him; and this he was poſitive of would be the caſe, not only that night, but ever after. No doubt he ſaid this in the ſincerity of his heart, and out of his great fervour of affection for Chriſt; but what he failed in, was truſting to his own ſtrength, being ſelf-confident; and in entertaining a greater opinion of himſelf, and his ſteady attachment to Chriſt, than of the reſt of the diſciples; and in contradicting what Chriſt had ſo ſtrongly affirmed of them all, without any exception, and ſo of himſelf, and had confirmed by ſo glaring a prophecy concerning this matter.

Ver. 34. *Jeſus ſaid unto him, verily I ſay unto thee*, &c.] Chriſt, the more ſtrongly to aſſeverate what he was about to ſay, uſes the word *verily*, or prefixes his *Amen* to it, as being a certain truth, and what *Peter* might aſſure himſelf of would certainly come to paſs: *that this night before the cock crow, thou ſhalt deny me thrice*; which is, as if he ſhould ſay, thou wilt not only be offended becauſe of me, and flee from me, and be ſcattered with the reſt, as will be the caſe of all of you; but thou wilt deny that thou knoweſt me, that thou belongeſt to me, or haſt any concern with me; and this thou wilt do not only once, but again and again, even three times, one after another, and that this very night, before the cock has done crowing. In *Mark* it is ſaid, *that this day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou ſhalt deny me thrice*; which may be reconciled with the words of *Matthew*, and the other Evangeliſts, by obſerving, that the word *twice* is not in *Beza*'s ancient copy, which he gave to the univerſity of *Cambridge*, nor is it in the *Ethiopic* verſion; which, if allowed to be the true reading, the difficulty is removed at once; but whereas it is in other copies, no ſtreſs muſt be laid on this, nor is there any need of it: for whereas the cock crows twice in the night, once at midnight, and again near break of day; and which latter crowing being louder, and more welcome, and moſt taken notice of, is, by way of eminence, called the cock-crowing; and is what *Matthew* here has reſpect to, and ſo deſigns the ſame as *Mark* does; and the ſenſe of both is, that before the cock crow a ſecond time, which is moſt properly the cock crowing, *Peter* ſhould three times deny his maſter, as he did; ſee *Mark* xiii. 35. where cock-crowing is diſtinguiſhed from midnight, the firſt time the cock crows, and means the ſecond time of crowing; and where *Mark* is to be underſtood in the ſame ſenſe as *Matthew*, and both entirely agree. So cock-crowing and midnight are diſtinguiſhed by the *Jews*, who ſay [b], that "on all other days they remove the "aſhes from the altar, בקריאת הגבר, *at cock-* "*crowing*, or near unto it, whether before or after; "but on the day of atonement, מחצות, *at mid-* "*night:*" and who alſo ſpeak of the cock's crowing a firſt and ſecond, and even a third time [c]. "Says *R. Shila*, he that begins his journey before "cock-crowing, his blood be upon his head. *R.* "*Joſiah* ſays, he may not proceed, עד שישנה, "*until he repeats*; that is, until he crows twice: "and there are, who ſay, until he trebles it, or "crows a third time: of what do they ſpeak? of "a middling one, *i. e.* which neither crows too "ſoon, nor too late."

Ver. 35. *Peter ſaith unto him*, &c.] *Mark* ſays, *he ſpake the more vehemently*; his ſpirits were raiſed to a greater pitch of reſentment, and he expreſſed himſelf in ſtronger terms, and in more peremptory and ſelf-confident language; *tho' I ſhould die with thee, yet will I not deny thee:* he ſeems to have underſtood Chriſt, that he ſhould ſuffer death, and that he would be in great danger himſelf, and therefore rather than loſe his life would deny his maſter; wherefore he moſt confidently affirms, that ſhould this be the caſe, ſhould he be called to ſuffer death for his ſake, or along with him, he would moſt chearfully embrace it, rather than be guilty of ſo dreadful a crime, which he could not look upon but with the utmoſt deteſtation and abhorrence, as to deny his dear Lord and Saviour: *likewiſe alſo ſaid all the diſciples*; that they would never be offended becauſe of him, and would die with him rather than deny him. This they ſaid, being alſo ſelf-confident and ignorant of their own weakneſs, and drawn into theſe expreſſions thro' *Peter*'s example; and that partly to ſhew their equal abhorrence of ſo horrible an iniquity, as denying Jeſus; and partly to remove all ſuſpicion from them, leſt they ſhould be thought to have leſs love and zeal for Chriſt than *Peter* had.

Ver. 36. *Then cometh Jeſus with them*, &c.] The eleven diſciples, *unto a place called Gethſemane*; the *Syriac* verſion calls it *Ghedſiman*; the *Perſic*, *Gheſmani*, ſo the *Arabic*; the *Vulgate Latin*, and the *Ethiopic*, *Gethſemani:* in *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel, and in the *Vulgate Latin*, and *Arabic* verſions, it is called a *village*; and, in the *Ethiopic* verſion, *a village of wine*; and in the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions, *a place*. Here, according to an *Ethiopic* writer, the virgin *Mary* was buried by the apoſtles [d]. Its etymology is very differently given: ſome read, and explain it, as if it was גי שמנים, *a valley of fatneſs*, or *of olives*, as it is called in *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel; ſee *Iſ.* xxviii. 1. others, as if it was גי דסמני, *a valley of ſigns*, or a very famous valley; ſo mount *Sinai* is called [e], הר סימנאי, *Harſemanai*, the mountain of ſigns: but, to take notice of no more; the true reading and ſignification of it is, גת שמני, *an olive preſs*, or a preſs for olives: ſo we read [f] of a chamber in the temple which is called *the chamber*, בית שמניא, *Beth Semania*, or *Bethſemani*, where they put their wine and oil for temple ſervice. It is very probable that at, or near this place, was a very publick olive preſs, where they uſed to ſqueeze the olives, for the oil of them, which they gathered in great plenty from off the mount

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[b] Miſn. Yoma, c. 1. §. 8.

[c] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 21. 1.

[d] Ludolph. Lex. Ethiop. p. 554.

[e] T. Bab. Sabbath, fol. 89. 1.

[f] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 16. 1.

*of Olives*; at the foot of which this place was; and a very ſignificant place it was for our Lord to go to at this time, when he was about to tread the wine-preſs of his father's wrath, alone, and of the people there were none with him: for it follows, *and ſaith unto the diſciples, ſit ye here, while I go and pray yonder*: perceiving a time of diſtreſs was coming upon him, he betakes himſelf to prayer, an example worthy of our imitation; in the performance of which duty he choſe to be retired and ſolitary, and therefore left eight of his diſciples at a certain place, whilſt he went to another at ſome diſtance, convenient for his purpoſe; who perhaps might be the weakeſt of the diſciples, and not able to bear the agonies and diſtreſs of their Lord and Maſter.

Ver. 37. *And he took with him Peter, and the two ſons of Zebedee*, &c.] *James* and *John*, who perhaps were the ſtrongeſt, and beſt able to bear the ſhocking ſight, and were his favourite diſciples; who were admitted to be with him at other times, when the reſt were not; as at the raiſing of *Jairus*'s daughter, *Mark* v. 37. and moreover, theſe were at his transfiguration on the mount, *Matt.* xvii. 1. which was a repreſentation and preſage of his glory; and ſo were very proper perſons to be witneſſes of his ſorrows and agonies, which were the way to it; and three of them were taken by him for this purpoſe, being a ſufficient number to bear teſtimony, ſince by the mouth of two or three witneſſes every thing is eſtabliſhed: *and began to be ſorrowful*; his ſoul was troubled on the ſame account ſix days before, *John* xii. 27. but was now ſorrowful. He was a man of ſorrows all his days, and acquainted with griefs, being reproached and perſecuted by men: but now a new ſcene of ſorrows opened; before he was afflicted by men, but now he is bruiſed, and put to grief by his father: his ſorrows now began, for they did not end here, but on the croſs; not that this was but a bare beginning of his ſorrows, or that theſe were but light in compariſon of future ones; for they were very heavy, and indeed ſeem to be the heavieſt of all, as appears from his own account of them; his vehement cry to his father; his bloody ſweat and agony; and the aſſiſtance he ſtood in need of from an angel; and the comfort and ſtrength he received from him in his human nature: all which, put together, the like is not to be obſerved in any part of his ſufferings: *and to be very heavy*; with the weight of the ſins of his people, and the ſenſe of divine wrath, with which he was ſo preſſed and overwhelmed, that his ſpirits were almoſt quite gone; he was juſt ready to ſwoon away, ſink and die; his heart failed him, and became like wax melted in the midſt of his bowels, before the wrath of God, which was as a conſuming fire: all which ſhews the truth, tho' weakneſs of his human nature, and the greatneſs of his ſufferings in it. The human nature was ſtill in union with the divine perſon of the ſon of God, and was ſuſtained by him, but left to its natural weakneſs, without ſin, that it might ſuffer to the utmoſt, and as much as poſſible for the ſins of God's elect.

Ver. 38. *Then ſaith he unto them*, &c.] The three diſciples, *Peter*, *James*, and *John*, who, by his looks and geſtures, might know ſomewhat of the inward diſtreſs of his mind; yet he choſe to expreſs it to them in words, ſaying, *my ſoul is exceeding ſorrowful, even unto death*. That Chriſt had an human ſoul, as well as an human body, is clear from hence; and which was poſſeſs'd of the ſame paſſions as ours are, but without ſin, ſuch as joy, love, grief, ſorrow, &c. and at this time its ſorrows were exceeding great: his ſoul was beſet all around with the ſins of his people; theſe took hold on him, and encompaſſed him, which muſt, in the moſt ſenſible manner, affect his pure and ſpotleſs mind; the ſorrows of death and hell ſurrounded him on every ſide, inſomuch that the leaſt degree of comfort was not let in to him; nor was there any way open for it, ſo that his ſoul was overwhelmed with ſorrow; his heart was ready to break; he was brought even, as it were, to the duſt of death; nor would his ſorrows leave him, he was perſuaded, until ſoul and body were ſeparated from each other; ſee a like phraſe in *Judg.* xvi. 16. *tarry ye here*. The *Ethiopic* verſion adds, *till I ſhall return*, for he was going a little further from them, to vent his grief, and pour out his ſoul unto God. *Munſter's Hebrew* Goſpel reads it, *expect me*, or *wait for me here*, ſignifying, that he ſhould return to them ſhortly; *and watch with me*. It was night, and they might be heavy and inclined to ſleep: he knew it would be an hour of temptation both to him and them, and therefore adviſes them to watch againſt it; and to obſerve how it would go with him, and what ſhould befal him, that they might be witneſſes of it, and be able to teſtify what agonies he endured, what grace he exerciſed, and how ſubmiſſive he was to his father's will.

Ver. 39. *And he went a little further*, &c.] *Luke* ſays, ch. xxii. 41. *about a ſtone's caſt*, about fifty or ſixty feet from the place where they were, *and fell on his face, and prayed*; partly to ſhew his great reverence of God, the ſword of whoſe juſtice was awaked againſt him, the terrors of whoſe law were ſet in array before him, and whoſe wrath was pouring down upon him; and partly to ſignify how much his ſoul was depreſſed, how low he was brought, and in what diſtreſs and anguiſh of ſpirit he was, that he was not able to lift up his head, and look up. This was a prayer-geſture uſed when a perſon was in the utmoſt perplexity. The account the *Jews* give of it, is this[g], “ כשנופלין על פניהם, “ *when they fall upon their faces*, they don't ſtretch “ out their hands and their feet, but incline on “ their ſides.” This was not to be done by any perſon, or at any time; the rules are theſe[h]: “ no “ man is accounted fit, ליפול על פניו, *to fall upon* “ *his face*, but he that knows in himſelf that he is “ righteous, as *Joſhua*; but he inclines his face a “ little, and does not bow it down to the floor; “ and it is lawful for a man to pray in one place, “ and to *fall upon his face* in another: 'tis a cuſtom “ that reaches throughout all *Iſrael*, that there is “ no falling upon the face on a ſabbath-day, nor “ on feaſt-days, nor on the beginning of the year, “ nor on the beginning of the month, nor on the “ feaſt of dedication, nor on the days of *purim*, “ nor at the time of the meat-offering of the eves “ of the ſabbath-days, and good days, nor at the “ evening prayer for every day; and there are pri- “ vate perſons that fall upon their faces at the even- “ ing prayer, and on the day of atonement only: “ they fall upon their faces becauſe it is a time of “ ſupplication, requeſt, and faſting.” *Saying, O my father*; or, as in *Mark*, *Abba, Father*; *Abba*, being the *Syriac* word he uſed, and ſignifies, *my father*; and the other word is added for explanation's ſake, and to denote the vehemency of his mind, and fervour of ſpirit in prayer. Chriſt prayed in the ſame manner he taught his diſciples to pray, ſaying, *our father*; and as all his children pray under the influence of the Spirit of adoption, whereby they cry *Abba*, *Father*. God is the father of Chriſt, not as man, for as ſuch he was without father, being the ſeed of the woman, and made of a woman, without man; nor by creation, as he is the father of ſpirits, of angels, and the ſouls of men, of *Adam*, and all mankind; nor by adoption, as he is the father of all the choſen, redeemed, and regenerated ones; but by nature, he being the only-begotten of the father, in a manner unconceivable and inexpreſſible by us. Chriſt now addreſſes him in prayer in his human nature, as ſtanding in this relation to him as the ſon of God, both to expreſs his reverence of him, and what freedom and boldneſs he might uſe with him; what confidence he might put in him; and what expectation he might have of being heard and regarded by him; and what ſubmiſſion and reſignation of will was due from himſelf unto him. *If it be poſſible, let this cup paſs from me*; meaning not only *the hour*, as it is called in *Mark*, the preſent ſeaſon and time of diſtreſs, and horror; but all his future ſufferings and death, which were at hand; together with the bearing the ſins of his people, the enduring the curſe of the law, and the wrath of God, all which were ingredients in, and made up this dreadful bitter cup, this cup of fury, curſing and trembling; called a *cup*, either in alluſion to the nauſeous potions given by phyſicians to their patients; or rather to the cup of poiſon given to malefactors the ſooner to diſpatch them; or to that of wine mingled with myrrh and frankincenſe to intoxicate them, that they might not feel their pain, ſee the note on *Mark* xv. 23. or to the cup appointed by the maſter of the family to every one in the houſe; theſe ſorrows, ſufferings, and death of Chriſt being what were allotted and appointed by his heavenly father: and when he prays that this cup might paſs from him, his meaning is, that he might be freed from the preſent horrors of his mind, be excuſed the ſufferings of death, and be delivered from the curſe of the law, and wrath of God; which requeſt was made without ſin, tho' it betrayed the weakneſs of the human nature under its inſupportable load, and its reluctance to ſufferings and death, which is natural; and yet does not repreſent him herein as inferior to martyrs, who have deſired death, and triumphed in the midſt of exquiſite torments: for their caſe and his were widely different; they had the preſence of God with them, Chriſt was under the hidings of his father's face; they had the love of God ſhed abroad in them, he had the wrath of God poured out upon him; and his prayer beſpeaks him to be in a condition which neither they, nor any mortal creature were ever in. Moreover, the human nature of Chriſt was now, as it were, ſwallowed up in ſorrow, and intent upon nothing but ſufferings and death; had nothing in view but the wrath of God, and the curſe of the law; ſo that every thing elſe was, for the preſent, out of ſight; as the purpoſes of God, his counſel and covenant, his own engagements and office, and the ſalvation of his people; hence it is no wonder to hear ſuch a requeſt made; and yet it is with this condition, *if it be poſſible*. In *Mark* 'tis ſaid, *all things are poſſible unto thee*; intimating, that the taking away, or cauſing the cup to paſs from him, was: all things are poſſible to God, which are conſiſtent with the perfections of his nature, and the counſel of his will: and all ſuch things, tho' poſſible in themſelves, yet are not under ſuch and ſuch circumſtances ſo; the removal of the cup from Chriſt was poſſible in itſelf, but not as things were circumſtanced, and as matters then ſtood; and therefore it is hypothetically put, *if it be poſſible*, as it was not; and that by reaſon of the decrees and purpoſes of God, which had fixed it, and are immutable; and on account of the covenant of grace, of which this was a conſiderable branch and article, and in which Chriſt had agreed unto it, and is unalterable; and alſo on the ſcore of the prophecies of the Old Teſtament, in which it had been often ſpoken of; and therefore without it, how ſhould the ſcriptures be fulfilled that thus it muſt be? they would not have been the ſcriptures of truth. Beſides, Chriſt had foretold it himſelf once and again, and therefore conſiſtent with the truth of his own predictions, it could not be diſpenſed with: add to all this, that the ſalvation of his people required his drinking it; that could not be brought about no other way in agreement with the veracity, faithfulneſs, juſtice, and holineſs of God. This condition qualifies and reſtrains the above petition; nor is it to be conſidered but in connexion with what follows: *nevertheleſs not as I will, but as thou wilt*; which ſhows that the requeſt was far from being ſinful, or contrary to piety to God, or love to men, or to true fortitude of mind; the pure natural will of Chriſt, or the will of Chriſt's human nature, being left to act in a mere natural way, ſhews a reluctancy to ſorrows, ſufferings, and death; this ſame will acting on rational principles, and in a rational way, puts it upon the poſſibility of the thing, and the agreement of the divine will to it. That there are two wills in Chriſt, human and divine, is certain; his human will, tho' in ſome inſtances, as in this, may have been different from the divine will, yet not contrary to it; and his divine will is always the ſame with his father's. This, as mediator, he engaged to do, and came down from heaven for that purpoſe, took delight in doing it, and has compleatly finiſhed it.

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[g] Gloſſ. in T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 34. 2.

[h] Maimon. Hilch. Tephilla, c. 5. §. 14, 15.

Ver. 40. *And he cometh unto the diſciples*, &c.] The three he took with him, *Peter*, *James*, and *John*, after he had finiſhed his prayer; *and findeth them aſleep*: many things might contribute to, and bring this drowſineſs upon them; as the great fatigue they had had in preparing the paſſover in the day, the plentiful meal they had eat at night, tho' without exceſs, and the lateneſs of the night, it being now probably midnight; but the chief reaſon of their ſleepineſs was their ſorrow, as is expreſſed in *Luke* xxii. 45. what Chriſt had ſaid to them of his ſoul-troubles, and what they ſaw in him, had filled their hearts with ſorrow, which brought on them an amazement and ſtupidity of mind; and this iſſued in ſleep. We have other inſtances of perſons in exceſſive grief and trouble falling aſleep, as *Elijah* in 1 *Kings* xix. 4, 5. and *Jonah* in *Jon.* i. 5. ſo that this did not ariſe from a ſecure, lazy, indolent frame of ſpirit; or from any diſregard to Chriſt, and neglect of him, and unconcernedneſs for him; but from their great ſorrow of heart; for, the trouble and diſtreſs that he was in, added to the cauſes above-mentioned. Tho' ſome have thought, that *ſatan* might be concerned in it, who induced this ſleepineſs, or increaſed it, that he might the more eaſily ſurprize them with his temptations, he was preparing for them, which I will not deny. Now, tho' this ſleep was natural bodily ſleep, which the diſciples fell into, yet was an emblem of, and carried in it a reſemblance to the ſpiritual ſleep and drowſineſs of the people of God; for as this was after a delightful entertainment and converſation with Chriſt at the paſſover and Lord's ſupper, ſo it ſometimes is, that the children of God fall into a ſleepy frame of ſoul, after much communion with Chriſt, as the church did in *Cant.* v. 1, 2. and as this ſleep befel them, when Chriſt was withdrawn a little ſpace from them; ſo it was with the church, when her beloved was abſent from her, *Cant.* iii. 1. and v. 2. and with the wiſe virgins when the bridegroom tarried, *Matt.* xxv. 6. and as this was not an entire thorough ſleep; they knew all the while what Chriſt was doing, and could relate, as they have done, the circumſtances of it; ſo the children of God, when aſleep, they are not like unregenerate perſons, in a dead ſleep of ſin, that hear, and ſee, and feel, and know nothing; but tho' they are aſleep, their hearts are awake, as was the church's, *Cant.* v. 2. yet as the diſciples were ſo much aſleep, that the bare words of Chriſt did not arouſe them from it for a while; ſo ſuch is the ſleep of the ſaints ſometimes, that they are not to be arouſed by the bare miniſtry of the word, tho' the moſt powerful arguments, and the moſt moving and melting language are made uſe of, as were with the church, *Cant.* v. 2, 3, 4. *and ſaith unto Peter, what, could ye not watch with me one hour?* This was ſaid particularly to *Peter*, becauſe he had ſo lately, in ſuch a confident manner, declared, that he would not be offended with Chriſt, but abide with him, ſtand by him, and even die with him, was there an occaſion for it; and yet, in ſo ſhort a ſpace of time, was fallen aſleep, as were the reſt who ſaid the ſame things alſo: and it is as if Chriſt ſhould ſay, how will you be able to ſtand by me throughout this night, when ye can't watch with me ſo much as one hour, tho' I ſo earneſtly deſired you to tarry here, and watch with me, and you ſaw in what diſtreſs I was in? how will you be able to withſtand the temptations, that will beſet you quickly, and perform your promiſes of love, fidelity, conſtancy, and cloſe attachment to me, in the greateſt dangers, when you can't keep yourſelves awake one hour for my ſake?

Ver. 41. *Watch and pray*, &c.] Theſe two are very juſtly put together. There is, and ought to be, a watching before prayer, and *unto* it; a watching all opportunities, the moſt ſuitable and convenient to perform it; and there is a watching in it, both over our hearts, thoughts, words, and geſtures, and after it, for a return of it, and anſwer to it: the reaſon of this exhortation follows, *that ye enter not into temptation*; not that they might not be tempted at all; for none of the ſaints have been, or are without temptations; and they are needful for them; and it is the will of God they ſhould be attended with them; and he has made gracious proviſions for their ſuccour and relief under them; but that they might not enter into them, throw themſelves in the way of temptation, be ſurprized by them at an unawares, fall into them headlong, be immerſed in them, fall by them, and be overcome with them, ſo as to forſake Chriſt, or to deny him: *the ſpirit indeed is willing, but the fleſh is weak*; meaning either that the evil ſpirit ſatan was very deſirous of having them in his hands, very forward and ready to make the onſet upon them; was chearful, alert, and confident of victory; and was ſtrong, robuſt, and powerful; and they were but fleſh and blood, very weak and infirm, and unequal to the enemy; which is a ſenſe not to be deſpiſed, ſeeing it carries in it a very ſtrong reaſon why they ought to watch and pray, leſt they fall into the temptations of ſuch a powerful adverſary; ſee *Eph.* vi. 12. 1 *Pet.* v. 8. or elſe by *ſpirit* may be meant the ſoul, as renewed and regenerated by the Spirit of God; particularly the principle of grace in it, which is born of the ſpirit, and is called by the ſame name, and which luſts againſt the fleſh, or corrupt nature: this was willing to watch and pray, and guard againſt falling into temptations; was willing to abide by Chriſt, and expreſs its love to him every way; but *the fleſh*, or *body*, ſo the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read, is *weak* and infirm, prone to ſleep, indulges eaſe, and unfit to bear trouble, but ready to ſink under it, and is for fleeing from it: and ſo the words contain our Lord's excuſe of his diſciples in their preſent circumſtances. *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel reads the words thus, *and indeed the ſpirit is*, שוקדת, *watchful, but the fleſh is weak.* The *Ethiopic* verſion after this manner, *the ſpirit deſires, and the body is fatigued.* The *Perſic* verſion, contrary both to the letter and ſenſe of the words, renders them, *my ſpirit is firm, but my body is infirm.*

Ver. 42. *He went away again the ſecond time*, &c.] To the ſame place as before, or at ſome little diſtance; after he had reproved his diſciples for their ſleeping, and had exhorted them to watchfulneſs, and prayer, ſuggeſting the danger they were liable to, and the condition they were in: *and prayed, ſaying, O my father, if this cup may not paſs away from me except I drink it, thy will be done.* The ſenſe of this prayer to his God and Father is, that if his ſufferings and death could not be diſpenſed with; if it was not conſiſtent with the decrees of God, and the covenant of grace, that he ſhould be excuſed from them; or if the glory of God, and the ſalvation of his people required it, that he muſt drink up that bitter cup, he was content to do it; deſiring in all things to ſubmit unto, and to fulfil his father's will, tho' it was ſo irkſome and diſagreeable to nature.

Ver. 43. *And he came and found them aſleep again*, &c.] For they were arouſed and awaked, in ſome meaſure, by what he had ſaid to them; but no ſooner was he gone but they fell aſleep again, and thus he found them a ſecond time; or *he came again and found them aſleep*; ſo read the *Vulgate Latin*, the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, and *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel: *for their eyes were heavy*; with ſleep thro' fatigue, ſorrow, *&c.* *Mark* adds, *neither wiſt they what to anſwer him:* they were ſo very ſleepy, they knew not how to ſpeak; or they were ſo confounded, that he ſhould take them aſleep a ſecond time, after they had had ſuch a reproof, and exhortation from him, that they knew not what anſwer to make him; who probably rebuked them again, or gave them a freſh exhortation.

Ver. 44. *And he left them, and went away again*, &c.] At ſome little diſtance from them; they being ſo over-powered with ſleep, that he could have no converſation with them: *and prayed the third time*; as the apoſtle *Paul* did, when under temptation, he prayed thrice that it might depart from him, 2 *Cor.* xii. 8. *ſaying the ſame words:* the *Arabic* verſion renders it, *in the words which he before expreſſed*; and *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel reads, *he ſaid the ſame prayer*; not in the ſelf-ſame words, or in the expreſs form he had before delivered it; for it is certain, that his ſecond prayer is not expreſſed in the ſame form of words as the firſt: but the ſenſe is, that he prayed to the ſame purpoſe; the matter and ſubſtance of his prayer was the ſame, namely, that he might be exempted from ſuffering; but if that could not be admitted of, he was deſirous to be reſigned to the will of his heavenly father, and was determined to ſubmit unto it.

Ver. 45. *Then cometh he to his diſciples*, &c.] The three that were neareſt to him, *the third time*, as *Mark* ſays, and as it was; and ſaith unto them, *ſleep on now, and take your reſt.* The Evangeliſt *Mark* adds, *it is enough*; which has induced ſome interpreters to think, that theſe words were ſpoken ſeriouſly by Chriſt: tho' the ſenſe cannot be that they had watched ſufficiently, and now might ſleep, and take their reſt, for they had not watched at all; but rather, that he had now no need of them, or their watching with him; the conflict was over for the preſent; or, as the *Syriac* verſion renders it, *the end is come*; and ſo the *Arabic*; and to the ſame purpoſe the *Perſic*, *the matter is come to an end*, or to an extremity; the ſenſe being the ſame with what is expreſſed in the following clauſe, *the hour is at hand*; and ſhews, that the words are to be underſtood in an ironical ſenſe, ſleep on and take your reſt, if you can: I have been exhorting you to watchfulneſs, but to no purpoſe, you'll be alarmed from another quarter; a band of ſoldiers is juſt at hand to ſeize and carry me away, and now ſleep if you can: that this is the ſenſe appears from the reaſon given, and from the exhortation in the following verſe, and the reaſon annexed to that: *behold the hour is at hand, and the ſon of man is betrayed into the hands of ſinners*: by the *ſon of man* Chriſt means himſelf, and under this diminutive title expreſſes his Meſſiahſhip, this being a character of the Meſſiah in the Old Teſtament; and the truth of his human nature, and the weakneſs and infirmities of it: by the *betraying*, or delivery of him, is intended either the betraying of him by *Judas* into the hands of the high-prieſt, *Scribes*, and *Phariſees*; or the delivery of him, by them, into the hands of *Pilate*, and by him to the *Roman* ſoldiers; all which were by the determinate counſel and fore-knowledge of God. The high-prieſt, elders, *Scribes*, and *Phariſees*, notwithſtanding all their pretenſions to religion, righteouſneſs, and holineſs, were very wicked perſons; tho' the *Gentiles*, the band of *Roman* ſoldiers, *Judas* brought with him to take Chriſt, are here rather meant, it being uſual to call the *Gentiles*, ſinners. This betraying and delivery of Chriſt into the hands of theſe, was determined by God; the time, the very hour was fixed, and was now approaching; the laſt ſand in the glaſs was dropping; for as ſoon as Chriſt had ſaid theſe words, *Judas*, with his band of ſoldiers, appeared.

Ver. 46. *Riſe, let us be going*, &c.] Not to run away from the enemy, but to meet him: this was ſaid, partly to arouſe his ſleepy diſciples; and partly to ſhew his love to his father, and his ſubmiſſion to his will; as alſo to expreſs the fortitude of his mind as man; he was now rid of his fears, and free from thoſe agonies and dreadful apprehenſions of things, he was but a little while ago poſſeſſed of; and likewiſe to ſignify his willingneſs to be apprehended, and to ſuffer, and die, in the room of his people: *he is at hand that doth betray me.* This ſhews his omniſcience: he not only knew, as he did from the beginning, who ſhould betray him; but he knew when he would do it; and he knew where the betrayer now was, that he was juſt now coming upon him, in order to deliver him into the hands of ſinful men. And this he ſpake with intrepidity of ſoul, with greatneſs of mind, being no more concerned at it, than when he gave him the ſop, and bid him do what he did quickly: he does not mention his name; nor did he ever, when he ſpoke of him as the betrayer; either becauſe the diſciples, as yet, did not fully and certainly know who ſhould betray him, and he would not now ſurprize them with it; or becauſe they did, and therefore it was needleſs to mention his name; or rather, becauſe he was unworthy to be mentioned by name: a *behold* is prefixed to this, partly to awaken the attention of his diſciples; and partly to expreſs what an horrid, inſolent, and unparallell'd action that was, *Judas* was now about to be guilty of.

Ver. 47. *And while he yet ſpake*, &c.] While he was thus ſpeaking to his diſciples, before the laſt words, *he is at hand that doth betray me*, were well out of his mouth; ſuch an exact knowledge had Chriſt of every motion of *Judas*, of what he was about, and where he was: *lo! Judas, one of the twelve, came.* The *Perſic* verſion adds, *in ſight* of Chriſt, and the diſciples; they ſaw him, and knew him, tho' at ſome little diſtance: he came to *Gethſemane*, and into the garden, where they were, with a deſign to betray his maſter. He is deſcribed by his name *Judas*; that is, *Iſcariot*, as in ver. 14. for there was another *Judas* among the apoſtles; the *Syriac* and *Perſic* read, *Judas the betrayer*, to diſtinguiſh him from the other: and alſo by his office, *one of the twelve*; i. e. apoſtles, whom Chriſt called from the reſt of his diſciples and followers, and beſtowed extraordinary gifts upon, and ſent forth to preach the Goſpel, caſt out devils, and heal all manner of diſeaſes; and *lo!* one of theſe betrays him! an apoſtle, and yet a devil! one of the twelve, one of his ſelect company, and boſom friends, and yet a traitor! *and with him a great multitude, with ſwords, and ſtaves, from the chief-prieſts and elders of the people.* *Judas* was at the head of them, went before them to ſhew them where Chriſt was, and to deliver him into their hands: he had not been aſleep, he had been with the chief-prieſts, and acquainted them with the opportunity he had of making good his agreement with them: he had got the band of ſoldiers, and other perſons together, in order to make ſure work of it. Thus we ſee how diligent wicked men are in the accompliſhment of their evil deſigns, whilſt good men are aſleep and indifferent to godly and ſpiritual exerciſes. *Judas* is here deſcribed by his company; he who but a few hours ago was at table with his Lord, and the reſt of the apoſtles, is now at the head of a band of *Roman* ſoldiers, and other miſcreants, and blood-thirſty wretches, intent upon the death of his maſter. They may well be called a *multitude*, becauſe made up of various ſorts of perſons, and theſe, many of them; of *Roman* ſoldiers, of the officers and ſervants of the chief-prieſts; yea of the chief-prieſts themſelves, captains of the temple, and elders of the people, who were ſo eager upon this enterprize, that they could not forbear going in company with them, to ſee what would be the iſſue of it. And a *great* one; for the *band* of ſoldiers, if it was compleat, conſiſted of a thouſand men itſelf; and beſides this, there were many others, and all to take a ſingle perſon, and who had no more about him than eleven diſciples; tho' the [1] *Jews* pretend he had two thouſand men with him: and who came alſo *with ſwords and ſtaves*, or *clubs*; the *Roman* ſoldiers with their ſwords, and the ſervants of the chief-prieſts with their clubs: the reaſon of this poſſe, and of their being thus armed, might be either for fear of the people, who, ſhould they be alarmed, and have any notice of their deſign, might riſe and make an uproar, and attempt to reſcue him; or that by having a *Roman* band with them, and the chief-prieſts and their officers, it might appear, that what they did they did by authority; and that they ſeized him as a malefactor, as one guilty either of ſedition, or hereſy, or both. And this account is confirmed by the *Jews* themſelves, who ſay,

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[1] Toldos Jeſu, p. 16.

ſay [k], that the citizens of *Jeruſalem* were מזוינים, *armed*, and accoutred, and ſo took Jeſus: and this multitude alſo came *from the chief-prieſts and elders of the people*. *Mark* joins the *Scribes* with them: theſe compoſed the *ſanhedrim*, or great council of the nation, who had been conſulting the death of Chriſt; had agreed to give *Judas* thirty pieces of ſilver to betray him into their hands; had obtained a band of ſoldiers of the *Roman* governor to apprehend him, and ſent their officers and ſervants to aſſiſt herein; theſe all acted under their direction, influence, and authority. The *Vulgate Latin*, and *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel read, *ſent*, from them.

Ver. 48. *Now he that betrayed him gave them a ſign*, &c.] By which it might be known who he was; for it being night, tho' they had lanterns and torches, as *John* ſays, yet *Judas* himſelf might not be able to diſcern him, ſo as to point him out, until he came very near him: moreover, Chriſt and his apoſtles might be cloathed alike, ſo that a miſtake might be eaſily made, and one of them be took for him: and ſo the *Jews* ſay [l], that the two thouſand men, they pretend were with him, were cloathed with the ſame apparel; which ſtory may take its riſe from hence: add to this, that *James*, the ſon of *Alpheus*, called the brother of our Lord, is reported to be very like unto him. Beſides, it is very likely that the *Roman* ſoldiers, who were to be the principal perſons in apprehending, binding, and carrying him away, might never have ſeen him, and ſo could not know him without ſome ſign was given them; and which *Judas* gave them before he came out with them; and is as follows: *ſaying, whomſoever I ſhall kiſs, that ſame is he, hold him faſt*. *Judas* might the rather pitch upon this to be the ſign, partly becauſe it might be what had been uſual with the diſciples, when they had been at any time abſent from Chriſt, and which he admitted of; and partly becauſe he might think this would beſt cover his treacherous deſigns, who, with all his wickedneſs, had not effrontery enough to come ſword in hand and ſeize him in a violent manner; and beſides, might not judge ſuch a method adviſeable, had he impudence enough to proſecute it, leſt this ſhould put Jeſus upon taking ſome meaſures to make his eſcape. The reaſon of his advice, *hold him faſt*, was, becauſe he knew that once and again, when attempts were made to ſeize him, he eaſily diſengaged himſelf, paſſed thro' the midſt, and went his way; ſee *Luke* iv. 30. *John* viii. 59. and x. 39. and therefore gave them this caution, and ſtrict charge, leſt, ſhould he ſlip from them, he ſhould loſe his money he had agreed with the chief-prieſts for; or, to let them know, that when he was in their hands, he had made good his agreement, and ſhould expect his money; and that it lay upon them then to take care of him, and bring him before the *ſanhedrim*. The account the *Jews* themſelves give of the directions of *Judas*, is not very much unlike this; who repreſent him adviſing in this manner, only as on the day before: "gird yourſelves ready about this time to-morrow, and the man whom I ſhall worſhip and bow to, the ſame is he; behave yourſelves like men of war, fight againſt his company, and lay hold on him [m]."

Ver. 49. *And forthwith he came to Jeſus*, &c.] As ſoon as ever he appeared, before the reſt could come up; for he went before them, as *Luke* ſays, and that not only as their guide to direct them to the perſon they wanted, but he ſeparated himſelf from them, that it might not be thought that he came with them, or belonged to them: *and ſaid, hail maſter, and kiſſed him*. Juſt as *Joab* aſked *Amaſa* of his health, and took him by the beard to kiſs him, and ſmote him under the fifth rib; 2 *Sam*. xx. 9. The ſalutation he gave him was wiſhing him all health, proſperity, and happineſs. The *Syriac* verſion renders it, *peace, Rabbi*; and the *Perſic*, *peace be upon thee, Rabbi*; which was the very form of ſalutation the diſciples of the wiſe men gave to their *Rabbins*. "Says [n] *Aba bar Hona*, in the name of *R. Jochanan*, in what form is the ſalutation of a diſciple to his maſter? שלום עליך רבי, *peace be upon thee, Rabbi*." In *Mark*, the word *Rabbi* is repeated, this being uſual in the ſalutation of the *Jewiſh* doctors; and the rather uſed by *Judas* under a pretence of doing him the greater honour, and of ſhewing the higheſt reſpect, and ſtrongeſt affection for him. So this deceitful wretch ſtill addreſſes him as his maſter, tho' he was now ſerving his moſt implacable enemies; and wiſhes him all peace and joy, when he was going to deliver him into the hands of thoſe that ſought his life; and to cover all, kiſſed him, as a token of his friendſhip, and the ſincerity of it. It is rightly obſerved by Dr. *Lightfoot*, that it was uſual for maſters to kiſs their diſciples, particularly their heads; but then not for diſciples to kiſs their maſters: of the former there are many inſtances in the *Jewiſh* writings, but not of the latter: yet, I can hardly think that this was done out of open contempt and deriſion, but under a pretence of reſpect and love; and even as being concerned for his preſent caſe, and as condoling him under the circumſtances he was now likely to be in, thro' an armed band, which was juſt upon him; and which he, by this artifice, would have ſuggeſted he had no concern with.

Ver. 50. *And Jeſus ſaid unto him, friend*, &c.] Not in an ironical and ſarcaſtic way, but becauſe he pretended to be his friend, by ſaluting and kiſſing him, in the manner he had done; or rather, becauſe Chriſt had always uſed him as his friend, his familiar friend, who had been of his councils, and had eat at his table; and therefore this carried in it ſomething very cutting, had *Judas* had any conſcience, or ſenſe of gratitude: *wherefore art thou come?* The *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *my friend, art thou not come?* that is, art thou come as my friend? is thy coming as a friend, or as an enemy? if as a friend, what means this company with ſwords and ſtaves? if as an enemy, why this ſalutation and kiſs? or what is thine end in coming at this time of night? what is thy buſineſs here? thou haſt left my company, and my diſciples, what doſt thou do here? The *Syriac* verſion reads it, *to that*; and the *Arabic*, *to this art thou come?* to kiſs me, and by a kiſs to deliver me into the hands of my enemies? to which agrees what is ſaid in *Luke*, *Judas, betrayeſt thou the ſon of man with a kiſs?* This he ſaid, to let him know he knew him, and therefore he calls him by name; and that he knew his deſign in kiſſing him, and that what he was doing was againſt light and knowledge; he, at the ſame time, knowing that he was the ſon of man, the true Meſſiah. *Then came they, and laid hands on Jeſus, and took him*; that is, the multitude, the *Roman* band, the captains and officers of the *Jews*, when *Judas* had given the ſign; tho' not till Chriſt had given them a ſpecimen of his power, in ſtriking them to the ground; to let them know, that *Judas* could never have put him into their hands, nor could they have laid hold on him, had he not thought fit to ſurrender himſelf to them. The ſeizing and apprehending him is related by *Luke* and *John* as after the following circumſtance; tho' the *Ethiopic* verſion here reads, *they lift up their hands, and did not lay hold on the Lord Jeſus.*

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[k] Toldos Jeſu, p. 16.

[l] Ib.

[m] Ib.

[n] T. Hieroſ. Shebuot, fol. 34. 1.

Ver. 51. *And behold one of them which were with Jeſus,* &c.] Either one of the three that Jeſus took with him whilſt he was in his agony, leaving the other eight at ſome diſtance; or of the eleven, who might now be all with him: however, 'tis certain, *Peter* is the perſon meant; for though he is not named here, nor by *Mark*, nor *Luke*, he is by *John*; whoſe Goſpel being wrote laſt, and many years after the reſt, there was no danger like to accrue, by telling who it was that did the following action: he being now thorougly awaked with the reſt, by what Chriſt had ſaid to him; and more ſo by the ſurprize of the multitude of armed men about him; and remembring his ſolemn proteſtations of abiding by his maſter; and ſeeing him juſt now ready to be ſeized, and carried away; without knowing his maſter's mind, or waiting for his anſwer to the queſtion the other diſciples put, *ſtretched out his hand, and drew his ſword, and ſtruck a ſervant of the high-prieſt's, and ſmote off his ear.* It ſeems he had a ſword by his ſide, upon what account is not certain; this he drew, and ſtruck at a ſervant of the high-prieſt's, who might ſhew great malignity againſt Chriſt, and was foremoſt, and moſt buſy in apprehending him. The blow was levelled at his head, and with an intention, no doubt, to have cleaved him down, but ſloping on one ſide took off his ear. The ſervant's name was *Malchus*, as *John* ſays; and it was his right ear that was cut off, as both he and *Luke* relate.

Ver. 52. *Then ſaid Jeſus unto him,* &c.] That is, unto *Peter*, *put up again thy ſword into its place*, or ſheath. This Chriſt ſaid not only to rebuke *Peter* for his raſhneſs, but to ſoften the minds of the multitude, who muſt be enraged at ſuch an action; and which was ſtill more effectually done by his healing the man's ear: and indeed, had it not been for theſe words, and this action of Chriſt's; and more eſpecially had it not been owing to the powerful influence Chriſt had over the ſpirits of theſe men, in all probability *Peter*, and the reſt of the apoſtles, had been all deſtroyed at once. *For all they that take the ſword, ſhall periſh with the ſword.* This is not to be underſtood of magiſtrates who bear not the ſword in vain, are miniſters of God for good, and revengers of evil works; but of private perſons that uſe the ſword, and that not in ſelf-defence, but for private revenge; or engage in a quarrel, to which they are not called; and ſuch generally periſh, as *Peter* muſt have done, had it not been for the interpoſition of almighty power. Tho' this ſeems to be ſpoken not ſo much of *Peter*, and of the danger he expoſed himſelf to, by taking and uſing the ſword, and ſo to deter him from it, but rather of theſe his enemies; and as an argument to make and keep *Peter* eaſy and quiet, and exerciſe patience, ſince, in a little time, God would avenge himſelf of them; and that the *Jews*, who now made uſe of the ſword of the *Roman* ſoldiers, would periſh by the ſword of the *Romans*, as in a few years after the whole nation did.

Ver. 53. *Thinkeſt thou that I cannot now pray to my father,* &c.] Meaning, if he thought proper, or that there was any neceſſity for it, or that he was deſirous of being reſcued out of ſuch hands he was falling into. This muſt be underſtood of him as man; for, as God, the angels were his creatures, and miniſtring ſervants, whom he had the command of himſelf, and ſo had no need, as ſuch, to pray to his father to detach a number of them to his aſſiſtance, and which, as man, he could only want. *And he ſhall preſently give me more than twelve legions of angels.* A *Roman* legion conſiſted of about ſix thouſand ſoldiers, or upwards; ſome add ſix hundred ſixty-ſix; and others make the number far greater. Twelve are mentioned, either with reſpect to the twelve apoſtles; or in alluſion, as others think, to the *Roman* militia; a proper and full army with them conſiſting of ſuch a number of legions: and that there is an innumerable company of angels, thouſand thouſands, and ten thouſand times ten thouſand, is certain; and the *Perſic* verſion here reads, *twelve myriads* of legions; and that theſe are at the command of God, and he can diſpatch them at once, on any emergent occaſion, is very evident; and what is it that ſuch a company of angels is not capable of, when a ſingle angel flew in one night an hundred, fourſcore, and five thouſand men, 2 *Kings* xix. 35. wherefore had Chriſt had any inclination to have been reſcued from the preſent danger, he ſtood in no need of *Peter*'s ſword.

Ver. 54. *But how then ſhall the ſcriptures be fulfilled,* &c.] That is, ſhould Chriſt make ſuch a requeſt to his father, and he ſhould grant it, and an hoſt of angels ſhould be ſent to reſcue him, and he ſhould be reſcued by them; how then ſhould the ſcriptures, which ſpeak of Chriſt's being taken, and led as a lamb to the ſlaughter, and of his various ſufferings, and the circumſtances of them, have their accompliſhment? *declaring*, as the *Arabic* verſion ſupplies, or as the *Ethiopic* verſion, *which ſay, that thus it muſt be*; that the Meſſiah muſt be apprehended, and ſuffer, and die. The ſeveral parts of the ſufferings of the Meſſiah are foretold in the writings of the Old Teſtament; the ſpirit of Chriſt, in the prophets, teſtified before hand of them; as that he ſhould be reproached and deſpiſed of men, *Pſ.* xxii. 6, 7, 8. *Iſ.* liii. 3. be ſpit upon, ſmote, and buffeted, *Iſ.* l. 5, 6. *Mic.* v. 1. be put to death, *Pſ.* xxii. 15. *Iſ.* liii. 12. and that the death of the croſs, *Pſ.* xxii. 15, 16. *Zech.* xii. 10. and be buried, *Iſ.* liii. 9. and alſo the ſeveral circumſtances of his ſufferings, which led on to them, or attended them; as the ſelling him for thirty pieces of ſilver, *Zech.* xi. 12, 13. the betraying him by one of his familiar friends, *Pſ.* xli. 9. the ſeizing and apprehending him, and which is particularly referr'd to here, *Iſ.* liii. 7, 8. his diſciples forſaking him, *Zech.* xiii. 7. and even his God and Father, *Pſ.* xxii. 1. his ſuffering between two thieves, *Iſ.* liii. 12. the parting of his garments, and caſting lots on his veſture, *Pſ.* xxii. 18. the giving him gall and vinegar when on the croſs, *Pſ.* lxix. 21. and not breaking any of his bones, *Pſ.* xxxiv. 20. yea, the ſcriptures not only declared, that theſe things ſhould be; but the neceſſity of them alſo, that they *muſt* be; becauſe of the purpoſes and decrees of God, which are eternal, immutable, and unfruſtrable; for as God had determined on the ſalvation of his people by Chriſt, and that thro' his ſufferings and death, theſe were determined by him alſo, even the time, nature, manner, and circumſtances of them; and which the ſcriptures declare, and therefore muſt be likewiſe: and becauſe of the covenant of grace, which is ſure, unalterable, and unchangeable; in which Chriſt agreed to aſſume human nature, to obey, ſuffer, and die in it, and ſo do his father's will, which was to bear the penalty of the law, and undergo the ſufferings of death; and which therefore muſt be, or Chriſt's faithfulneſs fail. Moreover, on account of the law and juſtice of God, which required his bearing the curſe, as well as fulfilling the precept of the law; and eſpecially on account of the ſalvation of his people, which could not be effected without them, they muſt be. Chriſt, in theſe words, diſcovers a very great concern for the fulfilling of ſcripture; and that becauſe it is the word of God, which muſt not be broken; and becauſe throughout it he is ſpoken of, in the volume of it, it is written of him, to do the will of God; even in the law of *Moſes*, and in the Prophets, and in the *Pſalms*: and beſides, he was the miniſter of the circumciſion, to confirm the promiſes made unto the fathers; and even agreeable to them, and upon the foundation of them, he had himſelf predicted his own ſufferings: and as thoſe were to be the rule of the faith and practice of his people in all ages, he was concerned for their accompliſhment in every punctilio; and which may teach us to value the ſcriptures, and to be confident of the fulfilment of them in things yet future.

Ver. 55. *In that ſame hour ſaid Jeſus to the multitude*, &c.] That is, to the heads and chief of them; the chief prieſts, captains of the temple, and elders, as *Luke* ſays, ch. xxii. 52. for though it was in the dead of the night, and the company ſuch, as they would not have choſe to have been ſeen in at another time; yet ſo intent were they upon this affair, that they could not ſatisfy themſelves without being in it, and ſeeing the iſſue of it; and this the *Jews* themſelves confirm in their account; for they ſay [o], that the elders of *Jeruſalem* took Jeſus, and brought him to the city. Now in that ſame hour, immediately, that very moment, that Chriſt had made an end of rebuking *Peter* for his raſh action, and reaſoning with him upon it, he turned and addreſſed himſelf to theſe men, ſaying; *are ye come out as againſt a thief, with ſwords and ſtaves, for to take me?* as an highwayman, or notorious robber, that had done great miſchief to the country; and being armed, and having aſſociates, was not eaſy to be taken: the *Syriac* renders it, as a cut-throat; and the *Perſic*, as a robber, and a cut-throat; a deſperate villain, that would by no means yield, unleſs overpowered by numbers, by force of arms, by the dint of the ſword, by knocks and blows: but how different from this, was the character of Jeſus! who never did any injury to any man's perſon or property, but ſaved both; was meek, lowly, and humble in his deportment, throughout the whole of his life; never ſtrove with men, or cried, and cauſed his voice, in any riotous manner, to be heard in the ſtreets; and even when reviled, reviled not again, but took every inſult patiently; and was now unarmed, and ready to ſubmit at once; nay, before they could well come up to him, he aſked them who they ſought; and on mentioning his name, declared he was the perſon; and ſignified he was ready to ſurrender himſelf, only deſired his diſciples might have leave to go away: he adds, *I ſat daily with ou, teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me.* The buſineſs he was employed in, was not thieving nd ſtealing, but teaching; and that wholeſome octrine, which he, as man, had received from his ather, and as the great prophet in *Iſrael* taught; nd with ſuch power and authority, as the *Scribes* nd *Phariſees* did not: the place where he taught, as the temple; not a corner, or a private place, t a place of publick worſhip, and of publick reſort: the time when he taught there, was the day-time, and day by day; for ſome days paſt, it had been his cuſtom in the day-time to teach in the temple, and at night to go out, and abide in the mount of *Olives*; and his continuance day by day in the temple, or his conſtant teaching there, is ſignified by ſitting daily there, and teaching; unleſs it ſhould be thought, rather to have regard to the poſture in which he taught; ſee *Matt.* v. 1. And yet, though this had been his common practice for ſome days paſt, and at other times before, yet no man laid hands on him then; which was not wanting to a good will in them, who were very deſirous of it, and ſought every opportunity to do it, but were prevented; either through fear of the people, or through Chriſt's making his eſcape from them; and particularly, by the ſingular providence and power of God, which reſtrained them, becauſe his time was not yet come. However, Chriſt ſuggeſts by this, that they had no need to take ſuch extraordinary methods to apprehend him, as to make uſe of one of his diſciples to betray him; to come in the middle of the night to take him, and that in ſuch great numbers, and with ſwords and ſtaves, when he was every day with them in the temple.

Ver. 56. *But all this was done, that the ſcriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled*, &c.] Some have thought theſe to be the words of the Evangeliſt, making this remark upon what was ſaid and done; but by what both *Mark* and *Luke* record, *Mark* xiv. 49. *Luke* xxii. 53. they appear to be the words of Chriſt himſelf; who obſerves this, partly to make himſelf, as man, eaſy under the treatment he met with; and partly, to fortify the minds of his diſciples againſt offence at it; and alſo to throw conviction, or confuſion, into the minds of his enemies. The ſcriptures of the prophets he refers to, as having, or about to have, by this conduct, their accompliſhment, were ſuch, as regarded the betraying him by *Judas*, the taking him in this ſecret, private, inſidious, yet violent manner; in all which he ſhewed great meekneſs, calmneſs, and ſubmiſſion, as *Pſal.* xli. 9. *Lam.* iv. 20. *Iſa.* liii. 7, 8. As alſo what reſpected the ſcattering, and haſty flight of his diſciples from him, *Zech.* xiii. 7. which in the next clauſe is ſhewn to be accompliſhed. *Then all the diſciples forſook him and fled*; not only went away from him, and left him alone, as he foretold they would, *John* xvi. 32. but they ran away from him in a precipitant manner, like timorous ſheep, the ſhepherd being about to be ſmitten; and they fearing, leſt *Peter*'s raſh action ſhould be imputed to them all, and they ſuffer for it; or leſt they ſhould be laid hold on next, and bound, as their maſter was, or about to be. Every thing in this account, is an aggravation of their puſillanimity, and ingratitude; as that they were the *diſciples* of Chriſt that forſook him, whom he had called, and ſent forth as his apoſtles to preach his Goſpel; and to whom he had given extraordinary gifts and powers; who had forſaken all and followed him, and had been with him from the beginning; had heard all his excellent diſcourſes, and had ſeen all his miracles, and yet theſe at laſt forſake him, and even *all* of them; *John* the beloved diſciple, that leaned on his boſom, and *Peter*, that profeſſed ſo much love to him, zeal for him, and faith in him; the three that had juſt ſeen him in his agony and bloody ſweat, and every one of them left him; not one ſtood by him, and this too, after they had had a freſh inſtance of his power, in ſtriking the men to the ground, that came to take him; and when he was ſuing for them with their enemies, to let them go peaceably and ſafely: ſo that they had no need to have fled in ſuch haſte; and to leave him *then*, in the midſt of his enemies, in his great diſtreſs and trouble, was very unkind and ungrateful: and to this account of the Evangeliſt, pretty much agrees what the *Jews* themſelves ſay of it; for they report [p], that "when his diſ-"ciples ſaw that he was taken, and that they could "not fight againſt them, ירוצו ברגליהם, *they ran* "*away on foot*, and lift up their voice and wept "greatly." Though they alſo pretend, that the citizens of *Jeruſalem* killed many of them, and that the reſt *fled* to the mountain, which is falſe.

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[o] Toldos Jeſu, p. 17.

Ver. 57. *And they that had laid hold on Jeſus*, &c.] Who were the band, and the captain, and the officers of the *Jews*, as *John* xviii. 12. or as the *Jews* themſelves ſay [q], the elders of *Jeruſalem*; who not only laid faſt hold on him, but bound him; and that both for greater ſecurity of him, ſome of them perhaps knowing how he had made his eſcape from them formerly; or at leaſt taking the hint from *Judas*, to hold him faſt, and lead him away ſafely; and by way of reproach and contempt, thereby ſhewing that he was a malefactor, and had done ſome crime worthy of bonds: and having him thus in faſt and ſafe cuſtody, they *led him away to Caiaphas, the high prieſt*; who was high prieſt that year; for the prieſtood was frequently changed in thoſe times, and men were put into it by the *Roman* governor, through favour or bribery. The year before this, *Simeon*, or *Simon ben Cambith*, was high prieſt; and the year before that, *Eleazar*, the ſon of *Ananus*; and before him, *Iſhmael ben Phabi*, who were all three, ſucceſſively, made high prieſts by the *Roman* governor; as was alſo this *Caiaphas*, this year; and who by *Joſephus* [r], and in the *Talmud* [s] likewiſe, is called *Joſeph*. From whence he had his name *Caiaphas*, is not certain: *Jerom* [t] ſays, it ſignifies a ſearcher, or a ſagacious perſon; but may be better interpreted, he adds, one that vomits at the mouth; deriving the word, as I ſuppoſe, from קוא, to vomit, and פי, the mouth; ſee the note on ver. 13. It was to the houſe, or palace of this man, the high prieſt, that Jeſus was led; *where the Scribes and elders were aſſembled*: a council was held about a week before this, in which *Caiaphas* aſſiſted, and then gave counſel to the *Jews*, that it was expedient, that one man ſhould die for the people, *John* xi. 47, 49, 50. whether that was held at his houſe, or elſewhere, is not certain, very probably it might; however, it is clear from ver. 2, 3. of this chapter, that two days ago, the chief prieſts, *Scribes*, and elders, were aſſembled together in his palace, to conſult about putting Jeſus to death; and here they were again met together on the ſame account, waiting to have him brought before them.

Ver. 58. *But Peter followed him afar off*, &c.] The *Ethiopic* verſion adds, *alone*; and which ſeems to be the true caſe; for though there was another diſciple who alſo followed Jeſus, and is thought to be *John*, yet it looks as if they followed him ſeparately, and not together; for the other diſciple went into the palace with Jeſus, but *Peter* not till afterwards, being eſpied by his fellow diſciple, ſtanding without. Theſe two it ſeems, having a little recovered themſelves from the fright they had been put into, ſtopped and turned back, and followed after Jeſus, to ſee what would be the iſſue of things. *Peter*'s following Chriſt, ſhewed love to him; he was loth to leave him, his bowels moved towards him, and he wanted to know how it would fare with him, and what would become of him; and yet keeping at a diſtance, following him afar off, betrayed fear, leſt he ſhould be obſerved, and taken up, and come into danger: however, he proceeded on his way in a ſlow pace, till he came *unto the high prieſt's palace, and went in and ſat with the ſervants, to ſee the end*; of the matter, or buſineſs, as the *Ethiopic* and *Perſic* verſions add; to ſee how it would go with him, whether he would exert his divine power, and deliver himſelf out of their hands, which he knew he was able to do, when he would again join him; or what puniſhment they would inflict upon him, whether they would ſcourge him, and then let him go; or whether they would ſentence him to death; that ſo he might know how to provide for his own ſafety: all which was indulging curioſity, and the carnal reaſonings of his mind; and it ſhowed want of integrity at that time, and ſome degree of hypocriſy, in placing himſelf among the ſervants of the high prieſt, as if he was none of the followers of Jeſus, but was of the ſame complexion and caſt with them: he had got into bad company, and was in the way of temptation; and though he had no deſign in following Jeſus, and in going into the high prieſt's palace, and ſeating himſelf among the ſervants to deny his Lord, yet all this led on to it; for which reaſon theſe ſeveral circumſtances are taken notice of, the account of which denial of his, is afterwards related.

Ver. 59. *Now the chief prieſts and elders, and all the council*, &c.] Or *Sanhedrim*, which conſiſted, as the *Jewiſh* writers ſay [u], of prieſts, *Levites*, and *Iſraelites*, of both eccleſiaſticks and laicks; the eccleſiaſticks were the prieſts and *Levites*, and the laicks the *Iſraelites*, or elders of the people; for if prieſts and *Levites* could not be found, a *Sanhedrim* might conſiſt of thoſe only; and ſo thoſe words in *Deut.* xxi. 2. *thy elders*, are thus interpreted [w], זה בית דין הגדול, this is the great *Sanhedrim*; and though a king of *Iſrael* might not ſit in the *Sanhedrim*, yet an high prieſt might, if he was a man of wiſdom [x]; and it ſeems as if *Caiaphas* was now at the head of this council, by its being aſſembled at his palace; which though it was not the uſual place where they met, yet might be choſe at this time for greater ſecrecy. Now theſe thus aſſembled together, *ſought falſe witneſs againſt Jeſus, to put him to death*; they firſt take him up, and then ſeek out for witneſſes againſt him; being determined, right or wrong, to put him to death, if poſſible; and falſe witneſſes too, even thoſe whoſe buſineſs it was, to examine and detect falſe witneſſes, and to inflict the ſame puniſhment upon them, which they b their falſe teſtimony intended to have brought o another, *Deut.* xix. 18, 19. And beſides, it wa in the night, when it was forbid by their canons t begin the trial of capital cauſes, or to receive an admit of witneſſes [y]. Indeed the *Syriac* and *Perſi* verſions read, only witneſſes, or witneſs, and leav out the word *falſe*; perhaps imagining, that me could never be ſo wicked, to ſeek out for falſe wi neſſes: but this need not be wondered at, when the men were bent upon the death of Chriſt at a rate; and were aware that nothing true could objected to him, that would legally take away li life; and beſides, their manner of procedure in judgment againſt a falſe prophet, a deceiver, and one that enticed to idolatry, and ſuch an one they would have Jeſus to be, was quite different from what they took with other perſons: their canon runs thus [z]: “ the judgment of a deceiver, is not as “ the reſt of capital judgments; his witneſſes are “ hid; and he has no need, or ought not to have “ any pre-monition, or warning, as the reſt of “ thoſe that are put to death; and if he goes out “ of the *Sanhedrim* acquitted, and one ſays I can “ prove the charge againſt him, they turn him “ back; but if he goes out condemned, and one “ ſays I can prove him innocent, they don’t return “ him.” So in the *Miſna* [a] ’tis ſaid, “ Of all “ that are condemned to death in the law, none “ have their witneſſes hidden but this (the deceiver, “ or one that entices to idolatry)——and they hide “ his witneſſes behind a wall, or hedge; and he, “ (whom he endeavoured to ſeduce) ſays to him, “ ſay what thou haſt ſaid to me privately; and if “ he repeats it to him, he muſt ſay, how ſhall we “ leave our God that is in heaven, and go and “ ſerve ſtocks and ſtones! if he repents, ’tis well; “ but if he ſhould ſay, ſo we are bound to do, “ and ſo it becomes us, they that ſtand behind the “ wall, or hedge, ſhall carry him to the *Sanhedrim* “ and ſtone him.” In the *Gemara* ’tis thus expreſſed [b], “ they light up a lamp in the innermoſt “ houſe, and ſet the witneſſes in the outermoſt “ houſe, ſo that they can ſee him and hear his “ voice, and he cannot ſee them.” And then follows what is ſaid before, to which is added, “ ſo “ they did to *Ben Stada*;” by whom they mean *Jeſus* of *Nazareth*. Moreover, this need not ſeem ſtrange, that they took ſuch a courſe with Chriſt, when in the caſe of *Stephen*, they ſuborned and ſet up falſe witneſſes againſt him. The *Sanhedrim* cannot be be thought to do this in perſon, but they ſent out their officers to ſeek for ſuch men, as could or would produce any thing againſt him, and no doubt promiſed them an handſome reward.

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[p] Toldos Jeſu, p. 16, 17. [q] Ib. [r] Antiqu. l. 18. c. 14. [s] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 47. 1. [t] De Heb. nomin fol. 104. col. 4. Tom. 3. [u] Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrim, c. 2. §. 1, 2. Abarbinel in Tora, fol. 366. 2. [w] T. Hi Sota, fol. 23. 3. [x] Maimon. ib. §. 4. [y] Ib. c. 3. §. 3, 4.

Ver. 60. *But found none*, &c.] That were fit for their purpoſe; *yea, though many falſe witneſſes came, yet found they none*; whoſe teſtimonies were ſufficient to put him to death, which was what they were reſolved upon, or whoſe witneſs were not alike and agreed; for according to their law, a man muſt not die by the mouth of one witneſs only, but by the mouth of two or three witneſſes agreed in a point; and tho’ they might be willing enough to diſpenſe with the law in this caſe, yet might have ſome regard to their own character and reputation; and eſpecially as they meant to deliver him to the *Roman* governor, in order to be condemned by him; they knew they muſt have a charge, and this ſupported with a proper evidence, or they could not hope to ſucceed; for which reaſon, they could not put up, as they otherwiſe willingly would, with any ſort of witneſſes: *at the laſt came two falſe witneſſes*; who were agreed in a point, and whoſe Teſtimonies were alike; at leaſt, had a greater appearance of truth and agreement than the reſt; though *Mark* ſays, ch. xiv. 59. *neither ſo did their witneſſes agree together*, as to prove the point, for which it was given.

Ver. 61. *And ſaid, this* fellow *ſaid*, &c.] Or *ſaith*, as *De Dieu* obſerves, the *Syriac* verſion of this place ſhould be rendered; that is, he has not only ſaid in times paſt, referring to *John* ii. 19. but continues to ſay it, and glory in it: *I am able to deſtroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days*; in which they did injury, both to his words and ſenſe: he did not ſay, *I am able to deſtroy the temple*, but only ſaid, *deſtroy this temple*; ſignifying neither his power, nor his will and inclination to it; but put it upon the *Jews*, and left it to them to do it: nor did he ſay one word about *the temple of God*, or as it is in *Mark*, *this temple that is made with hands*; the temple at *Jeruſalem*, which was made by the hands of men, and devoted to the worſhip of God; but only *this temple*, referring to his body, or human nature; in which he, the Son of God, dwelt, as in a temple; nor did he ſay that he was able to *build* it in three days, but that he would *raiſe it up* in three days; intending the reſurrection of his body by his own power, after it had been dead three days; and ſo they perverted his ſenſe, as well as miſ-recited his words; applying that to the material temple at *Jeruſalem*, what he ſpoke of the temple of his body, and of its reſurrection from the dead, on the third day; deſigning hereby to fix a charge, both of ſacrilege and ſorcery upon him: of ſacrilege, in having a deſign upon the temple of God to deſtroy it; and of ſorcery, or familiarity with the devil, and having aſſiſtance from him, or knowledge of the magic art, that he could pretend in three days to re-build a temple, which had been forty and ſix years in building; and was what could never be done, but by the help of *Beelzebub*, the prince of devils, by whom it was inſinuated he did all his miracles.

Ver. 62. *And the high prieſt aroſe and ſaid unto him*, &c.] He roſe up from his ſeat in great wrath and anger; partly being vexed, that they could get no other and better teſtimony; and partly becauſe of Chriſt’s contemptuous ſilence, giving no anſwer to the witneſſes, as judging they deſerved none; and which highly provoked the high prieſt, and therefore in paſſion ſaid, *anſwereſt thou nothing? what is it which theſe witneſs againſt thee?* Is it true or falſe, right or wrong? The *Vulgate Latin* renders it, *doſt thou anſwer nothing to thoſe things which theſe witneſs againſt thee?* To which agree the *Arabic* verſion, and *Munſter*’s *Hebrew* Goſpel.

Ver. 63. *But Jeſus held his peace*, &c.] Knowing it would ſignify nothing, whatever he ſhould ſay, they being ſet upon his death, the time of which was now come; and therefore he quietly ſubmits, and ſays nothing in his own defence to prevent it. To be ſilent in a court of judicature, *Apollonius Tyanæus* [c] ſays, is the fourth virtue; this Chriſt had, and all others: *and the high prieſt anſwered and ſaid unto him*; though Chriſt had ſaid nothing, a way of ſpeaking very frequent among the *Jews*, and in the ſacred writings: *I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Chriſt, the ſon of God*; the Chriſt, the anointed, that *David* ſpeaks of in the *ſecond Pſalm*, and who is there ſaid to be the Son of God, *Pſal.* ii. 2, 7. to which the high prieſt ſeems to have reſpect; ſince there is no other paſſage, in which both theſe characters meet; and which was underſtood by the ancient *Jews* of the Meſſiah, as is owned by modern ones [d]. Jeſus was given out to be the Meſſiah, and his diſciples believed him to be the Son of God, and he had affirmed himſelf to be ſo; wherefore the high prieſt, exerting his prieſtly power and authority, puts him upon his oath; or at leaſt with an oath made by the living God, charges him to tell the truth, and which when ever any heard the voice of ſwearing, he was obliged to do, *Lev.* v. 1.

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[z] Maimon. ib. c. 11. §. 5.

[a] Sanhedrin, c. 7. §. 10.

[b] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 67. 1.

[c] Philoſtrat. Vita Apollonii, l. 8. c. 1.

[d] Jarchi & Aben Ezra in Pſal. ii. 1. & Kimchi in ver. 12.

Ver. 64. *Jeſus ſaith unto him, thou haſt ſaid,* &c.] That is, thou haſt ſaid right; or as *Mark* expreſſes it, *I am*, ch. xiv. 62. the Chriſt, the anointed of God; who was ſo from everlaſting, and in time; being before the world was, inſtalled into, and inveſted with the office of Mediator; and in the fulneſs of time, anointed with the Holy Spirit without meaſure: he might truly ſay he was the Meſſiah, ſince all the characters of him in the books of the prophets, met in him; and all the miracles he was to work in proof of his Meſſiahſhip, were wrought by him; as alſo that he was the Son of God, not by creation, as angels and men; nor by adoption, as ſaints; nor as man, or in the human nature, in which he was the Son of man, and not the Son of God; nor was he begotten as man, whereas he is called the only begotten Son, and the begotten of the Father; and was he the Son of God as man, not the firſt, but the third perſon muſt be his Father; beſides, he was the Son of God before his incarnation: nor as Mediator neither; he was the Son of God, antecedent to his office as Mediator; his Sonſhip is diſtinct from it, is an illuſtration of it, and what puts virtue into it; but he is ſo as God, as a divine perſon, by natural and eternal filiation; being begotten of the Father in the divine eſſence, and of the ſame nature; and having the ſame perfections with him, and in all things equal to him; and is the ſenſe in which he always affirmed God to be his Father, and himſelf to be his Son. For this phraſe, *thou haſt ſaid*, as anſwering to an affirmation, *I am*, ſee the note on ver. 35. Now, though Chriſt had ſo fully anſwered to the adjuration, and ſo ſtrongly affirmed himſelf to be the Meſſiah, the Son of God, yet he knew they would not believe; and therefore refers them to an after proof thereof, which whether they would or no, would oblige them to acknowledge the whole: *nevertheleſs, I ſay unto you, hereafter ſhall ye ſee the Son of man, ſitting at the right hand of power:* the *Vulgate Latin*, and *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel, read the *power of God*, as in *Luke* xxii. 69. though it is not abſolutely neceſſary; for *power* deſigns God himſelf, who is all powerful; as appears by the creation of all things out of nothing, the upholding of all things in their being, the redemption of men, the converſion of ſinners, and the preſervation of his ſaints. In the *Jewiſh* writings [e], God is frequently called, הגבורה, *the power:* ſuch a thing ſay they, we have heard, מפי הגבורה, *from the mouth of power*, or *might*; that is, from God himſelf: and ſo he is by the *Grecians* called, δυναμις, *power* [f]: by *the Son of man*, is meant Chriſt in the human nature; who then appeared at their bar as a mere man, in a very deſpicable form and condition, but hereafter they ſhould ſee him in a more glorious one, and at *the right hand* of God: a phraſe expreſſive of his exaltation, above all creatures whatever: reſpect is had to the prophecy of him in *Pſal.* cx. 1. *Sitting* there, denotes his having done his work; and his continuance in his exalted ſtate, until all enemies are ſubdued under him: and when he ſays they ſhould *ſee* him, his meaning is not, that they ſhould ſee him at the right hand of God with their bodily eyes, as *Stephen* did; but that they ſhould, or at leaſt might, ſee and know by the effects, that he was ſet down at the right hand of God; as by the pouring forth of the Holy Spirit upon his diſciples, on the day of *Pentecoſt*; by the wonderful ſpread of his Goſpel, and the ſucceſs of it, notwithſtanding all the oppoſition made by them, and others; and particularly, by the vengeance he ſhould take on their nation, city, and temple; and which may be more eſpecially deſigned in the next clauſe; *and coming in the clouds of heaven.* So Chriſt's coming to take vengeance on the *Jewiſh* nation, as it is often called the coming of the Son of man, is deſcribed in this manner, *Matt.* xxiv. 27, 30. Though this may alſo be underſtood of Chriſt's ſecond coming to judgment, at the laſt day; when as he went up to heaven in a cloud, he will return, and come alſo in the clouds of heaven; ſee *Acts* i. 9, 11. *Rev.* i. 7. when he'll be ſeen by the eyes of all, good and bad; and when this *Sanhedrim*, before whom he now was, will ſee him alſo, and confeſs that he is Lord and Chriſt, and the Son of God. Though the former clauſe ſeems to have regard to what would quickly come to paſs, and what they ſhould ſoon obſerve, and be convinced of; for, απ' αρτι, rendered *hereafter*, may be tranſlated *henceforwards*; or as it is in the *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, *from this time*; meaning, that in a very little while, they ſhould begin to ſee the effects of his being ſet down at the right hand of God, and which would be full proofs of it, and ſhould ſee him come in the clouds of heaven, at the laſt day: reference ſeems to be had to *Dan.* vii. 13. where one like unto the Son of man is ſaid to come in the clouds of heaven, and which is underſtood of the Meſſiah by many, both of the ancient and modern *Jews* [g]; with whom one of his names is *Anani* [h], which ſignifies *clouds*.

Ver. 65. *Then the high prieſt rent his cloaths,* &c.] Both his outer and inner garments. This he did, to ſhew his zeal for the honour and glory of God, his grief and concern at the profanation of his holy name by a falſe oath, and his abhorrence of, and indignation at the blaſphemy he ſuppoſed Chriſt to be guilty of, in aſſerting himſelf to be the Son of God. Some have thought, that *Caiaphas* in this action, tranſgreſſed the law, in *Lev.* xxi. 10. where it is ſaid, that *the high prieſt—ſhall not uncover his head, nor rent his cloaths:* and it is one of the *Jews* negative precepts [i], that "an high prieſt is prohibited, לעולם, *ever* to rend his garments:" and that therefore being tranſported with paſſion at the greatneſs of the ſuppoſed crime, could not forbear expreſſing his deteſtation of it in this manner, though it was forbidden him: but it does not appear to have been unlawful: as for the law in *Leviticus*, it only regards the renting of garments at funerals, or in mourning for the dead, as the context ſhews; and ſo *Jonathan ben Uzziel* paraphraſes the text, *nor rent his cloaths*, בשעת אניקי, *in the time of mourning*; and ſo the *Jewiſh* [k] interpreters in general, expound it; and beſides, this prohibition, according to them, only regards the manner of renting: their rule is this [l]; "an high prieſt "rents below, and a common perſon above:" the ſenſe of which, according to their commentators, is [m], "that if any one dies for whom an high prieſt "is obliged to rent his garments, he muſt rent below, at the extreme part of his garment, near his "feet; and as for what is written, *nor rent his* "*cloaths*; the meaning is, he ſhall not rent as other men do; *above*; over againſt the breaſt, near the ſhoulder, as the reſt of the people." Moreover, a prieſt might not go into the ſanctuary, nor perform any part of ſervice with his cloaths rent; the canon runs thus[n]; "the judgment, or the law of "them that rend their garment, and of thoſe that "uncover the head, is one and the ſame, as it is "ſaid, *Levit.* x. 6. lo! if he is in ſervice, and "rents his garments, he is guilty of death by the "hands of heaven; though his ſervice is right, "and not profaned." And indeed no man, whether a prieſt or an *Iſraelite*, might go into the temple with his cloaths rent; and a prieſt might not rend his ſacerdotal garments, on any account; yet ſuch were not theſe that *Caiaphas* now had on; but in caſe of hearing blaſphemy, every one, be he what he would, was obliged to rend his garments[o]: "Whoſoever hears the curſing of the name (of "God) is obliged to rend, even at the curſing of "the ſurnames he is obliged to rend; and he that "hears it from an *Iſraelite*, both he that hears, "and he that hears from the mouth of him that "hears, he is obliged to rend; but he that hears "from the mouth of a *Gentile*, is not obliged to "rend; and *Eliakim* and *Shebna* would not have "rent, but becauſe *Rabſhakeh* was an apoſtate." So when witneſſes expreſſed the blaſphemy of ſuch they teſtified againſt, the judges were obliged to riſe up and rend their garments; concerning which, take the following rule[p]: "a blaſ"phemer is not guilty, unleſs he expreſſes the "name (of God;) ſays *R. Joſhua ben Korcha*, all "the day the witneſſes are examined by the ſur"names; but when the cauſe is finiſhed, they "don't put to death becauſe of the ſurnames, but "they bring every man out, and aſk the chief "among them, and ſay to him, ſay expreſsly what "thou haſt heard, and he ſays it: then the judges "ſtand upon their feet, וקורעין, *and rend their gar"ments*, and do not ſow them up again; and then "the ſecond and the third ſay, I have heard the "ſame as he." From all which it appears, that *Caiaphas* did what was the cuſtom of the nation to do, in ſuch a caſe. The obſervation, that ſome learned men have made, that the high prieſt's rending his garments, was, though without his intention, an emblem and preſage, of the rending of the prieſthood from him, and his brethren, and the entire change of it; as the abolition of the whole ceremonial law, was ſignified by the rending of the vail of the temple in twain; and as the removing of the kingdom from *Saul*, was repreſented by *Samuel*'s rending his mantle; and the revolt of the ten tribes to *Jeroboam*, by *Abijah*'s rending his garment into twelve pieces, and giving ten to him; would have had a much better foundation to be built on, were theſe cloaths that *Caiaphas* rent, his prieſtly ones: but ſuch they were not; for both the high prieſt, and the other prieſts, only wore their ſacerdotal garments in the temple; nor was it lawful for them to go out in them elſewhere, for ſo the *Jews* ſay[q]; "it is forbidden to go out into the province, "city, or country, in the garments of the prieſt"hood; but in the ſanctuary, whether in the time "of ſervice, or not in the time of ſervice, it was "lawful." In the temple, there were cheſts on purpoſe for the garments of the prieſts[r]; from whence they took them, and where they laid them up when they had performed their ſervice: of theſe there were ninety-ſix in number; for as there were twenty-four courſes, there were four cheſts for every courſe; in which the garments were put by themſelves, the breeches by themſelves, the girdles by themſelves, the bonnets by themſelves, and the coats by themſelves; ſealed up with an inſcription on them, ſhewing what was in them: and when the men that belonged to ſuch a courſe, came to perform their ſervice in turn, they opened theſe cheſts, and cloathed themſelves; and when they went out of their ſervice, they put them up in them again, and ſealed them; and as for "the high prieſt, he "left his golden garments, בלשכה שלו, *in his "chamber*, (an apartment in the temple, peculiar to "him, and for this uſe) in the night, and at what"ſoever time he went out of the ſanctuary[s]." Nor might he go abroad with them, unleſs לצורך גדול, *in great neceſſity*[t]; as *Simeon* the juſt, went out in prieſtly garments, to meet *Alexander* the great, to appeaſe him, being warned of God ſo to do: hence the apoſtle *Paul* knew not *Ananias* the high prieſt, *Acts* xxiii. 5. which he muſt have done, had he had on his prieſtly garments: for when the prieſts were not in the temple, and out of ſervice, they wore no diſtinguiſhing habits, but were dreſſed as laicks, and as the common people were[u]. The reaſon of *Caiaphas*'s rending his cloaths, is expreſſed in the next clauſe, *ſaying, he hath ſpoken blaſphemy*: not only becauſe Jeſus aſſerted that he was the Meſſiah, but alſo the Son of God; hereby making himſelf equal with God, which is the ſenſe in which the *Jews* always underſtood this phraſe; and he appearing to them to be but a mere man, they charged it as blaſphemy againſt God, to aſſume ſuch a character and relation to himſelf; *what further need have we of witneſſes?* of ſeeking after others, as they had done; or of further examining and taking the depoſitions of thoſe, who were before them: he was for putting a ſtop to the proceſs, and bringing the cauſe at once to an iſſue; and therefore addreſſes the court in the following manner; *behold now, ye have heard his blaſphemy*: out of his own mouth, as *Luke*, ch. xxii. 71. expreſſes it; and with their own ears, and at that very time; ſo that they had no need of recourſe to things paſt, or examine witneſſes about what they had heard from him formerly: and therefore he propoſes, that they would attend to, and take notice of his preſent words; and which, as he ſuggeſts, were ſhocking and aſtoniſhing; for the word, *behold!* may not only be a note of attention, but of aſtoniſhment.

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[e] T. Bab. Maccot, fol. 24. 1. & Horayot, fol. 8. 1. Debarim Rabba, fol. 245. 4. Maimon. Hilch. Memarim, c. 5. §. 15. & Melacim, c. 8. §. 10. & alibi paſſim. [f] Sententiæ Secundi, p. 21. Ed. Gale. [g] Zohar in Gen. fol. 85. 4. Bemidbar Rabba, §. 13. fol. 209. 4. R. Jeſhuah in Aben Ezra, in Dan. vii. 13. & Jarchi & Saadiah Gaon in loc. [h] Targum in 1 Chron. iii. 24. & Beckius in ib. Midraſh Tillim apud Galatin. de arcan. Cathol. ver. l. 10. c. 1. [i] Moſes Kotſenſis Mitzvot Tora, pr. neg. 302. [k] Jarchi, Aben Ezra, &c. in loc. [l] Miſn. Horayot, c. 3. §. 5. [m] Bartenora & Maimon. in ib.

Ver. 66. *What think ye?* &c.] Of the words juſt now ſpoken by him; do not they in your opinion amount to a charge of blaſphemy? and what puniſhment do you think ought to be inflicted on him? is he guilty of death, or no? This queſtion he put, as being preſident of the court: *they anſwered and ſaid, he is guilty of death*; they were unanimous in their vote, for *Mark* ſays, *they all condemned him to be guilty of death*; only *Joſeph* of *Arimathea*, muſt be excepted, who conſented not to their counſel and deed, *Luke* xxiii. 51. and ſo muſt *Nicodemus*, if he was preſent; who ſeeing what they were determined to do, withdrew themſelves before the queſtion came to be put, and ſo it paſſed *nemine contradicente*; and indeed, if he had been guilty of blaſphemy, as they charged him, the ſentence would have been right. Now this was in the night, in which they begun, carried on, and finiſhed this judicial procedure, quite contrary to one of their own canons [w], which runs thus: "pecuniary cauſes they try in the day, and finiſh in "the night; capital cauſes (ſuch was this) they try "in the day, and finiſh in the day; pecuniary "cauſes they finiſh the ſame day, whether for abſolution, or condemnation; capital cauſes they "finiſh the ſame day for abſolution, and the day "following for condemnation; wherefore they do "not try cauſes neither on the ſabbath eve, nor on "the eve of a feaſt-day." But in this caſe, they begun the trial in the night, examined the witneſſes, finiſhed it, and paſſed the ſentence of condemnation, and that in the eve of a grand feſtival, their *Chagigah.*

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[n] Maimon. Hilch. Biath Hamikdaſh, c. 1. §. 14, 17. [o] Ib. Hilch. Obede Cochabim, c. 2. §. 10. Vid. T. Hieroſ. Sanhedrin, fol. 25. 1. [p] Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 7. §. 5. [q] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 69. 1. & Tamid, fol. 27. 2. [r] Miſn. Tamid, c. 5. §. 3. [s] Maimon. Hilch. Cele Hamikdaſh, c. 8. §. 8, 9, 10. [t] Moſes Kotſenſis Mitzvot Tora, pt. affirm. 173. [u] Maimon. ib. c. 10. §. 4. [w] Joſeph. de Bello Jud. l. 6. c. 15.

Ver. 67. *Then did they ſpit in his face,* &c.] Not the judges, the members of the *Sanhedrim,* but the ſervants of the high prieſt, and the officers that had Jeſus in hold, and were the guard upon him; ſee *Luke* xxii. 63. who ſeeing him condemned as guilty of death, thought they might inſult him at pleaſure, and uſe him in the moſt indecent and barbarous manner; and therefore, in a way of contempt, ſpit in his face; than which nothing was more reproachful and diſgraceful: the *Jews* [x] ſay, that he that ſpits before, or in the preſence of his maſter, is guilty of death, ſo nauſeous and filthy was it accounted; and how much more muſt it be ſo, to ſpit in the face of any one? hereby a prophecy was fulfilled, *Iſa.* l. 6. *I hid not my face from ſhame and ſpitting:* and hereby, together with his ſweat and blood, his viſage was more marred than any man's, and his form than the ſons of men: *and buffeted him;* cuffed, or boxed him with their double fiſts: *and others ſmote him with the palms of their hands;* gave him many a ſlap on the face with their open hands, or ſtruck him on the face with rods, as the word will bear to be rendered: they rapp'd him with the wands they had in their hands, and ſtruck him on the head with the rods or ſtaves they had with them; whereby was accompliſhed the prophecy, in *Mic.* v. 1. *they ſhall ſmite the judge of Iſrael with a rod upon the cheek.* This was very injurious treatment, the *Jews* themſelves being witneſſes; who have in their canons enjoined [y], that "if a man ſtrikes his "neighbour with his double fiſt, he muſt give him "a ſhekel; *R. Judah* ſays, on account of *R. Joſe* "the *Galilean,* a pound: if he gives him a ſlap of "the face, he muſt pay him two hundred *zuzim,* "or pence; and if with the back of his hand "(which was accounted [z] the more ignominious) "four hundred *zuzim:* if he plucked him by his "ear, or plucked off his hair, or ſpit, ſo as that "the ſpittle came upon him, or took away his "cloak——he muſt pay four hundred *zuzim,* and "all according to his honour or dignity." All theſe indignities were done to Chriſt; ſee *Iſa.* l. 6.

Ver. 68. *Saying, propheſie unto us, thou Chriſt,* &c.] Not that they owned him to be the Meſſiah; but becauſe he aſſerted himſelf to be the Meſſiah, and his followers believed in him as ſuch, they call him ſo; and in an ironical and ſarcaſtic way, call upon him to divine, and tell them who the perſons were, that uſed him in this manner; ſuggeſting, that if he was the Chriſt, or Meſſiah, he would know all things, and what were done to him: *who is he that ſmote thee?* for they had covered his face, or blindfolded him, as the other Evangeliſts ſay, and then bid him tell them who ſmote him laſt. Chriſt did not think fit to give them an anſwer to this queſtion, but he will let them know hereafter, who the particular perſon, or perſons were, that ſmote him; and when it will appear to all the churches, and to all the world, that he is the Lord God omniſcient. Some learned men have obſerved [a], that there was a play formerly uſed, called by the antients, κολλαϐισμος, at which, one perſon having his face covered, the reſt ſmote him; or one put his hands over his eyes, and another ſmote, and aſked him who it was that ſmote? and ſuch an exerciſe is yet in being among us, which is commonly called *Blind-man's Buff;* and ſuch paſtime as this the *Jews* had with Chriſt; in this ludicrous way did they uſe him, and made him their ſport and diverſion, as the *Philiſtines* did *Sampſon;* but it will coſt them dear another day.

Ver. 69. *Now Peter ſat without in the palace,* &c.] *Peter*'s denial of his Lord, the account of which follows, is related among the ſufferings of Chriſt; and indeed, the ill-uſage he met with from his enemies, their ſpitting in his face, buffeting him with their fiſts, ſmiting him on the cheeks with their hands, and rods, did not give him ſo much pain and grief, as to be denied by his own diſciple: we are before told, ver. 58. that *Peter* followed Chriſt afar off, and went into the high prieſt's palace, and ſat with the ſervants there, to ſee what would be the end and iſſue of theſe things: and here now he was in the apartment, where the council ſat, and were examining and trying Jeſus; though as *Mark* ſays, *beneath in the palace;* in the lower part of the room, in the great hall, in the midſt of which the ſervants had made a fire: the *Arabic* verſion reads it, *in the area of the court:* here *Peter* had placed himſelf, and here he ſat making his obſervations: *and a damſel came unto him;* one of the maids of the high prieſt, as *Mark* ſays; and according to the Evangeliſt *John,* was ſhe that kept the door, and had let him in, *ſaying, thou alſo waſt with Jeſus of Galilee.* The *Arabic* and *Perſic* verſions read, *Jeſus* the *Nazarene,* or of *Nazareth,* as below. So ſhe called him, not ſo much to diſtinguiſh him from any other of that name, as by way of reproach; ſuggeſting, that he could not be the Meſſiah, or that prophet; ſince Chriſt comes not out of *Galilee,* nor does any prophet ariſe from thence: and when ſhe charges him with being *with* him, her meaning is not, that he was with him in the garden, when he was taken; where it can't be thought ſhe was to ſee him; nor with him in the temple, or in any part of *Jeruſalem,* where ſhe poſſibly might have ſeen him; but that he was a diſciple of his, one that believed in him, embraced him as the Meſſiah, had imbibed his principles and doctrines, and was of his party; and was only come thither as a ſpie, to ſee what would be done to him.

Ver. 70. *But he denied before them all,* &c.] Which was a very great aggravation of his ſin; for, as it is to a man's commendation to profeſs a good profeſſion of Chriſt before many witneſſes, ſo it is to his diſgrace, and is reſented by Chriſt, to deny him before men: he did not deny that Chriſt was God, or the Son of God, or that he was come in the fleſh, or that Jeſus was the Chriſt, or that he was the only Saviour of ſinners; but that he was with him, or one of his diſciples; *ſaying, I know not what thou ſayeſt:* which was a very great falſehood; he knew the ſenſe and import of her words; he denied that which was moſt true; he had been with him from the beginning, had heard all his diſcourſes, and ſeen his miracles; he had been with him at particular times, and in particular places, when and where ſome others of the diſciples were not admitted, as at the raiſing of *Jairus*'s daughter, at the transfiguration in the mount, and in the garden, very lately; and yet, O baſe ingratitude! now denies that he had been with him; or that he knew what was meant by ſuch an expreſſion. He denied that he was a diſciple of Chriſt, which was his greateſt character, and higheſt glory; and this denial did not ariſe from any diffidence of his being one, or from a ſenſe of his unworthineſs to be one, but from the fear of man, which brought this ſnare upon him; and the more his weakneſs is diſcovered in it, that he ſhould be intimidated by a ſervant-maid into ſuch a denial, who but a few hours before had confidently affirmed, that tho' he ſhould die with Chriſt, he would not deny him; and who had ſo courageouſly drawn his ſword in his maſter's cauſe, in the face of a band of ſoldiers, and a multitude of armed men with ſwords and ſtaves. This was his firſt denial; a ſecond follows.

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[w] Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 4. §. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 11. §. 1, 2. T. Hieroſ. Yom Tob, fol. 63. 1.

[x] T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 99. 1.

[y] Miſn. Bava Kama, c. 8. §. 6.

[z] Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

[a] Braunii Select. Sacr. l. 5. Exerc. 2. §. 38. p. 622, 623. & Capell. in loc. e Polluce, l. 9. c. 7.

Ver. 71. *And when he was gone out into the porch*, &c.] The *Vulgate Latin*, *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read, *the gate*; and ſo does *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel; but more rightly it is rendered, *the porch*: he did not attempt to go out at the door, and run away, tho' he could gladly have done it; but he feared to do this, leſt, as this would diſcover him, they ſhould purſue him, and overtake him, and bring him before the *ſanhedrim*: he choſe rather to keep his ground, but was very uneaſy; and therefore moved into the porch, where he ſat very penſive, conſidering what was proper for him to do; when *another maid ſaw him, and ſaid unto them that were there, this* fellow *was alſo with Jeſus of Nazareth*: ſhe ſpeaks of Chriſt in the ſame contemptuous manner, as her fellow-ſervant had done; for this appellation of Chriſt was commonly, if not always uſed by way of contempt; and ſhe means the ſame thing by his being with him, the other did, and is rather more ſpightful, and bent on miſchief; for, the other addreſſed him alone, and what ſhe ſaid, ſaid to himſelf; but this directs her ſpeech to the ſervants and officers that were near at hand, and uſes him in a very ſcurrilous manner: this ſorry fellow, that is ſauntring and lurking about here, is certainly one of this man's diſciples.

Ver. 72. *And again he denied with an oath*, &c.] He denied a ſecond time, that he had ever been with Jeſus, or was a diſciple of his; and to put it out of all doubt, and an end to all diſpute about it, and farther charge of this kind, as he hoped, he annexed an oath to it: he ſwore by the God of truth; made a ſolemn appeal to the omniſcient God, the ſearcher of hearts, that he was ſo far from being ever with *Jeſus* of *Nazareth*, or a diſciple of his, that, ſays he, *I do not know the man*: meaning not only that he had no perſonal knowledge of him, or acquaintance with him; but that he had never ſeen the man in his life, nor did he know what manner of man he was. This, as it was a downright falſhood, it was what he had no need to have ſaid; for there were multitudes that knew Chriſt in this ſenſe, who never joined with him, or became his diſciples. This was ſo much over-doing it, that it was much it had not given them a ſuſpicion of him. Thoſe that would excuſe *Peter*'s ſin, by ſuppoſing that he meant, that he knew Chriſt to be God, and did not know him as a mere man, have no foundation for ſuch a ſuppoſition; and indeed, ſuch an ambiguous expreſſion, and mental reſervation, is no other than dealing fallaciouſly. *Peter* knew Chriſt in every ſenſe: he knew him ſpiritually, whom to know is life eternal; and he valued the knowledge of him above all things elſe: he knew him to be God, and the ſon of God; he knew him as mediator, and the ſaviour of loſt ſinners; he knew him as man, and had had perſonal intimacy and converſation with him of a long time, and yet now denies he knew him; and that with an oath, adding perjury to lying; and ſo it is, that one ſin leads on to another. This inſtance of *Peter*'s ſhews the wickedneſs and deceitfulneſs of man's heart; and what the beſt of men are, or would be, when left to themſelves, and of God: they become like other men, even like the men of the world, whoſe mouths are full of curſing and bitterneſs.

Ver. 73. *And after a while*, &c.] *Mark* ſays, *a little after*, and *Luke* obſerves, that it was *about the ſpace of one hour after*: ſo that here was time to reflect upon what he had been ſaying, and to guard againſt another temptation, ſhould he be attacked; but, alas! as yet he was unmindful of his Lord's words, and perſiſts in the denial of him, and that with greater aggravation, than at his firſt ſurprize: and indeed his temptation was now more violent; for there *came unto him they that ſtood by*; the officers and ſervants of the high-prieſt, his attendants that waited upon him, and who ſtood by the fire, where *Peter* was warming himſelf: before he was attacked by ſingle maid-ſervants, now by a body of men, and one of them the kinſman of the man whoſe ear he had cut off, and who challenged him, as having ſeen him in the garden; and another confidently affirmed, and ſwore to it, that he was with Jeſus, and was a *Galilean*; and all of them agreed in this, *and ſaid to Peter, ſurely thou alſo art one of them, for thy ſpeech bewrayeth thee*: not his ſpiritual ſpeech, for he had not been ſpeaking in the language of a diſciple of Chriſt, like one that had been with Jeſus; nor his ſwearing neither, for this rather ſhewed him to be one of them; but his country language, the brogue of his ſpeech, the *Galilean* dialect which he ſpoke: for in *Mark* 'tis ſaid, *thou art a Galilean, and thy ſpeech agreeth thereunto*: for, tho' the ſame language was ſpoken in *Galilee* as at *Jeruſalem*, yet it was not ſo accurate and polite in *Galilee*, nor ſo well pronounced; words of different ſignification were confounded together. Hence the *Talmudiſts* ſay[b], that "the men of *Judah*, who were careful of their language, their law was confirmed in their hands; the men of *Galilee*, who were not careful of their language, their law was not confirmed in their hands——the men of *Galilee*, who do not attend to language, what is reported of them? a *Galilean* went and ſaid to them, אמר למאן אמר למאן, they ſaid to him fooliſh *Galilean*, חמר, *Chamor* is to ride upon, or *Chamar* is to drink, or *Hamar* is for clothing, or *Immar* is for hiding for ſlaughter." By which inſtances it appears, that a *Galilean* pronounced *Chamor*, an aſs, and *Chamar*, wine, and *Hamar*, wool, and *Immar*, a lamb, all one, and the ſame way, without any diſtinction; ſo that it was difficult to know which of theſe he meant. Many other inſtances of the like kind are given in the ſame place, which ſhew the *Galilean* to be a more groſs, barbarous, and impolite language, than what was ſpoken at *Jeruſalem*; and *Peter* uſing this dialect, was known to be a *Galilean*: juſt as the *Ephraimites* were known by their pronouncing *Shibboleth*, *Sibboleth*.

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[b] T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 53. 1, 2. Vid. Buxtorf. Lex. Talmud. in rad. גלל.

Ver. 74. *Then began he to curſe, and to ſwear,* &c.] He ſwore before, and now he began to *curſe*; not Chriſt, as *Saul* compelled ſome to blaſpheme him, who profeſſed him, and as the *Jews* formerly curſed Chriſt, and his followers, in their ſynagogues: for *Peter*'s crime was bad enough, it need not be made worſe than it was: he could never call Jeſus accurſed; in ſo doing he would have ſinned the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt; but he curſed himſelf; *he began to imprecate himſelf*, as the *Arabic* verſion renders it; he made dreadful imprecations and wiſhes; wiſhed that all the miſeries and calamities he could think of might fall upon him, if he was one of the diſciples of *Jeſus* of *Nazareth*, or knew any thing of him: ſaying, *I know not the man*; if I do, God do ſo to me, or more alſo: let vengeance light upon me; may I be the moſt miſerable creature in the world, if I know any thing of him; *and immediately the cock crew*: as he was ſwearing and curſing in this manner; as ſoon as ever the words were out of his mouth, and he had in this ſad and ſolemn manner three times denied that he knew Chriſt, or was ever with him, or a diſciple of his. It is forbid, by a *Jewiſh* canon, to keep cocks at *Jeruſalem*; it runs thus[c]: "they do not bring up cocks in *Jeruſalem*, becauſe of the holy things, neither do the prieſts in all the land of *Iſrael*, becauſe of the purifications." Whether this canon was then in being, or how it was diſpenſed with, or whether there was any particular providence in the cock being here now, and ſo nigh the high-prieſt's palace, is not certain; but one there was: nor can the *Jews* deny that there were cocks at *Jeruſalem*; for they themſelves ſpeak of a cock, שנסקל בירושלים[d], *that was ſtoned at Jeruſalem*.

Ver. 75. *And Peter remembred the words of Jeſus*, &c.] Forgetfulneſs of God, of his works, of his words, and of his law, of his revealed mind and will, is often the cauſe of ſin; and a remembrance of things is neceſſary to the recovery of a fallen or back-ſliding profeſſor; as, of what he is fallen from, of the love and kindneſs of God formerly ſhewn to him, of his evil ways and works he is fallen into, and of the words and truths of Chriſt he has been very indifferent unto, and lukewarm about: *which ſaid unto him, before the cock crow*, or is done crowing, *thou ſhalt deny me thrice*; which he was put in mind of on hearing the cock crow. So by one means, or another, ſometimes by ſome remarkable providence, and ſometimes by the miniſtry of the word, God is pleaſed to alarm and awaken ſleepy profeſſors, back-ſliding believers, and remind them of their condition and duty, and reſtore them by repentance, as he did *Peter*: *and he went out*; of the high-prieſt's palace, either thro' fear, leſt he ſhould be ſeen weeping, and be ſuſpected; or rather thro' ſhame, not being able to continue where his Lord was, when he had ſo ſhamefully denied him; as alſo to leave the company he had got into, being ſenſible he was wrong in mingling himſelf with ſuch, and thereby expoſed himſelf to theſe temptations; as well as to vent his grief in tears privately: *and wept bitterly*; being thoroughly ſenſible what an evil and bitter thing the ſin was, he had been guilty of: his repentance ſprung from Chriſt's looking upon him, and from his looking to Jeſus, and was truly evangelical: it was a ſorrow after a godly ſort, and was increaſed by the diſcoveries of Chriſt's love unto him; and was attended with faith in him, and views of pardon thro' him: the *Perſic* verſion adds, *and his ſin is forgiven*; which, tho' not in the text, yet is a truth; for *Peter*'s repentance was not like *Cain*'s, nor *Eſau*'s, nor *Judas*'s; it was not the repentance of one in deſpair, but was a repentance unto life and ſalvation, which needed not to be repented of.

## CHAP. XXVII.

Ver. 1. *WHEN the morning was come*, &c.] Or, *as ſoon as it was day*, as *Luke* ſays, ch. xxii. 66. The *ſanhedrim* had been up all night, which, after eating the paſſover, they had ſpent in apprehending, trying, and examining Jeſus, and the witneſſes againſt him; and had come to an unanimous vote, that he was guilty of death; upon which they either put Jeſus out of the room for a while, or went into another themſelves, to conſult what further ſteps ſhould be taken: or if they went home to their own houſes, they very quickly got together again, and met in the temple, where they ſeem to be, ver. 5. unleſs the ſtory of *Judas* is, by anticipation, inſerted here; and in their council-chamber, where they led Jeſus, and examined him again concerning his being the ſon of God; ſee *Luke* xxii. 66. all which ſhows how intent they were upon this buſineſs, and with what eagerneſs and diligence they purſued it; their feet ran to evil, and they made haſte to ſhed blood. This was the time of their morning prayers, of their ſaying their phylacteries, and reciting the *ſhema*, *hear, O Iſrael, the Lord our God is one Lord*, according to their canon, which is this[e]: "from what time do they read the *ſhema* in the morning? from ſuch time that a man can diſtinguiſh between blue and white: ſays *R. Eliezer*, between blue and green; and he finiſhes it before the ſun ſhines out. *R. Joſhua* ſays, before three hours are elapſed:" but religion, rites, ceremonies, and canons, muſt all give way to the accompliſhment of what their hearts were ſo much ſet upon: *all the chief-prieſts and elders of the people.* The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions leave out the word *all*, but it is retained in the *Vulgate Latin*, *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, and in *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel, and that very rightly. The *Scribes* and elders met at *Caiaphas*'s houſe before, ch. xxvi. 57. but it being in the night, they might not be all together; *Annas* particularly ſeems to have been abſent, *John* xviii. 24. but now they all aſſemble together, as in a caſe of neceſſity they were obliged to do: their rule was this[f]; "the ſanhedrim, conſiſting of ſeventy and one (as this was) are not obliged to ſit all of them as one, (or all, and every one of them) in their place in the temple; but at what time there is a neceſſity of their being gathered together, מתקבצין כולן, *they are all of them aſſembled*; but, at other times, he who has any buſineſs may go, and do his pleaſure, and return: yet ſo it is, that there may not be leſs than twenty-three ſitting continually all the time of their ſitting; (their uſual time of ſitting was from the morning daily ſacrifice, to the evening daily ſacrifice).

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[c] Miſn. Bava Kama, c. 7. §. 7. T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 82. 2. Abot R. Nathan, c. 35. Maimon. Hilch. Beth Habechirah, c. 7. §. 14. Shalſhelet Hakkabala, fol. 9. 2.

[d] T. Hieroſ. Erubin, fol. 26. 1. Caphtor, fol. 42. 1.

[e] Miſn. Beracot, c. 1. §. 2.

[f] Maimon Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 3. §. 2.

“ ſacrifice [g]) one that is under a neceſſity of going out; this looks upon his companions that remain, and if twenty-three remain, he may go out; but if not, he may not, until the other returns.” This being now a caſe of neceſſity, and great importance, they are all ſummoned and gathered together, unleſs we except *Joſeph* of *Arimathea*, and *Nicodemus*; who yet might be there, tho' they did not conſent to their counſel and deed, as is certain of the former, *Luke* xxiii. 51. theſe *took counſel againſt Jeſus*; God's holy child Jeſus, his anointed, the Meſſiah; and which was taking counſel againſt the Lord himſelf; and ſo the prophecy in *Pſ.* ii. 2. had its accompliſhment: what they conſulted about was *to put him to death*; it was not what puniſhment to inflict upon him, whether ſcourging or death; that was before determined; they had already adjudged him to death: but now they enter into cloſe conſultation what death to put him to, and in what manner; whether privately, he being now in their hands; or whether by the means of zealots, or by the *Roman* magiſtrate; or whether it ſhould be by ſtoning, which muſt have been the caſe, if they put him to death according to their law, and by their authority; or whether by crucifixion, which they choſe as the moſt ignominious and painful; and therefore determined to deliver him up to the *Roman* governor, and uſe their intereſt with him to put him to death, according to the *Roman* law.

Ver. 2. *And when they had bound him*, &c.] The captain, and officers, bound him when they firſt took him, and brought him to *Annas*, and *Annas* ſent him bound to *Caiaphas*, *John* xviii. 12, 24. Perhaps he might be unlooſed whilſt he was examining before the high-prieſt, under a ſhew of freedom to ſpeak for himſelf; or they might bind him faſter now, partly for greater ſecurity, as he paſſed thro' the ſtreets, and partly for his greater reproach; as alſo, that he might be at once taken to be a malefactor by the *Roman* judge: *they led him away:* the chief-prieſts and elders of the people led him, at leaſt by their ſervants, and they themſelves attending in perſon, that they might awe the people from attempting a reſcue of him, as they paſſed along; and that they might influence the *Roman* governor ſpeedily to put him to death; and leſt he ſhould be prevailed upon to releaſe him, thro' his own commiſeration, the innocence of Jeſus, and the intreaty of his friends. *And delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor*; and ſo fulfilled what Chriſt had predicted, *Matt.* xx. 19. This they did, either becauſe the power of judging in caſes of life and death was taken away from them; or if it was not, they choſe that the infamy of his death ſhould be removed from them, and be laid upon a *Gentile* magiſtrate; and chiefly becauſe they were deſirous he ſhould die the death of the croſs. The *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions leave out the firſt name *Pontius*, and only call him *Pilate*: the *Ethiopic* verſion calls him *Pilate Pontinæus*; and *Theophylact* ſuggeſts, that he was ſo called becauſe he was of *Pontus*. *Philo* the *Jew* [h] makes mention of him: “*Pilate*, ſays he, was επιτροπος της Ιυδαιας, *procurator of Judea*; who, not ſo much in honour of *Tiberius*, as to grieve the people, put the golden ſhields within the holy city in the palace of *Herod*.” And ſo *Tacitus* [i] calls him the procurator of *Tiberius*, and *Joſephus* alſo [k]. It is ſaid [l] of him, that falling into many calamities, he ſlew himſelf with his own hand, in the times of *Caligula*, and whilſt *Publicola* and *Nerva* were conſuls; which was a righteous judgment of God upon him for condemning Chriſt, contrary to his own conſcience.

Ver. 3. *Then Judas, which had betrayed him*, &c.] Before he is deſcribed as he that *ſhall*, or *ſhould*, or doth betray him; but now having perpetrated the horrid ſin, as he that *had* done it. *When he ſaw that he was condemned*; that is, that *Jeſus* was condemned, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read, either by the *Jewiſh Sanhedrim*, or by *Pilate*, or both: for this narrative concerning *Judas* may be proleptically inſerted here, tho' the thing itſelf did not come to paſs till afterwards; and the ſenſe be, that when he, either being preſent during the whole procedure againſt Chriſt; or returning in the morning after he had received his money, and had been with his friends; finding that his maſter was adjudged to death by the *Sanhedrim*, who were puſhing hard to take away his life; that they had delivered him bound to the *Roman* governor; and that he, after an examination of him, had committed him to the ſoldiers to mock, and ſcourge, and crucify him; and ſeeing him leading to the place of execution, *repented himſelf:* not for the ſin, as committed againſt God and Chriſt; but as it brought a load of preſent guilt and horror upon his mind, and expoſed him to everlaſting puniſhment: it was not ſuch a repentance by which he became wiſer and better; but an excruciating, tormenting pain in his mind, by which he became worſe; therefore a different word is here uſed than what commonly is for true repentance: it was not a godly ſorrow for ſin, or a ſorrow for ſin, as committed againſt God, which works repentance to ſalvation not to be repented of; but a worldly ſorrow, which iſſues in death, as it did in him. It did not ſpring from the love of God, as evangelical repentance does, nor proceed in the fear of God, and his goodneſs; but was no other than a foretaſte of that worm that dieth not, and of that fire which cannot be quenched: it was deſtitute of faith in Chriſt; he never did believe in him as the reſt of the diſciples did; ſee *John* vi. 64, 70, 71. and that mourning which does not ariſe from looking to Jeſus, or is not attended with faith in him, is never genuine. *Judas*'s repentance was without hope of forgiveneſs, and was nothing elſe but horror and black deſpair, like that of *Cain*'s, like the trembling of devils, and the anguiſh of damned ſouls. It looks as if *Judas* was not aware that it would iſſue in the death of Chriſt: he was puſhed on by ſatan, and his avarice, to hope, that he ſhould get this money, and yet his maſter eſcape; which he imagined he might do, either thro' ſuch a defence of himſelf, as was not to be gainſayed; or that he would find out ways and means of getting out of the hands of the *Jews*, as he had formerly done, and with which *Judas* was acquainted: but now, there being no hope of either, guilt and horror ſeize his mind, and gnaw his conſcience; and he wiſhes he had never done the accurſed action, which had entailed ſo much diſtreſs and miſery upon him: *and brought again the thirty pieces of ſilver to the chief-prieſts and elders*; which was the ſum he had covenanted for, and they had agreed to give him, on condition of delivering Jeſus into their hands, which he had done: and it appears from hence, that the money had been accordingly paid him, and he had received it. But he being filled with remorſe of conſcience for what he had done, feels no quietneſs in his mind; nor could he ſave of what he had deſired, but is obliged to return it; not from an honeſt principle, as in the caſe of true repentance, but on account of a racking and torturing conſcience.

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[g] Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 3. §. 1. Bemidbar Rabba, §. 1. fol. 177. 3.

[h] De Legat. ad Caium, p. 1033, 1034.

[i] Hiſt. l. 15.

[k] De Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 9. §. 2.

[l] M. Aurel. Caſſiodor. Chronicon in Caligula, Joſeph. Antiq. l. 18. c. 11. Euſeb. Eccl. Hiſt. l. 2. c. 7.

Ver. 4. *Saying, I have ſinned*, &c.] Here was a confeſſion, and yet no true repentance; for he confeſſed, but not to the right perſons; not to God, nor Chriſt, but to the chief-prieſts and elders; nor over the head of the antitypical ſcape-goat, not ſeeking to Chriſt for pardon and cleanſing; nor did he confeſs and forſake ſin, but went on adding ſin to ſin, and ſo found no mercy. The ſame confeſſion was made by a like hardned wretch, *Pharoah*, *Exod.* ix. 27. He proceeds and points out the evil he had committed: *in that I have betrayed innocent blood*, or *righteous blood*; ſo the *Vulgate Latin*, and *Syriac* verſions, and *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel read, and ſome copies; that is, have betrayed an innocent and righteous perſon, and been the occaſion of his blood being about to be ſhed, and of his dying wrongfully. So God, in his all-wiſe providence, ordered it, that a teſtimony ſhould be bore to the innocence of Chriſt, from the mouth of this vile wretch that betrayed him; to cut off the argument from the *Jews*, that one of his own diſciples knew him to be a wicked man, and as ſuch delivered him into their hands: for tho' *Judas* might not believe in him as the Meſſiah, and the Son of God, at leaſt had no true faith in him, as ſuch; yet he knew, and believed in his own conſcience, that he was a good man, and a righteous and innocent one: and what he here ſays is a teſtimony of Chriſt's innocence, and what his conſcience obliged him to; and ſhews the terrors that now encompaſſed him about; and might have been a warning to the *Jews* to have ſtopped all further proceedings againſt him; but inſtead of that, *they ſaid, what is that to us? ſee thou to that:* ſignifying, that if he had ſinned, he muſt anſwer for it himſelf; it was no concern of theirs; nor ſhould they form their ſentiments of Chriſt according to his: they knew that he was a blaſphemer, and deſerving of death; and whatever opinion he had of him, it had no weight with them, who ſhould proceed againſt him as an evil doer, let him think or ſay what he would to the contrary; and ſuggeſt, that he knew otherwiſe than what he ſaid: ſo the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions render it, *thou knoweſt*, and the *Arabic*, *thou knoweſt better*.

Ver. 5. *And he caſt down the pieces of ſilver in the temple*, &c.] Upon the ground, in that part of the temple where they were ſitting; in their council-chamber, לשכת הגזית, *the paved chamber*, where the *Sanhedrim* uſed to meet [m]: for it ſeems they would not take the money of him; and he was determined not to carry it back with him, and therefore threw it down before them, left it, and *departed*; from the *Sanhedrim: and went*; out of the temple; not to God, nor to the throne of his grace, nor to his maſter, to aſk pardon of him, but to ſome ſecret ſolitary place, to cheriſh his grief and black deſpair, *and hanged himſelf*. The kind and manner of his death, as recorded by *Luke* in *Acts* i. 18. is, that *falling headlong he burſt aſunder in the midſt, and all his bowels guſhed out:* which account may be reconciled with this, by ſuppoſing the rope, with which he hanged himſelf, to break, when falling; it may be, from a very high place, upon a ſtone, or ſtump of a tree; when his belly burſt, and his guts came out: or it may be rendered, as is in the *Arabic* and *Ethiopic* verſions, *he was ſtrangled*; and that either by the devil, as Dr. *Lightfoot* thinks; who, having been in him for the ſpace of two or three days, caught him up into the air, and threw him down headlong; and daſhing him on the ground, he burſt in the midſt, and his bowels guſhed out, and the devil made his exit that way: or by a diſeaſe called the ſquinancy, or quinſie, a ſuffocation brought upon him by exceſſive grief, deep melancholy, and utter deſpair; when being choaked by it, he fell flat upon his face, and the rim of his belly burſt, and his entrails came out. This diſeaſe the *Jews* call אסכרא, *Iſcara*; and if it was what he was ſubject to from his infancy, his parents might call him *Iſcariot* from hence; and might be deſigned in providence to be what ſhould bring him to his wretched end: and what is ſaid of this ſuffocating diſorder, ſeems to agree very well with the death of *Judas*. They ſay [n], that "it is a diſeaſe "that begins in the bowels, and ends in the throat:" they call death by it, מיתה רעה, *an evil death* [o]; and ſay [p], that "there are nine hundred and three kinds of "deaths in the world, but that קשה שבכלן אסכרא, "*the hardeſt of them all is Iſcara*; which the *Gloſs* calls *ſtrangulament*, and ſays, is in the midſt of the "body:" they alſo reckon it, מיתה משונה, *a violent death* [q]; and ſay [r], that the ſpies which brought a bad report of the good land, died of it. Moreover, they affirm [s], that "whoever taſtes any thing "before he ſeparates (*i. e.* lights up the lamp on "the eve of the ſabbath, to diſtinguiſh the night "from the day) ſhall die by *Iſcara*, or ſuffocation." Upon which the Gloſs ſays, this is "meaſure for "meaſure: he that ſatisfies his throat, or appetite, "ſhall be choaked; as it is ſaid [t], he that is condemned to be ſtrangled, either he ſhall be drowned in a river, or he ſhall die of a quinſie, this is "*Iſcara*."

Ver. 6. *And the chief-prieſts took the ſilver pieces*, &c.] Off of the ground, after *Judas* was gone, no other daring to meddle with them; for in any other it would have been deemed ſacriledge; and they being the proper perſons to take care and diſpoſe of money brought into the temple; and if not, their covetous diſpoſition would have moved them to take up the money: *and ſaid*, one to another, *it is not lawful to put them into the treaſury*, or *Corban*; as the *Vulgate Latin* and *Ethiopic* verſions leave the word untranſlated: and which is the place where the offerings for the repair and ſervice of the temple were put, and is the ſame into which Chriſt beheld the people caſting their money, *Mark* xii. 41. *Joſephus* [u] obſerves, that "there was, with the *Jews*, "an holy treaſure, which is called *Corbonas*;" and this is the לשכת הקרבן, *the chamber of the Korban*, of which the *Jews* make mention [w]: the reaſon the high-prieſts give why it was not lawful to put this money into the treaſury, or into any of the cheſts in the *Corban* chamber, was, *becauſe it is the price of blood*. Thus they ſtrained at a gnat, and ſwallowed a camel. It is highly probable, that they took this ſelf-ſame money out of the treaſury to buy this blood with, and yet ſcruple to put it in, having bought it: and beſides, they made no heſitation about ſeeking for, and ſhedding this innocen cent blood, and yet boggle at putting this money into the *Corban*, becauſe it was the price of it; proceeding upon the ſame reaſon as the law in *Deut.* xxiii. 18. does, pretending much religion, and great veneration for holy places and things, when they made no conſcience of committing the moſt flagitious crimes.

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[m] T. Bab Sanhedrin, fol. 88. 2.

[n] Gloſſ. in T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 33. 1.

[o] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 62.

[p] Beracot, fol. 8. 1.

[q] Gloſſ. in T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 19. 2.

[r] T. Bab. Sota, fol. 35. 1.

[s] T. Bab Peſachim, fol. 105. 1.

[t] T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 30. 2.

[u] De Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 9. §. 3.

[w] Miſn. Mid dot, c. 1. §. 1.

Ver. 7. *And they took counſel*, &c.] With one another, conſidered of the matter, and deliberated about it a while; and at laſt came to a reſolution, *and bought with them the potter's field to bury ſtrangers in:* a field of no great value, or it could not have been bought ſo near *Jeruſalem* for ſo ſmall a ſum as thirty pieces of ſilver. *Grotius*'s conjecture ſeems to be a good one, that it was a field the potter had dug up for his uſe, and had made the moſt of it; ſo that it was good for nothing, but for the purpoſe for which theſe men bought it, *to bury ſtrangers in:* either ſuch as were not of their own nation, as the *Roman* ſoldiers, many of which were among them, and who they did not ſuffer to be buried among them; or proſelytes, or ſuch as came from diſtant parts, at their three feſtivals, many of whom may be ſuppoſed to die at ſuch times: now by this act of humanity in providing for the interment of ſtrangers, they deſigned, and hoped to have covered their wickedneſs in bargaining with *Judas* to betray innocent blood, for this ſum of money; but it was ſo ordered by divine providence, that this became a public and laſting memorial of their ſin and infamy: for it follows,

Ver. 8. *Wherefore that field was called*, &c.] Not by the prieſts and elders, but by the common people, who knew by what money it was purchaſed, *the field of blood*; or *Aceldama*, which ſo ſignifies, as in *Acts* i. 19. not called the field of the prieſts, the purchaſers; nor the field of the ſtrangers, for whom it was bought; but the field of blood, being purchaſed with that money, for which innocent blood was betrayed; and this name it bore *unto this day*; in which *Matthew* wrote his Goſpel, about eight years after, as is thought. *Jerom*[x] ſays, that in his time this field was ſhown on the ſouth-ſide of mount *Sion*.

Ver. 9. *Then was fulfilled that which was ſpoken by Jeremy the prophet*, &c.] Thro' the purchaſing of the potter's field with the thirty pieces of ſilver, the price that Chriſt was valued at, a prophecy in the writings of the Old Teſtament had its accompliſhment: but about this there is ſome difficulty. The Evangeliſt here ſays it was ſpoken by *Jeremy* the prophet; whereas in his prophecy there is no mention of any ſuch thing. There is indeed an account of his buying his uncle *Hanameel*'s ſon's field, in ch. xxxii. but not a word of a potter, or a potter's field, or of the price of it, thirty pieces of ſilver; and that as a price at which he, or any other perſon was valued; but the paſſage which is manifeſtly referr'd to, ſtands in *Zech.* xi. 12, 13. where are theſe words, *and I ſaid unto them, if ye think good, give* me *my price, and if not, forbear*; *ſo they weighed for my price thirty* pieces *of ſilver: and the Lord ſaid unto me, caſt it unto the potter, a goodly price that I was prized at of them. And I took the thirty* pieces *of ſilver, and caſt them to the potter in the houſe of the Lord:* for the removing of this difficulty, it might be obſerved, that the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions make no mention of any prophet's name, only read, *which was ſpoken by the prophet*; and ſo may as well be aſcribed to *Zechariah*, as to *Jeremy*, and better: but it muſt be owned, that *Jeremy* is in all the *Greek* copies, in the *Vulgate Latin*, *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, and in *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel. Various things are ſaid for the reconciling of this matter: ſome have thought that *Zechariah* had two names, and that beſides *Zechariah*, he was called *Jeremy*; but of this there is no proof. *Jerom*[y] affirms, that in an *Hebrew* volume, being an apocryphal work of *Jeremy*, which was ſhewn him by one of the *Nazarene* ſect, he read theſe words verbatim: ſo that tho' they do not ſtand in the writings of *Jeremy*, which are canonical ſcripture, yet in an apocryphal book of his, and which may as well be referred to, as the book of *Maccabees*, the traditions of the *Jews*, the prophecies of *Enoch*, and the writings of the Heathen poets. Moreover, Mr. *Mede*[z] has laboured, by various arguments, to prove, that the four laſt chapters of *Zechariah* were written by *Jeremy*, in which this paſſage ſtands; and if ſo, the reaſon is clear, for the citation in his name. But what ſeems beſt to ſolve this difficulty, is, that the order of the books of the Old Teſtament is not the ſame now, as it was formerly: the ſacred writings were divided, by the *Jews*, into three parts: the firſt was called the law, which contains the five books of *Moſes*; the ſecond, the prophets, which contains the former and the latter prophets; the former prophets began at *Joſhua*, and the latter at *Jeremy*; the third was called *Cetubim*, or the *Hagiographa*, the holy writings, which began with the book of *Pſalms:* now, as this whole third and laſt part is called the *Pſalms*, *Luke* xxiv. 44. becauſe it began with that book; ſo all that part which contained the latter prophets, for the ſame reaſon, beginning at *Jeremy*, might be called by his name; hence a paſſage, ſtanding in the prophecy of *Zechariah*, who was one of the latter prophets, might be juſtly cited under the name of *Jeremy*. That ſuch was the order of the books of the Old Teſtament, is evident from the following paſſage[a]: "it is a tradition of our Rabbins, that "the order of the prophets is, *Joſhua* and *Judges*, "*Samuel* and the *Kings*, *Jeremiah* and *Ezekiel*, "*Iſaiah*, and the twelve." Moreover, it is uſual with them to ſay[b], that the ſpirit of *Jeremiah* was in *Zechariah*; and it is very plain, that the latter prophets have many things from the former; and ſo might *Zechariah* have this originally from *Jeremy*, which now ſtands in his prophecy: all this would be ſatisfactory to a *Jew:* and it is to be obſerved, that the *Jew*[c], who objects to every thing he could in the Evangeliſt, with any appearance on his ſide, and even objects to the application of this prophecy; yet finds no fault with him for putting *Jeremy* for *Zechariah*. That the prophecy in *Zechariah* belongs to the Meſſiah, and was fulfilled in Jeſus, manifeſtly appears from the context, as well as the text itſelf. The perſon ſpoken of is in ver. 4. called to *feed the flock of ſlaughter*, which being in a very poor condition, ver. 5, 6. the ſtate of the *Jews*, at the time of Chriſt's coming, is hereby very aptly repreſented: he agrees to do it, ver. 7. and accordingly furniſhes himſelf for it; but he is deſpiſed, abhorred, and rejected by the *ſhepherds*, the principal men in church and ſtate; becauſe he ſeverely inveighed againſt their doctrines and practices, ver. 8. upon which he rejects them, and diſſolves both their civil and church-ſtate; which can ſuit with no other times than the times of Jeſus, ver. 9, 10, 11, 14. and leſt it ſhould be thought that he uſed them with too much ſeverity, he gives one ſingle inſtance of their ingratitude to him, which ſhews how little they eſteemed him; and that is, their valuing him at no greater a price than *thirty pieces of ſilver*, ver. 12, 13. which were afterwards *caſt unto the potter*. The *Jews*[d] themſelves own, that this prophecy belongs to the Meſſiah, tho' they interpret it of him in another manner. “Says *R. Chanun*, “the *Iſraelites* will have no need of the doctrine of “the king Meſſiah in the time to come; as it is “ſaid, *Iſ.* xi. 10. *to him ſhall the Gentiles ſeek*, and “not the *Iſraelites*: if ſo, for what does the king “Meſſiah come? and what does he come to do? “to gather the captives of *Iſrael*, and to give them “the thirty precepts, as it is ſaid, *Zech.* xi. 12. “*and I ſaid unto them, if ye think good*, &c. *Rab* “ſays, theſe are the thirty mighty men; and *Jo*“*chanan* ſays, theſe are the thirty commands.” Should it be objected, that ſuppoſing the Meſſiah is intended, the money is ſaid to be given into his hands, and not into the hands of him that was to betray him; *if ye think good, give* me *my price*: it may be replied, that the words הבו שכרי ſhould not be rendered, *give me my price*, but *give my price*; i. e. give what you think fit to value me at, into the hands of the betrayer; and accordingly they did: *ſo they weighed for my price thirty pieces of ſilver*; which is the very ſum the chief-prieſts agreed with *Judas* for, and which he received; ſee *Matt.* xxvi. 15. and if it ſhould be objected to the citation of the Evangeliſt, that it is conſiderably different from the words of the prophet, it being in the latter, *I took the thirty pieces of ſilver*; whereas in the former, the words are quoted thus, *ſaying, and they took the thirty pieces of ſilver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Iſrael did value*: it may be obſerved, that the word which *Matthew* uſes may be rendered, *I took*, as it is in the *Syriac* verſion; and that the thirty pieces of ſilver were the goodly price, at which the Meſſiah was valued by the children of *Iſrael*, is manifeſt enough; and is an inſtance of egregious ingratitude, that this ſhould be the price of the *innocent* one, as the *Arabic* verſion renders the phraſe, *of him that was valued*; of the *honoured* one, as the *Ethiopic*; of the *moſt precious* one, as the *Syriac*; he who in his perſon, and the perfections of his nature, is equal to his father, and his fellow; who has all the riches of grace and glory in him, as mediator; who is ſuperior to angels, and fairer than the ſons of men in human nature; is the chiefeſt among ten thouſands, and more precious than rubies; and all the things that can be deſired are not to be compared with him, and yet ſold for a ſum of money, the price of a ſlave, *Exod.* xxi. 32. and that by the children of *Iſrael*, to whom the Meſſiah was promiſed; who expected him, and deſired his coming; and who ſprung from among them, and was ſent unto them, and yet they received him not, but under-valued him in this exceeding mean way. Wicked men have no value for Chriſt; they ſell him and themſelves for nought; but gracious ſouls can't value him enough, nor ſufficiently expreſs their eſteem of him.

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[x] De locis Hebraicis.

[y] In loc.

[z] Mede's Works, p. 963, 1022, 1023.

[a] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 14. 2. Vid. Præfat. R. David Kimchi in Jer.

[b] Sepher Hagilgulim apud Surenhuſ. Biblos Katallages, p. 41.

[c] R. Iſaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 25. p. 412.

Ver. 10. *And gave them for the potter's field*, &c.] In the prophet it is, *and I caſt them to the potter in the houſe of the Lord*; whereas here it is, *they gave them*; but the word *Matthew* uſes may be rendered, *I gave*, as it is by the *Syriac*; and as the laſt words require it ſhould, *as the Lord commanded me*; otherwiſe there will be no coherence between them: and whereas the thirty pieces of ſilver are, in the prophet, ſaid to be caſt, or given *to the potter*, and here, *for the potter's field*, there is no contradiction: the plain ſenſe is, that they were given to the potter, as a valuable conſideration for his field: and whereas 'tis added, *in the houſe of the Lord*, which the Evangeliſt does not cite; the reaſon is, becauſe this money was firſt caſt down in the temple by *Judas*, and after being taken up by the prieſts, they covenanted with the potter for his field, and paid him for it with this money in the ſanctuary. The Evangeliſt, inſtead of this laſt clauſe, puts, *as the Lord commanded me*; which have made ſome think, that there ſhould be a different reading; and that inſtead of בית, *the houſe*, it ſhould be read כדת, *according to the commandment*: but there is no need to ſuppoſe this; the Evangeliſt is juſtified in the uſe of this phraſe, by what is ſaid in the prophet in the beginning of ver. 13. *and the Lord ſaid unto me*: and this is only a tranſpoſition and explanation, according to a rule the *Jews* have, סרס המקרא ודרשהו, *invert*, or *tranſpoſe the ſcripture, and explain it*[e]. Should it be ſaid that the Meſſiah, and not the betrayer, nor the prieſts, is ſaid to caſt this money to the potter, or give it for the potter's field; it may be replied, that Jeſus may be ſaid to do that which *Judas*, and the chief-prieſts did; becauſe, by his almighty power and providence, he over-ruled thoſe things for good, which in themſelves were evil. *Judas* thought to have converted the money to his own uſe, and the prieſts would have been glad to have taken it again to themſelves; but Chriſt obliged *Judas* to carry back the money to the prieſts, and caſt it into the temple, and worked upon the minds of the prieſts, not to put it into the treaſury, but to buy the potter's field with it, whereby the prophecy, in its literal ſenſe, was fully accompliſhed.

Ver. 11. *And Jeſus ſtood before the governor*, &c.] *Pilate* who ſat; for ſo was the cuſtom for the judge to ſit, and thoſe that were judged, to ſtand, eſpecially whilſt witneſs was bore againſt them[f]. “Says “*R. Ba*, in the name of *Rab Hona*, the witneſſes “ought to ſtand whilſt they bear witneſs. Says “*R. Jeremiah*, in the name of *R. Abbu*, alſo “הנידונין צריכן להיות עומדין, *thoſe that are judged* “*ought to ſtand*, whilſt they receive their witneſs.” And again[g], “how do they judge? the judges ſit, “והנידונין עומדין, *and they that are judged ſtand*.” Think what a ſight was here, the eternal ſon of God in human nature, the Lord of life and glory, the prince of the kings of the earth, ſtanding before an Heathen governor! he before whom *Pilate* muſt ſtand, and even all men, ſmall and great, another day; all muſt appear, and ſtand before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt; he himſelf ſtands at the bar of men! the reaſon of this was, becauſe he ſtood in the law-place, and ſtead of his people: he became their ſubſtitute from everlaſting, was made under the law in time, and was ſubject to its precept, and its penalty: and tho' he had no crimes of his own to anſwer for, he had the ſins of his people on him; on account of which he ſtood before the governor, to receive the ſentence of condemnation on himſelf; that ſo ſin being condemned in his fleſh, the whole righteouſneſs of the law might be fulfilled in them: he ſtood here, that they might ſtand before God, and at the throne of his grace with boldneſs and intrepidity; a new, and living way to it being opened for them, thro' his blood and ſacrifice; and that they might ſtand before him, the judge of all the earth, with confidence, and not be aſhamed at his coming. *And the governor aſked him, ſaying, art thou the king of the Jews?* for the *Jews* had ſuggeſted to *Pilate*, that Jeſus had given out that he was Chriſt a king; and he being *Cæſar*'s procurator, it became him ſtrictly to enquire into this matter, leſt there ſhould be any encroachment made on his maſter's dignity, authority, and dominions, and he himſelf ſhould ſuffer blame; wherefore, he does not aſk Jeſus, whether he ſaid he was the king of the *Jews*, or others ſaid ſo of him, but whether he was their king: he knew he was not in fact; but his queſtion was, whether he was ſo in right; or if he thought he was, what claim he made, and what he had to ſupport it: *and Jeſus ſaid unto him, thou ſay'ſt*; which is all one as if he had ſaid, *I am*; ſee *Matt.* xxvi. 25, 64. compared with *Mark* xiv. 62. and that this was the ſenſe of his anſwer is clear from *John* xviii. 36, 37. though, at the ſame time, he let him know that his kingdom was not of this world; that he was not a temporal king, nor did he lay any claim to any earthly dominions; and therefore neither he, nor his maſter *Cæſar*, had any thing to fear from him: he was only a king, in a ſpiritual ſenſe, over the *Iſrael* of God; ſuch as received him, as the Meſſiah, and believed in his name.

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[d] Bereſhit Rabba, §. 98. fol. 85. 3, 4.

[e] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 119. 2. & Vajikra Rabba, §. 27. fol. 167. 4.

[f] T. Hieroſ. Yoma, fol. 43. 2, 3.

[g] Ib. Sanhedrin, fol. 21. 2.

Ver. 12. *And when he was accuſed of the chief-prieſts and elders*, &c.] As, that he was a perverter of the people, a ſtirrer up of ſedition, diſcord, and rebellion among them; that he taught them not to give tribute to *Cæſar*, and ſet up himſelf for a king; all which he had done not in one place only, but throughout all the land of *Judea*, from *Galilee* to *Jeruſalem*; ſee *Luke* xxiii. 2, 5. *he anſwered nothing*; the things laid to his charge being notoriouſly falſe, and known to be ſo by all the people; and the evidence with which they were ſupported being ſo ſlender, the judge could never receive it; he therefore judged it unneceſſary, and not worth a while to return an anſwer to them: beſides, he knew they were bent upon his death, and that, ſhould he ſet aſide theſe charges, as he eaſily could, they would invent new ones, and ſo increaſe their ſin, and their condemnation: but the chief reaſon of all, of his ſilence, was, he had the ſins of his people to anſwer for, and the time of his dying for them was now come, and for which he was ready; and therefore would ſay nothing to remove theſe falſe charges, and retard his death.

Ver. 13. *Then ſaith Pilate unto him*, &c.] Obſerving he made no reply to the accuſations of the chief-prieſts and elders, and in order to draw ſomething out of him, *heareſt thou not how many things they witneſs againſt thee?* art thou deaf? or doſt thou not take in what is alledged againſt thee? doſt thou not conſider the nature of theſe charges? how many, and of what kind the depoſitions are now made by perſons of ſuch rank and figure? art thou under no concern to make anſwer to them?

Ver. 14. *And he anſwered him to never a word*, &c.] He made no reply to any one thing which *Pilate* ſuggeſted to him, tho' it ſeems to have been in a kind and friendly way, and with a view to his good: *inſomuch that the governor marvelled greatly*; that a man, who at other times, had ſuch fluency of ſpeech, and readineſs of expreſſion; who both for matter and words, and alſo weight and authority, ſpake as never man did; and who had ſo often ſilenced the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, men of the greateſt learning among the *Jews*, of which *Pilate* doubtleſs, had knowledge, ſhould ſay nothing in his own defence; and eſpecially when the charges brought againſt him were of a capital nature, and touched his life, and yet were ſo eaſy to be refuted, and proved to be falſe ones: and what might increaſe his wonder, was, that he ſhould take no notice of them, nor return an anſwer to them, conſidering by whom they were brought; not by the common people, but by the *Sanhedrim* of the nation, and that before him the *Roman* governor, who had power to crucify or releaſe him: and above all, he marvelled at the patience of Jeſus, that he could hear ſuch notorious falſities, and which ſo affected his character, and his life, and ſay nothing to them; and at the fortitude of his mind, at his being ſo regardleſs of his life, and fearleſs of death.

Ver. 15. *Now at that feaſt*, &c.] The *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read, *at every feaſt*; which looks as if the authors of theſe verſions thought the ſenſe was, that the following cuſtom was uſed at each feaſt in the year, at the feaſts of pentecoſt, and tabernacles, and paſſover; whereas it was only at the feaſt of the paſſover; and which is meant by the feaſt here, as is clear from *John* xviii. 39. It was but once a year that this was done; at every returning paſſover; and ſo the *Perſic* verſion renders it, *every year on the day of the feaſt*; that is, of the paſſover, and which was frequently called, by way of emphaſis, חג, *the feaſt: the governor was wont to releaſe unto the people a priſoner, whom they would.* It was not a law, but a cuſtom; it was not enjoined by the law of *Moſes*; for they that ſinned againſt that, died without mercy: nor is it agreeable to ſtrict juſtice, that there ſhould be ſuch a releaſe of criminals; nor was it a *Jewiſh* cuſtom, as an emblem of their deliverance out of *Egyptian* bondage. I have not met with the leaſt trace of any ſuch cuſtom of theirs at the time of the paſſover in any of their writings; but it ſeems to be a *Roman* one: and from all the accounts of the Evangeliſt, it appears to be peculiar to the *Roman* governor, who, either by the order of *Cæſar*, or of himſelf, introduced ſuch a cuſtom to get the favour of the people; for it was to them the releaſe was made, and the perſon, whom they pleaſed; and this being repeated annually for ſome time, was expected by them, and at laſt became neceſſary.

Ver. 16. *And they had then a notable priſoner*, &c.] The *Vulgate Latin* reads, *he had*; that is, *Pilate*, who had committed him to priſon, and under whoſe power he was: for the *Jews* had loſt all authority of this kind, at leaſt in capital caſes. This priſoner is called a *notable* one; that is, a famous, or rather an infamous one: he was a thief, and a robber, and had been guilty of ſedition; had made, or joined with others in an inſurrection, and had committed murder in it; and ſo, on more accounts than one, was deſerving of death: nor could it be otherwiſe expected by himſelf, or others, but that he ſhould die: his name was *called Barabbas*; that is, as the *Syriac* verſion reads it, בר אבא, which ſignifies *the ſon of a father*; a father's child that was ſpoiled and ruined, and a child of his father the devil. This was a name common among the *Jews*. Frequent mention is made of *R. Abba*[h], and *Bar Abba* is the ſon of *Abba*: hence we read of *Abba Bar Abba*[i], and of *R. Samuel Bar Abba*[k], and of *R. Simeon Bar Abba*[l], and of *R. Chijah Bar Abba*[m]. In *Munſter's* ſter's *Hebrew* Goſpel it is read, בר רבה, *Bar Rabbah, the ſon of a maſter*; and ſo *Jerom* ſays, that in the Goſpel according to the *Hebrews* it is interpreted, *the ſon of their maſter*; but the former is the right name, and the true ſenſe of the word. The *Ethiopic* verſion adds, *the prince*, or *chief of robbers, and all knew him*; and the *Arabic*, inſtead of a *priſoner*, reads, a *thief*, as he was.

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[h] Juchaſin, fol. 70. 1, &c.

[i] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 18. 2. & Hieroſ. Peſachim, fol. 32. 1. & Juchaſin, fol. 104. 1.

[k] T. Hieroſ. Peſachim, fol. 32. 1.

[l] T. Hieroſ. Succa, fol. 53. 3. Juchaſin, fol. 105. 1.

[m] T. Hieroſ. Succa, fol. 55. 3. Juchaſin, fol. 91. 2.

Ver. 17. *Therefore when they were gathered together*, &c.] Meaning not the chief-prieſts and elders; for theſe were together before, but the common people; and ſo the *Perſic* verſion renders the words, *when the people increaſed into a multitude:* for it was to them the releaſe of a priſoner was to be made, and ſo the propoſal of one; and it was at their option, who ſhould be the perſon; for it was *whom they would*, as in ver. 15. and where the *Ethiopic* verſion adds, *and ſhould chuſe. Pilate ſaid unto them, whom will ye that I ſhould releaſe unto you? Barabbas, or Jeſus, which is called Chriſt?* He puts it to them, whom they would chuſe to have releaſed, *Barabbas*, the thief and robber, the ſeditious perſon and murderer, or Jeſus, whom ſome called the Chriſt, the Meſſiah, the king of the *Jews*. *Pilate* on purpoſe propoſed ſuch an infamous perſon along with him, not doubting but they would have preferred him, whatever were their prejudices againſt him, before ſuch a ſcandalous perſon as *Barabbas*; and whatever good-will they might ſecretly have to put Jeſus to death, and releaſe *Barabbas*, yet he thought they could not, for ſhame, ſpeak out their ſenſe, and deſire him, and not Jeſus. His view was not to reproach Chriſt, by joining him with ſo wicked a man, but in order to ſave him.

Ver. 18. *For he knew that for envy they had delivered him.* He ſaw in their countenances, and by their charges againſt him, and by the whole of their conduct, that it was not out of any regard to *Cæſar*, or to the peace and tranquillity of the civil government, or to ſtrict juſtice; but from envy, at his popularity, at his fame and credit, the honour, glory, and applauſe he had among the people, on account of his doctrine, and miracles, that they had delivered him up into his hands; and therefore *Pilate* might the rather hope to ſucceed in this ſcheme of his to releaſe him, by propoſing him with ſo notorious a perſon to the populace, when the one, as he might reaſonably judge, was abhorred by them, and the other had got great credit and eſteem among a large number of them. The *Perſic* verſion here adds the peoples anſwer; *they anſwered, releaſe Barabbas, but deliver Jeſus to us.*

Ver. 19. *When he was ſet down on the judgment-ſeat*, &c.] That is, when *Pilate the governor*, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read, was ſet down upon the bench, and while he was ſitting there, and trying of Jeſus: *his wife ſent unto him*; her name, according to the *Ethiopians*, was *Abrokla* [a]; who might be a *Jeweſs*, as the wife of *Felix* was, *Acts* xxiv. 24. and a favourer of Jeſus, or, at leaſt, a religious perſon; and if only a mere Heathen, yet had ſome notion of juſtice being to be done; and however, preſſed by her dream, ſent a meſſenger to her huſband, as he was trying this cauſe: *ſaying, have thou nothing to do with that juſt man*; meaning Jeſus, whom ſhe either knew to be ſo, or concluded from her dream that he was one: and her ſenſe is, that her huſband would have no hand in his condemnation and death, but rather do all he could to releaſe and ſave him. She might know that he had gone ſome lengths already againſt him; that he had the night before granted a band of ſoldiers to the chief-prieſts to apprehend him; and knew he roſe early that morning, at the requeſt of the ſame, to try him; and he was now before him, and ſhe might be apprehenſive that he was forward to adjudge him to death, and therefore ſends this cautionary meſſage; alledging this for a reaſon, *for I have ſuffered many things this day, in a dream, becauſe of him.* The *Arabic* and *Perſic* verſions read, *this night*. *Pilate* might riſe that morning before ſhe was awake, and had an opportunity of telling her dream; or ſhe might dream it after he was gone; in which ſhe was ſadly diſtreſſed about Jeſus, and might have ſome hints given her of the miſerable conſequences of his death, not only to the *Jewiſh* nation, but to her huſband and family; which gave her great uneaſineſs and diſquietude. Some have thought, that this dream was from the devil, willing to hinder the death of Chriſt, and ſo mans redemption and ſalvation by it; but had he had any ſuch intention, the moſt effectual method would have been to have perſuaded the chief-prieſts and elders off of it, and from attempting it; whereas, on the contrary, they were inſtigated by him to it: and whatever natural cauſes there might be of this dream, as the chief-prieſts coming over-night to deſire a band of ſoldiers to take Jeſus, and the diſcourſe they might have with *Pilate* about him; which things might run in her mind in her ſleep; yet, doubtleſs, this was of God, and with a deſign that a teſtimony ſhould be bore to the innocency of Chriſt every way; as by *Judas* that betrayed him, by *Pilate* his judge, and by his wife.

Ver. 20. *But the chief-prieſts and elders perſuaded the multitude*, &c.] Among whom the choice lay who ſhould be releaſed. This they did not by haranguing them, or making a public oration to them; but by ſending their ſervants, or proper perſons among them, telling them that Jeſus had been examined before the *Sanhedrim* that morning, and was found to be a blaſphemer; and that the whole court had unanimouſly condemned him to death, and therefore it became them to act according to their decree: and beſides, ſhould this man be ſet free, they might ſuggeſt to them, ſince he has given out that he is the king Meſſiah, the *Romans* hearing of it, will be jealous of ſuch a perſon, and come and take away both our place and nation, or deprive us of the few privileges we have remaining: with ſuch ſort of arguments as theſe, it may be ſuppoſed they worked upon the common people. The *Perſic* verſion reads, *commanded*, inſtead of *perſuaded*, *that they ſhould aſk Barabbas* to be releaſed to them, *and deſtroy Jeſus*; for nothing ſhort of that would ſatisfy them: they thirſted after his blood, and were bent upon his death: to releaſe *Barabbas*, if Jeſus was not deſtroyed, would not anſwer their end: they deſired *Barabbas*'s liberty for no other reaſon, but for the ſake of the deſtruction of Jeſus.

Ver. 21. *The governor anſwered and ſaid unto them*, &c.] A ſecond time, after ſome time had been allowed and taken up to conſider of the matter, and which the chief-prieſts and elders improved among the people againſt Jeſus. *Whether of the twain will ye that I releaſe unto you?* for as theſe two were propoſed, one of them muſt be releaſed; and it lay in the breaſt of the people to chuſe which they would: *they ſaid, Barabbas*; ſo that Chriſt was not only numbered among, and reckoned with tranſgreſſors, but he was accounted worſe than the worſt of them; a ſeditious perſon, a robber, and a murderer was preferred before him; ſee *Acts* iii. 14.

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[a] Ludolph. Lex. Ethiop. p. 541.

Ver. 22. *Pilate ſaith unto them*, &c.] As one aſtoniſhed at their choice: he could not have thought they would have aſked the life of ſo vile a wretch, that had been guilty of ſuch capital crimes, crimes to be abhorred by all men: *what ſhall I do then with Jeſus, which is called Chriſt?* Surely you would not have me put him to death, and that for no other reaſon but this, becauſe he is called either by himſelf or others, Chriſt, or the Meſſiah, or the king of the *Jews!* *they all ſay unto him, let him be crucified*; which was a *Roman* puniſhment, inflicted on the meaneſt and worſt of men; as wicked ſervants, thieves, robbers, and cut-throats [o]; and ſo was not only a torturing and painful death, but a very ſhameful and ignominious one; yea, an accurſed one: in this they all agreed, being inſtigated to it by the chief prieſts and elders.

Ver. 23. *And the governor ſaid, why, what evil hath he done?* &c.] What reaſon can be given, why he ſhould be crucified? what ſin has he committed, that deſerves ſuch a death? From whence 'tis clear, that of all the things they had accuſed him, they had not, in *Pilate*'s account, given proof of one ſingle action, that was criminal, nor had he done any: he came into the world without ſin, he did none in it; he knew no ſin, nor could any be found in him, by ſatan, nor his accuſers, nor his judge: *but they cried out the more, ſaying, let him be crucified:* the more they ſaw *Pilate* inclined to favour him, and pleaded for him, and atteſted his innocence; the more clamorous, outragious, and urgent they were to have him crucified.

Ver. 24. *When Pilate ſaw he could prevail nothing*, &c.] That it was to no purpoſe to talk to them, and in favour of Jeſus; he ſaw they were determined upon his crucifixion, and that nothing elſe would ſatisfy them: *but that rather a tumult was made*; there was an uproar among the people, and he might fear the conſequences of it, ſhould he not grant their requeſt; otherwiſe, as *Philo* the [p] *Jew* ſays of him, he was την φυσιν ακαμπης ϗ μετα τȣ αυθαδȣς αμειλικτος, *naturally inflexible, rigid, and ſelf-willed:* but he knew the temper of theſe people, and had had experience of their reſoluteneſs, when they were determined on any thing; as in the caſe of his introducing the golden ſhields into the holy city, of which the ſame author ſpeaks; and was then obliged, though ſore againſt his will, as now, to yield unto them. *He took water, and waſhed his hands before the multitude*; either in conformity to a cuſtom among the *Jews*, whereby they teſtified their innocence as to the commiſſion of murder; ſee *Deut.* xxi. 6, 7. *Pſal.* xxvi. 6. or to a *Gentile* one, uſed when murder was committed, for the luſtration or expiation of it [q]: *ſaying, I am innocent of the blood of this juſt perſon*; though this did not clear him from all guilt in this matter: he ought to have acted the part of an upright judge, and not have yielded to the unrighteous requeſts of the people; he ought not to have ſcourged an innocent man, and much leſs have condemned and delivered him to be crucified; as he did; though in this he bore a teſtimony to the innocence of Chriſt, and which is ſomewhat remarkable in him; who was, as *Philo* ſays [r], notoriouſly guilty of receiving bribes, of injuries, rapine, and frequent murders of perſons uncondemned: *ſee ye to it*; you muſt be anſwerable for this action, and all the conſequences of it. The *Syriac* verſion renders it, *you have known*; and the *Perſic* verſion, *you know*; and the *Arabic* verſion, *you know better*; ſee the note on ver. 4.

Ver. 25. *Then anſwered all the people*, &c.] They were as unanimous in their imprecations upon themſelves, as in deſiring the crucifixion of Chriſt: *and ſaid, his blood be on us and on our children*; not for the cleanſing of them from ſin, which virtue that blood has; but if there were any ſtain, blot, or pollution, through the ſhedding of it, they wiſhed it might be on them and theirs: nor for the forgiveneſs of ſins, which that blood was ſhed for; but on the contrary, if there was any ſin and guilt in it, they deſired it might be imputed to them: nor for their juſtification before God, and ſecurity from wrath to come, both which are by his blood; but all the reverſe of this, that if there were any puniſhment, and condemnation, and death, due for the ſhedding of it, they imprecated it all upon themſelves, and their poſterity: ſo this phraſe is uſed in *Joſh.* ii. 19. 2 *Sam.* i. 16. and in other places, and in the *Talmud* [s]: and it is a notion of the *Jews*, that the guilt of innocent blood, and the blood of that innocent man's children, lie not only upon the perſons immediately concerned, but upon their children to the end of the world: and ſo the judges uſed to addreſs the witneſſes upon a trial, after this manner [t]; "know ye, that capital cauſes, "are not as pecuniary ones: in pecuniary cauſes, "a man gives his money, and it atones for him; "but in capital cauſes, דמו ודם זרעו תלויין בו, "*his blood, and the blood of his ſeed, hang upon* "*him*, to the end of the whole world: for lo! of "*Cain* 'tis ſaid, *the voice of the blood of thy brother* "*crieth*, &c. his blood, and the blood of his "ſeed." And this imprecation of theirs, has been notoriouſly verified in them; for though this blood was ſhed for many of them, and Chriſt prayed for the forgiveneſs of them, and they had the Goſpel, and the doctrine of remiſſion of ſins firſt preached among them, which was made the power of God unto ſalvation to ſome of them, even of thoſe who were concerned in the crucifixion of Chriſt; yet, on the generality of them, his blood was in the ſenſe they wiſhed it; and for the ſhedding of it, wrath came upon them to the uttermoſt, in the entire deſtruction of their nation, city, and temple: and very remarkable it is, that great numbers of them were put to death by crucifixion; and very likely ſome of thoſe very perſons, that were ſo clamorous for the crucifying of Chriſt; and if not, at leaſt their children: five hundred of the *Jews* and more, were ſometimes crucified in a day, whilſt *Titus* was beſieging the city; till at length there wanted *room for croſſes*, ϗ ϛαυροι τοις σωμασι, *and croſſes for bodies*, as *Joſephus* [u] ſays, who was an eye witneſs of it: and to this day, this dreadful wiſh of the blood of Chriſt upon them, is to be ſeen in their miſerable, abject, and captive ſtate; and will be, until ſuch time that they look to him whom they have pierced, and mourn.

Ver. 26. *Then releaſed he Barabbas unto them*, &c.] The ſeditious perſon, robber, and murderer, for which crimes he was in priſon. This man was an emblem of the perſons for whom Chriſt ſuffered, both in his character and in his releaſe: in his character; for they are ſuch as have rebelled againſt God, robbed him of his glory, and deſtroyed themſelves; many of them are notorious ſinners, the chief of ſinners, and all of them by nature, children of wrath, as others; and as the deſcendants of *Adam*, under the ſentence of condemnation and death; and yet in Chriſt, they are children of *Abba*, Father; being of God predeſtinated by him, to the adoption of children: and in his releaſe; for when Chriſt was apprehended, they were let go; when he was bound, they were looſed; when he was condemned, they were releaſed, and acquitted; and when the ſword of juſtice was awaked againſt him, the hand of grace and mercy was turned upon them. *And when he had ſcourged Jeſus*; which was done ſome time before his examination, trial, and condemnation were over, though mentioned here, as appears from *John* xix. 1. and was done by *Pilate*, in order to move the pity and compaſſion of the *Jews*; hoping they would have been ſatisfied with it, and not have inſiſted upon his death: and he indeed moved it to them, that he might chaſtize him, and let him go, *Luke* xxiii. 22. but nothing would do but crucifixion. Whether the previous ſcourging ſufficed, or whether he was not ſcourged again upon his condemnation, is not certain: if he was ſcourged twice, *John* may be thought to relate the one, and *Matthew* the other; for certain it is, that it was uſual with the *Romans* to ſcourge either with rods or whips, juſt before crucifixion [w]: our Lord was ſcourged with whips, as the word here uſed ſhews. Perſons of birth and blood, and freemen of *Rome*, were beaten with rods; but ſuch as were ſervants, which form Chriſt had taken, were ſcourged with whips; to which, ſometimes were faſtened, the huckle bones of beaſts [x]; ſo that this kind of whipping, was very ſevere and cruel. The *Jews* themſelves own this ſcourging of Jeſus, only they aſcribe it to the elders of *Jeruſalem*, and relate it thus [y]: "the elders of *Jeruſalem* took Jeſus, and brought him "to the city, and bound him to a marble pillar in "the city, ויכוהו בשוטים, *and ſmote him with* "*whips*, or *whipped him*; and ſaid unto him, "where are all thy miracles which thou haſt done?" Hereby the prophecy in *Iſa*. l. 6. and our Lord's prediction in *Matt*. xx. 19. had their accompliſhment. This ſcourging of Chriſt, was an emblem of the ſcourges and ſtrokes of divine juſtice, which he endured in his ſoul, as the ſurety of his people; being ſmitten of God by the ſword of juſtice, as he ſtood in their place and ſtead, and ſtricken for their tranſgreſſions; and may furniſh out ſeveral inſtructions: as that it is no wonder, if any of the followers of Chriſt have, do, or ſhall, meet with ſuch like treatment from men; and that it becomes them to bear patiently the ſcourges of their heavenly Father, ſince theſe are in love; and that they need not fear being trodden down, or carried away by the overflowing ſcourge of God's wrath, ſince Chriſt has endured this in their room. This being done, *he delivered him to be crucified*; either into the hands of the *Jews*, to their will and at their requeſt; or into the hands of his ſoldiers, to execute the ſentence he had paſſed upon him; which was done in a judicial way, and according to the determinate counſel and foreknowledge of God.

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[o] Lipſius de Cruce, l. 1. c. 12, 13.

[p] De Legat. ad Caium, p. 1034.

[q] Vid. Ovid. Faſt. l. 2. Anticlidis Redit. l. 74. Triclinius in Ajac. Sophocl. 3. 1.

[r] Ubi ſupra.

[s] T. Bab. Peſachim, fol. 110. 1. Yoma, fol. 21. 1. & Avoda Zara, fol. 2. 2.

[t] Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 12. §. 3.

[u] De Bello Jud. l. 6. c. 12.

Ver. 27. *Then the ſoldiers of the governor*, &c.] Thoſe that were about him, his attendants and guards, *took Jeſus into the common-hall*; the *prætorium*, or judgment-hall, as it is ſometimes called; the governor's palace, into which the *Jews* would not enter, leſt they ſhould defile themſelves: *Pilate* therefore came out to them, and went into the pavement called *Gabbatha*, and ſat upon a judgment-ſeat there; ſee *John* xviii. 28, 29. and xix. 13. where he paſſed ſentence on Chriſt; which being done, the ſoldiers took him into the hall of judgment; which being both magnificent and large, was fit for the ſcene they intended to act there. *Munſter's Hebrew* Goſpel reads it, they took him *in the houſe of judgment*; and the *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *out of the court of judicature*; both wrong. *And gathered unto him the whole band* of ſoldiers; the ſame that *Judas* had with him to take him, conſiſting of five hundred, and ſome ſay more: theſe their fellow-ſoldiers, to whom Jeſus was committed, got together to him, or *againſt him*, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions render it, to make themſelves ſport and diverſion with him. Think in what hands and company our dear Lord now was: now was he encompaſſed with dogs, and incloſed with the aſſembly of the wicked indeed; ſee *Pſal*. xxii. 16. The *Perſic* verſion renders it, *multitudes of knaves being gathered together to him*.

Ver. 28. *And they ſtripped him*, &c.] Of his cloaths; at leaſt of his upper garment: for one man to ſpit upon another, as theſe ſoldiers afterwards did on Chriſt, or to ſtrip him of his garment, according to the *Jewiſh* canons, were puniſhable with a fine of four hundred pence [z], which amounted to twelve pounds and ten ſhillings of our money; but the ſoldiers were in no danger of being proſecuted, for ſtripping Chriſt. This is one part of the low eſtate Chriſt ſubmitted to: his cloaths on his back ſeem to be all he had in this world, and of theſe he is ſtripped: *and put on him a ſcarlet robe*, or *a red coat*, as the *Perſic* verſion renders it; very likely an old coat of one of their officers. The Evangeliſts *Mark* and *John*, ſay it was *purple*, and ſo the *Arabic* verſion renders it here: whether there were two garments put upon him, the one a purple veſt, and the other a ſcarlet robe over it; or whether ſcarlet was uſed inſtead of purple, is not certain; which was a colour wore by kings, and a ſign of imperial dignity [a]; and therefore put upon Chriſt by way of mockery, upbraiding him with the character he bore, as king of the *Jews*. This was an emblem of his being cloathed, as it were with our ſins, which are as ſcarlet, and of his bloody ſufferings in the human nature.

Ver. 29. *And when they had platted a crown of thorns*, &c.] What ſort of thorn this crown was made of, whether of the bramble, or of the white thorn, is not very material [b]: the word uſed in the *Syriac* verſion, is rendered by interpreters, *white thorns*, and which were common in *Judæa*: theſe, be they what they will, they made into the form of a crown, and *they put it upon his head*; both to reproach him as a king, and to torture him as a man: however, it had its ſignificancy, and was an emblem of men, comparable to thorns; either of wicked men, and of his being encompaſſed with them at this time; or of good men, choſen out from among them, redeemed by him, and accounted as a royal diadem with him [c]: or it might repreſent the ſins of his people, which, like thorns, pierced him, and like a crown of them ſurrounded him on every ſide; or elſe the many troubles he wa exerciſed with, and through which he did, as hi members do, enter the kingdom; and eſpecially his being made a curſe for us, thorns and briers be ing the curſe which was inflicted on the earth, fo the ſin of man: in this Chriſt was the antitype o th the ram, caught by his horns among the thickets, which *Abraham* ſacrificed in the room of his ſon. This may teach us many uſeful leſſons: we may ſee what a curſe ſin brought upon man, and upon the earth for man's ſake; and even upon the Meſſiah, in the ſtead of men: we may obſerve the difference between us and Chriſt: we are a crown of glory, and a royal diadem in his hand; we are crowned with loving kindneſs and tender mercies, and have a crown of righteouſneſs, life, and glory, laid up for us, and he was crowned with thorns; as alſo the difference between Chriſt in his ſtate of humiliation wearing ſuch a crown, and his ſtate of exaltation, in which he is crowned with glory and honour. The *Jews* acknowledge this circumſtance of the ſufferings of Jeſus, though they aſcribe it to the elders of *Jeruſalem*; who, they ſay [d], "took "thorns and made a crown of them, and put it "upon his head." Which are the very words of the Evangeliſt: *and a reed in his right hand*; or *cane*; and *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel uſes the word, קנה, *a cane*, ſuch as men walk with; and this may be confirmed from the barbarous uſe they afterwards made of it, by ſmiting him on the head with it: a *reed* indeed may fitly expreſs the weakneſs of his kingdom in the eye of the world; but any cane or common ſtaff, or ſtick, put into his hands in the room of a ſceptre, would alſo ſignify the meanneſs of his kingdom, which was not of this world, and came not with obſervation: they meant to reproach him with it, but they'll find one time or another, that he has another ſceptre, even a ſceptre of righteouſneſs, a ſtaff of ſtrength, a rod of iron, with which he'll rule and break in pieces, all the wicked of the earth. However, we may learn from hence, Chriſt does not diſdain to hold a reed in his hand; nor will he break the bruiſed reed, or diſcourage, or cruſh the weakeſt believer. *And they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, ſaying, Hail, king of the Jews*: being thus clad in a ſcarlet, or purple robe, or both; and having a crown of thorns on his head, and a reed inſtead of a ſceptre in his hand, they carry on the mockery ſtill further, and bend the knee to him, as to a prince juſt come to his throne, and ſalute him as ſuch; and in a mock way, wiſh him long life and proſperity: thus deriding him in his kingly office, as all ſuch do, who call him Lord, Lord, but diſregard his commands.

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[w] Lipſius de Cruce, l. 2. c. 2. Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 1. c. 28.

[x] Ib. c. 3.

[y] Toldos Jeſu, p. 17.

[z] Miſn. Bava Kama, c. 8. §. 6.

[a] Alexander

[b] Vid. Bartholin. de Spinea Corona, §. 1, 2.

[c] Vid. Paſchal. de Coronis, l. 10. c. 1 p. 701, 702.

Ver. 30. *And they ſpit upon him*, &c.] The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions add, *upon his face*, which he did not hide from ſpitting; ſee *Iſa*. l. 6. and ſo what with ſweat, by being hurried from place to place, and with blood trickling down from his temples, ſcratched with thorns, and with the ſpittle of theſe filthy ſoldiers, his viſage was more marred than any man's, and his form than the ſons of men, *Iſa*. lii. 14. *And took the reed*, or *cane*, which was put into his right hand, *and ſmote him on the head*; whereby they drove the ſharp points of the thorns into it, which muſt give him inexpreſſible pain and torture.

Ver. 31. *And after that they had mocked him*, &c.] Gone through the whole farce, and glutted themſelves with deriſion of him, and with ſport and diverſion with him, *they took the robe off from him*; it belonging to one of their company, *and put his own raiment on him*; partly that he might be known to be the ſelf-ſame perſon that was condemned and committed to them, which they now brought forth to crucify; and partly, that the four ſoldiers that were appointed to be the executioners, might have the perquiſite of his cloaths, which belonged unto them: *and led him away to crucify him*; for a condemned perſon was always executed the ſame day: their canon is [e], "after that his judg- "ment, or ſentence is finiſhed, they don't tarry "with him, but ſlay him, ביומו, *that very day*." And their cuſtom was this; "he whoſe ſentence "for death is finiſhed, they bring him out from "the houſe of judgment; and one ſtands at the "door of it, and linen clothes in his hand, and a "horſe at ſome diſtance from him; and a crier "goes out before him, *ſaying*, ſuch an one is going "to be executed with ſuch a death, becauſe he has "committed ſuch a ſin, in ſuch a place, at ſuch a "time, ſuch and ſuch being witneſſes; whoever "knows him to be innocent, let him come, and "ſpeak in his favour: if one ſays, I have ſome- "thing to ſay in his favour, this waves with the "linen clothes, and the other rides upon the horſe, "and runs and brings back him that is judged, to "the *Sanhedrim*; and if he is found innocent, they "diſmiſs him; but if not, he returns, and goes to "execution [f]." The *Jews* pretend [g], that a crier went out before Jeſus of *Nazareth*, forty days before his execution, and made ſuch a proclamation, but found none that had any thing to ſay in his favour, and therefore hanged him on the evening of the paſſover. But this is falſe; Chriſt had no ſuch length of time, or his friends any liberty granted them to ſpeak for him. They led him out of the common hall, through *Jeruſalem*, and through one of the gates of it, without the city, in order to crucify him, to which he was adjudged, when that prophecy was fulfilled in *Iſa*. liii. 7. *He is brought as a lamb to the ſlaughter, and as a ſheep before her ſhearers is dumb, ſo he openeth not his mouth*: as he made no oppoſition or ſtruggle, but quietly went along with them, where they led him; ſo he took every thing patiently from them, uttered not one complaint, or any murmuring and repining word, or any thing by way of reviling; but became meekly ſubject to them, and ſubmitted himſelf to him that judgeth righteouſly.

Ver. 32. *And as they came out*, &c.] Of the city; for no execution was made, neither in the court of judicature, nor in the city, but at ſome diſtance; as it was at ſtoning, ſo at crucifixion [h]: "when judgment was finiſhed, they brought him "out to be ſtoned; the place of ſtoning was with- "out the *Sanhedrim*, as it is ſaid, *Lev*. xxiv. 14. "*bring forth him that hath curſed without the camp*." Upon which the *Gloſs* and *Gemara* ſay [i], without the three camps; which were theſe, the court which was the camp of the *Shekinah*, or the divine preſence; and the mountain of the houſe, the camp of the *Levites*; and the city, the camp of *Iſrael*; ſo that he that was executed, was had without the city. *Maimonides* [k] ſays, "the place in which the "*Sanhedrim* executed, was without it, and at a "diſtance from it, as it is ſaid, *Lev*. xxiv. 14. and "it appears to me, that it was about ſix miles "diſtant; for ſo far it was between the *Sanhedrim* "of *Moſes* our maſter, which was before the door "of the tabernacle of the congregation, and the "camp of *Iſrael*." So Jeſus went without the camp, and ſuffered without the gate, as the antitype of the red heifer; ſee *Numb*. xix. 3. compared with *Heb.* xiii. 11, 12, 13. and the notes there: *They found a man of Cyrene*; a place in *Libya*, and one of the five cities called *Pentapolis*; which were theſe, *Berenice*, *Arſinoe*, *Ptolemais*, *Apollonia*, and *Cyrene* [l]; *Kir* in *Amos* i. 5. and ix. 7. is rendered by the *Targum*, קירני, *Cyrene*, as it is alſo by the *Vulgate Latin*. There were many *Jews* dwelt here, as appears from *Acts* ii. 10. as this man was a *Jew*, as his name ſhews; and beſides, there was a ſynagogue of the *Cyrenian Jews* at *Jeruſalem*, *Acts* vi. 9. ſo that though he was a native of *Cyrene*, he might now dwell there, and ſome of theſe were converted to the faith of Chriſt; for of thoſe that were ſcattered abroad at the death of *Stephen*, ſome were men of *Cyrene*, *Acts* xi. 19, 20. And it is very likely, that this man was a favourer of Chriſt, which might be one reaſon why they laid hold on him, and obliged him to bear the croſs of Chriſt; ſince he was the father of *Alexander* and *Rufus*, who were men of note among the firſt chriſtians: *Simon by name*; of which name was one of the apoſtles, and a common name among the *Jews*, and ſignifies hearkening and obedient: and none are fit to bear, or will bear the croſs of Chriſt, but ſuch who hearken to his voice, and are obedient to him, being made willing in the day of his power: *him they compelled to bear his croſs*; which they did, not out of good-will to Chriſt, but fearing leſt through his faintneſs and weakneſs, he ſhould die before he got to the place of execution, and they be diſappointed of their end, the crucifixion of him; or becauſe they were in haſte to have him executed, and he was not able to go ſo faſt as they deſired; for when they firſt came out, the croſs was laid upon Chriſt, and he bore it, as *John* relates; but he being weak and ready to faint under it, and not able to go the pace they would have him, and meeting with this man, they preſs him to bear it after him; which he might be unwilling to do, partly becauſe it was ſcandalous and ignominious; and partly, becauſe if a favourer of *Jeſus*, he did not chuſe to be any ways acceſſary to his death: but he was obliged to it; and it may be obſerved from hence, that taking up the croſs and following Chriſt, is diſagreeable to fleſh and blood: though the ſpirit may be willing, the fleſh recoils; none care for it, or chuſe to bear it, unleſs conſtrained to it.

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[d] Toldos Jeſu, p. 17.

[e] Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 12. §. 4. Miſn. Sanhed. c. 6. §. 1.

[f] Ib. c. 13. §. 1.

[g] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 43. 1.

[h] Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 6. §. 1.

[i] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 42. 2.

[k] Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 12. §. 3.

Ver. 33. *And when they were come to a place called Golgotha*, &c.] The true pronunciation is *Golgoltha*, and ſo it is read in *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel. It is a *Syriac* word, in which language letters are often left out: in the *Syriac* verſion of this place, the firſt *l* is left out, and the latter retained, and it is read *Gogoltha*; and ſo in the *Perſic*, *Gagulta*; and in the *Arabic*, *Gagalat*. The *Ethiopic* verſion reads it, *Golgotha*; and ſo Dr. *Lightfoot* obſerves, it is read by the *Samaritan* interpreter, of the firſt chapter of *Numbers*: *that is to ſay, a place of a ſkull*: ſome ſay *Adam*'s ſkull was found here, and from thence the place had its name; this is an ancient tradition, but without foundation [m]: it ſeems to be ſo called, becauſe it was the place where malefactors were executed, and afterwards buried; whoſe bones and ſkulls in proceſs of time might be dug up, and ſome of them might lie ſcattered about in this place: for, one that was executed as a malefactor [n], “ they
“ did not bury him in the ſepulchres of his anceſ-
“ tors; but there were two places of burial ap-
“ pointed by the *Sanhedrim*; one for thoſe that were
“ ſtoned, and for thoſe that were burnt; and ano-
“ ther for thoſe that were killed with the ſword,
“ and for thoſe that were ſtrangled; and when their
“ fleſh was conſumed, they gathered the bones, and
“ buried them in their place;” *i. e.* in the ſepulchres of their anceſtors. This place was as infamous as our *Tyburn*, and to be crucified at *Golgotha*, was as ignominious as to be hanged at *Tyburn*; which ſhows to what ſhame and diſgrace our Lord was brought, and what he condeſcended to bear on our account.

Ver. 34. *They gave him vinegar to drink*, &c] It was a cuſtom with the *Jews* [o], when “ a
“ man went out to be executed, to give him to
“ drink a grain of frankincenſe in a cup of wine,
“ that his underſtanding might be diſturbed, as it
“ is ſaid, *Prov.* xxxi. 6. *Give ſtrong drink to him*
“ *that is ready to periſh, and wine to thoſe that be of*
“ *heavy hearts*; and the tradition is, that the ho-
“ nourable women in *Jeruſalem* gave this freely;
“ but if they did not, it was provided at the charge
“ of the congregation.” The deſign of it was to chear their ſpirits, and intoxicate their heads, that they might not be ſenſible of their pain and miſery. But ſuch a cup was not allowed Chriſt at the publick expence, nor were the honourable women ſo compaſſionate to him; or if it was ſent him, the ſoldiers did not give it him, but another potion in the room of it; indeed *Mark* ſays, they gave him *wine mingled with myrrh*: which was either a cordial provided by his friends, and given him, and is different from what the ſoldiers gave him here; or the ſenſe is, that they gave him the cup, that was ſo called, but not the thing; but inſtead of it, *vinegar mingled with gall*. The *Vulgate Latin* and *Ethiopia* verſions, inſtead of *vinegar*, read *wine*; and ſo does *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel, and ſo it is read in *Beza*'s moſt ancient copy, and in another exemplar, and in one of *Stephens*'s; and which may be eaſily reconciled with the common reading, and that with *Mark*; for the wine they gave him was flat and ſour, and no other or better than vinegar; and real vinegar may be ſo called, as this ſeems to be; and the rather, becauſe vinegar was a part of the *Roman* ſoldiers allowance, and ſo they had it ready at hand; ſee the note on *John* xix. 29. As alſo, becauſe it was thought that vinegar was uſeful to prolong the life of a man ready to die; and therefore they might chuſe to give it to Chriſt, that he might live the longer in miſery: ſo the *Jews* [p] write, that
“ if a man ſwallows a waſp or hornet alive, he
“ can't live; but they muſt give him to drink a
“ quarter, דחלא שמגז, *of vinegar of Shamgaz*,
“ (which the *Gloſs* ſays is ſtrong vinegar) and it is
“ poſſible he may live a little while, until he hath
“ given orders to his houſe.” The *Arabic* verſion inſtead of *gall*, reads *myrrh*; nor are we to ſuppoſe that this drink was mixed with the gall of a beaſt itſelf, but with ſomething that was as bitter as *gall*; as wormwood, or myrrh, or any other bitter, to make it diſtaſteful. This potion of vinegar with gall, was an aggravating circumſtance in our Lord's ſufferings, being given to him when he had a violent thirſt upon him; and was an emblem of the bitter cup of God's wrath, he had already taſted of in the garden, and was about to drink up: the *Jews* had a notion of vinegar's being expreſſive of the chaſtiſements of the Meſſiah; the words in *Ruth* ii. 14. they ſay [q], “ ſpeak of the king Meſ-
“ ſiah; *come thou hither*, draw nigh to the king-
“ dom; *and eat of the bread*, this is the bread of
“ the kingdom, *and dip thy morſel in the vinegar*,
“ אלו הייסורין, *theſe are the chaſtiſements*, as it is

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[l] Plin. Nat. Hiſt. l. 5. c. 5.

[m] Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 6. §. 4, 5.

[n] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 43. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 13. §. 2, 3.

[o] T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 12. 2.

[p] Midraſh Ruth, fol. 33. 2.

“ ſaid in *Iſ.* liii. 5. *he was wounded for our tranſgreſſions.*” By this offer was fulfilled the prophecy in *Pſ.* lxix. 21. and which he did not altogether refuſe; for it follows, *and when he had taſted thereof, he would not drink:* not becauſe it was the vinegar of *Gentiles*, which was forbidden by the *Jewiſh* canons [q], leſt it ſhould have been offered to idols; but becauſe he would make uſe of no means either to prolong his life, or diſcompoſe his mind; and that it might appear he knew what he did, and that he was not afraid nor unwilling to die; tho' he thought fit to taſte of it in a ſuperficial way, to ſhew he did not deſpiſe nor reſent their offer; and that he was really a-thirſt, and ready to drink a more diſagreeable potion than that.

Ver. 35. *And they crucified him*, &c.] That is, the ſoldiers: they laid the croſs upon the ground, and ſtretched Chriſt upon it; they extended his two arms as far as they could, to the tranſverſe part of it, and nailed his hands unto it: his two feet they fixed by each other on a baſis, in the body of the croſs, thro' which they alſo drove nails; and then raiſing it up, fixed it in the earth, and left him hanging on it till he expired. This death was not only painful and cruel, but exceedingly ſhameful and ignominious: it was what was inflicted on the meaneſt of perſons, as ſervants, whoſe form Chriſt had taken; and upon the worſt of men, as murderers, cut-throats, thieves, and the vileſt of men [r], among whom Chriſt was now numbered: *and parted his garments, caſting lots:* for they ſtripped him of his clothes before they fixed him to the croſs, and crucified him naked, as was the cuſtom of the *Romans* [s]; as it was of the *Jews* to ſtone and hang perſons naked: their canons run thus [t]; “ when he “ is four cubits off of the place of ſtoning, they “ ſtrip off his garments; a man they cover before, “ a woman both behind and before; the words “ of *R. Judah:* but the wiſe men ſay, a man is “ ſtoned naked, and a woman is not ſtoned naked: “ a man, they hang him with his face to the people; a woman, with her face to the tree. *R.* “ *Eliezer*, and the wiſe men ſay, a man is hanged, “ but a woman is not hanged.” On which the *Gemara* [u] ſays, “ what is the ſenſe of the *Rabbins?* “ the ſcripture ſays, *thou ſhalt hang him*; him, and “ not her: and, ſays *R. Eliezer*, him, בלא כסיתו, “ *without his clothes.*” So our Lord was crucified; his clothes were a perquiſite of the ſoldiers; there were four of them, as we learn from *John* xix. 23. and they parted them into four parts, and then caſt lots whoſe each part ſhould be; or rather, they divided his garments into four parts, and each took his part; but his veſture, or coat, being ſeamleſs, and woven from top to bottom, they did not chuſe to tear it into pieces, but caſt lots for it, who ſhould have it: *that it might be fulfilled which was ſpoken by the prophet*, by *David*, in *Pſ.* xxii. 18. *they parted my garments among them, and upon my veſture did they caſt lots.* All this, *Beza* ſays, is not in any of the ancient copies; nor is it in the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, but ſtands in the *Vulgate Latin*, and in *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel; ſee the note on *John* xix. 24.

Ver. 36. *And ſitting down, they watched him there.*] That is, the ſoldiers, after they had crucified Jeſus, and parted his garments, ſat down on the ground, at the foot of the croſs, and there watched him, leſt his diſciples ſhould take him down; tho' there was no need to fear that, ſince they were few, and weak, and wanted courage, and were in the utmoſt dread and conſternation themſelves; or leſt the people, who were very changeable with reſpect to Chriſt, one day ſaying *Hoſanna* to the ſon of *David*, and another day crucify him, crucify him, ſhould once more change their ſentiments of him, and thro' pity to him riſe and take him down; or rather, leſt Jeſus himſelf, ſhould by his miraculous power, unlooſe himſelf, come down, and make his eſcape. It was uſual with the *Romans* to ſet a ſoldier, or ſoldiers, to watch thoſe that were crucified, not only before they expired, but after they were dead, leſt they ſhould be took down and buried; as appears from *Petronius*, *Plutarch*, and others [w]. This ſeems to be the watch *Pilate* refers to, ver. 65. and over which there was a centurion, ver. 54.

Ver. 37. *And ſet up over his head his accuſation written*, &c.] The Evangeliſt *John* calls it a *title*, and *Luke*, a *ſuperſcription*, and *Mark*, the *ſuperſcription of his accuſation:* it was what contained the ſum and ſubſtance of what he was accuſed, and for which he was condemned, and ſuffered. The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions here render it, *the cauſe of his death.* It was written by *Pilate* in *Hebrew*, *Greek*, and *Latin*, that all might read it; and by his orders it was put upon the croſs, and over the head of Jeſus by the ſoldiers. This title, or inſcription, ſetting forth the perſon's crime, uſed to be carried before him, or put upon him, as he was led to execution [x]: but here it was ſet upon the croſs, and perhaps nailed unto it; to which the apoſtle ſeems to allude in *Col.* ii. 14. the ſubſtance of it was, *this is Jeſus the king of the Jews.* This was what the chief-prieſts accuſed him of to *Pilate*, and and about which he queſtioned him, and for which they deſired he might be crucified; urging, that ſhould he let him go, he could not be *Cæſar*'s friend. Hence *Pilate* wrote his accuſation in this form, not ſo much in deriſion of Jeſus; for by converſation with him he underſtood what ſort of a king he was, as to the reproach of the *Jews* for crucifying him who was their king; being the perſon that was propheſied of in their books, as king of *Zion*, and whom they expected as ſuch, tho' now they denied and rejected him.

Ver. 38. *Then were there two thieves crucified with him*, &c.] Which ſeems contrary to one of their canons, which runs thus; אין דנין שנים ביום אחד, *they don't judge two in one day* [y], unleſs they were both in the ſame crime, and died the ſame death: but here were three perſons, Jeſus, and theſe two malefactors, condemned and executed in one, and the ſame day: theſe two thieves were led out with Jeſus, to be put to death with him, according to *Luke* xxiii. 32. and were crucified with him upon the ſame ſpot of ground; their death was the ſame, but not their crime: *one on the right hand, and another on the left*; and Jeſus in the midſt, as *John* relates, chap. xix. 18. and hereby was fulfilled, as *Mark* obſerves, chap. xv. 28. a prophecy in *Iſ.* liii. 12. If this was ſo ordered by *Pilate*, it might be done in order to cover the ſin, and take off the reproach of putting an innocent perſon to death, ſuggeſting hereby he was one of them; tho' this ſeems rather to be done by the *Jews*, the ſoldiers agreeing to it, for the greater reproach of Jeſus; intimating, that he was the worſt of theſe malefactors, and a ringleader of ſuch ſort of perſons: and whereas they had obſerved, he took it ill at their hands that they ſhould come to apprehend him with ſwords and ſtaves, as if he was a thief and a robber; to vex and diſtreſs him the more, they crucify him between two ſuch perſons: but the grand reaſon why it was ſo ordered, was, that tho' Chriſt was no tranſgreſſor, he was accounted one, and ſtood in the room and ſtead of ſinners, and was numbered with them, and as ſuch was treated by divine juſtice, and accordingly died for them.

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[q] T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 29. 2.
[r] Lipſius de Cruce, l. 1. c. 12, & 13.
[s] Ib. l. 2. c. 7.
[t] Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 6. §. 3. 4.
[u] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 46. 1.
[w] Vid. Lipſium de Cruce, l. 2. c. 16. & Lydium. de re militari, l. 5. c. 4. p. 191. Kirchman. de funeribus Rom. append. c. 9. p. 726.
[x] Lipſius de Cruce, l. 2. c. 11.
[y] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 35. 1. & 46. 1. Bemidbar Rabba, §. 8. fol. 190. 1.

Ver. 39. *And they that paſſed by*, &c.] In the road to or from *Jeruſalem*; for, it ſeems, the croſſes were placed by the way-ſide; or they who paſſed by the croſs, the populace that came from *Jeruſalem*, on purpoſe to ſee the ſight, *reviled him*, or *blaſphemed him*; they ſpoke all manner of evil of him, they could think of, to which he anſwered not a word; and which may teach us patience under the revilings of men: this was foretold of him, *Pſ.* lxxxix. 51. *they have reproached the footſteps of thine anointed*, or *Meſſiah*; and which *Jarchi* explains by סופי, *the ends of the king Meſſiah*; his laſt times, towards the cloſe of his days; and cites that paſſage in the *Miſna*[z], "in the heels, or, as *Buxtorf* renders it, in the end of the days of the *Meſſiah* impudence ſhall be multiplied," as it now was exceedingly: *wagging their heads*; in deriſion of him, and as exulting in his miſery; ſee *Iſ.* xxxvii. 22. *Lam.* ii. 15. This alſo was propheſied of him in *Pſ.* xxii. 7.

Ver. 40. *And ſaying, thou that deſtroyeſt the temple*, &c.] The *Vulgate Latin*, and *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel, read, *the temple of God*; and add *ah* here, as in *Mark* xv. 29. and ſo *Beza* ſays 'tis read in a certain copy. They refer to the charge of the falſe witneſſes againſt him, who miſrepreſenting his words in *John* ii. 19. declared that he gave out that he was able to deſtroy the temple of *Jeruſalem*, and rebuild it in three days time; wherefore it is added, *and buildeſt it in three days, ſave thyſelf*. They reproach him with it, and ſuggeſt, that theſe were vain and empty boaſts of his; for if he was able to do any thing of that kind, he need not hang upon the tree, but could eaſily ſave himſelf: *if thou be the ſon of God, come down from the croſs*. The *Jews* themſelves ſay[a], that the following words were ſaid to Jeſus on the croſs, "if thou be the ſon of God, why doſt thou not deliver thyſelf out of our hands?" As ſatan before them, they put an *if* upon the ſonſhip of Chriſt; and ſeeing his followers believed in him as the ſon of God, and he had owned himſelf to be ſo before the *Sanhedrim*, they require a ſign of it by his power, and to do that which they believed no mere man in his ſituation could do; which ſhows, that they had no other notion of the ſon of God, but that he was a divine perſon: but his ſonſhip was not to be declared by his coming down from the croſs, which he could have eaſily effected, but by a much greater inſtance of power, even by his reſurrection from the dead; and no other but that ſign was to be given to that wicked and perverſe generation.

Ver. 41. *Likewiſe alſo the chief-prieſts*, &c.] Who as they attended at his apprehenſion, and in their own council condemned him to death unanimouſly, and were very buſy at his arraignment, examination, and trial before *Pilate*, and perſuaded the people to be urgent for his crucifixion; they follow him to the croſs to exult over him, and inſult him, and to ſee that the execution was ſtrictly performed: and forgetting their character, office, and education; and laying aſide all humanity, decency, and good manners; inſtead of rebuking and reſtraining the populace from uſing him in an ill and unkind manner, they themſelves ſtood *mocking him, with the Scribes and elders*; who compoſed the whole *Sanhedrim* of the nation. The *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions, and ſeveral copies, read, *and the Phariſees*; of which, no doubt, there were great numbers preſent, who had been indefatigable and implacable enemies of Chriſt every where, and to whom it muſt be a pleaſing ſight to ſee him hanging on the croſs: theſe ſcoffed at him, jibed, and reproached him; and *ſaid*, as follows;

Ver. 42. *He ſaved others, himſelf he cannot ſave*, &c.] This was not ſo much a conceſſion of theirs, that he had done many ſaving works, as healing the ſick, cleanſing lepers, cauſing the blind to ſee, and the lame to walk, and raiſing the dead; but rather a ſuggeſtion, that theſe were only pretenſions and illuſions; that either they were not really done, or done by the help of the devil; ſince now he himſelf was in the utmoſt extremity, he could not ſave himſelf: but of this they might have been convinced by his ſtriking many of them to the ground, that came to apprehend him in the garden, and of which theſe men were eye-witneſſes; and he, as man, could eaſily have obtained of his father more than twelve legions of angels that would have reſcued him out of their hands: but ſo it muſt not be; he came not to ſave himſelf, but others, and to ſave them ſpiritually and eternally by dying himſelf. *If he be the king of Iſrael*; that is, the Meſſiah, who was promiſed and expected as a king, as *Zion*'s king, or king of *Iſrael*; ſee *John* i. 49. hence in *Mark* xv. 32. 'tis Chriſt the king of *Iſrael*. *Let him now come down from the croſs, and we will believe him.* The *Perſic* verſion reads, *that the people may ſee, and believe in him*; and the *Syriac* and *Arabic* verſions, *that we may ſee, and believe in him*, as in *Mark* xv. 32. But, alas! they had ſeen greater things already than this, and yet had not believed. He could eaſily have cauſed the nails to have given way, and unlooſed himſelf, and come down, who had done ſuch mighty works among them; and if he had, there is no reaſon to conclude they would have believed him to be the ſon of God, and the true Meſſiah; for tho' after this he did a much greater work, raiſed himſelf from the dead, of which they had the fulleſt evidence, yet they remained unbelieving.

Ver. 43. *He truſted in God*, &c.] That is, he pretended to claim an intereſt in him, to be high in his favour and eſteem, and to have great faith and confidence in him: *let him deliver him now*; directly, from the croſs, and the death of it: *if he will have him*; or if he is well pleaſed with him as his own ſon, or delights in him as ſuch, and will ſhew him any favour and good-will; ſee *Pſ.* xxii. 8. where are theſe very words, and which are predicted ſhould be ſaid by theſe men to Chriſt; and are a wonderful confirmation of the truth of that pſalm and prophecy belonging to him: *for he ſaid, I am the ſon of God*; not only in his miniſtry, but he had ſaid ſo in their grand council, before them all.

Ver. 44. *The thieves alſo*, &c.] One or other of them, not both; an *Hebrew* way of ſpeaking, as *Druſius*[b] has obſerved: ſo it is ſaid of *Jonah*, ch. i. 5. that he was *gone down into the ſides of the ſhip*; not into both ſides, but into one or other of them: ſo here the thieves, one or other of them, not naming which, railed at Jeſus, for it was but one of them; ſee *Luke* xxiii. 39. unleſs it can be thought, as it is by ſome, that they both at firſt reviled him; but one being quickly convinced of his evil, ceaſed, and rebuked his fellow-ſufferer, confeſſed his ſin, bore a teſtimony to the innocence of Chriſt, and deſired to be remembered by him in his kingdom. This was an aggravation of the ſufferings of Chriſt, that he ſhould be vilified by thoſe, *which were crucified with him*; who ought to have been, conſidering the condemnation they were in, and the future ſtate they were juſt entering into, lamenting and confeſſing the ſins they had been guilty of, inſtead of adding ſin to ſin, and ſo aggravating their condemnation. Theſe, at leaſt one of them, *caſt the ſame into his teeth*; as the populace, the chief-prieſts, *Scribes*, elders, and *Phariſees* had done; twitted him with his pretenſions of being the ſon of God, the Meſſiah, and king of *Iſrael*; and urged, that if he was, why did not he ſave himſelf, and them alſo?

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[z] Sota, c. 9. §. 15.

[a] Toldos Jeſu, p. 17.

[b] Quæſt. Heb. l. 1. qu. 5.

Ver. 45. *Now from the ſixth hour*, &c.] Which was twelve o'clock at noon, *there was darkneſs over all the land unto the ninth hour*; till three o'clock in the afternoon, the time the *Jews* call *between the two evenings*; and which they ſay[c] is *from the ſixth hour, and onwards*. *Luke* ſays, the ſun was darkned, ch. xxiii. 45. This darkneſs was a preter-natural eclipſe of the ſun; for it was at the time when the moon was in the full, as appears from its being at the time of the paſſover; which was on the fourteenth day of the month *Niſan*, the *Jews* beginning their months from the new moon: and moreover, it was over all the land, or *earth*, as the word may be rendered; and the *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *the whole world was dark*; at leaſt it reached to the whole *Roman* empire, or the greateſt part of it; tho' ſome think only the land of *Judæa*, or *Paleſtine*, is intended: but it is evident, that it is taken notice of, and recorded by Heathen hiſtorians and chronologers, as by *Phlegon*, and others, referred to by *Euſebius*[d]. The *Roman Archives* are appealed unto for the truth of it by *Tertullian*[e]; and it is aſſerted by *Suidas*, that *Dionyſius* the *Areopagite*, then an Heathen, ſaw it in *Egypt*; and ſaid, "either the divine being ſuffers, or ſuffers "with him that ſuffers, or the frame of the world "is diſſolving." Add to this the continuance of it, that it laſted three hours; whereas a natural eclipſe of the ſun is but of a ſhort duration; ſee *Amos* viii. 9. The *Jews*[g] have a notion, that in the times of the Meſſiah "the ſun ſhall be darkned, "בפלגות יומא, *in the middle of the day*, (as this "was) as that day was darkned when the ſanctuary "was deſtroyed." Yea, they ſpeak[h] of a darkneſs that ſhall continue a long time: their words are theſe: "the king Meſſiah ſhall be made "known in all the world, and all the kings ſhall "be ſtirred up to join together to make war with "him; and many of the profligate *Jews* ſhall be "turned to them, and ſhall go with them, to make "war againſt the king Meſſiah; ſo יתחשך כל עלמא, "*all the world ſhall be darkned* fifteen days, and "many of the people of *Iſrael* ſhall die in that "darkneſs." This darkneſs that was over the earth at the time of Chriſt's ſufferings, was, no doubt, an addition to them; the ſun, as it were, hiding its face, and refuſing to afford its comforting light and heat to him; and yet might be in deteſtation of the heinouſneſs of the ſin, the *Jews* were committing, and as expreſſive of the divine anger and reſentment; for God's purpoſes and decrees, and the end he had in view, did not excuſe, nor extenuate their wickedneſs; as it ſhews alſo their wretched ſtupidity, not to be awakened and convinced by the amazing darkneſs, with other things attending it, which made no impreſſion on them; tho' it did on the *Roman* centurion, who concluded Chriſt muſt be the ſon of God. It was an emblem of the judicial blindneſs and darkneſs of the *Jewiſh* nation; and ſignified, that now was the hour and power of darkneſs, or the time for the prince of darkneſs, with his principalities and powers, to exert himſelf; and was a repreſentation of that darkneſs that was now on the ſoul of Chriſt, expreſſed in the following verſe; as well as of the eclipſe of him, the ſun of righteouſneſs, of the glory of his perſon, both by his incarnation, and by his ſufferings.

Ver. 46. *And about the ninth hour*, &c.] Or three o'clock in the afternoon, which was about the time of the ſlaying and offering of the daily ſacrifice, which was an eminent type of Chriſt. The *Jews* ſay[i], that "every day the daily ſacrifice was ſlain "at eight and a half, and was offered up at nine "and a half:" about which time alſo the paſſover was killed, which was another type of Chriſt; and, as they ſay[k], "was offered firſt, and then the daily "ſacrifice." Tho' the account they elſewhere[l] give of theſe things, is this; "the daily ſacrifice was ſlain "at eight and a half, and was offered up at nine "and a half; (that is, on all the common days of "the year) on the evenings of the paſſover it was "ſlain at ſeven and a half, and offered at eight and "a half, whether on a common day, or on a ſabbath day: the paſſover eve, that happened to be "on the ſabbath eve, it was ſlain at ſix and a half, "and offered at ſeven and a half, and the paſſover "after it." At this time, *Jeſus cried with a loud voice*, as in great diſtreſs, having been ſilent during the three hours darkneſs, and patiently bearing all his ſoul-ſufferings, under a ſenſe of divine wrath, and the hidings of his father's countenance, and his conflicts with the powers of darkneſs; but now, in the anguiſh of his ſoul, he breaks out, *ſaying, Eli, Eli, lama ſabachthani*: which words are partly *Hebrew*, and partly *Chaldee*; the three firſt are *Hebrew*, and the laſt *Chaldee*, ſubſtituted in the room of *Azabthani*; as it was, and ſtill is in. The *Chaldee* paraphraſe of the text in *Pſ.* xxii. 1. from whence they are taken; *that is to ſay, my God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* He calls him his God, not as he was God, but as he was man; who, as ſuch, was choſen by him to the grace of union to the ſon of God; was made and formed by him; was anointed by him with the oil of gladneſs; was ſupported and upheld by him in the day of ſalvation; was raiſed by him from the dead, and highly exalted by him at his own right hand; and Chriſt, as man, prayed to him as his God, believed in him, loved him, and obeyed him as ſuch: and tho' now he hid his face from him, yet he expreſſed ſtrong faith and confidence of his intereſt in him. When he is ſaid to be *forſaken* of God; the meaning is not, that the hypoſtatical union was diſſolved, which was not even by death itſelf; the fulneſs of the Godhead ſtill dwelt bodily in him: nor was he ſeparated from the love of God; he had the ſame intereſt in his father's heart and favour, both as his ſon, and as mediator, as ever: nor was the principle and habit of joy and comfort loſt in his ſoul, as man, but he was now without a ſenſe of the gracious preſence of God, and was filled, as the ſurety of his people, with a ſenſe of divine wrath, which their iniquities he now bore, deſerved, and which was neceſſary for him to endure, in order to make full ſatisfaction for them; for one part of the puniſhment of ſin is loſs of the divine preſence. Wherefore he made not this expoſtulation out of ignorance; he knew the reaſon of it, and that it was not out of perſonal diſreſpect to him, or for any ſin of his own; or becauſe he was not a righteous, but a wicked man, as the *Jew* [m] blaſphemouſly objects to him from hence; but becauſe he ſtood in the law-place, and ſtead of ſinners: nor was it out of impatience, that he ſo expreſſed himſelf; for he was entirely reſigned to the will of God, and content to drink the whole of the bitter cup: nor out of deſpair; for he at the ſame time ſtrongly claims and aſſerts his intereſt in God, and repeats it; but to ſhew, that he bore all the griefs of his people, and this among the reſt, divine deſertion; and to ſet forth the bitterneſs of his ſorrows, that not only the ſun in the firmament hid its face from him, and he was forſaken by his friends and diſciples, but even left by his God; and alſo to expreſs the ſtrength of his faith at ſuch a time. The whole of it evinces the truth of Chriſt's human nature, that he was in all things made like unto his brethren; that he had an human ſoul, and endured ſorrows and ſufferings in it, of which this of deſertion was not the leaſt: the heinouſneſs of ſin may be learnt from hence, which not only drove the angels out of heaven, and *Adam* out of the garden, and ſeparates, with reſpect to communion, between God and his children; but even cauſed him to hide his face from his own ſon, whilſt he was bearing, and ſuffering for, the ſins of his people. The condeſcending grace of Chriſt is here to be ſeen, that he, who was the word, that was with God from everlaſting, and his only-begotten ſon that lay in his boſom, that he ſhould deſcend from heaven by the aſſumption of human nature, and be for a while forſaken by God, to bring us near unto him: nor ſhould it be wondered at, that this is ſometimes the caſe of the ſaints, who ſhould, in imitation of Chriſt, truſt in the Lord at ſuch ſeaſons, and ſtay themſelves on their God; and which may be ſome ſupport unto them, they may be aſſured of the ſympathy of Chriſt, who having been in this ſame condition, cannot but have a fellow-feeling with them. The *Jews* themſelves own [n], that theſe words were ſaid by Jeſus when he was in their hands. They indeed apply the paſſage to *Eſther*; and ſay [o], that “ſhe ſtood in the innermoſt court of the “king's houſe; and when ſhe came to the houſe “of the images, the *Shechinah* departed from her, “and ſhe ſaid, *Eli, Eli, lama Azabthani?* my God, “my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?” Tho' others apply the *pſalm* to *David*, and others to the people of *Iſrael* in captivity [p]: but certain it is, that it belongs to the Meſſiah; and ſo many things in it were fulfilled with reſpect to Jeſus, as moſt clearly ſhew him to be the *Meſſiah*, and the perſon pointed at: the firſt words of it were ſpoken by him, as the *Jews* themſelves allow, and the very expreſſions which his enemies uſed concerning him while ſuffering, together with their geſtures, are there recorded; and the parting his garments, and caſting lots on his veſture, done by the *Roman* ſoldiers, are there propheſied of; and indeed there are ſo many things in it which agree with him, and cannot with any other, that leave it without all doubt that he is the ſubject of it [q].

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[c] T. Hieroſ. Peſachim, fol. 31. 3.

[d] In Chronicis.

[e] Apolog. c. 21.

[g] Zohar in Exod. fol. 4. 1.

[h] Ib. fol. 3, 4.

[i] T. Hieroſ. Peſachim, fol. 31. 3, 4.

[k] Ib.

[l] Miſn. Peſachim, c. 5. §. 1.

Ver. 47. *Some of them that ſtood there*, &c.] Near the croſs, looking on, and mocking at him, *when they heard that*; the words *Eli, Eli*, ſpoken by Chriſt, *ſaid, this man calleth for Elias*. Theſe could not be the *Roman* ſoldiers that ſaid ſo, who had no notion of *Elias*; rather the *Helleniſtical Jews*, who not ſo well underſtanding the *Hebrew* language, hearing the above words, and having ſome notion of the prophet *Elias*, fancied he was calling for him; though it ſeems moſt likely to be the *Jews*, who either thro' the nearneſs of the ſound of the words, and miſtake of them, and not near enough to hear and diſtinguiſh them, really thought he called for that prophet; or rather wilfully miſtook him, with an intent to banter and ridicule him.

Ver. 48. *And ſtraightway one of them ran and took a ſponge*, &c.] Which was not far from the croſs, where a veſſel full of vinegar was ſet, *John* xix. 29. *and filled it with vinegar*; dipping it into it, it ſucked it up. Some of theſe ſponges had leathern handles to them [r]. *And put it on a reed*; a ſtalk of hyſſop; ſee the note on *John* xix. 29. *and gave him to drink*; not to revive his ſpirits, or haſten his death, as ſome have thought, but in contempt of him, and to mock him, he having ſignified that he was a-thirſt.

Ver. 49. *The reſt ſaid, let be*, &c.] The others to whom he belonged, that fetched the ſponge, ſaid to him, let him alone, keep at a diſtance from him, give him nothing to drink: *let us ſee whether Elias will come to ſave him*; whom the *Jews* looked upon to be the fore-runner of the Meſſiah, and therefore ſuggeſt, that ſhould he come to ſave him, they would believe he was the Meſſiah; and they had a mighty notion of *Elias* appearing to perſons frequently [s], and talking, and converſing with them; ſee the note on *Matt.* xvii. 3. tho' they did not believe he would come, and appear to Chriſt; for they were perſons of great note for piety and learning, to whom he appeared, as they pretend, whereas they had no ſuch opinion of him. The *Ethiopic* verſion here adds, *and one took a ſpear and pierced his ſide with it, and blood and water flowed out*: but this circumſtance is only recorded by the Evangeliſt *John*, ch. xix. 34. tho' *Beza* ſays the ſame is read here in two ancient copies.

Ver. 50. *Jeſus when he had cried again*, &c.] A *ſecond time*, as the *Perſic* verſion; for he had cried once before, and expreſſed the words he did, as in ver. 46. what he now delivered were, *father, into thy hands I commend my ſpirit*, *Luke* xxiii. 46. and *it is finiſhed*, *John* xix. 30. which he ſaid *with a loud voice*; which ſhewed the vehemency of his affection, his ſtrong confidence in God, and his being fearleſs of death; as alſo he thus ſpoke, that he might be heard, and his words attended to, ſince they contained things of the greateſt importance and conſequence: moreover, being able to expreſs himſelf in ſuch a manner, this declared him to be more than a mere man; for after ſuch agonies in the garden, and ſo much fatigue in being hurried from place to place, and ſuch loſs of blood by being buffeted, ſcourged, crowned with thorns, and nailed to the accurſed tree, where, being ſtretched, he had hung for ſome hours; to ſpeak with ſo loud a voice was more than human, and was a conviction to the centurion, that he was a divine perſon: for when he

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[m] Vet. Nizzachon, p. 162.

[n] Toldos Jeſu, p. 17.

[o] T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 15. 2. & Gloſſ. in T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 29. 1.

[p] Vid. Jarchi & Kimchi in Pſ. xxii. 1.

[q] See my book of the Prophecies of the Old Teſtament, &c. p. 158, &c.

[r] Miſn. Sabbat, c. 21. §. 3.

[s] Vid. Juchaſin, fol. 79. 1. & 86. 1. & 101. 1. & 118. 2. & 132. 1.

*ſaw that he ſo cried out*, and *gave up the ghoſt*, he ſaid, *truly this man was the ſon of God*, *Mark* xv. 39. and likewiſe it ſhows, that he died freely and voluntarily, and not thro' force and neceſſity: it was not all that men had done, or could do to him, that could have forced his life from him: he died willingly, and when nature was in its full ſtrength; and which is ſignified in the next phraſe, *yielded up the ghoſt*, or *diſmiſſed the ſpirit*, as the *Syriac* verſion truly renders it; he ſent it away. It was not taken from him, he laid down his life of himſelf, as the Lord of it, and gave himſelf freely to be an offering and ſacrifice in the room of his people; which is a proof of his great love, and amazing grace unto them.

Ver. 51. *And behold, the vail of the temple was rent in twain*, &c.] Juſt at the time that Chriſt ſpake with ſo loud a voice, and expired, and which was at the time of the offering up of the evening incenſe; and ſo muſt be ſeen by the prieſt that was then offering, and thoſe that aſſiſted him, for the incenſe-altar was near the vail; and which muſt be a very aſtoniſhing ſight unto them: the vail was of a very great thickneſs; it was made of fine twined linen, *Exod.* xxvi. 31. and it is a rule with the *Jews*[t], that "where-ever mention is made in the law of fine linen, or fine twined linen, it means a thread ſix times doubled:" and whereas this was made of blue, and purple, and ſcarlet, *Jarchi*'s note on the place is, that "every kind was doubled with each thread of ſix threads." His ſenſe is more clearly expreſſed in his note on ver. 1. "lo! here are four ſorts to every thread; one of linen, and three of wool, and every thread is ſix times doubled; behold four ſorts when they are twiſted together, make twenty-four doubles to a thread." Yea, ſome of them make it to be forty-eight doubles[u]. What a thick piece of tapeſtry muſt this be! and this makes the rending of it the more amazing; for no doubt but that the vail of the ſecond temple was made after the manner of the firſt; and this was rent *from top to bottom*; and which was no leſs than forty cubits in length, which was the height of the holy of holies in the ſecond temple; and which made the rent the more aſtoniſhing. The account the *Jews* give of the vail, is this[w]: "*R. Simeon ben Gamaliel* ſaid, on account of *R. Simeon*, the ſon of the *Sagan*, the thickneſs of the vail is an hand's breadth, and it is woven of ſeventy-two threads, and every thread has twenty-four threads in it: it is forty cubits long, and twenty broad, and is made of eighty-two myriads; (which is either the number of the threads in it, or the ſum of the golden pence it coſt. Some copies read, is made by eighty-two virgins[x];) two are made ever year; and three hundred prieſts waſh it." The *Syriac* verſion renders it, *the face of the gate of the temple*; by which may be meant, perhaps, the vail of the gate of *Ulam*, or of the porch[y]. The *Jews* have a tradition[z], that "forty years before the deſtruction of the temple, the gates of it opened of themſelves. *R. Jochanan ben Zaccai* reproved them, ſaying, O temple! temple! wherefore doſt thou fright thyſelf? I know thy end is to be deſtroyed; for ſo propheſied of thee *Zechariah*, the ſon of *Iddo*, *open thy gates, O Lebanon*, &c. *Zech.* xi. 1." But whether this may be referred to in the above verſion, or has any reference to the evangelic hiſtory, I will not ſay. Other writers, as *Joſephus*[a], and *Egeſippus*[b], ſpeak of the eaſtern gate of the city, which was of braſs, and as much as twenty men could ſhut, opening of its own accord, before the deſtruction of the temple; which perhaps the *Jewiſh* tradition rather regards. This rending of the vail was done, as ſome think, in token of mourning for, and teſtifying abhorrence at the crucifixion of Chriſt; the temple rending its garments, the vail, at the death of its Lord, proprietor and type, as the high-prieſt did his at ſuppoſed blaſphemy; or to ſhew that the Lord, who had taken up his reſidence in the moſt holy place between the cherubim, over the mercy-ſeat, in thick darkneſs, was now about to remove, and leave the houſe deſolate; or it ſignified the rending of Chriſt's fleſh, the breaking of his body for us, which was typified by the vail; ſee *Heb.* x. 20. and may alſo denote both the fulfilment and abrogation of the ceremonial law, which had its end in the death of Chriſt; and likewiſe the more clear diſcoveries of the myſteries of grace under the Goſpel, in which they are laid to open view, and are beheld with open face: to which may be added, that this pointed out, that the way to the holieſt of all, to heaven, of which this was a figure, was now made manifeſt; and was plain and acceſſible, as it was, firſt to Chriſt, who entered by his own blood, as the fore-runner; and alſo to his people, who likewiſe have boldneſs to enter by the ſame. *And the earth did quake*: whether this earthquake reached only to the ſpot of ground where Chriſt was crucified, and on which the city and temple of *Jeruſalem* ſtood; or whether it extended to other parts of the earth; ſince, in the reign of *Tiberius Cæſar*, as *Pliny*[c] relates, there was an earthquake, in which twelve cities in *Aſia* fell, is not certain. However, it was an indication of the divine anger and reſentment, and in deteſtation of the ſin of crucifying Chriſt; ſee *Pſ.* xviii. 7. and was an emblem of the ſhaking and removing of the *Jewiſh* church-ſtate and ordinances, *Heb.* xii. 26, 27. *And the rocks rent*; which were near mount *Calvary*, and about *Jeruſalem*; and, as we are told, the clefts are to be ſeen to this day, and which appear to be ſupernatural. This was alſo a token of divine wrath and fury, *Nahum* i. 5, 6. and a rebuke of the ſtupidity and hardneſs of the *Jews*, who were unmoved when rocks were rent aſunder, being harder than they; and an emblem of the future converſion of many thro' the powerful miniſtry of the word, and in conſequence of Chriſt's death; when hearts, as hard as rocks, were broke in pieces, ſtony hearts taken away, and hearts of fleſh given; of which the three thouſand being pricked to the heart under *Peter*'s ſermon, were an inſtance.

Ver. 52. *And the graves were opened*, &c.] Which were near the city of *Jeruſalem*: this was a proof of Chriſt's power over death and the grave, by dying; when he through death, deſtroyed him that had the power of it, and aboliſhed death itſelf; and became the plague of death and the deſtruction of the grave, taking into his hands the keys of hell and death: *and many bodies of ſaints which ſlept, aroſe*; not that they aroſe at the time of Chriſt's death: the graves were opened then, when the earth quaked, and the rocks were rent; but the bodies of the ſaints did not ariſe, till after

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[t] Maimon. Cele Hamikdaſh, c. 8. §. 14. Kimchi in Sepher Shoraſh rad. שזר.

[u] T. Hieroſ. Shekalim, fol. 51. 2.

[w] Miſn. Shekalim, c. 8. §. 5. Shemot Rabba, §. 50. fol. 144. 2. Bemidbar Rabba, §. 4. fol. 183. 2.

[x] Vid. Bartenora & Yom. Tob. in ib.

[y] Vid. Bartenora in ib.

[z] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 39. 2. Jarchi & Kimchi in Zech. xi. 1. Ganz, Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 25. 2.

[a] l. 8. c. 12.

[b] l. 5. c. 44.

[c] l. 2. c. 84.

Chriſt was riſen, as appears from the following verſe; but becauſe the other event now happened, they are both recorded here: theſe were ſaints, and ſuch as ſlept in Jeſus; and of whom he is the firſt fruits, that now roſe; and not all, but many of them, as pledges of the future reſurrection, and for the confirmation of Chriſt's, and the accompliſhment of a prophecy in *Iſa.* xxvi. 19. And they roſe in the ſame bodies in which they before lived, otherwiſe they could not be called their bodies, or known by thoſe to whom they appeared: but who they were, is not to be known; ſome have thought them to be the ancient patriarchs, as *Adam*, *Noah*, *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, *Jacob*, &c. In the *Septuagint* on *Job* xlii. 17. *Job* is ſaid to be one of them, and a tradition is there recorded, which runs thus: "it "is written, that he roſe with whom the Lord roſe." But it ſhould ſeem rather, that they were ſome later ſaints, ſuch as *Zechariah*, the father of *John* the *Baptiſt*, *John* the *Baptiſt* himſelf, good old *Simeon*, *Joſeph* the huſband of *Mary*, and others, well known to perſons now alive. Some think they were ſuch, as had been martyrs in the cauſe of religion; and ſo the *Perſic* verſion renders the words, *and the bodies of many ſaints who ſuffered martyrdom, roſe out of the graves.*

Ver. 53. *And came out of the graves after his reſurrection*, &c.] The reſurrection of Chriſt; for he roſe as the firſt fruits, as the firſt begotten of the dead, and the firſt born from the dead; for he was the firſt that was raiſed to an immortal life; for though others were raiſed before him, by himſelf, and in the times of the prophets, yet to a mortal life; but theſe ſaints came forth to the reſurrection of life, and therefore it was neceſſary that Chriſt the firſt fruits, ſhould riſe firſt. The *Arabic* verſion indeed reads, *after their own reſurrection*; and the *Ethiopic* verſion, *after they were raiſed*; both wrong, and ſcarcely ſenſe: *and went into the holy city*; the city of *Jeruſalem*, which though now a very wicked city, was ſo called, becauſe of the temple, and the worſhip of God, and his reſidence in it: the burying places of the *Jews* were without the city [d], and therefore theſe riſen ſaints, are ſaid to go into it: *and appeared unto many*; of their friends and acquaintance, who had perſonally known them, and converſed with them in their life-time. Theſe ſaints I apprehend, continued on earth until our Lord's aſcenſion, and then joining the retinue of angels, went triumphantly with him to heaven, as trophies of his victory over ſin, ſatan, death, and the grave.

Ver. 54. *Now when the centurion*, &c.] That was over the band of ſoldiers, that mocked Chriſt in *Pilate*'s hall, and who was particularly over the guard of ſoldiers, ſet about the croſs of Chriſt: *and they that were with him, watching Jeſus*: the ſoldiers that were with him, who were ſet to watch the croſs of Chriſt, leſt he ſhould come down, or any ſhould take him down from thence; ſee the note on ver. 36. *Saw the earthquake, and thoſe things that were done*; as beſides that, the darkening of the ſun, the rending of the rocks, and particularly heard with what a loud voice Chriſt ſpoke, and then at once expired: *they feared greatly*; not with a true godly fear, but with a fear of puniſhment; leſt divine vengeance ſhould light on them, for their concern in this matter: *ſaying, truly this was the Son of God*; which they concluded, not from any mediatorial performances, which they were utter ſtrangers to, but from effects of divine power; and which to them ſhewed him to be a divine perſon, what he ſaid he was, and the *Jews* charged him with blaſphemy, on account of, and condemned him for, as theſe ſoldiers might have ſeen and heard.

Ver. 55. *And many women were there*, &c.] At the croſs of Chriſt, at ſome little diſtance from it; but where was *Peter*, who had declared he would never be offended, though all men were; and would die with Chriſt, rather than deny him? and where were the reſt of the diſciples, who ſaid the ſame things? None were preſent excepting *John*, as can be learnt from the Evangeliſts; but many women, thoſe of the weaker ſex, were there; which was a rebuke of the former vanity and confidence of the diſciples, and of their preſent puſillanimity and cowardice: *beholding afar off*; Chriſt upon the croſs, in all his agonies, the chief prieſts and people mocking him, the darkneſs upon the earth, the quaking of it, and the rending of the rocks: they were witneſſes of all this, being at ſome little diſtance, by reaſon of the crowd of people and ſoldiers about the croſs; and they beheld with an eye of faith, their bleeding, dying Lord, as crucified for them, and as bearing and taking away their ſins: a ſight which at once ſtirred up their affection and love to Chriſt, their concern for him, and ſorrow for ſin; and yet joy and peace, in believing in him: *which followed Jeſus from Galilee*; where they had ſeen his miracles, heard his doctrines, and had been ſavingly converted by him; and therefore followed him wherever he went, though an hundred miles or more, and through many difficulties and diſcouragements: they attended him in his triumphant entry into *Jeruſalem*, and now at his croſs; nor did they leave him when dead, and in his grave: *miniſtring unto him*: not now, for he ſtood in no need of their aſſiſtance, nor could they give him any; but this reſpects what they had done heretofore, in their journey with him from *Galilee* to *Jeruſalem*; when they miniſtred to him of their worldly ſubſtance, as a token of their affection for him; and which expreſſes the low eſtate and mean condition he was in, and is an inſtruction to his followers, how to behave towards the faithful preachers of his Goſpel; ſee *Luke* viii. 3.

Ver. 56. *Among which was Mary Magdalene*, &c.] Out of whom Chriſt had caſt out ſeven devils; and who having received much from him, loved much, which ſhe ſhowed by her zealous and conſtant attachment to him. She was called *Magdalene*, either becauſe ſhe was an inhabitant of *Magdala*, *Matt.* xv. 39. ſo we read [e] of *R. Iſaac*, מגדלאה, of *Magdala*, or *Magdalene*; and the rather, becauſe that *Magdala* was famous, or rather infamous, for whoredom; for which reaſon the *Jews* [f] ſay, it was deſtroyed: or elſe ſhe was ſo called, becauſe ſhe was, גדלת, a tonſtrix, or plaiter of womens hair, as the word ſignifies [g]; and ſo we often read of *Mary*, מגדלא שיער נשייא, *the plaiter of womens hair* [h]; by whom the *Jews* ſeem to deſign *Mary*, the mother of *Jeſus*, whom they confound with this *Mary Magdalene*. *Jerom* ſays [i], her name ſignifies *towered*, or fortified, becauſe of her care and diligence, and the ardour of her faith; and *Migdal* in *Hebrew*, does ſignify a tower: *and Mary the mother of James and Joſes*; the ſame with the wife of *Cleophas*, and ſiſter to *Mary*, the mother of Jeſus: inſtead of *Joſes*, the *Vulgate Latin* and *Ethiopic*

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[d] Vid. Gloſſ. in T. Bab. Kidduſhin, fol. 80. 2. & Maimon. Hilch. Shemitta veyobel, c. 13. §. 3.

[e] Juchaſin, fol. 96. 2.

[f] T. Hieroſ. Taaniot, fol. 69. 1. Echa Rabbati, fol. 52. 4.

[g] Maimon. & Bartenora in Miſn. Kidduſhin, c. 2. §. 3.

[h] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 104. 2. Chagiga, fol. 4. 2. & Sanhedrin, fol. 67. 1.

[i] Ad Principiam, Tom. 1. fol. 41.

opic verſions, read *Joſeph*: יוםי, *Joſe* in *Hebrew*, is the ſame with *Joſeph*, the laſt letter being cut off; the *Arabic* verſion reads *Mary*, the mother of *James*, and the mother of *Joſes*, *John* xix. 25. *And the mother of Zebedee's children*; that is, of *James* and *John*; her name was *Salome*, *Mark* xv. 40.

Ver. 57. *When the even was come*, &c.] The ſecond evening, when it was juſt on ſun-ſetting; at which time the *Jewiſh* ſabbath began, and when the bodies of thoſe that were crucified, muſt be taken down; and if not dead, their bones muſt be broken, and they diſpatched, in order to be interred in the common burying-place of malefactors: *there came a rich man of Arimathea*: not from thence now, for he lived at *Jeruſalem*; but this was the place of his nativity, or former abode, and from whence he originally came; and is the ſame with *Ramathaim Zophim*, and *Ramah*, and was the birth-place of *Samuel* the prophet, 1 *Sam*. i. 1, 19. and is by the *Septuagint* called *Armathaim*, in 1 *Sam*. i. 1, 3, 19. and viii. 4. and xv. 34. and xvi. 13. and xxviii. 3. His character, as a rich man, is particularly mentioned, not merely to ſhow that ſuch men may be, and ſometimes are, inſtances of the grace of God; much leſs in a way of boaſting, that ſuch a man was attached to Jeſus; but rather to point out the reaſon, how he came to have ſuch eaſy acceſs to *Pilate*, and to ſucceed in his buſineſs with him; as well as to obſerve the accompliſhment of a prophecy, in *Iſa*. liii. 9. *named Joſeph*; the ſame name with one of the patriarchs, the ſons of *Jacob*; between whom there was a reſemblance, not only as good men, but in their obſervance of funeral rites and obſequies; the one in thoſe of his father, the other in thoſe of his dear Lord and Maſter. Some think [k] he is the ſame with *Joſeph ben Gorion*, the brother of *Nicodemus ben Gorion*, often ſpoken of as a prieſt, and one of the richeſt of them in *Jeruſalem*: *who alſo himſelf was Jeſus's diſciple*; though he was only a ſecret one, as *Nicodemus* was: he had not as yet, or till now publickly profeſſed him, for fear of the *Jews*, who had made a law, that whoever did, ſhould be caſt out of the ſynagogue; ſee *Luke* xix. 38.

Ver. 58. *He went to Pilate*, &c.] To his houſe where he lived, and went in, as *Mark* ſays, ch. xv. 43. *boldly*; not being aſhamed of Chriſt crucified, or afraid to own him, and ſhew his reſpect to him as dead, though he knew he ſhould incur the diſpleaſure, reproach, and perſecution of the *Jews*: *and begged the body of Jeſus*; which could not be taken down and interred, without the leave of the *Roman* governor; and which was generally granted to the friends of the deceaſed, when aſked; otherwiſe they were buried in places [l] appointed for ſuch perſons; ſee the note on ver. 33. And this would have been the caſe of Chriſt, had not *Joſeph* craved his body; and which he did, to prevent its being abuſed by the *Jews*, and interred in ſuch an ignominious manner: *then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered*; to *Joſeph*, after he had underſtood by the centurion that Jeſus was dead, which he at firſt could not tell how to believe, and marvelled at it, *Mark* xv. 44, 45. *Joſeph* might the more eaſily obtain his requeſt, as he was a perſon of character and riches; and becauſe *Pilate* himſelf had a good opinion of Jeſus, and of his innocence, as well as his wife was much in his favour; ſo that *Joſeph* had no difficulty to obtain the body of Chriſt; but as ſoon as he aſked, he had the favour granted, and orders were given to the centurion and his ſoldiers, to deliver it to him.

Ver. 59. *And when Joſeph had taken the body*, &c.] Down from the croſs, with the aſſiſtance of others, or from the hands of thoſe who had orders to deliver it to him: *he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth*; that is, he wound up the body in it round and round, as was the cuſtom of the *Jews*; ſee *Acts* v. 6. *John* xi. 44. Nor was it uſual to bury in any thing but linen: ſo 'tis ſaid [m], "let the "wrappings, or grave cloaths, be של פשתן לבנים, "*of white linen*; and let not the price of them be "dear, for it is forbidden to bury in wrappings "of ſilk, or broidered garments, even to a prince "of *Iſrael*; for this is pride and deſtruction, and "the work of the *Gentiles*." This clean linen cloth, in which the dead body of Chriſt was wrapped, may be an emblem of his purity and innocence, who did no ſin; nor did he die for any of his own, but for the ſins of others; and alſo of his pure and ſpotleſs righteouſneſs, which is compared to fine linen, clean and white, and which he now had wrought out, and brought in; ſee *Rev*. xix. 8.

Ver. 60. *And laid it in his own new tomb*, &c.] Chriſt was laid not in his own, but in another's tomb; for as in his life-time he had not where to lay his head; ſo when he was dead, he had no ſepulchre of his own to put his body in: and moreover, this ſhews that as he was born for others, and ſuffered and died not for himſelf, but them; ſo he was buried for them, as well as roſe again for their juſtification: and it was a *new* tomb in which he was laid, in which none had been laid before; and was ſo ordered by providence, for the confirmation of the truth of his reſurrection; for had another body been laid there, it might have been ſaid that it was that, and not his that was raiſed. The *Jews* diſtinguiſh between a new grave, and an old grave [n]: "a new grave may be meaſured, and ſold, and "divided; an old one may not be meaſured, nor "ſold, nor divided: there is a new grave, which "is as an old one; and an old one, which is as a "new one; an old grave, in which are ten dead "bodies, which is not in the power of the owners, "lo! this is as a new grave." *Which he had hewn out in the rock*; it was uſual with the *Jews* to make their ſepulchres in rocks: "in the midſt (of the "court of the ſepulchre, they ſay [o]) two caves are "opened, one on one ſide, and the other on the "other; *R. Simeon* ſays, four on the four ſides; "*Rabban Simeon ben Gamaliel* ſays, all are, "לפי הסלע, *according to the rock*;" *i. e.* according to the nature of the rock, out of which the ſepulchre is hewn; ſee *Iſa*. xxii. 16. *And he rolled a great ſtone to the door of the ſepulchre*; for the ſepulchres were made with doors to go in and out at: hence we often read [p] of הפתח הקבר, *the door of the ſepulchre*; and this was not only the cuſtom of the *Jews*, but of other nations alſo [q]: the ſtone rolled to the door, was what the *Jews* call, גולל, from its being rolled to, and from the door of the ſepulchre; and which they ſay [r], was a large and broad ſtone, with which the mouth of the ſepulchre was ſtopped above: and it was at the ſhutting up of the ſepulchre with this ſtone, that mourning began [s]; and after it was ſhut with this ſepulchral ſtone, it was not lawful to open it[t]: now this was done by *Joſeph*, to preſerve the body from any injury, either from beaſts, or from the *Jews: and* when he had ſo done, he *departed* to his own houſe; for the ſabbath drew on, and there was no more time to do any thing more in this affair. The *Syriac* verſion reads theſe laſt clauſes in the plural number; *they rolled a great ſtone, and they put it*, &c. *and they went away*; intimating, that *Joſeph* did not do this himſelf; the ſtone was too great; but by others, or with their aſſiſtance. It may be obſerved, that all this was done on a feaſt-day; on one of the days of the feaſt of the paſſover, when no ſervile work was to be done; and yet this was agreeable to the *Jewiſh* canons, which ſay[u], "they "do all things needful for the dead on a feaſt-day; "they ſhave his head, and waſh his cloaths, and "make him a coffin; and if they have no boards, "they bring timber and ſaw boards of it, ſilently "within doors; and if the perſon is a man of note, "they do it even in the ſtreet; but they don't cut "wood out of the foreſt, to ſaw planks of it for "the coffin; nor do they hew ſtones, to build a "tomb with them." In this caſe, there was no need for the latter, becauſe the ſepulchre in which the body of Chriſt was laid, had been hewn out of a rock before; but the body was wrapped in a clean linen cloth, and wound up in it with myrrh and aloes to preſerve it, and was interred; and ſo the women on this day, prepared ſpices and ointments, to anoint it with; though they reſted on the ſabbath-day according to the commandment; but then as ſoon as that was over, though it was a feaſt-day, they came to the ſepulchre with their ſpices and ointments, *Luke* xxiii. 56. and xxiv. 1.

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[k] Alting. Shilo, p. 309.

[l] See Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 6. §. 5, 6. Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 14. §. 9.

[m] Juchaſin, fol. 54. 2. Vid. Maimon. Hilchot Ebel, c. 4. §. 2.

[n] Maſſech. Semachto, c. 14. fol. 16. 3.

[o] Miſn. Bava Bathra, c. 6. §. 8.

[p] Miſn. ib. & Bartenora in Miſn. Ohalot, c. 15. §. 8.

[q] Vid. Kirchman de Funer. Roman. l. 3. c. 15. p. 438.

[r] Bartenora & Yom Tob in Miſn. Ohalot, c. 2. §. 4.

[s] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 47. 2. Maimon. Hilchot Ebel, c. 1. §. 2. &c. 2. §. 8.

Ver. 61. *And there was Mary Magdalene and the other Mary*, &c.] The wife of *Cleophas*, and the mother of *James* and of *Joſes*: *ſitting overagainſt the ſepulchre*; obſerving where the body of Chriſt was put, and how it was laid; for they intended to prepare ſpices and ointments to anoint it with; and were mourning for the death of Chriſt: for *ſitting* was a mourning poſture, which now they were allowed, the body being taken down from the croſs, and interred by leave of the governor; for for one that died as a malefactor, they might not uſe the outward ſigns of mourning: the canon is this[w]; for ſuch "they don't mourn, but they grieve; and "there is no grieving but in the heart:" hence theſe women before *ſtood*, *John* xix. 25. but now they ſat.

Ver. 62. *Now the next day that followed the day of preparation*, &c.] Which was the ſabbath-day; for the day of preparation was the day before the ſabbath, *Mark* xv. 42. in which they prepared every thing neceſſary for the ſabbath, and therefore was ſo called: and as this introduces the account of the chief prieſts and *Phariſees*, making application to *Pilate*, to ſecure the ſepulchre; and which by his leave they did, by ſealing the ſtone, and ſetting a guard about the ſepulchre; it ſhows what conſciences theſe men had, who accuſed the diſciples of Chriſt of a violation of the ſabbath, for plucking a few ears of corn on that day; and ſought to kill Jeſus, becauſe he healed a man on it, and bid him take up his bed and walk; and yet they themſelves could leave their devotions, and firſt meet together and agree upon an addreſs to *Pilate*, and then go in a body to his palace; and having obtained their requeſt, march to *Joſeph*'s garden, and make the ſepulchre ſure, ſealing the ſtone, and ſetting a watch, which were ſervile works, and, according to their laws and traditions, not to be done on the ſabbath-day; and yet they ſcrupled them not, notwithſtanding their characters and profeſſion, which follow: *the chief prieſts and Phariſees came together unto Pilate*; theſe were the inveterate and implacable enemies of Chriſt; they took counſel how to put him to death; they employed *Judas* to betray him, and ſent a band of ſoldiers with him to take him; they ſuborned falſe witneſſes againſt him; they moved the people to prefer *Barabbas* to him; they got him condemned to death, and followed him to the croſs, where they mocked him; and ſtill, like the troubled ſea, they were reſtleſs and uneaſy; for though he was dead, they feared his reſurrection; and though they could not prevent the thing, they conſult to hinder the credit of it.

Ver. 63. *Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver ſaid*, &c.] Meaning Jeſus; for no better name could they give him alive or dead, and they chuſe to continue it; and the rather to uſe it before *Pilate*, who had a good opinion of his innocence; and to let him ſee, that they ſtill retained the ſame ſentiments of him: מסית, *a deceiver*, is with the *Jews*[x], "a private perſon, that deceives "a private perſon; ſaying to him there is a God in "ſuch a place, ſo it eats, and ſo it drinks; ſo it "does well, and ſo it does ill." But which can never agree with Jeſus, who was not a private perſon, but a publick preacher; and who taught men, not privately, but openly, in the temple and in the ſynagogues; nor did he teach idolatry, or any thing contrary to the God of *Iſrael*, or to the unity of the divine being; or which ſavoured of, and encouraged the polytheiſm of the *Gentiles*. The *Ethiopic* verſion renders theſe words thus; *Sir, remember*, &c. as if Chriſt had ſaid this to *Pilate* in their hearing, and therefore put him in mind of it. *While he was yet alive*; ſo that they owned that he was dead; and therefore could not object this to the truth of his reſurrection, that he was taken down from the croſs alive, and did not die: *after three days I will riſe again*: now, though he ſaid this to his diſciples privately, *Matt.* xvi. 21. and xvii. 23. yet not clearly and expreſly to the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*; wherefore they muſt either have it from *Judas*, and lyed in ſaying they remembered it: or they gathered it either from what he ſaid concerning the ſign of the prophet *Jonas*, *Matt.* xii. 40. or rather from his words in *John* ii. 19. and if ſo, they acted a moſt wicked part, in admitting a charge againſt him, as having a deſign upon their temple, to deſtroy it, and then rebuild it in three days; when they knew thoſe words were ſpoken by him concerning his death, and reſurrection from the dead: they remembered this, when the diſciples did not: bad men have ſometimes good memories, and good men bad ones; ſo that memory is no ſign of grace.

Ver. 64. *Command therefore that the ſepulchre be made ſure*, &c.] By this alſo they own, that he was buried; and they knew in what, and whoſe ſepulchre he was laid, and where it was; and requeſt of *Pilate*, that as he had given leave to *Joſeph* to take the body and inter it, that he would alſo give orders that the ſepulchre might be watched, that no body might come near it, and remove the body, and that *until the third day*: not from the time they made this requeſt, but from the time of Chriſt's death; for, no longer did they deſire the ſepulchre to be guarded; for if he did not riſe, and no pretenſions could be made to it in that time, they then very likely intended to expoſe his dead body, and triumph over him as an impoſtor; and after that time, they cared not what became of it, and were in no concern about watching the ſepulchre; but till then they judged it neceſſary and deſired it, *leſt his diſciples come by night and ſteal him away:* but of this there was no danger; they were too fearful and timorous to do ſuch an action, had they been ever ſo much inclined to it; they all forſook him and fled, immediately upon his apprehenſion; nor durſt any of them appear at the time of his crucifixion, but *John*; and were now ſhut up for fear of the *Jews*; and beſides, they had forgot what Chriſt ſaid to them about his reſurrection, though theſe men remembered it, and even diſbelieved it when it was told them: the phraſe *by night*, is not in two copies of *Beza*'s, nor in the *Vulgate Latin* and *Arabic* verſions, nor in *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel; but is in other copies, and in the *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions: *and ſay unto the people, he is riſen from the dead*; to the common people, that were illiterate, credulous, and eaſily impoſed on: as for themſelves, who were the learned, the wiſe and knowing, they were in no danger of being carried away with ſuch a deception; but the populace, for whom they pretend a great concern, were: *ſo the laſt error ſhall be worſe than the firſt*; either their own error and miſtake, ſhould the ſepulchre be neglected, and an opportunity given for ſuch a report; this would be of more fatal conſequence than their firſt miſtake, in ſuffering him and his followers to go on ſo long: or rather, the error of the people, in believing that Jeſus was the Meſſiah; which would be greatly ſtrengthened and received by greater numbers, ſhould it be given out, and there was any proof of it, that he was riſen from the dead: nor were they miſtaken in this, for the number of the diſciples and followers of Chriſt, greatly increaſed after his reſurrection; to an hundred and twenty, which was their number upon Chriſt's reſurrection, three thouſand were added at one time; being converted under one ſermon, and that the firſt preached after Chriſt was riſen.

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[t] Vid. Buxtorf. Lex. Rab. p. 437.

[u] Maimon. Hilchot Yom Tob, c. 7. §. 15.

[w] Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 6. § 4.

[x] Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 7. § 10.

Ver. 65. *Pilate ſaid unto them, ye have a watch*, &c.] Meaning either the watch of the temple, ſaid to be placed in the tower of *Antonia*, for the ſervice of it: hence mention is made of the captain of the temple, *Acts* iv. 1. but it is not likely they would remove the temple guards, to watch a ſepulchre night and day: or rather, therefore, the ſoldiers that had had the care of the crucifixion of Chriſt, and watched him on the croſs, are deſigned: the words may be read imperatively, *have ye a watch*, or *take a watch*, as the *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, and which ſeems beſt; for if they had a watch already, what occaſion had they to have applied to *Pilate* for one? but having none, he gives them leave to take one; or ſuch a number of ſoldiers as were ſufficient: *go your way*; as faſt as you can, take the watch as ſoon as you pleaſe, make no ſtay, but ſatisfy yourſelves in this point: *make it as ſure as you can*; or, *as you know* how to do it; and what will be proper and neceſſary.

Ver. 66. *So they went*, &c.] From *Pilate*'s palace, to the garden of *Joſeph*, and to the ſepulchre there; which whether more than a ſabbath-day's journey, or two thouſand cubits, may be enquired; and if ſo, then they broke one of their own traditions, which allowed a perſon to go no further on a ſabbath-day; ſee the note on *Acts* i. 12. *And made the ſepulchre ſure*; in the following manner, *ſealing the ſtone*; that was rolled to the door of it, it may be with ſome publick ſeal, with *Pilate*'s, or with the *Sanhedrim's*; as the ſtone at the mouth of the lion's den, in which *Daniel* was put, was ſealed with the king's ſignet, and with the ſignet of his lords, *Dan.* vi. 17. that there might be no change of the ſentence upon him, and by which it appeared, that his deliverance was by no human aſſiſtance: ſo the ſtone at Chriſt's ſepulchre was ſealed, that it could not be removed without breaking it; which would ſhew, whether any fraudulent methods were taken to remove the body: *and ſetting a watch*; a guard of ſoldiers, to obſerve and prevent any perſon coming near it; or *with the watch*: they made ſure the ſepulchre with the watch; or ſealed the ſtone, the watch being preſent; all which was overruled by the providence of God, for the greater confirmation of the truth of Chriſt's reſurrection: by the methods taken, it clearly appears, there could be no fraud in the caſe; the body was laid in a tomb, where no corpſe had ever been before; in a tomb hewed out of a rock, to which there was no acceſs, but at the door; where a great ſtone was rolled; and this had a ſeal upon it, and a guard of ſoldiers about it; and hereby there were more witneſſes of Chriſt's reſurrection, than otherwiſe would have been; as the ſoldiers, though they were afterwards bribed to tell another ſtory; and even the chief prieſts and *Phariſees*, were convicted that he was riſen, or they would never have taken ſuch a method with the ſoldiers, as they did.

## CHAP. XXVIII.

Ver. 1. IN *the end of the ſabbath*, &c.] This clauſe is by ſome, joined to the laſt verſe of the preceding chapter, but ſtands better here, as appears from *Mark* xvi. 1. and intends not what the *Jews* call the ſabbath-eve, for that began the ſabbath; but what they call, מוצאי שבת, *the goings out of the ſabbath*; and as *Mark* ſays, ch. xvi. 1. *when the ſabbath was paſt*: that is, when the ſun was ſet, and any ſtars appeared. The *Vulgate Latin*, *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, and *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel render it, *the evening of the ſabbath*; and the *Perſic* verſion, *the night of the ſabbath*; but muſt mean, not the evening and night, which preceded the ſabbath, and was a part of it, but what followed it, and belonged to the firſt day. *As it began to dawn*; not the day, but the night; a way of ſpeaking uſed by the *Jews*, who call the night, אור, *light*: thus they ſay[y], אור לארבעה עשר, *on the light, or night of the fourteenth* (of the month *Niſan*) *they ſearch for leavened bread*, &c. And ſo the word is uſed, in *Luke* xxiii. 54. of the eve of the ſabbath, or the beginning of it, as here of the going out of it: *towards the firſt day of the week*, or *ſabbaths*; ſo the *Jews* uſed to call the days of the week, the firſt day of the ſabbath, the ſecond day of the ſabbath, *&c.* take an inſtance or two[z]. "The ſtationary men faſt four days in the "week, from the ſecond day to the fifth day; "and they don't faſt on the ſabbath eve (ſo they "ſometimes call the ſixth day) becauſe of the

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[y] Miſn. Peſachim, c. 1. §. 1. Vid. Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

[z] Miſn. Taanith, c. 4. §. 3.

“ glory of the ſabbath; nor באחד בשבת, *on the firſt day of the ſabbath*, or *week*, that they may not go from reſt and delight, to labour and faſting, and die.” On which the *Gemara* has theſe words [a]; “ the ſtationary men go into the ſynagogue, and ſit four faſtings; בשני בשבת, *on the ſecond of the ſabbath*, or *week*; on the third, and on the fourth, and on the fifth.” *Came Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary*, the wife of *Cleophas*, and mother of *James* and *Joſes*, with whom alſo was *Salome*, the mother of *Zebedee*'s children, *Mark* xvi. 1. There ſeems to be ſome difference between the Evangeliſts about the time of the womens coming to the ſepulchre. *Matthew* ſays, it was at *the end of the ſabbath, when it began to dawn; towards the firſt day of the week*. *John* ſays, that *Mary Magdalene* came *when it was yet dark*, *John* xxi. 1. and yet *Mark* ſays, that they came *at the riſing of the ſun*, *Mark* xvi. 2. Tho' they all agree it was early in the morning: all they ſay is no doubt true, and may be reconciled thus. As ſoon as the ſabbath was ended, the women ſet out on their journey, and as they went, bought ſpices and ointment to anoint the body with: they paſſed thro' the gates of the city before they were ſhut, and might ſtay ſome time in the ſuburbs; when *Mary Magdalene*, eager to be at the ſepulchre, ſet out firſt, whilſt it was dark, and came back and reported to *Peter* what ſhe had ſeen, and returned again by ſuch time the other women came, which was at ſun-riſing. From all the accounts it is clear, that he roſe, as is expreſsly ſaid, *Mark* xvi. 9. on the firſt day of the week, and which was the third from his death: on the ſixth day, which was Friday, he was crucified, and buried that evening; he lay in the grave all ſabbath-day, or Saturday; and roſe early on the firſt day of the week, before the women got to the ſepulchre; who came thither, as it is here ſaid, *to ſee the ſepulchre*: not merely to ſee it, for they had ſeen it before, and where, and how the body of Chriſt was laid in it; but to ſee whether they could enter into it, and anoint the body with the ſpices and ointments, which they had prepared and brought with them for that purpoſe.

Ver. 2. *And behold there was a great earthquake*, &c.] Or *there had been* one; which, how far it reached, and whether further than the ſpot of ground in which the ſepulchre was, is not certain: it was an emblem of the ſhaking of the earth by the preaching of the Goſpel, the ſound of which was now to go after Chriſt's reſurrection to the ends of the world; and a prelude of the general reſurrection, when the earth ſhall be ſhaken, and the graves opened, and the dead come forth; and was a ſymbol and token of the preſence and majeſty of Chriſt, at whoſe riſing, as at his death, the earth ſhook and trembled. Think whether the watch could now be aſleep, as they afterwards gave out, ver. 13. The *Perſic* verſion renders it very wrongly; *and there was great conſternation and fear*; which was the conſequence of the earthquake, and the deſcent of the angel, and was ſo great that it was not poſſible for the keepers to ſleep, if ever ſo much inclined: *for the angel of the Lord deſcended from heaven*; perhaps *Gabriel*, who brought the news of the conception of Chriſt to the virgin, and of his incarnation to the ſhepherds, and might be the ſame angel that ſtrengthened him in the garden: nor is this any contradiction to the other Evangeliſts, which ſpeak of two angels, *Luke* xxiv. 4. *John* xx. 12. for *Matthew* does not ſay there were no more than one, tho' he makes mention but of one. *And came and rolled back the ſtone from the door*; of the ſepulchre, which by *Joſeph*, or his orders, was put there, and was ſealed by the *Jews*. This might be done, that way might be made for the riſen body of Chriſt to paſs out of the ſepulchre; for to ſuppoſe, as ſome do, that he penetrated thro' this ſtone with his riſen body, is not to be credited: 'tis true, he could have cauſed the ſtone to have given way, or removed it himſelf, and put it in the place again; as he cauſed the doors of the houſe in which the diſciples were, to open and ſhut ſo quick, that they could not diſcern it when he appeared in the midſt of them, *John* xx. 19. ſee *Acts* xii. 10. but he might chuſe to do it by the miniſtry of an angel, which is no ways derogatory to his power and majeſty, but rather agreeable. Moreover, this might be done, that the women might have acceſs to the ſepulchre, and enter into it, which was the thing they were concerned about by the way, who ſhould roll away the ſtone for them. Beſides, this the angel did, as a token that Chriſt was riſen, and to let the guard know as much, who, if they thought fit, might come and ſee what was done; but chiefly the ſtone was rolled away by the angel, as an emblem of the acquittance and diſcharge of Chriſt, as the ſurety of his people. He had taken upon him their ſins; he had bore them in his body on the tree; he had ſuffered and died for them, and was laid as a priſoner in the grave; and now full ſatiſfaction being made, an angel is ſent from heaven to roll away the ſtone; thereby ſignifying, that the debt was fully paid, and he was now legally diſcharged. 'Tis added, *and ſat upon it*; thereby ſhewing who it was that rolled it away; that it was done by him, not by the earthquake, nor by any human power: he ſat there defying the guard of ſoldiers to come nigh; and waiting for the coming of the women, to tell them the good news, that their Lord was riſen; and as the keeper of the ſepulchre, that no corpſe might be brought and laid in the room of Chriſt, and it be ſaid that he was not riſen. This poſture of the angel does not contradict what other Evangeliſts ſay of this, and the other angel, that they ſtood by the women, and alſo were ſitting in the ſepulchre, *Mark* xvi. 5. *Luke* xxiv. 4. *John* xx. 12. for each was true: when the women firſt came, the angel ſat upon the ſtone; after that, with the other, ſtood by them; when having invited them to the grave, placed themſelves, ſitting the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Chriſt had lain.

Ver. 3. *His countenance was like lightning*, &c.] There was ſuch a luſtre and brightneſs in his face, that it glittered like lightning: ſuch a deſcription is in *Dan*. x. 6. *and his raiment white as ſnow*: the word *white* is left out in the *Vulgate Latin*, and in *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel: the angel appeared clad in white, as a token of the purity and innocence of his nature; and becauſe of the victory and triumph of Chriſt over death and the grave; and that he might be known and taken by the women for a good angel, it being a commonly received notion of the *Jews*, that miniſtring angels were clothed in white [b]. “ Said *R. Ame* to *R. Levi*, ſhew me the *Perſians*; he ſaid to him, they are like to the mighty men of the houſe of *David*: ſhew me the *Chaberin*, (another nation near the *Perſians*) they are like to deſtroying angels: ſhew me the *Iſhmaelites*, they are like to devils of the houſe of *Hacſa*: ſhew me the diſciples of the wiſe men in *Babylon*, they are like to the miniſtring angels.” Upon which the *Gloſs* ſays, “ *to the devils*, becauſe

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[a] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 27. 2. Vid. T. Bab. Nidda, fol. 4. 2. & 11. 1. & 67. 2.

[b] T. Bab. Kidduſhin, fol. 72. 1.

“they are clothed in black, and are like to devils; *to the miniſtring angels*, לבושי לבנים, *they are clothed in white*, and veiled like the miniſtring angels; as it is written in *Ezek.* ix. 2. *and the man was clothed with linen*: and it is ſaid [c] of *R. Judah*, that he was veiled, and ſat in fine linen fringed, and was like to an angel of the Lord of hoſts: and elſewhere [d] it is ſaid, who are the miniſtring angels? the Rabbins: and why are they called miniſtring angels? becauſe they are fringed, as the miniſtring angels, in beautiful garments.”

Ver. 4. *And for fear of him the keepers did ſhake*, &c.] Tho' they were ſoldiers, *Roman* ſoldiers and veterans, who had been uſed to terrible ſights in the field of battle; were men of courage, and fearleſs of danger; and yet were ſeized with a panic, and every limb of them ſhook and trembled at the ſight of the angel, for fear he was come as an executioner of divine vengeance upon them; who had been concerned in the crucifixion of Chriſt, had watched him as he hung upon the croſs, and now his body in the ſepulchre: and even ſuppoſing no conſciouſneſs of guilt in them, or dread of puniſhment from him; yet ſuch was the glory and majeſty in which he appeared, of which they had never ſeen the like before, that it had this effect upon them: *and became as dead men*: they turned pale, as dead men, and had ſcarce any life, or ſpirit, left in them.

Ver. 5. *And the angel anſwered and ſaid unto the women*, &c.] Who being come up, were alſo affrighted at the ſight of the angel. The *Arabic* verſion leaves out the firſt part, *and the angel anſwered*; which is a *Jewiſh* way of ſpeaking, when nothing goes before, to which it is a reply; and renders the other part thus, *and ſaid to the two women*: but from the other Evangeliſts it appears, that there were more women than two; ſee *Mark* xvi. 1. *Luke* xxiv. 10. *fear not ye*: ſome put an emphaſis upon the word *ye*, as if uſed in oppoſition to the keepers, who had reaſon to be afraid, but not theſe good women. It was very common with gracious perſons to be filled with fear at the ſight of an angel, as *Zacharias*, and the ſhepherds; but without reaſon; they are their friends, their fellow-ſervants, and miniſtring ſpirits to them. The *Perſic* verſion adds, *but come near before, for ye are his familiars*: the reaſon alledged, by the angel, why they had no reaſon to fear, is, *for I know that ye ſeek Jeſus which was crucified*: the knowledge which angels have of ſaints is very conſiderable, and which ariſes from their frequent embaſſies to them, care and guardianſhip of them, the good offices they perform, and their ſeveral miniſtrations to them; and the knowledge which the angel had of theſe good women, might not be from immediate revelation, but from the obſervations he had made of them: they had followed Jeſus from *Galilee*, they had attended him all the while he was on the croſs, and were now come to his grave to anoint him; and from their words and geſtures, the angel might know that they were the diſciples of Chriſt, and now ſought him; and therefore had no reaſon to fear, as thoſe who were his adverſaries: and indeed, ſuch as ſeek a crucified Chriſt, and life and ſalvation by him, have no reaſon to be afraid of any thing; not of ſin, and its damning power, ſince Chriſt ſaves, his blood cleanſes, and his righteouſneſs juſtifies from all ſin; nor of the law, its menaces, curſes, and condemnation, for Chriſt has redeemed them from it; nor of ſatan, and his principalities and powers, who are ſpoiled by Chriſt, and out of whoſe hands he has ranſomed his people; nor of the world, ſince Chriſt has overcome it, and delivered his people from it; nor of death, whoſe ſting is taken away, and that aboliſhed as a penal evil; nor of hell, and wrath to come, from which he has ſaved them; and much leſs of good angels, who are kindly diſpoſed to them: and ſuch are they that ſeek a crucified Chriſt, whom Chriſt has firſt ſought, and looked up, and found in redemption and effectual vocation; who are made ſenſible of their loſt and dangerous ſtate by nature, to whom Chriſt has been manifeſted; and who ſee both their need of him, and his worth and value: theſe ſeek to him in the firſt place, and with all their hearts, for cleanſing, pardon, righteouſneſs, reſt, food, ſalvation, and eternal life: they ſeek for him where he is, and is revealed, in the ſcriptures, in the Goſpel, in the ordinances, and at the father's right hand.

Ver. 6. *He is not here*, &c.] In the grave, where he was laid, and theſe women ſaw him laid: he was dead, but is now alive; he was laid in the grave, but God would not leave him there, nor ſuffer him to ſee corruption: *for he is riſen, as he ſaid*; not ſtolen away, as the chief-prieſts hired the ſoldiers to ſay he was; nor removed to another place, as *Mary Magdalene* firſt thought, when ſhe found him gone; but he was riſen from the dead, by the power of his father, and by his own power, as he had before ſaid he ſhould. In one of *Beza*'s exemplars 'tis added, *to you*; for the words that Chriſt ſaid in *Galilee*, that he ſhould be delivered into the hands of ſinſul men, and be crucified, and riſe again, the third day, were ſaid in the preſence and hearing of theſe women, and to them, as well as to the diſciples; ſee *Luke* xxiv. 6, 7, 8. This clauſe is left out in the *Perſic* verſion: it follows, *come ſee the place where the Lord lay*; the Lord both of angels and men: the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read, *our Lord*. The *Arabic* and *Ethiopic* verſions leave out the word *Lord*, and only read *he*. Chriſt, as the ſon of God, lay in the boſom of his father, and in the arms of his love, from all eternity; as mediator, he lay in the womb of God's purpoſes and decrees, being his elect, in whom his ſoul delighted; as man, he lay in the womb of the virgin; and, as an example to his people, he lay, when baptized, in the waters of *Jordan*; and as the language of the ordinance of the Lord's ſupper is, *come ſee my hands, and my feet*; that of baptiſm is, *come ſee the place where the Lord lay*: but here it regards the grave, in which the body of Chriſt had been laid; and the women are invited by the angel to go along with him, into the ſepulchre, to ſee the place where he had lain; to aſſure them the more of the truth of his reſurrection, that they might, with their own eyes, ſee that he was gone, who before had beheld where, and how he was laid; as alſo to affect them with the condeſcending grace of Chriſt, in making his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; as well as to ſtrengthen their faith in their diſcharge from ſin and condemnation by Chriſt, who was riſen for their juſtification; as alſo to let them ſee that the grave was perfumed and ſanctified by him; and he was riſen as the firſt-fruits and pledge of them that ſlept.

Ver. 7. *And go quickly and tell his diſciples*, &c.] Who were mourning and weeping for the death of Chriſt; deſpairing of his reſurrection, of which, at leaſt, they had but little hope, nor indeed much thought, tho' Chriſt had ſo often told them of it; and therefore a quick diſpatch was neceſſary to remove their ſorrow, revive their faith, and relieve their ſouls, to which the errand theſe women were ſent upon, and the news they were to bring, had a tendency; namely, *that he is riſen from the dead:* than which nothing could be more joyful news unto them, as it is to all believers; for on this depend the juſtification and ſalvation of God's elect; their ſecurity from condemnation, and their reſurrection from the dead. This news was firſt brought to the apoſtles by women, who were greatly honoured hereby; that as the woman was firſt in the tranſgreſſion, and the cauſe of death, ſo the firſt news of the reſurrection of Chriſt to life, and of life and immortality being by him, who was firſt ſhewed the path of life, were brought by women; and to a woman it was that Chriſt firſt appeared after his reſurrection, *Mark* xvi. 9. The *Vulgate Latin* only reads, *that he is riſen*, as in the former verſe. *And behold he goeth before you into Galilee.* Theſe are ſtill the words of the angel to the women, telling them what they ſhould ſay to the apoſtles, that he ſhould go before them into *Galilee*; and which might ſerve to confirm the reſurrection to them, and to give the greater credit to the report of the women, ſince this very thing Chriſt had promiſed them before; ſee ch. xxvi. 32. tho' it was alſo true, that he ſhould go before theſe women into *Galilee*, and who alſo ſhould ſee him there: for the next words, *there ſhall ye ſee him*; tho' they may chiefly deſign the apoſtles, who ſhould have a ſight of Chriſt in *Galilee*, yet may include theſe women alſo: *lo! I have told you*; I *Gabriel*, who am an angel of the Lord, ſent by him to inform you of theſe things; and you may depend upon the truth of them, that Jeſus is riſen, and that he is about, in a very little time, to go before his diſciples into *Galilee*, where they ſhall ſee him with their bodily eyes, and have a free and familiar converſation with him. The reaſons why this place was pitched upon for Chriſt and his apoſtles to meet in, were, becauſe here he firſt preached, and chiefly converſed, and had the largeſt number of diſciples there, to whom he meant to ſhow himſelf, as he did, 1 *Cor.* xv. 6. as well as to his apoſtles: moreover, the apoſtles were of *Galilee*, and ſo were theſe women; and to go into their own country, and there meet with Jeſus, muſt be very agreeable; and beſides, there they would be ſafer and freer from the moleſtations and perſecutions of the *Jews*; and might follow their former calling, as they did, until the time they were to be further employed in preaching the Goſpel.

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[c] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 25. 2.

[d] T. Bab. Nedarim, fol. 20. 2.

Ver. 8. *And they departed quickly from the ſepulchre*, &c.] Or *they went out from* it, as it may be rendered, and as it is in *Mark* xvi. 8. which ſhows, that they went into the ſepulchre upon the invitation of the angel, and ſaw the place where the Lord lay; and here it was the angel gave them their inſtructions, and errand to the diſciples; which as ſoon as they received, they quitted the ſepulchre in all haſte, partly in obedience to the angel's orders, and partly thro' ſurprize and fear; for *Mark* ſays, they *fled from the ſepulchre*, as perſons terrified and affrighted: and 'tis added here, *with fear and great joy:* a mixture of both theſe; with fear and dread, becauſe of the viſion they had ſeen, and with joy at the news of Chriſt's reſurrection; and yet in this their faith might not be ſo confirmed, as to have no doubt about it: they might fear the body was taken away, and removed to ſome other place, and that this they had ſeen might be a deception and a deluſion. However, between both joy and fear, they ſet out, *and did run to bring his diſciples word*; as *Mary Magdalene* ran to *Peter*, *John* xx. 2. nor is running unuſual for women, or unbecoming them on certain occaſions; ſee *Gen.* xxiv. 20, 28. and xxix. 12. Their fright, as well as their joy, and their regard to the angel's order, might cauſe them to run, and make the quicker diſpatch.

Ver. 9. *And as they went to tell his diſciples*, &c.] This clauſe is wanting in the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions, and in *Beza*'s moſt ancient copy; but it ſtands in the *Ethiopic* verſion, and in *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel, *behold, Jeſus met them*; that they might be confirmed in what the angel had told them, and their fear might be removed, and their joy increaſed; and alſo be capable of reporting to the diſciples not only what they had heard from the angel, but what they had ſeen themſelves; they being now eye-witneſſes, as well as ear-witneſſes of his reſurrection: ſo ſouls in the way of their duty, as theſe women were, oftentimes meet with Jeſus, and he with them, as they may expect, and indeed not otherwiſe: *ſaying, all hail*; all health of ſoul and body, all happineſs and proſperity, both temporal, ſpiritual, and eternal, attend you. The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions, and *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel render it, *peace be to you*; which, 'tis highly probable, was the phraſe uſed by Chriſt, ſince it was the common form of ſalutation among the *Jews*, and what Chriſt made uſe of at other times; ſee *John* xx. 19, 26. *and they came*; near unto him, being encouraged by the above ſalutation, and knowing who he was by his voice, habit, and geſture: *and held him by the feet*; they threw themſelves proſtrate at his feet, in token of reverence and humility; and they laid hold on his feet, that they might know, and be aſſured that he was really riſen, and that it was not a ſpirit, or a mere phantom and appearance; and they held him in affection to him, and as deſirous of his continuance with them: *and worſhipped him*; with divine adoration, expreſſing their love to him, their faith and hope in him, owning him to be their Lord and God; he being, by his reſurrection from the dead, declared to be the Son of God, with power; and ſo the proper object of religious worſhip.

Ver. 10. *Then ſaid Jeſus unto them, be not afraid*, &c.] Of me, or what you have ſeen; or leſt there ſhould be any deception in the caſe. In other reſpects the ſaints are ſubject to fears; as leſt they ſhould have no ſhare in the love of God, nor intereſt in Chriſt, or the work of God is not begun in their hearts; and by reaſon of ſin, leſt that ſhould get the aſcendant over them, and they periſh by it, and ſo fall ſhort of eternal glory; when it is the will of Chriſt to have theſe fears removed, by ſhedding abroad his love in their hearts, by affording his gracious preſence, views of intereſt in him, and promiſes of his grace, by ſending his ſpirit, word, and miniſters to comfort them, by diſcovering and applying pardoning grace to them, and ſhewing his power to keep them. *Go tell my brethren*; meaning not his kinſmen according to the fleſh, but his diſciples, who were in this relation to him, as all the elect of God are; not only thro' his incarnation, he being their *Goel*, their near kinſman, and redeemer, and of the ſame nature, fleſh, and blood with them, and like unto them in all things, excepting ſin; but on account of their divine adoption, to which they were predeſtinated, and which they received thro' his redemption, and under the witneſſings of the Spirit: he that is his God being theirs; and he that is his father being theirs alſo:

and which was made manifeſt in their regeneration, by their faith in him, and obedience to him, and his father; ſee *Matt.* xii. 49, 50. A very conſiderable relation this is, that the diſciples ſtood in to Chriſt, who is the eternal Son of God, and heir of all things; and wonderful grace and condeſcenſion it was in Chriſt to own the relation, when they had ſo lately forſaken him; and now he was raiſed from the dead, and had glory given him: *that they go into Galilee, and there ſhall they ſee me:* he does not ſay they ſhould not ſee him before; for they ſaw him, all but *Thomas*, that very evening, and all of them eight days after; and both times were before they went into *Galilee:* but this he ſaid, to put them in mind of what he had promiſed them, ch. xxvi. 32. and to confirm the words of the angel; and which might ſerve for a confirmation of the truth of theſe things, both to the women, and to the diſciples, when they obſerved the exact agreement between the words of Chriſt, and of the angel. Moreover, it may be remarked, that wherever Chriſt has appointed to meet his people, they may expect, and be ſure to ſee him at one time or another; as in his houſe and ordinances, where they are ſometimes indulged with a ſight of him by faith, which is an appropriating, aſſimilating, ſoul-rejoicing, and ſatisfying one; when with pleaſure they behold the glory of his divine perſon, and of his offices, the tranſcendent excellencies and perfections of his nature, his love and his lovelineſs, the beauty and amiableneſs of him, the fulneſs of grace, life, and righteouſneſs in him, and ſo the ſuitableneſs of him as their ſaviour and redeemer; and when they are favoured with communion with him, and the joys of his ſalvation.

Ver. 11. *Now when they were going*, &c.] Or were gone from the ſepulchre; that is, the women, *Mary Magdalene*, and the other *Mary*, and their companions, when they were going, or gone, and before they could come to the diſciples, to inform them of what they had ſeen and heard, and deliver the meſſage both of the angel, and of Chriſt, unto them: *behold, ſome of the watch came into the city*; that is, of *Jeruſalem*. The word *behold* is left out in the *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions; but ought to be retained as expreſſive of what is wonderful, and worthy of obſervation and attention; that the very perſons who were placed to prevent every thing, that might be the foundation of a report, that Chriſt was riſen, ſhould be the firſt perſons that ſhould relate it to the chief-prieſts and elders, that employed them: not all the watch, for ſome ſtill ſtayed behind, till they had orders to come away; but ſome of them, the principal of them, or who were deputed by the reſt, came. The *Perſic* verſion, rather commenting than tranſlating, has theſe words: "moreover, the rulers "and governors, who watched the ſepulchre, "coming to themſelves, returned to the city with "a pale and frighted countenance." *And ſhewed unto the chief-prieſts all the things that were done*; how that there had been a very great earthquake, and a very ſurprizing appearance; one like a young man deſcended from the clouds, whoſe countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as ſnow, which filled them with aſtoniſhment and dread; that he rolled away the ſtone from the ſepulchre, and then ſat upon it; and that ſome women coming to the ſepulchre, were ſhown by him where the body had been laid, but was now gone; and how, that after they had recovered themſelves from the fright, they had themſelves examined the ſepulchre, and the body was certainly gone; and ſure they were that the women did not carry it away, nor any other: all which they thought proper to relate to the chief-prieſts; partly on their own account, to clear themſelves from the charge of bribery and corruption, and ſloth and negligence; and partly that the chief-prieſts might conſider what was proper to be done at ſuch a juncture.

Ver. 12. *And when they were aſſembled with the elders*, &c.] Upon this the grand *Sanhedrim* was convened together, which conſiſted of the chief-prieſts, *Scribes*, and elders; *and had taken counſel* among themſelves what ſteps to take to ſtifle this matter, that it might not ſpread and be believed by the people; they agreed upon this, as the beſt expedient, to bribe the ſoldiers to give a falſe account of it, as they did: *they gave large money unto the ſoldiers*, or *ſufficient money*; they gave large ſums of money, as were enough to ſatisfy the ſoldiers: they gave them whatever they would have; for tho' theſe men were very covetous, yet upon this occaſion gave liberally; and that perhaps which were for the ſacrifices, or for the repair of the temple, or for the ſupply of the poor.

Ver. 13. *Saying, ſay ye his diſciples came by night*, &c.] They charged them to tell every one that ſhould aſk them about this affair; and even publiſh it every where, that the diſciples of Chriſt came in the dead of the night, *and ſtole him away while we ſlept*; which was a very unlikely thing, and a fooliſh ſcheme this, for ſuch a body of men to form. There is no ſhew of probability in it, that the diſciples, who were intimidated by the taking and putting Chriſt to death, and were now ſhut up in a houſe, for fear of the *Jews*, that theſe ſhould venture out in the night, to take away the body of Chriſt, which was decently and honourably interred in a garden of one of his diſciples; and when they knew it was guarded by a company of *Roman* ſoldiers; and who beſides had no notion of his reſurrection from the dead, nor never thought of it till he was riſen, and therefore would never attempt any thing of this kind, in order to give out ſuch a report. Moreover, had they took it away by ſtealth, it is not reaſonable to think that they would afterwards have reported ſuch a lye every where, that he was riſen from the dead, when they were ſure to obtain nothing by it, but reproach, afflictions, perſecutions, and death: add to this, that this was never objected to them by their worſt enemies, when they moſt ſtrongly aſſerted his reſurrection: nor was it a feaſible account, or well put together, with reſpect to the watch. It can hardly be thought that they ſhould be all of them aſleep at once; and if they were, 'tis much they were not awaked by the coming up of the diſciples, and the rolling away of the ſtone, and the buſtle there muſt be in taking up the body, and carrying it away; and beſides, if they were aſleep, and continued ſo, what is their evidence good for? for how could they know that his diſciples came and took him away? if they awaked, tho' too late, and ſaw them at a diſtance, why did not they purſue them, who might eaſily have been overtaken with ſuch a burden? at leaſt, why did not they ſearch their houſes for the body? and take up both the women and the diſciples, and proſecute them for it? and yet nothing of this was done. Beſides, how came the linen clothes to be left behind? why did they take the napkin from his head, and give themſelves all that trouble to unwrap the body, and carry it away naked? It is clear the chief-prieſts themſelves were convinced in their own minds, that he was truly riſen, or they would have puniſhed the ſoldiers ſeverely for their ſleep and negligence, and would never have given them money to ſpread ſuch a ſtory.

Ver. 14. *And if this come to the governor's ears,* &c.] Not the governor of the watch, but *Pontius Pilate* the governor of *Judæa:* if this ſhould be told him, and ſhould be heard by him; or this matter ſhould come before him, and be under his examination, and there ſhould be any danger of puniſhment; for to ſleep on the watch was ſeverely puniſhed by the *Romans: we will perſuade him*; that this is the true ſtate of the caſe, and intercede with him, and make uſe of all our intereſt, not to puniſh for it; or will perſuade him, that tho' this is a falſe account, yet it will be much better that it ſhould go in this way, for his own peace, and the peace of the nation, and the ſecurity of the *Roman* government; ſince, ſhould it ſpread among the people, that this perſon was really raiſed from the dead, they would, one and all, believe he was the true Meſſiah, and would ſet him up as a king, and ſeize upon the government in favour of him: *and will ſecure you*; indemnify you, bear you harmleſs, keep you from puniſhment; ſo that you need not be under any care, or concern, on this account.

Ver. 15. *So they took the money, and did as they were taught,* &c.] Tho' they had been juſt now in the greateſt fright and conſternation imaginable, at the ſight of the angel, and knew what was done; yet being men of no religion or conſcience, were tempted with the money, and took it, and reported every where what had been put into their mouths by the chief-prieſts and elders. *And this ſaying is commonly reported among the Jews unto this day*; to the time that *Matthew* wrote this Goſpel; which, according to the ſubſcriptions to a moſt ancient copy of *Beza*'s, and the *Syriac* and *Arabic* verſions of *De Dieu*, was in the *eighth* year after our Lord's aſcenſion; tho' others make it to be the *ninth*; and others the *fifteenth*. The ſenſe is, not that this narrative the Evangeliſt gives, that the *Sanhedrim* bribed the ſoldiers to give out ſuch a lying ſtory, was known to the *Jews*, and commonly reported by them; tho' ſome take this to be the ſenſe; but that it was reported and believed among the *Jews* in common, to that time, that the diſciples of Chriſt did really come in the night, and ſteal away the body of Chriſt, while the watch ſlept: to ſuch judicial blindneſs, and hardneſs of heart, were they given up, as to believe a lye, and which had no appearance of truth in it. They have ſince contrived a more monſtrous and ridiculous ſtory than this. They ſay [e], that *Judas*, ſeeing where the body was laid, and the diſciples ſitting upon the tomb, and mourning over it, in the middle of the night, took his opportunity to take away the body, and buried it in his own garden, under a current of water; having firſt turned the water another way, and then put it in the ſame courſe as before; and which he afterwards diſcovered to the *Jews*; and the body was taken up and expoſed, and inſulted in the moſt ignominious manner: but, alas! *Judas* had hanged himſelf ſome days before; and had he been living, would not have been capable of doing what they aſcribe unto him.

Ver. 16. *Then the eleven diſciples,* &c.] For *Judas* was not only gone from them, but was dead; ſo that there were now but eleven of them: *went away into Galilee*; not directly, as ſoon as the women had delivered their meſſage; for Chriſt appeared to them the ſame day at *Jeruſalem*; and ſo he did at the ſame place that day ſennight; ſee *John* xx. 19, 26. but ſome time after this they went together into *Galilee*, according to Chriſt's direction both before and after his reſurrection, *Matt.* xxvi. 32. and xxviii. 10. *into a mountain where Jeſus had appointed them*; either before his death, or ſince he was riſen; and very likely at one of the above interviews he had with them. This is generally thought to be mount *Tabor*; but of this there is no proof, nor certainty: it might be the mountain near *Capernaum*, on which he taught, *Matt.* v. 1. or that, if not the ſame with the other, near the ſea of *Galilee*, where Chriſt fed four thouſand with ſeven loaves, and a few fiſhes, *Matt.* xv. 29. A mountain was appointed for this meeting, both for ſolitarineſs and for ſight; for here it was he was ſeen by above five hundred brethren at once, 1 *Cor.* xv. 6.

Ver. 17. *And when they ſaw him, they worſhipped him,* &c.] With divine adoration, as the eternal Son of God; for ſo he was now declared to be by his reſurrection from the dead, *Rom.* i. 4. *but ſome doubted*; or *ſome of them*, as the *Syriac* and *Arabic* verſions render it; that is, ſome of the eleven diſciples: not that they doubted now that Chriſt was riſen from the dead; ſince he had appeared ſeveral times to them before this, and had given them all the proofs of the truth of his reſurrection they could deſire; but they, who worſhipped him now in *Galilee*, had doubted before in *Jeruſalem*; not only *Thomas*, but all of them: they looked upon the words of the women as idle tales; nor did the reſt believe the two diſciples, with whom Chriſt travelled to *Emmaus:* wherefore he upbraids them for their unbelief, *Luke* xxiv. 11. *Mark* xvi. 11, 13, 14. or elſe the ſenſe is, that ſome of them, tho' they believed Chriſt was riſen from the dead, of which they had had the ſtrongeſt aſſurance; yet they doubted whether what they then ſaw on the mountain was he, or whether it was not a ſpirit, or a mere phantom; and therefore, as in the next verſe, he *came* nearer to them, when they knew him: or elſe this may be underſtood of ſome of the ſeventy diſciples, or of the five hundred brethren, who ſaw him at this time, and at firſt had ſome doubts of his reſurrection, but were afterwards fully ſatisfied.

Ver. 18. *And Jeſus came and ſpake unto them,* &c.] To the eleven diſciples and apoſtles; for tho' there might be ſo large a number as before obſerved, yet the following words were only ſpoken to the apoſtles: *ſaying, all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth*; which is to be underſtood of him, not as God, who has the ſame original and underived power and authority over all creatures, and things in heaven and earth, as the father has; but as mediator, to whom all things are delivered by the father; and not of a power of doing this, or the other thing, or of omnipotence, being the almighty; nor of doing miracles, and forgiving ſins, which he had, and exerciſed before his death and reſurrection, but of governing: he was king before, but his kingdom was not with obſervation; but now he was declared, and made manifeſt, to be both Lord and Chriſt; he had *all* power and authority for the ſettling the affairs of his church and kingdom, to appoint offices and officers in it, and to beſtow gifts upon men, to qualify them for the ſame, and to inſtitute ordinances to be obſerved till his ſecond coming: and this power of his reached to things in heaven; he having the angels in heaven ſubject to him, as miniſtring ſpirits to be ſent forth by him at his pleaſure; and all the gifts of the Spirit to diſpoſe of as he thought good; and to things on earth, not only to the ſaints, whoſe king he is, and who are made willing to ſerve him; but to all fleſh, to kings and princes, who rule and reign by him; and even to all the wicked of the world, who in ſome ſhape or another are made to ſubſerve the ends of his mediatorial kingdom and government: and this is not uſurped power, but what is given him, and what he has a right to exerciſe; having finiſhed ſin, aboliſhed death, overcome the world, and deſtroyed the devil; and muſt reign till all enemies are ſubject to him: and this he ſays, and it was neceſſary to ſay it at this time, partly on account of his late ſufferings and death, which were attended with weakneſs and reproach; and partly on account of the following commiſſion he gives to his diſciples, that it might be ſeen and believed, he had power and authority ſufficient to give them ſuch an one; as alſo to animate and encourage them under all the weakneſs, contempt, and perſecution that ſhould attend them in their miniſtry. The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions add, *as the father hath ſent me, even ſo I ſend you*, as in *John* xx. 21. from whence theſe words ſeem to be taken.

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[e] Toldos Jeſu, p. 18, 19, 21.

Ver. 19. *Go ye therefore*, &c.] Into all the world; ſome into one place, and ſome into another; ſince his power and authority, and ſo now the commiſſion he gave them, reached every where: before it was confined to *Judæa*, but now it is extended to all the nations of the world; see *Matt.* x. 6, 7. *Mark* xvi. 15. *and teach all nations*; *Jews* and *Gentiles*, firſt the one, and then the other, the doctrines of the Goſpel, and the ordinances of it; whatever they had learned from Chriſt, or were ordered by him; or *diſciple all nations*: make them diſciples by teaching them; or, as the *Perſic* verſion, by way of explanation, adds, *bring them to my religion and faith*: not that they were able to do this of themſelves, but they were to teach men externally, or outwardly miniſter the word, whilſt the Spirit of God internally applied it, and taught, and made men true diſciples of Chriſt: and they are ſuch, who have learned to know themſelves, their ſin, and loſt eſtate by nature; to deny themſelves, both ſinful and righteous ſelf; who have learnt to know Chriſt, and the way of righteouſneſs, peace, pardon, life, and ſalvation by him; and who are taught and enabled to part with all for Chriſt, and to bear all for his ſake, and to believe in him, and give up themſelves to him, and follow him whitherſoever he goes: *baptizing them*; not all nations, for the antecedent to the relative *them*, cannot be *all nations*; ſince παντα τα εθνη, the words for *all nations*, are of the neuter gender, whereas αυτους, *them*, is of the maſculine: nor can it be thought that it ſhould be the mind of Chriſt, that all the individuals of all nations ſhould be baptized, as Heathens, *Turks*, and *Jews*; but μαθητας, *diſciples*, ſuppoſed and contained in the word μαθητευσατε, *teach*, or *make diſciples*; ſuch as are taught, and made diſciples by teaching, or under the miniſtry of the word by the Spirit of God: Chriſt's orders are to *baptize*; טבלו, *dip* them, as *Munſter*'s *Hebrew* Goſpel renders it; that is, in water, which, tho' not expreſſed, is implied; for with no other baptiſm could the apoſtles baptize: not with the Holy Ghoſt, and with fire; for this was Chriſt's peculiar prerogative; but with water, which they in obedience to this commiſſion practiſed, *Acts* viii. 36, 38. and x. 47. and which was to be done *in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt*; by the authority of theſe three divine perſons, who all appeared, and teſtified their approbation of the adminiſtration of this ordinance, at the baptiſm of Chriſt: and as they are to be invocated in it; ſo the perſons baptized not only profeſs faith in each divine perſon, but are devoted to their ſervice, and worſhip, and are laid under obligation to obedience to them. Hence a confirmation of the doctrine of the Trinity, there are three perſons, but one name, but one God, into which believers are baptized; and a proof of the true deity both of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt; and that Chriſt, as the Son of God, is God; ſince baptiſm is adminiſtred equally in the name of all three, as a religious ordinance, a part of divine inſtituted worſhip, which would never be in the name of a creature. This is the firſt, and indeed the only place in which the Trinity of perſons is expreſſed in this order, and in the ſelf-ſame words. *Galatinus* [f] pretends, that the ancient *Jews* uſed the ſame way of ſpeaking. It would be well if proof could be made of it: he aſſerts it to be in *Zohar* on *Deut.* vi. 4. and in the *Targum* of *Jonathan ben Uzziel* on *Iſ.* vi. 3. In the former he ſays, it is expreſſed thus, *hear, O Iſrael*; *the Lord*, he is called *the father*; *our God*, he is called *the ſon*; *is one Lord*, this is *the Holy Ghoſt*, who proceeds from both; and again, by the ſame *R. Simeon*, it is ſaid, *holy*, this is אב, *the father*; *holy*, this is בן, *the ſon*; *holy*, this is רוח הקדש, *the Holy Ghoſt*: and in the latter after this manner, "Holy Father, Holy Son, and Holy Holy Ghoſt;" but no ſuch words are now to be found in either of theſe places. He affirms, that he himſelf ſaw a copy of *Jonathan*'s *Targum* that had theſe words. The *Jews* often ſpeak of the *Tetragrammaton*, or name of four letters, the name *Jehovah*, which they ſay is not lawful to be pronounced; and alſo of the name of twelve letters, which the above writer [g] makes to be "Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt;" and of forty-two letters, which from a book called *Gale Razia*, he ſays is, "Father God, Son God, Holy Ghoſt "God, three in one, and one in three;" which in the *Hebrew* language make up ſo many letters; but this wants better authority.

Ver. 20. *Teaching them to obſerve all things*, &c.] All ordinances, not only baptiſm, but the Lord's ſupper; all poſitive inſtitutions, and moral duties; all obligations, both to God and men; all relative duties that reſpect the world, or one another, thoſe that are without, and thoſe that are within; and theſe are to be taught them, and therefore to be inſiſted on in the miniſtry of the word; and not merely, in order, that they may know them, and have the theory of them, but that they may put them into practice: *whatſoever I have commanded you*; every thing that Chriſt has commanded, be it what it will, and nothing elſe; for Chriſt's miniſters are not to teach for doctrines the commandments of men; or enjoin that on the churches, which is of their own, or other mens deviſing, and was never ordered by Chriſt; and for their encouragment he adds, *and lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world*: meaning, not merely to the end of their lives, which would be the end of the world to them; nor to the end of the *Jewiſh* world, or ſtate, which was not a great way off, tho' this is ſometimes the ſenſe of this phraſe; but to the end of the world to come, the Goſpel church-ſtate, which now took place; or to the end of the preſent world, the univerſe: not that the apoſtles ſhould live to the end of it; but that whereas Chriſt would have a church and people to the end of the world, and the Goſpel, and the ordinances of it ſhould be adminiſtred ſo long, and there ſhould be Goſpel-miniſters till that time; Chriſt's ſenſe is, that he would grant his preſence to them, his immediate diſciples, and to all that ſhould ſucced them in future generations, to the end of time: and which is to be underſtood not of his corporal preſence, which they ſhould not have till then, but of his ſpiritual preſence; and that he would be with them, in a ſpiritual ſenſe, to aſſiſt them in their work, to comfort them under all diſcouragements, to ſupply them with his grace, and to protect them from all enemies, and preſerve from all evils; which is a great encouragement both to adminiſter the word and ordinances, and to attend on them.

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[f] L. 2. c. 1.

[g] Ib. c. 11, 12. Vid. Buxtorf. Lex. Heb. in voce הוה.

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# AN EXPOSITION, &c.

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## The Goſpel according to St. MARK.

THIS is the title of the book, the ſubject of which is the Goſpel; a joyful account of the miniſtry, miracles, actions, and ſufferings of Chriſt: the writer of it, was not one of the twelve apoſtles, but an Evangeliſt; the ſame with *John Mark*, or *John*, whoſe ſurname was *Mark*: *John* was his *Hebrew* name, and *Mark* his *Gentile* name, *Acts* xii. 12, 25. and was *Barnabas*'s ſiſter's ſon, *Col.* iv. 10. his mother's name was *Mary*, *Acts* xii. 12. The apoſtle *Peter* calls him his ſon, 1 *Pet.* v. 13. if he is the ſame; and he is thought to have wrote his Goſpel from him[a], and by his order, and which was afterwards examined and approved by him[b]: it is ſaid to have been wrote originally in *Latin*, or in the *Roman* tongue: ſo ſay the *Arabic* and *Perſic* verſions at the beginning of it, and the *Syriac* verſion ſays the ſame at the end; but of this there is no evidence, any more, nor ſo much, as of *Matthew*'s writing his Goſpel in *Hebrew*. The old *Latin* copy of this, is a verſion from the *Greek*; it is moſt likely that it was originally written in *Greek*, as the reſt of the New Teſtament.

### CHAP. I.

Ver. 1. *THE beginning of the Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt*, &c.] Not that the Goſpel firſt began to be preached at this time, for it was preached by *Iſaiah*, and other prophets before; and long before that, was preached unto *Abraham*; yea, it was preached as early as the times of our firſt parents, in *Eden*'s garden; and is indeed that myſtery, which was hid in God before the creation of the world; and was ordained before that was, to the glory of the ſaints: but the ſenſe is, that this narrative *Mark* was about to write, began with the miniſtry of *John* the *Baptiſt*, and of Chriſt; which was a Goſpel one, and was the beginning of the Goſpel diſpenſation, in diſtinction from the legal one: the law and the prophets were until *John*, and they ceaſed and ended in him; when the, עולם הבא, *the world to come*, the kingdom of God, or Goſpel ſtate, took place. The deſign of this Evangeliſt, is not to give an account of the genealogy of Chriſt, of his conception and birth, of what befel him in his infancy, or of any actions and ſayings of his from thence, to his appearance in *Iſrael*; but to give an account of his miniſtry and miracles, ſufferings and death; which is introduced with the preaching and baptiſm of *John* his forerunner, and which he chiefly intends by *the beginning of the Goſpel*: he firſt points out Chriſt, who is the author and ſubſtance, as well as the great preacher of the Goſpel; the ſum of which is, that he is Jeſus, the Saviour and Redeemer of loſt ſinners; the Chriſt, the Meſſiah, that was to come; the Mediator between God and man, the prophet that has declared the whole mind and will of God; the great high-prieſt, who has offered himſelf a ſacrifice for his people, made peace, procured pardon, brought in everlaſting righteouſneſs, and obtained eternal redemption, and now lives to make interceſſion for them; and king of ſaints, who reigns over them, protects and defends them, and is no other than *the Son of God*; equal with his Father; of the ſame nature with him, poſſeſſed of the ſame perfections, and enjoying the ſame glory; and which is a grand article of the Goſpel, and without which he could not be an able Saviour, nor the true Meſſiah. *Mark* begins his account of the Goſpel, and which he calls the beginning of it, with the ſame article of the divine ſonſhip of Chriſt, as the apoſtle *Paul* began his miniſtry with, *Acts* ix. 20. *Matthew* began his Goſpel with the humanity, *Mark* with the divinity of Chriſt: the one calls him the ſon of *David*, the other the Son of God, both true: Chriſt is the Son of *David* according to his human nature, the Son of God according to his divine nature; ſo a teſtimony is bore to the truth of both his natures, which are united in one perſon.

Ver. 2. *As it is written in the prophets*, &c.] *Malachi* and *Iſaiah*; for paſſages out of both follow; though the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, and *Perſic* verſions read, *as it is written in the prophet Iſaias*; and ſo it is in ſome *Greek* copies: but the former ſeems to be the better reading, ſince two prophets are cited, and *Iſaiah* is the laſt; to which agree the *Arabic* and *Ethiopic* verſions, and the greater number of *Greek* copies. The following citations are made to ſhew, that according to the writings of the Old Teſtament, *John* the *Baptiſt* was to be the harbinger of Chriſt, to come before him, and prepare his way; and alſo the propriety of the method the Evangeliſt takes, in beginning his Goſpel with the account of *John*'s miniſtry and baptiſm: the firſt teſtimony ſtands in *Mal.* iii. 1. and the words are the words of the Father to the Son, concerning *John*, pointing out his character and his work: *behold, I ſend my meſſenger before thy face, which ſhall prepare thy way before thee. John* the *Baptiſt* is here called a *meſſenger*, and the meſſage he was ſent and came with, was of the greateſt moment and importance, and required the cloſeſt attention to it; wherefore this paſſage is introduced with a *behold!* ſignifying that ſomething momentous, and what ſhould be ſtrictly regarded, was about to be delivered: and indeed, the work of this meſſenger was no other, than to declare that the long expected Meſſiah was born; that he would quickly make his publick appearance in *Iſrael*; that the kingdom of heaven, or the kingdom of the Meſſiah, was at hand; and that it became the *Jews* to repent of their ſins, and believe in Chriſt: he is called the meſſenger of God, *my meſſenger*; becauſe he was ſent, and ſanctified by him, he was called unto, and qualified for his work by him; ſee *John* i. 6, 7. his father *Zechariah* ſays, he ſhould be called the prophet of the higheſt, *Luke* i. 76. The reaſon of his being called the meſſenger of God, may be obſerved in the text itſelf, *behold, I ſend:* the words in *Malachi* are by us rendered, *behold, I will ſend*; becauſe this was at the time of the prophets's writing a thing future, but in the times of the Evangeliſt a thing done: and indeed, it is a more literal verſion of the *Hebrew* text, to render it *I ſend*, or *am ſending*; and it is ſo expreſſed, to denote the certainty of it, and becauſe in a little time it would be done: the words *before thy face*, are not in the original text of *Malachi*, nor in the *Septuagint* verſion, but are inſerted by the Evangeliſt; who might do it with authority, ſince Chriſt had done it before him, *Matt.* xi. 10. and which, as *Surenhuſius* [c] obſerves, is for the greater elucidation of the matter. The prophet does not ſay before whom he ſhould be ſent, though it is implied in the next clauſe, but here it is expreſſed: beſides, this meſſenger had now appeared before the face of Chriſt, had prepared his way in the wilderneſs, and had baptized him in *Jordan*; all which is deſigned in the following words, *which ſhall prepare thy way before thee*, by his doctrine and baptiſm: in the text in *Malachi* it is, *before me*; which has made it a difficulty with interpreters, whether the words in the prophet, are the words of Chriſt concerning himſelf, or of his Father concerning him. But ſending this meſſenger before Chriſt, may be called by the Father ſending him before himſelf, and to prepare the way before him; becauſe Chriſt is the brightneſs of his glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon, and is the angel of his preſence, or face; beſides, *Jehovah* the Father was greatly concerned, and the glory of his perfections, in the work the Meſſiah was to do, whoſe way *John* came to prepare. That the prophecy in *Malachi* here cited, is a prophecy of the Meſſiah, is owned by ſeveral *Jewiſh* writers [d]; who expreſsly ſay, that thoſe words which follow, *the Lord whom ye ſeek*, are to be underſtood of the king Meſſiah: and though they are divided among themſelves, who ſhould be meant by this meſſenger, ſee the note on *Matt.* xi. 10. yet ſome of them are of opinion, that *Elias* is intended, even *Abarbinel* himſelf: for though in his commentary he interprets the words of the prophet *Malachi* himſelf, yet elſewhere [e] he allows *Elias* may be intended: indeed he, and ſo moſt that go this way, mean *Elijah* the prophet, the *Tiſhbite*; who they ſuppoſe will come in perſon, before the Meſſiah appears: yet not he, but one in his ſpirit and power is deſigned; and is no other than *John* the *Baptiſt*, in whom the paſſage has had its full accompliſhment.

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[a] Papias apud Euſeb. Hiſt. l. 3. c. 39. Tertull. adv. Marcion. l. 4. c. 5.

[b] Hieron. Catalog. Script. Eccleſ. p. 91. § 18.

Ver. 3. *The voice of one crying in the wilderneſs,* &c.] This is the other teſtimony in proof of the ſame, and may be read in *Iſa.* xl. 3. ſee the note on *Matt.* iii. 3.

Ver. 4. *John did baptize in the wilderneſs,* &c.] Of *Judæa, Matt.* iii. 1. where he firſt appeared as a preacher; and is the ſame wilderneſs *Iſaiah* has reſpect to, in the above prophecy. The words are beſt rendered, in the *Vulgate Latin* and *Syriac* verſions; *John was in the wilderneſs, baptizing and preaching the baptiſm of repentance, for the remiſſion of ſins:* according to which, the account of the *Baptiſt* begins with his name, *John*; deſcribes the place where he was, where he made his firſt appearance, and continued in, the wilderneſs; which was not a wild uninhabited place, and without people, but had many cities, towns, and villages in it; and alſo declares his work and miniſtry there, which was preaching and baptizing: for though baptizing is here put before preaching, yet certain it is, that he firſt came preaching in theſe parts; and there baptized ſuch, to whom his preaching was made uſeful. Baptiſm is here called, the *baptiſm of repentance*; becauſe *John* required repentance antecedent to it, and adminiſtered it upon profeſſion of repentance, and as an open teſtification of it; and this *for*, or *unto the remiſſion of ſins:* not for the obtaining the remiſſion of ſins, as if either repentance, or baptiſm, were the cauſes of pardon of ſin; but the ſenſe is, that *John* preached that men ſhould repent of their ſins, and believe in Chriſt, who was to come; and upon their repentance and faith, be baptized; in which ordinance, they might be led to a freſh view of the free and full forgiveneſs of their ſins, through Chriſt; whoſe blood was to be ſhed for many, to obtain it; ſee *Acts* ii. 38.

Ver. 5. *And there went out unto him all the land of Judæa,* &c.] The people of the land, a great number of them: *and they of Jeruſalem*; the inhabitants of *Jeruſalem*, hearing of this new preacher, the new doctrine that he taught, and the new ordinance that he adminiſtered: *and were all baptized of him in the river Jordan, confeſſing their ſins*; that is, as many of them as were brought to a ſight and ſenſe of their ſins, and made a confeſſion of them, theſe he baptized, or immerſed, in the river *Jordan*; for certain it is, that there were many of the *Phariſees* and *Sadducees* who came, whom he rejected; ſee the notes on *Matt.* iii. 5, 6, 7.

Ver. 6. *And John was clothed with camels hair,* &c.] This is a deſcription of *John* by his cloaths; ſee the note on *Matt.* iii. 4. to which may be added, that it was uſual for penitents, and men of auſtere lives, and of the firſt claſs for holineſs and religion, to live in deſerts, to fare hard, and wear coarſe apparel. Mention is made of one man, who is called, נתן דצוציתא [f], becauſe he had on a garment of goats hair, which cut his fleſh, that ſo it might atone for him, for he was a penitent: *and with a girdle of ſkin about his loins*; a leathern one, as in *Matt.* iii. 4. not a golden one, ſuch as the high-prieſt wore, though the [g] *Jews* call *John* an high-prieſt: he was indeed of the prieſtly race; his father was a prieſt, but he did not wear a prieſtly girdle, nor any of the prieſts garments; *and he eat locuſts and wild honey.* The *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *honey of earth bees:* in *Ethiopia* was a ſort of bees, little bigger than flies, and without a ſting, which had their hives in the earth, where they produced honey of a white colour, very pleaſant and wholeſome; and this is thought, by the *Ethiopians*, to be the honey which *John* eat [h]; but then there muſt have been the ſame in *Judæa*, which does not appear. Moreover, in the land of *Judæa*, there was, דבש של תמרים, *the honey of palm-trees*; and it is ſaid [i], that it is the beſt honey; and therefore the ſcripture calls, honey of the palm-trees, honey; and the palm-trees which grow in the plains and vallies, abound moſt with it; wherefore there was much of this about *Jericho*, the city of palm-trees: there was alſo, דבש של תאינים, *honey of figs*, which in ſome places was in great plenty: “ *R. Jacob ben Doſthai* ſays [k], it is three “ miles from *Lud* to *Ono* (ſee *Ezra* ii. 33.) one time I “ walked before break of day, and I went up to my “ ankles in honey of figs.” Dr. *Lightfoot* thinks, this was the honey the Evangeliſt ſpeaks of, and *John* eat of. I have obſerved on *Matt.* iii. 4. that with the *Jews*, the honey of bees was lawful to eat [l], though the bees themſelves were not. So *Jonathan ben Uzziel* paraphraſes, *Levit.* xi. 20. “ Let the ſpecies of bees be an abomination to “ you, but the honey of bees may be eaten;” they being reckoned among reptiles that fly: and it may be further obſerved, that according to them, the honey of waſps and hornets was lawful to be eaten, as well as the honey of bees [m]; and this may be truly called, as here, wild honey; for which they give theſe reaſons [n], becauſe it is not of the ſubſtance of their bodies, but they gather it from herbs; and becauſe in the ſame manner as bees, they take it into their bodies, but do not produce it from them; though ſome of the doctors diſſent, and think it not lawful [o].

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[c] Biblos Katallages, p. 229.

[d] Kimchi & Ben Melech in Mal. iii. 1. Abarbinel, Maſhmia Jeſhua, fol. 76. 4.

[e] Abarb. ib.

[f] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 56. 2. Vid. Buxtorf. not. in Sepher Coſri, p. 156, 157.

[g] Ganz. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 25. 2.

Ver. 7. *And preached, ſaying, there cometh one mightier than I after me*, &c.] From whence it appears, that *John* was a preacher of Jeſus Chriſt; of the dignity of his perſon, the excellency of his office, and the nature and importance of his work: *the latchet of whoſe ſhoes I am not worthy to ſtoop down and unlooſe*; expreſſing the great veneration he had for him, and the great ſenſe he had of his own unworthineſs, to be concerned in the loweſt and meaneſt ſervice of life for him; and that he was far from being worthy of the high honour done him, to be his meſſenger and forerunner; ſee the note on *Matt.* iii. 11.

Ver. 8. *I indeed have baptized you with water*, &c.] This was ſpoken to the baptized perſons, partly to take off their dependance upon him and his baptiſm; and partly to direct their views to Chriſt, from whom the gifts and graces of the Spirit are alone to be had: *but he ſhall baptize you with the Holy Ghoſt*; ſee the note on *Matt.* iii. 11. One copy adds, *and with fire*, as there: a *Jewiſh* writer ſays, the holy bleſſed God baptizeth with fire, and the wiſe ſhall underſtand [p].

Ver. 9. *And it came to paſs in thoſe days*, &c.] Whilſt *John* was preaching and baptizing in the wilderneſs, and had large crowds of people flocking to him, to ſee his perſon, hear his doctrine, and to be baptized by him; ſome for one thing, and ſome another: *Jeſus came from Nazareth of Galilee*; the place where he had been brought up, and lived, and dwelt in from his infancy, to this time: *and was baptized of John in Jordan*; which was the reaſon of his coming from *Nazareth* to him; ſee *Matt.* iii. 13. where this is obſerved; and in ſome verſes following, an account is given of what paſſed between Chriſt and *John*, on this occaſion.

Ver. 10. *And ſtraightway coming up out of the water*, &c.] Not *John*, as many think; though it was true of him, that he came up out of the water, as the adminiſtrator of the ordinance of baptiſm to Chriſt, but Chriſt himſelf; who having deſcended into the water, the river of *Jordan*, and being baptized by immerſion in it by *John*, came up out of it; not from the river-ſide, and up the declivity to it, but out of the river itſelf: *when he ſaw the heavens opened*; or *cloven*, or *rent*; this may be underſtood, either of *John*, who was the ſpectator of all this, which was done for the manifeſtation of the Meſſiah to him, and the confirmation of his faith in him, and that he might bear record of him; and ſo the *Perſic* verſion reads, *John ſaw*, &c. ſee *John* i. 32, 33. or of Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, who came up out of the water; and when he did, ſaw the heavens part, *and the Spirit like a dove deſcending upon him*. The poſition of theſe words here, is a little different from that in *Matt.* iii. 16. there it is, *the Spirit of God deſcending like a dove*; which ſeems rather to point out the manner of his deſcent, than the form in which he deſcended: here it is put, *the Spirit like a dove deſcending on him*; which ſeems rather to incline to ſuch a ſenſe, that the Spirit appeared in the form of a dove, as well as deſcended like one; and both may be deſigned, and indeed the latter follows upon the former: if it was the form of a dove the Spirit of God deſcended in, it was a very ſuitable one: the dove, is a very proper emblem of the Spirit of God: *the voice of the turtle*, in *Cant.* ii. 12. is by the *Targum* interpreted, *the voice of the Holy Spirit*: he may be likened to a dove, for its ſimplicity and ſincerity; he guides into all truth as it is in Jeſus, and teaches to ſpeak the word in all plainneſs, openneſs, and ſincerity, and preſerves the ſaints in the ſimplicity of the Goſpel; and for its mildneſs and meekneſs; one of the fruits of the Spirit of God is meekneſs, *Gal.* v. 23. And this it produces in converted perſons, making them meek, humble, and gentle: and alſo for its harmleſsneſs and innocence; and which appears, or at leaſt ſhould, in thoſe who mind the things of the Spirit: hence that advice of Chriſt, be *harmleſs as doves*, *Matt.* x. 16. Likewiſe for its purity and cleanneſs; the Spirit of God is a ſpirit of holineſs, he is the author of ſanctification; ſuch as are waſhed, ſanctified, and juſtified, are ſo in the name of the Lord Jeſus, and by the Spirit of our God, 1 *Cor.* vi. 11. The dove is a mournful and bemoaning creature; and the Spirit of God makes interceſſion for the ſaints, with groanings which cannot be uttered, *Rom.* viii. 26. To which may be added, that *Noah*'s dove bringing the olive-leaf in its mouth, as a ſign of peace and reconciliation, fitly reſembled the Holy Spirit, one of whoſe fruits is peace, *Gal.* v. 22. and which he produces, by leading to the blood, righteouſneſs, and ſacrifice of Chriſt, whereby peace is made, and reconciliation obtained: and his deſcending upon Chriſt here, points him out as the peace-maker, through whom was come peace on earth, good-will towards men, and glory to God. Chriſt, on whom he lighted, is comparable to a dove; he is ſaid to have dove's eyes, *Cant.* v. 12. and he has all the fruits and graces of the dove-like Spirit of God, which reſted on him; like the dove, he is humble, meek, and lowly; in which characters, he is to be followed and imitated by his people: and as that creature is a very loving one to its mate, ſo is Chriſt to his church; whom he has ſo loved, as to give himſelf for her: and as that is a lovely beautiful creature, ſo is Chriſt; he is altogether lovely; and eſpecially his eyes of love, as they are ſet and fixed upon his church and people. With this deſcent of the Spirit as a dove on Chriſt, compare *Iſa.* xi. 2. and lxi. 1. ſee the note on *Matt.* iii. 16.

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[h] Ludolph. Lex. Ethiop. p. 447.

[i] Maimon. & Bartenora in Miſn. Biccurim, c. 1. §. 10.

[k] T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 111. 2.

Vid. Piſke Toſephot Becorot, art. 13.

[m] Miſn. Macſhirin, c. 6. §. 4. T. Bab. Becorot, fol. 7. 2.

[n] Maimon. Hilch. Maacalot Aſurot, c. 3. §. 3. Ib. & Bartenora in Miſn. Macſhirin, ibid.

[o] In Piſke Toſephot Becorot, art. 13. Mag-id Miſna in Maimon. Hilch. Maacolot ib.

[p] R. Menachem in Lev. viii. apud Ainſworth on Gen. xvii. 12.

Ver. 11. *And there came a voice from heaven,* &c.] What the *Jews* call *Bath Kol,* ſaying, *thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed:* it is in *Matthew, this is my beloved Son;* as if the words were ſpoken to others, to *John,* the adminiſtrator of baptiſm to him, and to thoſe that were ſpectators; directing them to Chriſt, on whom the Spirit now deſcended, and teſtifying to them how great a perſon he was, how nearly related to God; how much he was the object of his love, and what a pleaſure and delight he took in him; but here they are delivered as an immediate addreſs to Chriſt himſelf, *thou art my beloved Son.* Chriſt, as he was the only begotten Son of God from eternity, ſo his filiation was owned and declared to him as early, *Pſal.* ii. 7. This therefore was not the firſt time, nor was it only for his ſake that this was ſaid unto him, but alſo for the ſake of thoſe that ſtood by: but it may be obſerved, that he is not only called his Son, but his *beloved* Son; which might be neceſſary to be ſaid to him in his ſtate of humiliation, whilſt he was yielding obedience to the will of God, and fulfilling all righteouſneſs; and when he was about to be, as he quickly after this was, tempted by ſatan in the wilderneſs, by whom his ſonſhip was called in queſtion. Now theſe words being directed to Chriſt, ſhew that the former are ſpoken of him, and are applicable to him, as well as to *John;* ſee the note on *Matt.* iii. 17.

Ver. 12. *And immediately,* &c.] As ſoon as he was baptized, and this teſtimony had been given of his divine ſonſhip, the very ſelf-ſame day, *the Spirit driveth him into the wilderneſs:* into a more remote and deſolate part of it; for it was in the wilderneſs *John* was baptizing and preaching, when Chriſt came to him, and had the ordinance of baptiſm adminiſtered by him; and it was the ſame Spirit that deſcended on him at his baptiſm, which remained with him; by whoſe impulſe he was moved, though not againſt his will, to go into this deſert and forlorn place. For this was not the evil ſpirit ſatan, by whom he was tempted; for *Matthew* expreſsly ſays, that he was *led up of the Spirit—to be tempted by the devil;* where the devil that tempted him, is manifeſtly diſtinguiſhed from the Spirit by whom he was led, and the ſame Spirit is meant here, as there. Moreover, in one of *Beza*'s copies, and in his moſt ancient one, and in one of *Stephens*'s, it is read, *the Holy Spirit driveth him;* ſee the note on *Matt.* iv. 1.

Ver. 13. *And he was there in the wilderneſs forty days,* &c.] The *Vulgate Latin, Arabic,* and *Ethiopic* verſions add, *and forty nights;* for ſo long was he there, *tempted of ſatan:* the ſeveral temptations of ſatan, and how they were overcome by Chriſt, are particularly related by the Evangeliſt *Matthew,* ch. iv. which are here omitted; and what is not mentioned there, is here recorded: *and was with the wild beaſts;* which ſhews, that he was now in an uncultivated and uninhabited part of the deſert by men, and where only the moſt fierce and ſavage of creatures dwelt; and yet was as ſecure and unhurt by them, being the Lord of them, as *Adam* in *Eden*'s garden, or *Daniel* in the lions den. This circumſtance is only related by the Evangeliſt *Mark,* and is what adds to the uncomfortable ſituation Chriſt was in, when tempted by ſatan; and his being not hurt by them, may declare, partly his innocence, as man, being as pure and holy as the firſt man was in his ſtate of integrity, when all creatures were brought before him, to give them names; and partly the power of God, who ſhut up the mouths of theſe creatures, that they did him no hurt; and alſo may ſignify, the awe they ſtood in of him, who, as God, is Lord of all. Theſe creatures were more gentle to Chriſt, and uſed him better than the wicked *Jews,* among whom he dwelt, who are compared to lions, dogs, and *bulls* of *Baſhan, Pſal.* xxii. 12, 13, 16, 20, 21. *And the angels miniſtred unto him;* after the temptations were over, and ſatan had left him, preparing for him, and bringing to him proper food, after ſo long a faſt; and waiting upon him, and ſerving him as their great Lord and maſter; ſee the note on *Matt.* iv. 11.

Ver. 14. *Now after that John was put in priſon,* &c.] In the caſtle of *Macherus,* by *Herod,* for reproving him for taking his brother *Philip*'s wife: *Jeſus came into Galilee;* again, from whence he came to be baptized of *John: preaching the Goſpel of the kingdom of God;* the good news and glad tidings of the kingdom of the Meſſiah, or Goſpel diſpenſation; which lies not in worldly pomp and ſplendor, in outward obſervances, in legal rites and ceremonies, but in righteouſneſs, peace, and joy; in peace and pardon by the blood of Chriſt, in juſtification by his righteouſneſs, and in free and full ſalvation by him.

Ver. 15. *And ſaying, the time is fulfilled,* &c.] Either that which was fixed for the end of the law and prophets, the legal and *Moſaic* diſpenſation, and the *Jewiſh* church-ſtate; or the fulneſs of time for the Meſſiah's appearance in the world; which was agreed upon between the Father and the Son, was predicted in various prophecies, and the people of the *Jews* were in a general expectation of: *and the kingdom of God is at hand;* the ſame with the *kingdom of heaven,* in *Matt.* iii. 2. and iv. 17. ſee the notes there: *repent ye and believe the Goſpel.* He called them to repent, not only of their former ſins and vicious courſe of life, but of their bad principles and tenets, concerning a temporal kingdom of the Meſſiah; concerning merit and free-will, juſtification by the works of the law, and ſalvation by their obedience to the ceremonies of it, and the traditions of the elders: theſe he exhorts them to change their ſentiments about, and to relinquiſh them, and give into the Goſpel ſcheme; which proclaims liberty from the law, peace, pardon, and righteouſneſs by Chriſt, and ſalvation and eternal life by the free grace of God.

Ver. 16. *Now as he walked by the ſea of Galilee,* &c.] The ſame with the ſea of *Tiberias, John* vi. 1. *he ſaw Simon;* whoſe ſurname was *Peter,* the ſon of *Jonas: and Andrew his brother;* the brother of *Simon, caſting a net into the ſea;* of *Galilee,* in order to catch fiſh: *for they were fiſhers;* by occupation, this was their trade and buſineſs, by which they got their livelihood; ſee the note on *Matt.* iv. 18.

Ver. 17. *And Jeſus ſaid unto them, come ye after me,* &c.] Leave your worldly employments, and become my diſciples, *and I will make you to become fiſhers of men:* which will be a much more excellent and honourable employment, as men, and the ſouls of men, are more excellent, and of more worth than fiſhes; ſee the note on *Matt.* iv. 19.

Ver. 18. *And ſtraightway they forſook their nets,* &c.] Which perhaps were their all; ſee *Matt.* xix 27

27. *And followed him*; both in a corporal and ſpiritual ſenſe; ſee the note on *Matt.* iv. 20.

Ver. 19. *And when he had gone a little further thence*, &c.] From the place where *Simon* and *Andrew* were caſting their nets, though ſtill by the ſea-ſide; *he ſaw James the ſon of Zebedee, and John his brother.* The former was he whom afterwards *Herod* killed with the ſword, and the latter the beloved diſciple; theſe were alſo fiſhermen: *who alſo were in the ſhip mending their nets*: as the other two diſciples were on ſhip-board, caſting their nets into the ſea to catch fiſh; theſe were alſo in a ſhip, repairing their nets, in order to uſe them the ſame way, and for the ſame purpoſe; ſee the note on *Matt.* iv. 21.

Ver. 20. *And ſtraightway he called them*, &c.] As ſoon as he ſaw them; for he was looking out for them, having appointed them long before to the ſervice he now called them to; *and they left their father Zebedee with the hired ſervants, and went after him.* It might ſeem unnatural, had they left their father alone in the ſhip, to have taken the care and management of it, and therefore 'tis added, *with the hired ſervants*; who were hired for that purpoſe, to aſſiſt in mending the nets, and caſting them, and managing the ſhip, and conducting it from place to place, and therefore were not to be charged with want of humanity; and ſuch was the power that went along with Chriſt's call, that notwithſtanding natural affection to their parents, and the gain they might get by theſe ſervants and their trade, they chearfully quitted all, and followed Chriſt; ſee the note on *Matt.* iv. 22.

Ver. 21. *And they went into Capernaum*, &c.] Jeſus and his four diſciples he had juſt called, *Simon* and *Andrew*, *James* and *John*; though the *Arabic* and *Perſic* verſions read, *he went*; that is, Chriſt; and ſo *Beza* ſays it was read in a certain copy: *and ſtraightway on the ſabbath-day he entered into the ſynagogue and taught*; that is, immediately, as ſoon as he entered the city, it being then ſabbath-day; or, as ſoon as the ſabbath-day came, he went to the ſynagogue at *Capernaum*, and his diſciples with him; where the people uſed to meet weekly to hear the law read, and to be inſtructed in divine things; which opportunity Chriſt laid hold on to preach the Goſpel to them, and teach them things concerning the kingdom of God.

Ver. 22. *And they were aſtoniſhed at his doctrine*, &c.] The nature and importance of it, it being what they had not been uſed to hear; only at beſt the doctrine of the law, and ſometimes only the traditions of the elders, or an allegorical and traditional ſenſe of the ſcriptures, and things very trifling and unedifying: and alſo they were amazed at the manner of his preaching, which was with ſo much gracefulneſs, gravity, and majeſty, and was attended with ſo much evidence and power: *for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the Scribes*; or *their Scribes*, as the *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read. He did not go about to eſtabliſh what he ſaid by the authority of the Rabbins, as the *Scribes* did; ſaying, *Hillell* ſays ſo, or *Shammai* ſays thus, or ſuch a doctor ſays thus and thus; but he ſpake as from himſelf, as one ſent of God, that had an authority from him, and was independent of man; and this was what they had not obſerved in others, and wonder at it; ſee the note on *Matt.* vii. 28, 29.

Ver. 23. *And there was in their ſynagogue*, &c.] In the ſynagogue of the *Capernaites*, at the ſame time that Jeſus was teaching there, *a man with an unclean ſpirit*: not with an unclean heart, for there were doubtleſs many ſuch there, but that had a devil; for in *Luke*, ch. iv. 33. 'tis ſaid, he *had a ſpirit of an unclean devil*: ſo called, becauſe he is impure in himſelf, and the cauſe of uncleanneſs in men, in which he delights: and ſuch ſpirits ſometimes are where religious perſons meet, but with no good deſign; either to diſturb the preacher, or to divert the hearer, that the word may be unfruitful and unprofitable: *and he cried out*; either the man, or rather the unclean ſpirit in him, who had poſſeſſed his body, and made uſe of the organs of it: he cried out through dread of the majeſty of Chriſt, whoſe preſence he could not bear; and through grief and envy at the ſucceſs of his miniſtration, and the influence it had upon the minds of men; and through fear of being diſpoſſeſſed of the man, in whom he was.

Ver. 24. *Saying, let us alone*, &c.] Meaning with himſelf, the reſt of the unclean ſpirits, that had poſſeſſed the bodies of men in *Galilee*, and in all *Judæa*; knowing that Chriſt had power to diſlodge them, and fearing he would, intreats him he would let them alone, quietly to dwell in their beloved habitations: *what have we to do with thee?* They had nothing to do with Chriſt, as a Saviour; they had no intereſt in him, nor in his redemption, but he had ſomething to do with them, to ſhew his power over them, and to deliver men out of their hands: *thou Jeſus of Nazareth*; calling him ſo, from the place where he was educated, and had lived the greateſt part of his life, though he knew he was born at *Bethlehem*; but this he ſaid, according to the common notion of the people, and it being the uſual appellation of him: *art thou come to deſtroy us?* not to annihilate them, but either to turn them out of the bodies of men, which to them was a ſort of a deſtruction of them, and was really a deſtroying that power, which they had for ſome time exerciſed over men; or to ſhut them up in the priſon of hell, and inflict that full puniſhment on them, which is in reſerve for them: *I know thee who thou art, the holy one of God*: he whom God had called his holy one, *Pſal.* xvi. 10. and who is ſo, both in his divine nature, as the Son of God, the holy one of *Iſrael*; and as the Son of man, being the holy thing born of the virgin, and is without the leaſt ſtain of original ſin, or blemiſh of actual tranſgreſſion; and alſo as the Mediator, whom the Father has ſanctified and ſent into the world, the true Meſſiah; and all this the devil knew from his wonderful incarnation, by the voice from heaven at his baptiſm, from the conqueſt over him in the wilderneſs, and by the miracles he had already wrought: in the high-prieſt's mitre was written, קֹדֶשׁ לַיהוָה, which may be rendered, *the holy one of the Lord*: the high-prieſt was an eminent type of him.

Ver. 25. *And Jeſus rebuked him*, &c.] Checking his inſolence, deſpiſing his flattery, and refuſing to receive a teſtimony from him; and which he wanted not, leſt it ſhould be thought he had a familiarity and confederacy with him: *ſaying, hold thy peace*; ſtop thy mouth, I need no ſuch witneſs as thine, nor thy praiſes; I am not to be ſoothed by thy flattery, nor is my mouth to be ſtopped, or power reſtrained, by ſuch methods: wherefore he adds, *and come out of him*; I'll not let thee alone, the encomiums of me ſhall not prevail upon me to leave thee in the quiet poſſeſſion of the man; I'll give a teſtimony of who I am, by the diſpoſſeſſing of thee out of this man. In imitation of this authoritative power of Chriſt, the *Jewiſh* exorciſts, in their pretenſions to caſt out devils, uſe a like form: ſo they tell us [q], that *R. Simeon ben Jochai*, caſt a devil out of *Cæſar*'s daughter, ſaying *Ben Talmion* (which was the name of the devil) צא, *come out, Ben Talmion, come out*; and he came out of her; ſee the note on *Matt.* xii. 27.

Ver. 26. *And when the unclean ſpirit had torn him,* &c.] Not that he had torn any limb from him, or had made any wound in any part of his body; for *Luke* ſays, ch. iv. 35. that he *hurt him not*, but he ſhook him; and as *Luke* there ſays, *threw him in the midſt*, of the people, or ſynagogue; and ſo the *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read here, *he caſt him*, or *threw him to the ground:* he threw him into convulſions, and laid him proſtrate on the floor: *and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him*; though ſorely againſt his will, as his loud cry ſhewed, and being obliged to it by a ſuperior power.

Ver. 27. *And they were all amazed,* &c.] The people that were in the ſynagogue, who were met together for divine worſhip, were aſtoniſhed, not only at his doctrine, as before, but at this miracle and power of his in caſting out devils: *inſomuch that they queſtioned among themſelves, ſaying, what thing is this?* They ſpake among themſelves, as *Luke* ſays; they enquired of one another; they conferred together, talked over the point, and diſputed among themſelves, concerning both the doctrine and power of Chriſt, what, and how wonderful they were: *what new doctrine is this?* This they ſaid, not as fixing a brand of novelty upon it, as the *Athenians* did on *Paul*'s doctrine, *Acts* xvii. 19. but as admiring it; being what was rare and unuſual, and which they had never heard of from their Rabbins and *Scribes*, and which was confirmed by miracles; *for with authority commandeth he even the unclean ſpirits, and they do obey him:* they not only obſerved the authority with which he delivered his doctrine, but the authority with which he caſt out devils, by a word ſpeaking; he not only commanded them to come out, but they immediately came out; their exorciſts took authority upon them to command, but could not oblige the devils to obey; but theſe men took notice, that ſuch was the authority of Chriſt in commanding, that the unclean ſpirits were obliged to obey, and did.

Ver. 28. *And immediately his fame ſpread abroad,* &c.] Not only in the city of *Capernaum*, where theſe things were done, and where his fame was firſt ſpread, but alſo *throughout all the region round about Galilee:* and not only throughout *Galilee*, but throughout all the country that was bordering upon it, and adjacent to it; ſee *Matt.* iv. 23, 25. The *Perſic* verſions reads, *through all the provinces.*

Ver. 29. *And forthwith, when they were come out of the ſynagogue,* &c.] Chriſt having wrought this miracle, and finiſhed his ſermon, and the whole ſynagogue ſervice being over, when it was uſual for every one to repair to their own houſes, or their friends, for refreſhment; he, and they that were with him, departed from it, and directly, being not far from it, *they entered into the houſe of Simon and Andrew*; who being brethren, dwelt together in a houſe at *Capernaum*, where it ſeems they were now inhabitants, though their native place was *Bethſaida*, *John* i. 44. *with James and John*; whom they took along with them, being fellow diſciples of Chriſt.

Ver. 30. *But Simon's wife's mother lay ſick of a fever,* &c.] *A great fever*, *Luke* ſays; a very violent one, which threatened with death, and muſt be very dangerous to an ancient perſon; ſee the note on *Matt.* viii. 14. *And anon they tell him of her*; for it ſeems, that not as ſoon as he came into the houſe, but ſome time after, when he had ſat awhile, and reſted himſelf after his fatigue in preaching; they acquainted him with her caſe, and beſeeched him to look upon her, and reſtore her: this was done, either by *Simon* and *Andrew*, or by ſome others of their friends that were in the houſe; who having either ſeen, or heard of his diſpoſſeſſing the unclean ſpirit, might rightly conclude he had power to remove a fever.

Ver. 31. *And he came and took her by the hand,* &c.] He went into the room where ſhe lay, and took hold of her hand; not to feel her pulſe, and thereby judge of the nature and ſtrength of her diſorder, as phyſicians do; nor merely in a friendly manner, as is cuſtomary, but in order to reſtore her: *and lift her up*; to ſit upright in the bed, who before was laid along upon it, ſo weak as not to be able to turn herſelf, much leſs to ſit erect by any aſſiſtance whatever: *and immediately the fever left her*; and there was not the leaſt ſymptom of it, nor none of the effects which it uſually leaves; ſuch was the virtue that went forth from Chriſt by touching her, and ſuch his great power: *and ſhe miniſtered unto them*; ſhe immediately aroſe from the bed, and put on her cloaths, being at once in perfect health and ſtrength; and, in gratitude to her Saviour and phyſician, ſhe aſſiſted in preparing food for him and his diſciples, and ſerved at table to them.

Ver. 32. *And at even, when the ſun did ſet,* &c.] At which time the *Jews* ſabbath was ended; ſee the note on *Matt.* viii. 16. for this was a ſabbath-day, ver. 21. when, according to them, it was not lawful to heal; nor did they offer to bring their ſick to him on that day; but the laſt of the two even-days being come, and the ſun ſet, the ſabbath was over: and therefore being under no reſtraint on account of that, *they brought unto him all that were diſeaſed*; with any ſort of diſeaſe whatever, even all that were in their city; *and them that were poſſeſſed with devils.* The *Perſic* verſion renders it *Epilepticks*, ſuch as were troubled with the falling ſickneſs, as many of thoſe were, whoſe bodies the devils poſſeſſed.

Ver. 33. *And all the city was gathered together at the door.*] That is, the inhabitants of the city of *Capernaum*, a very great number of them at leaſt, who having either heard of, or ſeen the diſpoſſeſſion of the unclean ſpirit in the ſynagogue in the day-time; and being willing to ſee what miraculous cures might be wrought by Chriſt upon the diſeaſed and poſſeſſed that were brought to him, got together in great crouds about the door of the houſe of *Simon* and *Andrew*, where Jeſus now was.

Ver. 34. *And he healed many that were ſick of divers diſeaſes,* &c.] Not that there were ſome, who had ſome ſorts of diſeaſes, whom he did not heal; but he healed all that came, or were brought to him, which were many, of every ſort of diſeaſe, which were divers, with which they were afflicted: *and caſt out many devils*; even as many as were brought to him, or were poſſeſſed with any: *and he ſuffered not the devils to ſpeak*; either for him, or againſt him; which ſhows his great power over them: *becauſe they knew him*, or *that they knew him:* he would not ſuffer them to ſay a word about him, becauſe he knew that they knew that he was the Chriſt, the Son of God, or he would not permit them to ſay who he was; becauſe he had others to bear witneſs of him, and better teſtimonies than

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[q] T. Bab. Meilah, fol. 17. 2.

theirs, and leſt his enemies ſhould reproach him with an agreement and familiarity with them.

Ver. 35. *And in the morning, riſing up a great while before day,* &c.] On the morrow after the ſabbath, on the firſt day in the morning, notwithſtanding the fatigue of the former day, through preaching and working miracles; yet he roſe up very early while it was very much within the night, as the light and day were coming on, and before the day broke; tho' it might be broad day before he departed out of the houſe, as *Luke* ſuggeſts, ch. iv. 42. *he went out*; out of the houſe of *Simon* and *Andrew*, and out of the city of *Capernaum*, leaving his diſciples and friends behind him: *and departed into a ſolitary place, and there he prayed*; as man, to his God and Father; it may be for his diſciples he had lately choſen; for himſelf, as man, that he might be ſtrengthened as ſuch for ſervice; and for ſucceſs in his miniſtry, and that his Goſpel might run and be glorified: he choſe a deſert, and ſolitary place, for the ſake of retirement, from the croud of people that attended at *Peter*'s door; where he could not be alone, and in private, and as moſt ſuitable for the exerciſe of prayer. His early and private devotion may be an example to us.

Ver. 36. *And Simon, and they that were with him,* &c.] *Peter*, and his brother *Andrew*, together with *James* and *John*, *followed after him*; ſome time after he was gone; for he privately withdrew from them, ſo that they might not be aware when he went, nor apprized of his departure, for ſome conſiderable time; which when they were, they ſet out, in diligent ſearch, and eager purſuit after him, until they found him.

Ver. 37. *And when they had found him,* &c.] In the deſert and ſolitary place, where he had been praying: *they ſaid unto him*; in order to engage him to go with them, and as the reaſon why they ſought him with ſo much eagerneſs and diligence, *all men ſeek for thee:* not all the men in the world, nor, it may be, all the inhabitants of *Capernaum*, but a large number of them, who were enquiring after him, ſome for one thing, ſome for another; ſome to ſee him, what manner of man he was, and ſome to hear him, what ſort of doctrine he preached, and others to ſee his miracles, or to have themſelves, or their ſick healed; and the diſciples were loth that ſuch an opportunity of doing good ſhould be miſſed, and therefore ſought for him, till they found him.

Ver. 38. *And he ſaid unto them, let us go into the next towns,* &c.] Inſtead of returning with his diſciples to *Capernaum*, as they expected he would, and eſpecially ſince there was ſuch a concourſe of people got together, he propoſes to go to *the next towns*, or *village-cities*; towns that were neither villages, nor cities, but between both, as the word ſignifies: hence the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, and *Perſic* verſions render it, *villages and cities*; and it deſigns ſuch towns in which there were ſynagogues. The *Jews* diſtinguiſh between walled towns, villages, and large cities [r]. They aſk, "what is a large city? every "one in which there are ten leiſure men; if leſs "than ſo, lo! it is a village." And "every place "in which there were ten *Iſraelites*, they were "obliged to provide a houſe into which they might "go to prayer, at every prayer-time, and that "place is called a ſynagogue [s]." Theſe were the places Chriſt judged it adviſeable to go to; he had preached already at *Capernaum*, the day before, and had confirmed his doctrine by miracles, which was ſufficient for the preſent, and therefore thought fit to go elſewhere, and orders his diſciples to go likewiſe; for the *Syriac* verſion renders it, *go ye to the next cities*; and in the ſame way read the *Arabic* and *Perſic* verſions: *that I may preach there alſo*; as well as at *Capernaum*, that ſo the Goſpel may be ſpread, and have its uſefulneſs in other parts as well as there: the *Arabic* verſion renders it, *that we may preach*; both I and you; but without any foundation; nor does the reaſon following ſuit ſuch a verſion, *for therefore came I forth*; meaning, not from *Simon*'s houſe, nor from *Capernaum*, tho' there may be a truth in that; for Chriſt might come from thence, with that view, to preach the Goſpel elſewhere; but from God his father, from whom he came forth, and by whom he was ſent, to preach the Goſpel to other cities alſo, both in *Galilee* and *Judæa*; even to all the inhabitants of that country, to all the loſt ſheep of the houſe of *Iſrael*; ſo that this was but anſwering the end of his coming, and acting according to the commiſſion given him.

Ver. 39. *And he preached in their ſynagogues,* &c.] Which were in the next towns, in the village-cities, and *throughout all Galilee:* taking every town and city in his circuit, he continued preaching the Goſpel of the kingdom in one place and another, until he had gone over the whole country: *and caſt out devils*; as out of the ſouls, ſo out of the bodies of men, whereby he confirmed the doctrine he preached.

Ver. 40. *And there came a leper to him,* &c.] After he was come down from a certain mountain, in *Galilee*, where he had been preaching to the people, *Matt.* viii. 1. and when he was in a certain city, *Luke* v. 12. either *Capernaum*, or ſome other city of *Galilee*. This man was full of leproſy, as *Luke* ſays, and very probably deemed incurable; of the nature and ſymptoms of the leproſy, ſee the note on *Luke* v. 12. *beſeeching him*; to cure him of his leproſy: *and kneeling down to him*; in token of ſubmiſſion, reſpect, and reverence, and to worſhip him: *and ſaying unto him, if thou wilt thou canſt make me clean*; ſee the note on *Matt.* viii. 2. *Mark* omits the word *Lord*.

Ver. 41. *And Jeſus moved with compaſſion,* &c.] At the ſad and deplorable caſe the poor man was in, being a merciful high-prieſt, and not with a deſire of popular applauſe, and vain glory: *put forth his hand and touched him*; tho' the leproſy was ſpread all over him, and there was no place clean, and touching him was forbidden by the law: *and ſaith unto him, I will be thou clean*; ſee the note on *Matt.* viii. 3.

Ver. 42. *And as ſoon as he had ſpoken,* &c.] The above words, *immediately the leproſy departed from him, and he was cleanſed*; from it, and which ſeems to be done not by touching him, but by the words ſpoken, which were accompanied with ſuch power, as to effect the cure in an inſtant; ſee the note on *Matt.* viii. 3.

Ver. 43. *And he ſtraitly charged him,* &c.] Either with the ſin which had been the cauſe of this leproſy, and to take care that he ſinned that ſin no more, leſt a worſe evil ſhould befal him; for ſin was uſually the cauſe of leproſy, as the caſes of *Miriam*, *Gehazi*, and *Uzziah* ſhow. It is ſaid to come upon men for ſeven things. The ſeven abominations mentioned in *Prov.* vi. 16—19. are ſaid, by the *Jewiſh* writers [t], to be the reaſons of perſons being ſtricken with leproſy: *a proud look*; as appears from the inſtance of the daughters of *Zion*, *Iſ.* iii. 16—24. the crowns of whoſe heads were ſmitten with a ſcab, and who were attended with a ſtink, baldneſs, and burning. *A lying tongue*; as in the caſe of *Miriam*, who, with *Aaron*, ſpoke againſt *Moſes*; upon which the cloud departed from the tabernacle, and *Miriam* became leprous, white as ſnow, *Numb.* xii. 1, 10. *And hands that ſhed innocent blood*; which is proved from *Joab*, on whoſe head the blood of *Abner* and *Amaſa* returned; and on account of which a leper was not to fail from his houſe; ſee 1 *Kings* ii. 31, 32. compared with 2 *Sam.* iii. 29. *An heart that deviſeth wicked imaginations*; which was fulfilled in *Uzziah*, who ſought to bring the high prieſthood into contempt, and therefore was ſmitten with leproſy, which aroſe in his forehead, while he had the cenſer in his hands, and was contending with the prieſts; and he continued a leper to his death, 2 *Chron.* xxvi. 18—21. *Feet that be ſwift in running to miſchief*; which was true of *Gehazi*, who ran after *Naaman* the *Syrian*, and took a gift of him which he ſhould not; for which, the leproſy, *Naaman* was cured of, ſeized him, and cleaved unto him, 2 *Kings* v. 20—27. *A falſe witneſs that ſpeaketh Lyes*; of this no inſtance is given. *And him that ſoweth diſcord among brethren*; as *Pharoah* between *Abraham* and *Sarah*; wherefore the Lord plagued *Pharoah*, &c. *Gen.* xii. 17. which the *Jews* underſtand of the plague of leproſy. Theſe ſeven things are, in another place[u], ſaid to be an evil tongue, ſhedding of blood, a vain oath, uncleanneſs, a proud ſpirit, theft, and envy. Elſewhere it is ſaid[w], that for eleven things leproſy cometh; for curſing God, for uncleanneſs, for murder, for ſaying of a neighbour a thing that there is nothing in it, for pride, for entring into a border which is not a man's own, for a lying tongue, for theft, for a falſe oath, for profaning the name of God, for idolatry; and *R. Iſaac* ſays, for an evil eye; and the *Rabbins* alſo ſay, it comes upon him who deſpiſes the words of the law: the firſt is proved from *Goliah*, 1 *Sam.* xvii. 26. 46. the ſecond from the daughters of *Jeruſalem*, *Iſ.* iii. 16—24. the third from *Cain*, *Gen.* iv. 15. and from *Joab*, 2 *Sam.* iii. 29. the fourth from *Moſes*, *Exod.* iv. 5, 6. the fifth from *Naaman*, 2 *Kings* v. 1. the ſixth from *Uzziah*, 2 *Chron.* xxvi. 16—19. the ſeventh from *Miriam*, *Numb.* xii. 1, 10. the eighth and ninth from *Zech.* v. 4. compared with *Lev.* xiv. 45. the tenth from *Gehazi*, 2 *Kings* v. 20, 27. the eleventh from the children of *Iſrael* when they made the calf, *Exod.* xxxii. 25. compared with *Numb.* v. 2. But whether this man's ſin was either of theſe, or what it was, is not certain: however, he was, by this cure, laid under an obligation, for the future, to avoid it, and all other ſins: or rather the charge was to tell no man of his cure, before he came to the prieſt; nor to him, or any other, how he came by it, and by whom he was healed: *and forthwith ſent him away*; to the prieſt, in all haſte; and it looks as if the man was unwilling to have gone from him, but choſe rather to have continued with his kind benefactor: for the word ſignifies, he caſt him him out; he drove him from him; he obliged him to go without delay.

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[r] Miſn. Megilla, c. 1. §. 1, 2, 3. T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 2. 2. & 3. 2. Maimon. Megilla, c. 1. §. 4, 5, 8. Moſes Kotſenſis Mitzvot Tora, affirm. pr. 154.

[s] Maimon. Hilch. Tephilla, c. 11. §. 1.

[t] Vajikra Rabba, §. 16. fol. 158. 1, 2.

Ver. 44. *And ſaith unto him, ſee thou ſay nothing to any man*, &c.] By the way, till he came to the prieſt; *but go thy way, ſhew thyſelf to the prieſt*: the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read, *to the prieſts*; and the *Vulgate Latin* renders it, *to the chief-prieſt*; but any prieſt might judge of the cleanſing of a leper: *and offer for thy cleanſing thoſe things which Moſes commanded for a teſtimony unto them*; ſee the note on *Matt.* viii. 4.

Ver. 45. *But he went out*, &c.] Either out of the ſynagogue; for in ver. 39. it is ſaid, that Chriſt *preached in their ſynagogues*, &c. and in ver. 40. *there came a leper to him*; and *Luke* very plainly ſuggeſts, that he was in the city, ch. v. 12. and he might be in the ſynagogue: and this was allowed a leper, according to the *Jewiſh* canons, provided ſome rules were obſerved; which were theſe[x]: "if a leper enters into a ſynagogue, they make for him a partition ten hands high, and four cubits broad; he enters in firſt, and goes out laſt:" or, it may be, he went out of the houſe where he was, into the city, and parts adjacent; for it ſeems as if the cure was done privately: and yet a leper was not allowed to enter into a houſe[y]; "if he did, all the veſſels which were there, *i. e.* all the goods in the houſe were defiled, even to the very beams. *R. Simeon* ſays, as far as four cubits. *R. Judah* ſays, if he ſtaid ſo long as the lighting of a lamp." *And began to publiſh it much, and to blaze abroad the matter*; contrary to the charge Chriſt gave him; tho' this might be done by him, not out of diſobedience to Chriſt, but out of a tranſport of joy for the mercy received; and perhaps with a good intention to ſpread the fame and glory of his ſaviour: *inſomuch that Jeſus could no more openly enter into the city*; of *Capernaum*, or whatever city it was, where this cure was wrought, without a croud of people about him, and danger from them, at leaſt from his enemies, who envied his applauſe and glory. *But was without in deſert places*; devoid of inhabitants, where he ſpent his time in prayer: *and they came to him from every quarter*; whenever the people could learn where he was: ſo agreeable was his doctrine to ſome; and ſo uſeful his miraculous work of healing to others.

# CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. AND *again he entered into Capernaum after ſome days*, &c.] After he had been preaching in the ſynagogues throughout *Galilee*, and after he had ſpent ſome days in prayer, and private retirement in deſert places: *and it was noiſed that he was in the houſe*: a report was ſpread throughout the city that he was in the houſe of *Simon* and *Andrew*, where he was before, and where he uſed to be when in *Capernaum*.

Ver. 2. *And ſtraightway many were gathered together*, &c.] From all parts of the city, *inſomuch that there was no room to receive them*; in the houſe: by which it ſhould ſeem to be a large one, tho' not large enough to hold ſuch a numerous company as were got together: *no, not ſo much as about the door*; or the places before the door, the porch, the court, or court-yard. The croud was ſo great, that neither the houſe, nor the out-places before, could hold them, nor could they come even near the door; *and he preached the word unto them.* The *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *he ſpake his own word to them that came to him*: he preached the Goſpel, the word of grace and truth, of life and ſalvation, to as many as could come near him, and were

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[u] T. Bab. Eracin, fol. 16. 1. Vid. Abarbinel. in 2 Kings v. 27.

[w] Bemidbar Rabba, §. 7. fol. 188. 2, 3.

[x] Miſn. Negaim, c. 13. §. 12.

[y] Ib. §. 11.

within the hearing of him. To me it ſeems, that our Lord went up into an upper room, and out of the window preached to the people, that were, in great numbers, without doors; and the following narrative ſeems to confirm this conjecture.

Ver. 3. *And they came unto him*, &c.] A conſiderable body of people, townſmen, friends, and relations of the perſon after-mentioned: *bringing one ſick of the palſy, which was born of four*; carried by four men upon their ſhoulders, as if he was a dead carkaſs; ſo weak and enfeebled was he by his diſeaſe, that he could not walk, or be otherwiſe brought; or rather upon a bed, which four men, at the four corners of it, carried in their hands; and ſo the *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *four men carried him on a bed*; and certain it is, by what follows, that he was brought upon a bed. This man's caſe appears to be a very bad one, and what ſeems to be incurable by the art of medicine: it was not a ſlight touch of the palſy, but a general one, which had deprived him of motion and ſenſation. The palſy is a diſeaſe, whereby the body, or ſome of its parts, loſe their motion, and ſometimes their ſenſation or feeling: the cauſes of it are an impeded influx of the nervous ſpirits into the villi, or the muſcles, or of the arterious blood into their veſſels; which may happen from ſome fault either in the brain, the nerves, muſcles, or their veſſels. The palſy is ſaid to be *perfect*, or complete, when there is a privation of motion and ſenſation at the ſame time; *imperfect*, when one of the two is deſtroyed, the other remaining. The palſy again is either *univerſal*, *lateral*, or *partial*. The *univerſal* palſy, called alſo *paraplegia*, or *paraplexia*, is a general immobility of all the muſcles that receive nerves from the cerebrum, or cerebellum, except thoſe of the head——its cauſe is uſually ſuppoſed to reſide in the ventricles of the brain, or in the root of the ſpinal marrow.——The *lateral* palſy called alſo *hemiplegia*, is the ſame diſeaſe with the *paraplegia*, only that it affects but one ſide of the body. Its cauſe is the ſame, only reſtrained to one ſide of the brain, or ſpinal marrow. The *partial* palſy is where ſome particular part, or member, alone is affected; as, for inſtance, where the motion of the arm, or leg, is deſtroyed[z]. Now this man's diſeaſe ſeems to be the perfect and general palſy, which affects the whole body, or the *paraplegia*, which reaches every part but the head; whereby all ſenſe, as well as motion, are deſtroyed, and ſometimes only one of them: but in this caſe it ſeems as if both of them were loſt: that he was motionleſs, is clear from his being carried by four perſons; and it looks as if he had loſt his feeling, ſince he is not ſaid to be grievouſly tormented, as the centurion's ſervant is ſaid to be, *Matt.* viii. 6. whoſe diſeaſe ſeems to have been of the partial or imperfect kind; or however, tho' it deprived him of motion, yet not of ſenſation; his might be a kind of ſcorbutic palſy. This man is an emblem of a ſinner in a ſtate of nature, who is inſenſible of his condition, of the exceeding ſinfulneſs of ſin, of his danger and miſery to which he is expoſed, of his loſt and undone ſtate, of the neceſſity of the new birth, and of the need of ſalvation by Jeſus Chriſt; and who, as he is deſtitute of ſpiritual life, can have no ſpiritual motion to come to Chriſt for life and ſalvation, or any ſpiritual ſtrength and activity to move in, or perform any thing that is ſpiritually good: and as the friends of this man took him, and brought him to Chriſt, and laid him down before him, hoping he might receive a cure from him, though, from what appears, it was unaſked by him, as he did; ſo it becomes the friends and relations of unregenerate perſons, who have received the grace of God themſelves, and are in a ſound and ſafe eſtate, to be concerned for them; to bring them under the means of grace, where they may be brought to a ſenſe of their ſins, and to a comfortable view of the free and full forgiveneſs of them, as this man; and this ſhould be done, even tho' there may be difficulties in the accompliſhment of it, as there were in this caſe, as is manifeſt from what follows.

Ver. 4. *And when they could not come nigh unto him for the preſs*, &c.] To the room where Jeſus was, nor into the houſe, nor even to the door, the croud about it was ſo great, *they uncovered the roof where he was*. The *Arabic* verſion reads it, *they went up to the roof*; and the *Perſic* thus, *they carried him up upon the roof*. The place where Chriſt was, ſeems to be an upper room; for in ſuch an one the *Jewiſh* doctors uſed to meet, and diſcourſe together about religious matters; ſee *Acts* i. 13. and xx. 8. Tho' ſome think this was a mean houſe in which Chriſt was, and had no upper room, but the ground-floor was open to the roof, thro' which the man, ſick of the palſy, was let down on his bed to Chriſt; and the rather, becauſe the people crouded about the door to get in, and there was no room to receive them, no not about it: but even from this circumſtance it ſeems moſt reaſonable, that there was an upper room in which Chriſt was, and at a window in which he might preach to the people, with much more convenience, than at, or about the door, where they were preſſing: for, certain it is, that he did preach the word to them, ver. 2. and many inſtances may be given of the above mentioned doctors, whoſe uſages, when indifferent, and not ſinful, might be complied with Chriſt, as theſe were, of their meeting and converſing together in upper rooms. Inſtead of many, take the few following[a]: "It happened to *Rabban Gamaliel*, "and the elders, who were ſitting, בעליית, *in an* "*upper room* in *Jericho*, that they brought them "dates, and they did eat, *&c.*" Again[b], "theſe "are ſome of the traditions which they taught; "בעליית, *in the upper chamber* of *Hananiah ben* "*Hezekiah*, *ben Garon*." So it is likewiſe ſaid[c], that "*R. Tarphon*, or *Tryphon*, and the elders, were "ſitting *in the chamber* of the houſe of *Nithzah*, in "*Lydda*, and this queſtion was aſked before them, "is doctrine greateſt, or practice greateſt?" Once more[d], "the elders of the houſe of *Shammai*, "and the elders of the houſe of *Hillell*, went up, "לעליית, *to the upper chamber* of *Jochanan ben* "*Bethira*, and ſaid, that the *Tzitzith*, or fringes, "had no meaſure, *&c.*" Now, over this upper room was a flat roof, with battlements about it; for ſo the *Jews* were obliged to build their houſes, *Deut.* xxii. 8. to which they had a way of going to and from both, within and without ſide their houſes; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 17. Hence we ſo often read[e] of דרך גגות, *the way of the roofs*, in diſtinction from דרך פתחים, *the way of the doors*; by which they entered into their houſes, and by which means, things might be carried from a court to a roof, and from a roof to a court; about which the doctors diſpute, ſaying, that on a ſabbath-day[f], "it is forbidden to aſcend and deſcend from the roofs to the court, and from the court to the roofs; and the veſſels, whoſe abode is in the court, it is lawful to move them in the court, and which are in the roofs, it is lawful to move them in the roofs.——Says *Rabbi*, when we were learning the law with *R. Simeon* at *Tekoah*, we brought up oil, and a confection of old wine, water, and balſam, from roof to roof, and from roof to court, and from court to court, and from the court to a cloſe, and from one cloſe to another, till we came to the fountains, in which they waſhed. Says *R. Judah*, it happened in a time of danger, and we brought the book of the law from court to roof, and from roof to court, and from court to a cloſe, to read in it." Now, in theſe roofs, there was a door, which they call, פתח גגות, *the door of the roofs*[g]: now when they had brought up the ſick man to the roof of the houſe, by a ladder faſtened on the outſide, which was common[h]; they took up this door, and let him down in his bed into the room where *Jeſus* was: and becauſe they wrenched the roof-door open with violence, therefore 'tis ſaid, *and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the ſick of the palſy lay*: opening the door, and perhaps taking up the frame of it, and removing ſome tiles about it, to make the way wider, they let down, with ropes, the bed, and the man on it, together. The *Perſic* verſion thus renders it, *and the paralytic man being put upon a bed, at the four corners of the bed ſo many ropes being faſtened, they let him down through a window to Jeſus, into the place where he was ſitting*; which is rather a paraphraſe, or expoſition of the words, than a tranſlation.

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[z] Chambers's Cyclopædia in the word *palſy*.

[a] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 37. 1.

[b] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 12. 1. & Miſn. Sabbat, c. 1. §. 4.

[c] T. Bab. Kidduſhin, fol. 40. 2. Vid. T. Hieroſ. Peſachim, fol. 30. 2. & T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 74. 1.

[d] T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 41. 2. Vid. Targum in Cant. iii. 4.

[e] T. Peſach. fol. 92. 1. Moed. Katon, fol. 25. 1. Cetubot, fol. 10. 2. Gittin, fol. 81. 1. Bava Metzia, fol. 88. 1. in 117. 1.

Ver. 5. *When Jeſus ſaw their faith*, &c.] The faith of the ſick man, and his friends, who ſeemed confident, that could they get at Chriſt, a cure would be wrought: the faith of the one appears in ſuffering himſelf to be brought in ſuch a manner, under ſo much weakneſs, and with ſo much trouble; and of the other in bringing him, and breaking thro' ſo many difficulties to get him to Chriſt. *He ſaid unto the ſick of the palſy, ſon, thy ſins be forgiven thee*; pointing and ſtriking at the root of his diſorder, his ſins. Chriſt calls him *ſon*, tho' in this afflicted condition: a perſon may be a child of God, and yet greatly afflicted by him; afflictions are not arguments againſt, but rather for ſonſhip: *for what ſon is he whom the father chaſteneth not?* He ſcourgeth every ſon whom he receiveth, and by chaſtizing them, dealeth with them as with ſons; and ſuch as are without chaſtiſement are baſtards, and not ſons, *Heb.* xii. 6, 7, 8. yea, he calls him a ſon, tho' a ſinful creature, and who had not, as yet, until theſe words were ſpoken by Chriſt, any diſcovery and application of pardoning grace unto him: he was a ſon of God by divine predeſtination, being predeſtinated to the adoption of children: he was a ſon by virtue of the covenant of grace, he was intereſted in, as appears by his enjoying pardon of ſin, a bleſſing of it; which runs thus, *I will be their father, and they ſhall be my ſons and daughters*, 2 *Cor.* vi. 18. He was one of the children which were given to Chriſt as in ſuch a relation; and for the ſake of whom Chriſt was now a partaker of fleſh and blood, and in a little time was to die for them, in order to gather them together, who were ſcattered abroad. The bleſſing Chriſt conferred on this poor man is of the greateſt conſequence and importance, forgiveneſs of ſin: it is what ſprings from the grace and mercy of God; it is provided in a promiſe in the covenant of grace; Chriſt was ſent to ſhed his blood to procure it, in a way conſiſtent with the holineſs and juſtice of God; and this being done, it is publiſhed in the Goſpel, and is a moſt conſiderable article in it, and than which, nothing can be more deſirable to a ſenſible ſinner: and bleſſed are they that are partakers of it, their ſins will never be imputed to them; they will never be remembered more; they are blotted out of God's debt-book; they are covered out of his ſight, and are removed as far as the eaſt is from the weſt, even all their ſins, original and actual, ſecret or open, of omiſſion, or commiſſion; ſee the note on *Matt.* ix. 2.

Ver. 6. *But there were certain of the Scribes ſitting there*, &c.] In the upper room where Jeſus was, to watch and obſerve what he ſaid, and did: *and reaſoning in their hearts*; upon the aobve words of Chriſt, in the following manner.

Ver. 7. *Why doth this man thus ſpeak blaſphemies?* &c.] They took Chriſt to be a mere man, and reaſoned with themſelves, that he muſt be a blaſphemer, in aſſuming that to himſelf, which was peculiar to God: they ſeem aſtoniſhed at his words, and wonder at his arrogance, and to be filled with indignation and reſentment at him; ſaying, *who can forgive ſins but God only?* this was a generally received maxim with them, and a very juſt one. The *Chaldee* paraphraſe of *Job* xiv. 4. runs thus: "who can give a pure man out of a man that is defiled with ſins, but God, who alone is he, די ישבוק ליה, *that can pardon him?*" They even deny that *Metatron*, ſo they call the angel in *Exod.* xxiii. 20. of whom they ſay, that his name is as the name of his maſter, has a power of forgiving ſins; for which reaſon the *Iſraelites* rejected him as a meſſenger[i]. They were right in ſaying, that none but God could forgive ſin, againſt whom it is committed; but wrong in charging Chriſt with blaſphemy on this account; becauſe he is truly God, as well as man, as his omniſcience and omnipotence hereafter manifeſted, did abundantly ſhew. That no mere creature can forgive ſin, is certain: good men may, and ought to forgive one another, and even their very enemies; but then they can only forgive ſin as an injury done to themſelves, not as committed againſt God. The miniſters of the Goſpel may be ſaid to remit ſins miniſterially, or declaratively, by preaching the doctrine of pardon, declaring, that ſuch as believe in Chriſt ſhall receive the remiſſion of ſins; but for any man to aſſume ſuch a power to himſelf, as to grant pardons and indulgences, to abſolve from ſins, is antichriſtian, as the pope of *Rome* does; in which he takes that to himſelf, which is peculiar to God; ſo that he, as God, ſitteth in the temple of God, ſhewing himſelf that he is God, 2 *Theſſ.* ii. 4. Nor can any man procure the forgiveneſs of his ſins by any thing he has, or can do; not by his riches, which will not profit in a day of wrath, they being not a ſufficient ranſom-price for a man's ſelf, or any of his brethren and friends; nor by his repentance, for though this, and remiſſion of ſins, go together in grace and experience, yet repentance is not the cauſe of remiſſion of ſins, but rather the effect of remiſſion applied; nor by his faith, for faith does not procure, but receives this bleſſing; and much leſs by good works, for then the forgiveneſs of ſin this would not be according to the riches of grace; and a man would be ſaved by his works, ſince a principal part of ſalvation lies in the pardon of ſin; and beſides, the blood of Chriſt would be ſhed in vain. That God only can forgive ſin, is evident, becauſe it is againſt him, and him only, that men ſin: ſin is a tranſgreſſion of his law, a contrariety to his nature, and a contradiction of his will, an affront to his juſtice and holineſs, a contempt of him, who is the lawgiver, that is able to ſave and to deſtroy; it is of the nature of a debt, which he only can looſe from. Moreover, if there were any beſides himſelf that could forgive ſin, he would have one equal with him, and like unto him; whereas, *who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity?* *Mic.* vii. 18. This is a prerogative peculiar to him, which he challenges to himſelf: *I, even I am he that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions,* *Iſ.* xliii. 25. but then this is common to all the three divine perſons in the Godhead, Father, Son, and Spirit. The Father, he has prepared this grace in his own heart; for the moving cauſe of it, is his ſovereign grace and mercy; he has promiſed and ſecured it in the covenant of his grace; he ſet forth, and ſent forth his ſon to obtain it, by the ſhedding of his blood, that ſo his juſtice might be ſatisfied; and it is for Chriſt's ſake he forgives all treſpaſſes. The Son of God is concerned in it: as man, his blood was ſhed for it; and that being the blood, not of a mere man, but of him that is God, as well as man, it was effectual to that purpoſe; it is in his name that it is preached, and he is exalted as a ſaviour to give it; and as the advocate of his people he calls for it, and requires it; and as he is truly and properly God, he has equal power to beſtow it, and apply it as his father. The holy Spirit, as he makes men ſenſible of their need of it, he ſhows it to them, and their intereſt in it; he ſprinkles the blood of Chriſt upon their conſciences, and declares them pardoned thro' it; he bears witneſs of the truth of it to them, and ſeals it up unto them; ſo that it is wholly of God.

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[f] T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 91. 1. & Hieroſ. ib. fol. 25. 3.

[g] T. Hieroſ. Erubin, fol. 26. 2.

[h] Gloſſ. in T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 117. 1.

[i] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 38. 2. & Gloſſ. in ib.

Ver. 8. *And immediately when Jeſus perceived in his ſpirit,* &c.] *His own ſpirit,* as the *Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic,* and *Ethiopic* verſions read; not his human ſoul, nor the holy Spirit of God, tho' both may be ſaid to be his ſpirit; but his divine nature, in, and by which he knew all things, even the moſt ſecret thoughts of mens hearts: and as ſoon as ever the above thoughts were conceived in the minds of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees,* they were perceived by him, and told to them, *that they ſo reaſoned within themſelves; he ſaid unto them, why reaſon ye theſe things in your hearts?* thereby reproving them, not for reaſoning and concluding in their own minds, that none but God can forgive ſins; but for imputing blaſphemy to him, for pronouncing this man's ſins pardoned; he being God, as well as man, of which his knowing the thoughts and reaſonings of their minds might have been a convincing proof.

Ver. 9. *Whether is it eaſier to ſay to the ſick of the palſy,* &c.] This queſtion was put to them by Chriſt, in order to prove his deity, and clear himſelf from the charge of blaſphemy; for he that could cure the ſick of the palſy, by a word ſpeaking, had power to forgive him his ſins: and therefore propoſes it to them, which was eaſieſt to ſay, *thy ſins be forgiven thee, or to ſay ariſe, and take up thy bed, and walk?* both of them were eaſy to ſay, but not with power and effect: they were both inſtances of divine power, and proofs of deity; and only he that could do the one, could do the other; and the one was as eaſy to be performed, by a divine perſon, as the other: and tho' it may be hard to ſay which is the greateſt inſtance of power, or the ſtrongeſt proof of deity, to pardon a ſinner, or to cure a paralytic by a word ſpeaking; perhaps forgiveneſs of ſin may be the greateſt evidence of divine power and goodneſs; however, it is certain, it is a greater bleſſing to be pardoned, than to be cured of a palſy; yet curing of a palſy, in the manner in which Chriſt did it, was a more ſenſible proof of his deity to the *Scribes* and *Phariſees,* than pronouncing a man's ſins forgiven; becauſe this was viſible, and could not be denied; whereas the other, tho' pronounced, they might queſtion whether it had its effect: but by the one, which they would ſee done before their eyes, there would be left no room for them to doubt of the reality of the other; ſee the note on *Matt.* ix. 5.

Ver. 10. *But that ye may know that the ſon of man,* &c.] Meaning himſelf, who was really man, and the true Meſſiah, in which ſenſe this phraſe had been uſed in the writings of the Old Teſtament; ſee *Pſ.* lxxx. 17. *Dan.* vii. 13. and tho' by reaſon of his outward form, and mean appearance, he might be thought by them to be but a mere man, and had no right, nor authority, to ſay what he had; in order to convince them; he affirms, that he *hath power on earth to forgive ſins.* As there is an emphaſis lies on the phraſe, *the ſon of man,* ſuggeſting, that his being ſo was no contradiction to his deity, nor any hindrance to the exertion of his power; ſo there is another on thoſe words, *upon earth;* intimating, that tho' he was upon earth, in a very low eſtate, in a ſtate of humiliation, yet he had the ſame power to forgive ſin as in heaven; his humbling himſelf in human nature did not ſtrip him of his perfections, power, and prerogative as God: and if he had power on earth to forgive ſin, there can be no room to doubt of it now he is in heaven; ſince, as mediator, he is *exalted to be a prince, and a ſaviour, to give repentance to Iſrael, and remiſſion of ſins,* *Acts* v. 31. And that it might appear he had ſuch a power on earth, *he ſaith to the ſick of the palſy;* turning to, and addreſſing him in the following words, with great majeſty, authority, and power; ſee the note on *Matt.* ix. 6.

Ver. 11. *I ſay unto thee, ariſe, and take up thy bed,* &c.] He bid him, in an authoritative way, to ariſe from his bed, in which he was brought, and on which he lay before him, and take it up upon his ſhoulders, directly, and in the face of all the people, carry it away: *and go thy way into thine houſe;* to ſhew himſelf whole to his family and friends, and go about his buſineſs; ſee the note on *Matt.* ix. 6.

Ver. 12. *And immediately he aroſe,* &c.] Power going along with the words of Chriſt, he found himſelf perfectly well; and at once ſprung up from off his bed, and *took up his bed,* upon his ſhoulders, with all the eaſe imaginable: *and went forth before them all;* the *Scribes* and *Phariſees,* and the whole multitude of the people, who were eye-witneſſes of this wonderful cure: or *againſt them all;* for being ſtrong and robuſt, he made his way thro' the croud, with his bed on his back; *inſomuch that they were all amazed;* at the power of Chriſt, and the ſtrength of the man: *and glorified God, ſaying, we never ſaw it on this faſhion;* or any thing like this in our days. They eaſily perceived it was a preternatural action, and what could never be done by any mere man; they therefore attribute it to God, and give him the glory of it; they celebrated the perfections of God, particularly his power, and his goodneſs, which were very viſible in this inſtance; they praiſed him and his works, and gave thanks to him for this wonderful cure, which was wrought; and that he had given ſuch power to Chriſt, who they looked upon to be but a man; tho' they might have concluded from hence that he was God, to perform ſuch mighty works: and theſe that glorified God, and expreſſed their thankfulneſs for this inſtance of his kindneſs to men, were not the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, who had charged Chriſt with blaſphemy; for the miracles of Chriſt rarely, if ever, had ſuch an effect upon them, as to acknowledge that they were from God, and that Chriſt performed them by a divine power, but rather by a diabolical influence. We never read of their praiſing God, and glorifying him for any thing that was done by Chriſt; but generally went away, after a miracle, hardened, and full of ſpight and malice, going and conſulting together how to take away his life. But theſe were the *multitude*, as *Matthew* ſays, who attended on the miniſtry of Chriſt, and followed him from place to place, and had a high opinion of him, as a great and good man; tho' they did not believe in him as the Meſſiah, and did not know him to be the ſon of God; ſee the note on *Matt.* ix. 8.

Ver. 13. *And he went forth again by the ſea-ſide,* &c.] The ſea of *Galilee*, where he had met with, and called *Peter* and *Andrew*, *James* and *John*; and not far from which were the ſolitary place, and the deſert places, where he was before he entered into *Capernaum: and all the multitude reſorted unto him*; who had been with him at *Peter*'s houſe, and about the door, and thoſe who could not get near him: *and he taught them*; the word of God, the Goſpel, and the doctrines of it.

Ver. 14. *And as he paſſed by*, &c.] As he went from *Simon*'s houſe, and from the city of *Capernaum*, to go to the ſea-ſide: *he ſaw Levi, the ſon of Alpheus*; the ſame with *Matthew*, *Matt.* ix. 9. and ſon to the ſame *Alpheus* as *James* was, *Matt.* x. 3. *Beza*'s moſt ancient copy reads *James*, inſtead of *Levi*, very wrongly; but he was the brother of *James*, and alſo of *Simon* and *Jude*; ſo that there were four brothers of them apoſtles: and if *Joſes*, called *Barſabas*, was the ſame *Joſes* that was brother to theſe, as ſeems probable, a fifth was put up for an apoſtle, tho' the lot fell on *Matthias*. *James*, and *Joſes*, and *Simon*, and *Jude*, are mentioned together, *Matt.* xiii. 55. becauſe they lived together, and were men of religion and ſeriouſneſs, and known by their neighbours; but *Matthew*, or *Levi*, is not mentioned: it is thought, by ſome, probable, that he was a looſe, extravagant young man, and ſo might depart from his father's family, and enter into this ſcandalous employment of a publican; and herein went contrary to his father's will, *Cleophas*, or *Alpheus*, who was the huſband of the ſiſter of *Mary*, the mother of our Lord: *ſitting at the receipt of cuſtom*; the toll-booth, or cuſtom-houſe, where he ſat to take toll of paſſengers that came, or went in ſhips or boats. The *Syriac* verſion renders it, *ſitting among the toll-gatherers*; and the *Perſic*, *among publicans*; not only ſignifying the buſineſs in which he was, but the company he was among; which makes the grace of Chriſt the more illuſtrious and diſtinguiſhing, in looking upon him, and calling him: *and ſaid unto him, follow me; and he aroſe, and followed him.* Chriſt, the great ſhepherd of the ſheep, who came to ſeek, in order to ſave that which was loſt, was now looking up his loſt ſheep; and *Matthew*, or *Levi*, being one of them, he finds him, and calls him by his grace. Chriſt is always firſt with his people; he firſt ſeeks them, and then they ſeek him; he firſt finds them, and then they find him; yea, he is found of them that ſought him not. *Levi* took no notice of him, enquired not about him, and had no thought of leaving his employ, and going after him; but Chriſt knew him: his eye was upon him as he paſſed by him, and his time was a time of love, and ſo a time of life; he looked upon him, and ſaid unto him, live; quickening power went along with his words, and he aroſe, and left all, and followed him: Chriſt, as the good ſhepherd, went before; and *Levi*, thro' the grace that was now given him, as one of his ſheep, heard and knew his voice, and, without the leaſt heſitation or reluctance, quitted his buſineſs, and became a follower of him. How powerful is efficacious grace! what is it, it cannot do! it turns the heart of a ſinner at once, enclines it to Chriſt, and cauſes it to leave all for his ſake; it at once fills a ſoul with love to Chriſt, faith in him, and obedience to him; it works powerfully, and yet freely; it always obtains, and effects what it deſigns, yet puts no force upon the will: *Levi*, under the drawings of divine grace, followed Chriſt moſt willingly and chearfully; ſee the note on *Matt.* ix. 9.

Ver. 15. *And it came to paſs, that as Jeſus ſat at meat in his houſe*, &c.] In the houſe of *Levi*; not in the cuſtom-houſe, or toll-booth, for that he left; but in his houſe in the city of *Capernaum*, where he had him, and made an entertainment for him, in token of gratitude, for the high favour beſtowed on him: *many publicans and ſinners ſat alſo together, with Jeſus, and his diſciples*; being invited by *Levi*, and not objected to by Chriſt; ſee the note on *Matt.* ix. 10. *for there were many, and they followed him*; either Chriſt, whom they had obſerved to have called *Matthew*, and had heard preach by the ſea-ſide; or elſe *Matthew*; and ſo the *Perſic* verſion renders it, *for many followed Matthew*. The *Ethiopic* verſion reads the words, *and they were many*, that is, publicans and ſinners, *and the Scribes and Phariſees followed him*; mentioned in the next verſe, from whence, it ſeems, to be taken; tho' true it is, that not only a large number of publicans and ſinners followed Chriſt, but alſo many of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*; yet with a different view from the former, not to get any advantage to themſelves, but, if they could, an advantage againſt Chriſt.

Ver. 16. *And when the Scribes and Phariſees ſaw him eat*, &c.] They were offended at his eating and drinking, tho' it was in moderation; becauſe he did not faſt as they, and their diſciples did; and eſpecially, that he eat *with publicans and ſinners*; men of very infamous characters, and bad lives, with whom the *Phariſees* diſdained to keep company: *they ſaid unto his diſciples, how is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and ſinners?* The *Vulgate Latin*, *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read, *your maſter*, as in *Matt.* ix. 11. ſee the note there; ſo ſome *Greek* copies here.

Ver. 17. *When Jeſus heard it, he ſaith to them*, &c.] Chriſt either over-heard what they ſaid to his diſciples, or he heard it from the relation of the diſciples; and when he did, he turned to the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, and ſpoke to them the following words: *they that are whole, have no need of the phyſician, but they that are ſick*; which ſeems to be a proverbial expreſſion, ſignifying that he was a phyſician; that theſe publicans and ſinners were ſick perſons, and needed his company and aſſiſtance but that they, the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, were whole and in good health, in their own eſteem, and ſ wanted no relief; and therefore ought not to tak it amiſs, that he attended the one, and not th other. Theſe words give a general view of man kind, in their different ſentiments of themſelves and of Chriſt; and of the uſefulneſs of Chriſt to one ſort, and not another. There are ſome that cry up the power of man's free-will, and plead for the ſtrength and purity of human nature, and extol its excellencies and abilities; and it is no wonder that theſe ſee no need of Chriſt, either for themſelves or others: hence preachers of this complexion, leave Chriſt out of their miniſtry for the moſt part; and generally ſpeaking, leſſen the glory and dignity of his perſon, depreciate his offices, reject his righteouſneſs, and deny his ſatisfaction and atonement: and ſuch reckon themſelves the favourites of heaven, and are ready to ſay, whom ſhall God delight to honour, but us, who are ſo pure and holy? they therefore truſt in their own righteouſneſs, and deſpiſe others, and ſubmit not to the righteouſneſs of Chriſt; they make their own works their ſaviours, and ſo neglect the great ſalvation by Chriſt. There are others that are ſick, and are quite ſick of themſelves; they ſee the impurity of their nature, how unſound and unhealthful they are; that from the crown of the head to the ſole of the foot, there is no ſoundneſs in them, nothing but wounds, bruiſes, and putrifying ſores: their loins are filled with the loathſome diſeaſe of ſin; they are ſenſible of their inability to cure themſelves, and that no mere creature can help them; and that all beſides Chriſt, are phyſicians of no value: and therefore they apply to him, whoſe blood is a balm for every wound, and a medicine for every ſickneſs and diſeaſe, and which cleanſes from all ſin: and whereas ſuch, and ſuch only, ſee their need of Chriſt as a phyſician, theſe only does he attend under this character; ſee the note on *Matt.* ix. 12. Adding this as a reaſon, *I came not to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance.* Theſe words explain, what is more obſcurely and figuratively expreſſed in the former: it appears from hence, that by *the whole* are meant, *righteous* perſons; not ſuch who are made righteous, by the righteouſneſs of Chriſt imputed to them, but ſuch who were outwardly righteous before men, who truſted in themſelves that they were righteous, depended on their own righteouſneſs, and fancied themſelves, with reſpect to the righteouſneſs of the law, blameleſs; and ſo, in their own apprehenſions, ſtood in no need of Chriſt and his righteouſneſs: yea, even needed not repentance, according to their own thoughts of things, and therefore were not called to it, but were left to their own ſtupidity and blindneſs; theſe were the *Scribes* and *Phariſees:* and by the *ſick*, are meant *ſinners*; ſuch who are made ſenſible of ſin, and ſo of their need of Chriſt as a Saviour; and who have evangelical repentance given them, and are called to the exerciſe and profeſſion of it: and Chriſt's calling ſinners to repentance, and beſtowing that grace, together with the remiſſion of ſins, which goes along with it, is doing his work and office as a *phyſician.* This Evangeliſt makes no mention of the paſſage in *Hoſ.* vi. 6. with which theſe words are introduced in *Matthew.* The laſt words, *to repentance*, are omitted by the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, and are wanting in ſome ancient copies; but are retained in the *Arabic* verſion, and in moſt copies, as in *Matt.* ix. 13. ſee the note there.

Ver. 18. *And the diſciples of John and of the Phariſees uſed to faſt*, &c.] Or *were faſting*; perhaps that very day, and ſo were the more diſpleaſed at this entertainment, *Matthew* had made for Chriſt and his diſciples, and at their being at it; or faſting was uſual with them: they faſted often, both *John*'s diſciples, and the diſciples of the *Phariſees*; or the *Phariſees* themſelves; ſo the *Vulgate Latin* reads: of their frequent faſtings; ſee the note on *Matt.* ix. 14. *and they came*; both the diſciples of *John*, *Matt.* ix. 14. and the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, *Luke* v. 30, 33. *and ſay unto him, why do the diſciples of John, and of the Phariſees faſt, but thy diſciples faſt not?* ſee the note on *Matt.* ix. 14.

Ver. 19. *And Jeſus ſaid unto them*, &c.] Both to *John*'s diſciples and the *Phariſees*, *can the children of the bride-chamber faſt, while the bridegroom is with them?* Suggeſting that he was the bridegroom, as *John* their maſter had called him, *John* iii. 29. and that his diſciples were the children of the bride-chamber; and that it was very unſuitable for them, and very unreaſonable to deſire them to faſt at ſuch a time, and under ſuch a character: wherefore the anſwer returned by Chriſt himſelf to the queſtion is, *as long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot faſt:* all which the *Syriac* verſion expreſſes by, לא, *no*; ſee the note on *Matt.* ix. 15.

Ver. 20. *But the days will come*, &c.] As they were in ſome ſenſe now come to the diſciples of *John*, their maſter being taken up by *Herod*, and confined in priſon, and ſo it was a mourning time with them: *when the bridegroom ſhall be taken away from them, and then ſhall they faſt in thoſe days*; referring to the time of the ſufferings and death of Chriſt, which would be, and was a ſorrowful ſeaſon to his diſciples.

Ver. 21. *No man alſo ſeweth a piece of new cloth*, &c.] The traditions of the elders are meant, particularly concerning eating and drinking, and faſting, things before ſpoken of; and which occaſioned this parable, and which were new things in compariſon of the commands of God: ſome of them were of very ſhort ſtanding, deviſed in that age; and moſt, if not all of them, were ſince the times of *Ezra. On an old garment*; the moral and ceremonial righteouſneſs of the *Jews*, in obedience to the law of God; ſignifying, that the former were not to be joined with theſe, to make up a juſtifying righteouſneſs before God; which were not ſufficient for ſuch a purpoſe, either ſingly, or both together: *elſe the new piece that filled it up, taketh away from the old, and the rent is made worſe*; for by attendance to the traditions of the elders, the *Jews* were taken off from, and neglected the commandments of God; nay, oftentimes the commands of God were made void by theſe traditions: ſo that the old garment of their own righteouſneſs, which was very ragged and imperfect of itſelf, inſtead of being purer and more perfect, became much the worſe, even for the purpoſe for which it was intended; ſee the note on *Matt.* ix. 16.

Ver. 22. *And no man putteth new wine into old bottles*, &c.] By *old bottles* are meant, the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, the whole, which needed not a phyſician, and the righteous, Chriſt came not to call; and by *new wine*, either the love of God, which is not ſhed abroad in the hearts of ſuch perſons; or the bleſſings of the new covenant, which are not beſtowed upon them; or the Goſpel, which brings an account of both, which is not received by carnal men: *elſe the new wine doth burſt the bottles, and the wine is ſpilled, and the bottles will be marred:* the Goſpel will only fill them with rage and fury, and they will deſpiſe it, and let it go; which will be an aggravation of their ſin and miſery, and ſo will prove the ſavour of death unto death unto them: *but new wine muſt be put into new bottles*; into the hearts of ſinners, who are called to repentance,

ance, and are renewed in the Spirit of their minds; are new-born babes, that deſire the ſincere milk of the word, and wine of the Goſpel: in theſe the love of God is exceeding abundant, and it comes in with full flows into their ſouls; all grace is made to abound towards them, and the word of Chriſt richly dwells in them; in whom theſe things remain and abide, and they themſelves are ſaved with an everlaſting ſalvation; ſee the note on *Matt.* ix. 17.

Ver. 23. *And it came to paſs*, &c.] The *Vulgate Latin* adds, *again*; and ſo *Beza* ſays it was read in one of his copies: *that he went through the corn fields on the ſabbath-day, and his diſciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears of corn*; and to rub them, and get the grain out of them, and eat them; ſee the note on *Matt.* xii. 1.

Ver. 24. *And the Phariſees ſaid unto him*, &c.] To Chriſt, the ſame they ſaid to his diſciples, *Luke* vi. 2. *Behold, why do they on the ſabbath-day, that which is not lawful?* ſee how they pluck the ears of corn and rub them, and eat things, which by the law, eſpecially by the traditions of the elders, were not lawful to be done on the ſabbath-day; ſee the note on *Matt.* xii. 2.

Ver. 25. *And he ſaid unto them*, &c.] By way of anſwer to their queſtion, and which was a full one, and enough to ſilence them: *have ye never read what David did*; referring to the hiſtory in 1 *Sam.* xxi. *when he had need*; of bread, was in great neceſſity, and in the utmoſt diſtreſs: *and was an hungred, he, and they that were with him?* which was a juſtifiable reaſon for what he and his company did; as it was for the action of the diſciples; being in a like caſe, and therefore very appoſite to the purpoſe; ſee the note on *Matt.* xii. 3.

Ver. 26. *How he went into the houſe of God*, &c.] The tabernacle; for the temple was not yet built: thither *David* went to get bread for himſelf and his men, being hungry: ſo in a ſpiritual ſenſe, where ſhould ſuch go, who are hungring and thirſting after righteouſneſs, but into the houſe of God? here's bread enough, and to ſpare; here is a table furniſhed with excellent proviſions; here the Goſpel is diſpenſed, which is milk for babes, and meat for ſtrong men; here Chriſt, the bread of life, is ſet forth, whoſe fleſh is meat indeed, and whoſe blood is drink indeed; here the ordinances are adminiſtred, which are breaſts of conſolation to the children of God; here is a feaſt of fat things, all things are ready, and ſouls are welcome, and therefore it muſt be right to attend here. And this was on the ſabbath-day that *David* went into the houſe of God; when the ſhew-bread loaves were removed, and divided among the prieſts, and new ones were placed in their room: and ſo under the Goſpel diſpenſation, on the Lord's day, the day ſet apart for publick worſhip, it becomes the ſaints to go up to the houſe of the Lord, and feed upon the proviſions of it: they are a royal prieſthood, they are prieſts, as well as kings to God; and their buſineſs is in the houſe of the Lord, to offer up ſpiritual ſacrifices to him; and as the goodneſs and fulneſs of his houſe appertains to them, they do well to attend and partake thereof. *In the days of Abiathar the high-prieſt*; and yet from the hiſtory it is clear, that it was in the days of *Abimelech* the high-prieſt, the father of *Abiathar*; wherefore the *Jew* charges [k] *Mark* with an error, and *Matthew* and *Luke* too: whereas the two laſt, make no mention of the name of any high-prieſt; and it might be obſerved, that in the *Perſic* verſion of *Mark* it is rendered, *under Abimelech the high-prieſt*; and in an ancient copy of *Beza*'s, the whole clauſe is omitted; though it muſt be owned, that ſo it is read in other *Greek* copies, and in the ancient verſions, the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and others: wherefore let it be further obſerved, that the fact referred to, was done in the days of *Abiathar*, though it was before he was an high-prieſt; and the particle επι may be ſo rendered, about, or *before Abiathar* was *high-prieſt*, as it is in *Matt.* i. 11. Beſides, *Abiathar* was the ſon of an high-prieſt, and ſucceeded his father in the office; and might be at this time his deputy, who acted for him, or he by his advice; and according to a rule the *Jews* [l] themſelves give, "the ſon of an high-prieſt, who is deputed "by his father in his ſtead, הרי כהן גדול אמור, "*lo! he is called an high-prieſt.*" So that *Abiathar* might at this time be called the high-prieſt; and is the rather mentioned, becauſe he was the more eminent and famous man; and whom the *Jews* call [m] *Urim* and *Thummim*, becauſe there was much enquiry made by them, in his and his father's days, and very little after: to which may be added, that the names of the father and the ſon are ſometimes changed; *Abimelech* is called *Abiathar*, and this *Abiathar* is called *Abimelech*, the ſon of *Abiathar*, 2 *Sam.* viii. 17. and *Abimelech* the ſon of *Abiathar*, 1 *Chron.* xviii. 16. And it ſeems as if both father and ſon had two names, and were ſometimes called by the one, and ſometimes by the other: for as the father is ſometimes called *Abiathar*, the ſon is called *Abimelech*, or *Abimelech*, as in the places mentioned; and which refer to the times when *David* was king of *Iſrael*, and long after the death of *Saul*, and conſequently long after *Abimelech*, and the reſt of the prieſts at *Nob*, were killed by the order of *Saul*: wherefore *Abimelech*, or *Abimelech*, in the ſaid places, muſt be the ſon *Abiathar*; and who afterwards was thruſt out of the prieſthood by *Solomon*, for joining with *Adonijah* in his uſurpation, 1 *Kings* i. 25. and ii. 26. And from whence it appears, that his father was called *Abiathar* alſo, and which ſome take to be their family name; and if ſo, then there is no difficulty, and the Evangeliſt rightly ſays, that this affair was in the days of *Abiathar*: but be it that he intends the ſon, what has been before obſerved, is a ſufficient ſolution of this difficulty; for the Evangeliſt does not ſay that *Abiathar* was high-prieſt, when *David* came and eat the ſhew-bread; he only ſays, it was *in the days of Abiathar the high-prieſt*: for certain it is, that this happened in his days; and as certain, that he was an high-prieſt; and *Mark* might with great propriety call him ſo, though he was not ſtrictly one, till after this buſineſs was over: beſides, he was not only the ſon of an high-prieſt, and it may be his deputy, and ſome have thought officiated at this time, his father being ſick or infirm through old age; but inaſmuch as his father was directly killed by the order of *Saul*, he narrowly eſcaping, immediately ſucceeded him in the office of the high prieſthood; and therefore his being an high-prieſt ſo very near the time of this action, without any impropriety and impertinence, and eſpecially without incurring the charge of falſhood, the Evangeliſt might expreſs himſelf as he does. *And did eat the ſhew-bread, which is not lawful to eat, but for the prieſts, and gave alſo to them which were with him?* Who not only eat the ſhew-bread, which was ſet before the Lord, and was ſacred, and which none but the prieſts might eat of, after it was removed

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[k] R. Iſaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 28. p. 419.

[l] Siphra, fol. 17. 2. apud Kidder's Demonſtration of the Meſſiah, par. 2. p. 73.

[m] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 16. 2.

moved from the table; but he did this on the ſabbath-day; and he not only eat of it himſelf, but the ſoldiers that were with him; and all this with the knowledge and leave of the high-prieſt: for the *Jews* [n] have no reaſon to charge this Evangeliſt and the others with an error, that others beſides *David* eat of the ſhew-bread, urging that he came alone to *Abimelech*; ſince it is evident from 1 *Sam.* xxi. 2, 4, 5. that *David* had ſervants in company with him when he fled, though they did not attend him when he went to the high-prieſt; and that he aſked bread, and it was given him, not only for himſelf, but for the young men that he had appointed to be at ſuch a place: and therefore, if this was allowed to *David* and his men, when hungry, it ought not to be charged as an evil upon the diſciples, for plucking and rubbing a few ears of corn to ſatisfy their hunger, though on a ſabbath-day; and eſpecially when he, who was Lord of the ſabbath, was preſent, and admitted of it; ſee the note on *Matt.* xii. 4.

Ver. 27. *And he ſaid unto them,* &c.] Continuing his anſwer to them, and adding, in confirmation of what he had ſaid, and for the further vindication of his diſciples, *the ſabbath was made for man:* for his good, and not for his hurt; both for the good of his ſoul, that he might have an opportunity of attending divine worſhip, both in publick and private; and for the good of his body, that he might have reſt from his labour: and this was the end of the original inſtitution and appointment of it; and therefore works of neceſſity are not forbidden on this day; ſuch as are for the neceſſary comfort, ſupport, and preſervation of life; or otherwiſe it would be apparent, that the ſabbath was not appointed for the good, but for the hurt of men. By *man,* is not meant all mankind; for the ſabbath was never appointed for all mankind, nor binding upon all; only the *Jews,* who are emphatically called *man,* or *men;* ſee *Ezek.* xxxiv. 30, 31. upon which the *Jewiſh* writers remark [o], that "they are called, אדם, *man;* but the idolatrous "*Gentiles,* and nations of the world, are not called "*men;*" but dogs, beaſts, *&c.* Our Lord may here be thought to ſpeak in their language, as he does in *Matt.* xv. 26. ſee the note there. And that the obſervation of the ſeventh-day, was only deſigned for the children of *Iſrael,* ſeems manifeſt from *Exod.* xxxi. 16, 17. *wherefore the children of Iſrael ſhall keep the ſabbath, to obſerve the ſabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant; it is a ſign between me and the children of Iſrael;* and not between him and the reſt of the world: and in ver. 14. *ye ſhall keep the ſabbath, for it is holy unto you:* on which the *Jews* [p] make this remark, לכם ולא לשאר עמין, *to you, and not to the reſt of the nations:* nor did they ever think that the *Gentiles* were obliged to obſerve their ſabbath, only ſuch who became proſelytes to their religion; even thoſe who were proſelytes of righteouſneſs: for a proſelyte of the gate, was not bound to obſerve it; for ſo ſays [q] *Maimonides,* "thoſe who take upon "them the ſeven commandments of *Noah* only, "lo! they are as a proſelyte of the gate, and they "are free to do work on the ſabbath-day for them-"ſelves, openly, as an *Iſraelite,* on a common day." Yea, they not only ſay, they were not obliged to keep the ſabbath, but that it was not lawful for them to obſerve it; and that it was even puniſhable with death for them to regard it; for ſo they ſay [r], "a "*Gentile* that keeps the ſabbath before he is cir-"cumciſed, is guilty of death, becauſe it is not "commanded him." They judged them unworthy of having this precept enjoined them, as being not men, but beaſts, and worſe than they, and had not the privilege the aſs has: hence one of their commentators [s] ſays, "concerning the reſt of an "aſs, thou (O *Iſraelite!*) art commanded; but "concerning the reſt of a *Gentile,* thou art not "commanded." *And not man for the ſabbath;* who was in being long before that was appointed and enjoined.

Ver. 28. *Therefore the Son of man is Lord alſo of the ſabbath.*] Meaning himſelf, who had a power not only to diſpenſe with it, but to abrogate it as he did, with the reſt of the rituals of the ceremonial law; ſee the note on *Matt.* xii. 8. So that it did not become them to find fault with what his diſciples did, with his leave and approbation.

## CHAP. III.

Ver. 1. AND *he entered again into the ſynagogue,* &c.] Perhaps in *Capernaum,* where he had before caſt out the unclean ſpirit; but not on the ſame day, nor on that day he had had the debate with the *Phariſees,* about his diſciples plucking the ears of corn on the ſabbath-day; but on another ſabbath, perhaps the next; ſee *Luke* vi. 6. *And there was a man there which had a withered hand;* who came there either for a cure, knowing Chriſt to be in the ſynagogue, or for the ſake of worſhip; ſee the note on *Matt.* xii. 10.

Ver. 2. *And they watched him,* &c.] The ruler of the ſynagogue, and the principal men in it; particularly the *Scribes* and *Phariſees,* who followed him wherever he went; they obſerved him diligently, and kept their eyes upon him; this lame man being in the ſynagogue, to ſee *whether he would heal him on the ſabbath-day;* which, knowing his readineſs to do good, they might expect he would: *that they might accuſe him;* as they had accuſed his diſciples before, of the violation of the ſabbath: according to the Evangeliſt *Matthew,* they put a queſtion to him, whether it was lawful to heal on the ſabbath-day? with this view, that they might one way or another, have ſomething to accuſe him of, either to the people, or to the *Sanhedrim;* ſee the note on *Matt.* xii. 10.

Ver. 3. *And he ſaid unto the man which had the withered hand,* &c.] After he had reaſoned with them, from the leſſer to the greater, upon their own principles and practices, in relieving and taking out a ſheep fallen into a ditch, on a ſabbath-day, *Matt.* xii. 10, 11. and knowing *their thoughts,* as *Luke* ſays, ch. vi. 8. their reaſonings and deſigns; and as the *Perſic* verſion here, from thence *underſtanding their conſpiracy,* turns himſelf to the lame man, and bids him *ſtand forth:* or, as in *Luke, riſe up and ſtand forth in the midſt.* He bid him riſe up from his ſeat, and ſtand forth in the midſt of the ſynagogue: this he ſaid, partly to raiſe the attention of the people to the following miracle; and partly to move commiſeration upon the ſight of the object; and to aggravate the hard heartedneſs of the *Phariſees*; as alſo, that it might be manifeſt to all, that the man's hand was really withered; and that there was no fraud in the following cure.

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[n] R. Iſaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 28. p. 420. Jacob Aben Amram apud Kidder, Demonſtr. of the Meſſiah, par. 3. p. 48.

[o] T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 114. 2. Zohar in Exod. fol. 35. 4.

[p] Zohar in Exod. fol. 26. 4.

[q] Hilchot Sabbat, c. 20. §. 14.

[r] Debarim Rabba, §. 1. fol. 234. 4.

[s] Bartenora in Miſn. Sabbat, c. 24. §. 1.

Ver. 4. *And he ſaith unto them,* &c.] Either to the whole multitude, to all the aſſembly in the ſynagogue; and ſo the *Perſic* verſion renders it, *again he ſaid to the multitude*; or rather, to the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, who were watching him, and had put a queſtion to him, which he anſwers by another: *is it lawful to do good on the ſabbath-days, or to do evil, to ſave life, or to kill?* The *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions read, *or to deſtroy*, as in *Luke* vi. 9. To do evil, kill, or deſtroy, are not lawful at any time; and to do good, and to ſave life, muſt be right at all times: our Lord has a particular view to the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, and the queſtion is put home to their own conſciences; whoſe hearts and thoughts, deſigns and views, were all open to Chriſt; and who were now watching to do evil to him, and even to deſtroy and take away his life: for the violation of the ſabbath was death by the law, and this was what they ſought to accuſe him of: now he puts the queſtion to them, and makes them judges which muſt appear moſt right and juſt in the ſight of God and men, for him to heal this poor man of his withered hand, though on the ſabbath-day; which would be doing a good and beneficent action to him, whereby his life would be ſaved, and preſerved with comfort and uſefulneſs, and he would be in a capacity of getting his livelihood; or for them to cheriſh an evil intention againſt him, to ſeek to bring miſchief on him; and not only deſtroy his character and uſefulneſs as much as in them lay, but even take away his very life alſo: he leaves it with them to conſider of, which was moſt agreeable to the law of God, the nature of a ſabbath, and the good of mankind: *but they held their peace*; or *were ſilent*, not being able to return an anſwer, but what muſt have been in his favour, and to their own confuſion, and therefore choſe to ſay nothing.

Ver. 5. *And when he had looked round about on them,* &c.] In the ſeveral parts of the ſynagogue; for there were many of them on every ſide of him; which he might do, to obſerve their countenances, which might juſtly fall, upon ſuch a cloſe queſtion put to them, and what anſwer they would return to him: and his look upon them was *with anger*, with a ſtern countenance, which ſhewed indignation at them, though without ſin, or any deſire of revenge, for the evil they were meditating againſt him; for at the ſame time he had pity and compaſſion for them, *being grieved for the hardneſs of their hearts*: or *the blindneſs of their hearts*, as the *Vulgate Latin*, *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions render it; being troubled in his human ſoul, both at their inhumanity and cruelty to a miſerable object, whoſe cure, in their opinion, would have been a breach of the ſabbath; and to himſelf, having a malicious deſign againſt him, ſhould he perform it; and at their ſtupidity and ignorance of the law of God, the nature and deſign of the ſabbath, and of their duty to God, and their fellow-creatures: wherefore as one not to be intimidated by their evil deſigns againſt him, or prevented thereby from doing good, *he ſaith unto the man, ſtretch forth thine hand*; that is, the lame one; and ſuch power went along with his words, as at once effected a cure: *and he ſtretched it out, and his hand was reſtored whole as the other*. This laſt clauſe, *whole as the other*, is not in the *Vulgate Latin*, nor in the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions; and may be added from *Matt.* xii. 13. ſee the note there; ſince it is wanting in the *Alexandrian* copy, and in *Beza*'s moſt ancient copy, and in others.

Ver. 6. *And the Phariſees went forth,* &c.] Out of the ſynagogue, being dreadfully galled with the reaſonings of Chriſt, at the ſilence and confuſion they were put to, and with the miracle he wrought, to the expoſing of them, and eſtabliſhing his own credit: *and ſtraightway took counſel with the Herodians againſt him*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxii. 16. *How they might deſtroy him*; perſiſting ſtill in their evil intentions, though Chriſt had ſo fully and clearly expoſed the wickedneſs of them: and it is to be obſerved, that thoſe men who thought it was not lawful to heal a lame man on the ſabbath-day, yet make no ſcruple of meeting and conſulting together on that day, and even with profane men, what meaſures and methods were beſt to take, to deſtroy the life of an innocent perſon.

Ver. 7. *But Jeſus withdrew himſelf with his diſciples to the ſea,* &c.] Knowing their evil deſigns againſt him, he departed out of the ſynagogue, and city of *Capernaum*; and taking his diſciples with him, he went to the ſhore of the ſea of *Galilee*; not out of fear, but becauſe his time was not yet come, and he had more work to do: *and a great multitude from Galilee*; from the ſeveral parts of it, in which country he now was: *and from Judæa*; that part of the land of *Iſrael*, which was particularly ſo called, and belonged to the tribe of *Judah*.

Ver. 8. *And from Jeruſalem,* &c.] The metropolis of the country of *Judæa*; *and from Idumea*, or *Edom*, as the *Syriac* verſion reads it; a country that lay on the ſouth of *Judæa*, formerly inhabited by the ſons of *Edom*, but now by *Jews*; or at leaſt the inhabitants of it were proſelytes to the *Jewiſh* religion. Mention is made of the plains of *Idumea*, along with *Gazera*, *Azotus*, and *Jamnia*, in 1 *Maccab.* iv. 15. *Pliny* [t] ſpeaks of *Idumea* and *Judæa* together, as a part of *Syria*; and *Ptolemy* ſays [u], this country lies on the weſt of the river *Jordan*; and it is here added, *and from beyond Jordan*; the country of *Peræa*, on the eaſt of *Jordan*: *and they about Tyre and Sidon*; either the inhabitants of theſe places, as the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions favour, reading a *great company from Tyre and Sidon*; or thoſe that lived near the borders, and upon the confines of theſe cities of *Phœnicia*: *a great multitude*; when all met together, from theſe ſeveral parts; who *when they had heard what great things he did, came unto him*: for his fame went through all the countries, for the miracles he wrought; which drew this vaſt concourſe of people after him; and who, enquiring where he was, came to him at the ſea of *Galilee*.

Ver. 9. *And he ſpake unto his diſciples,* &c.] In an authoritative way; he ordered and commanded them, *that a ſmall ſhip ſhould wait on him*: that a boat ſhould be got ready, be near at hand, and attend him, who was on ſhore; that he might go into it, ſhould there be any occaſion for it; and from thence preach to the people: *becauſe of the multitude*; which came from the above parts, and all together made a very numerous body of people: *leſt they ſhould throng him*; croud, preſs, afflict, and diſtreſs, and make him uneaſy, that he could not be able to ſtand conveniently, and preach to them: ſo that ſhould this be the caſe, as it was very likely it would, having a ſmall veſſel near the ſhore, he could go into it, and free himſelf from ſuch an inconvenience.

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[t] Nat. Hiſt. l. 5. c. 12.

[u] Geograph. l. 5. c. 16.

Ver. 10. *For he had healed many*, &c.] Of various diſeaſes, and the fame of this brought more ſtill to him: *inſomuch that they preſſed upon him*; or *puſhed upon him*, with great eagerneſs and violence. The *Arabic* verſion renders it, *they ruſhed upon him, ſo that they fell*: they puſhed on, and preſſed ſo hard to get to him, that they fell upon one another, and on him: the *Perſic* verſion renders it, *they caſt themſelves on him, for the ſake of touching him*; which muſt be very troubleſome indeed. Though ſome think the phraſe ſignifies no more, than that they fell down before him at his feet, in a ſubmiſſive and petitionary way, intreating they might have the favour *for to touch him*; either any part of his body, or his garments, even the hem of them: and ſo the *Ethiopic* verſion tranſlates the words; *they prayed him that they might touch him*; ſee ch. vi. 56. *As many as had plagues*; of leproſy, and other diſeaſes, which were inflicted on them by God, as ſcourges and chaſtiſements for their ſins, as the word ſignifies, and which anſwers to, נגעים, *Negaim*; concerning which, there is a whole treatiſe in the *Miſna*; and which bears that name, and particularly regards the plagues of leproſy. Some verſions join this with the beginning of the next verſe. The *Syriac* verſion reads thus, *who had plagues of unclean ſpirits*; as if theſe plagues were their being poſſeſſed by unclean ſpirits. The *Perſic* verſion thus, *having plagues from unclean ſpirits*; as if theſe plagues were inflicted upon them by them, and which was ſometimes the caſe. The *Arabic* verſion after this manner, *who had diſeaſes and unclean ſpirits*; both the one and the other.

Ver. 11. *And unclean ſpirits when they ſaw him*, &c.] That is, as the *Syriac* and *Arabic* verſions read, *they who had unclean ſpirits*; or, as the *Ethiopic*, *they that were poſſeſſed with unclean ſpirits*; as ſoon as ever they beheld Chriſt, though they had never ſeen him before, and he was an entire ſtranger to them, yet *fell down before him*: the unclean ſpirits being ſaid to do that, which they that were poſſeſſed with them did; and which, notwithſtanding their poſſeſſion of them, they could not prevent, but were obliged to admit of it, as a token of their ſubjection to Chriſt: *and* even the devils themſelves in the men, *cried, ſaying, thou art the Son of God*; a divine perſon, equal with God; and ſuch his power over them, and his healing all manner of diſeaſes, by a word, or touch, ſhewed him to be.

Ver. 12. *And he ſtraightly charged them*, &c.] Or vehemently rebuked them, as the *Syriac* and *Arabic* verſions render it; or threatened them much and vehemently, as the *Vulgate Latin* and *Ethiopic*. The *Perſic* verſion renders it, *threatned many*; both the devils that confeſſed him, and the many that were healed of their diſeaſes: he gave them a ſtrict and ſevere charge, *that they ſhould not make him known*; or *his work*, as the *Arabic*, his miracles: he ſought not vain-glory and popular applauſe, nor did he need the teſtimony of men or devils; and eſpecially did not chuſe the latter, leſt his enemies ſhould traduce him, as having familiarity with them, as they did.

Ver. 13. *And he goeth up into a mountain*, &c.] Near *Capernaum*, being ſolitary, and a place of receſs and retirement, *to pray*, as *Luke* ſays, ch. vi. 12. who adds, *and continued all night in prayer to God*, notwithſtanding the great fatigue of the day paſt. His prayer, as is very probable, was chiefly concerning the great and important work, which was upon his mind, and he was about to do; the making and conſtituting twelve of his diſciples, as his apoſtles, to preach in his name, and work miracles: *and calleth unto him whom he would*; that is, *when it was day*, as the above *Evangeliſt* obſerves; when he called his diſciples, ſuch as had been for ſome time followers of him, as many of them as he thought fit: for it ſeems by the ſame Evangeliſt, that others were called to him beſides the twelve; and out of them he choſe them: the phraſe *whom he would*, is in the *Arabic* verſion rendered, *whom he loved*: and it is a common obſervation of expoſitors, that the choice and call of the apoſtles to office, were not according to their will, works, and merits, but according to the ſovereign will and grace of Chriſt, who choſe them, and not they him: but to me there ſeems no foundation for ſuch a remark here, though it is a truth; becauſe this regards not the call of the twelve only, and much leſs of them to office, but a call of many of the followers of Chriſt to come to him on the mountain: *and they came unto him*; as many as he called out of the multitude; and from among theſe he made the following choice.

Ver. 14. *And he ordained twelve*, &c.] Or made, conſtituted, and appointed twelve men, out of thoſe he called to him. The *Arabic* verſion adds, *and called them apoſtles*; which ſeems to be taken out of *Luke* vi. 13. *That they ſhould be with him*; conſtantly, in private and in publick; be taken into his family, and reckoned ſuch; be his familiars, and privy to all his affairs; hear all his diſcourſes, and ſee his miracles; that ſo they might be trained up and fitted for the great work he deſigned them for: *and that he might ſend them forth to preach*; the Goſpel in *Judæa* firſt, and then in all the world: for he did not at this time ſend them to preach, only choſe, called, and appointed them; and after they had been with him ſome time, and were better qualified for ſuch ſervice, he ſent them forth, as in *Matt.* x. 1, 5. for this conſtitution of them was before that miſſion, and was in order to it.

Ver. 15. *And to have power to heal ſickneſſes*, &c.] All manner of corporal diſeaſes that attend men and women: *and to caſt out devils*; from ſuch who were poſſeſſed with them: that is, he choſe and appointed them to be his apoſtles, with a view of conferring ſuch powers upon them hereafter; for as yet, they were not veſted with them, nor ſent out to exerciſe them; no, not till near twelve months after.

Ver. 16. *And Simon he ſurnamed Peter.*] Or *Cephas*, which ſignifies a rock, or ſtone, becauſe of his courage and conſtancy, his ſtrength and fortitude, his ſteadineſs and firmneſs of mind: this name was impoſed upon him, not at the time of his miſſion as an apoſtle; nor when he made that noble confeſſion of his faith in Chriſt, as the Son of the living God, at which time this name was taken notice of; but when Chriſt firſt called him to be his diſciple and apoſtle; ſee *John* i. 42.

Ver. 17. *And James the ſon of Zebedee, and John the brother of James*, &c.] Theſe are mentioned next, as being firſt called after *Peter* and *Andrew*: *and he ſurnamed them Boanerges, which is, the ſons of thunder*; either becauſe of their loud and ſonorous voice; or their warm zeal for Chriſt, and fervency in their miniſtry; or for their courage in oppoſing the enemies of Chriſt, and the power that went along with their words; which either put to confuſion and ſilence, or iſſued in conviction and converſion. The *Syriac* verſion reads *Benai Regeſh*, and the *Perſic*, *Beni Reg'ſch*. The *Jews*, as our learned countryman Mr. *Broughton* has obſerved [w], ſometimes pronounce *Scheva* by oa, as *Noabyim*, for *Nebyim*; ſo here, *Boanerges* for *Benereges*, or *Benerges*. There is a city which was in the tribe of *Dan*, mentioned in *Joſh.* xix. 45. which is called *Bene-berak*, *the ſons of lightning*; and is ſpoken of in the *Jewiſh* [x] writings, as a place where ſeveral of the Rabbins met, and converſed together: the reaſon of this name may be enquired after.

Ver. 18. *And Andrew*, &c.] The brother of *Peter*; *and Philip*, who was of *Bethſaida*; *and Bartholomew*, whom Dr. *Lightfoot* thinks is the ſame with *Nathaniel*: the name may be the ſame with בר תלמיון, *Bar Talmion*, with the *Jews* [y]; ſee the note on *Matt.* x. 3. and on *John* i. 41: *and Matthew*, the publican, who was called *Levi*; *and Thomas*, who was called *Didymus*, from his being a twin; *and James*, *the ſon of Alpheus*, to diſtinguiſh him from the other *James*, the ſon of *Zebedee*, and who is ſometimes called *the leſs*; *and Thaddeus*, whoſe name was alſo *Lebbeus*, and likewiſe *Jude*, the author of the Epiſtle that bears that name; *and Simon the Canaanite*, or *Zelotes*: of theſe men, and their ſeveral names, ſee the note on *Matt.* x. 2, 3, 4.

Ver. 19. *And Judas Iſcariot*, &c.] So called to diſtinguiſh him from the other *Judas*; and is mentioned laſt for the following reaſon: *which alſo betrayed him*; and which action of his will ever render his name infamous among men. This man, with the reſt, our Lord choſe to be an apoſtle of his, tho' he knew he would betray him; in order to fulfil the purpoſes of God, the prophecies of the Old Teſtament, and bring on the work of man's redemption he came into the world to perform. *And they went into an houſe* at *Capernaum*; the houſe of *Simon* and *Andrew*, where Jeſus uſed to be when there: they went home with him from the mountain; and from that time became his domeſticks, and were looked upon by him as his family, and were admitted to the greateſt nearneſs and intimacy with him.

Ver. 20. *And the multitude coming together again*, &c.] Either the multitude that were about the door of this houſe; inſomuch that there was no room about, nor any coming near it, ch. ii. 2. or the multitude that came from different parts, and had thronged about him at the ſea-ſide, before he went up into the mountain: theſe underſtanding that he was come down from thence, and was returned to *Capernaum*, and was at *Simon*'s houſe, flocked thither, in great numbers, to ſee his perſon, hear his doctrines, and obſerve his miracles: *ſo that they could not ſo much as eat bread*: the preſs was ſo great, and their importunities ſo urgent, either to hear him preach, or have their ſick healed, that Chriſt, and his diſciples, had neither room nor opportunity to eat ſome food for the refreſhment of nature; tho' it was very neceſſary, and high time they had, eſpecially Chriſt, who had been up all night, which he had ſpent in prayer; and had been very buſy that morning in calling and appointing his apoſtles, and inſtructing them what they ſhould do.

Ver. 21. *When his friends heard* of it, &c.] Not his ſpiritual friends, his diſciples and followers, that believed in him; but *his kinſmen*, as the *Syriac* and *Ethiopic* verſions render the words, who were ſo according to the fleſh; when they heard where he was, and what a croud was about him, ſo that he could not ſo much as take the neceſſaries of life for his refreſhment and ſupport, *they went out to lay hold on him*: either out of their houſes at *Capernaum*, or they went forth from *Nazareth*, where they dwelt, to *Capernaum*, to take him from this houſe, where he was thronged and preſſed, along with them; where he might have ſome refreſhment without being incommoded, and take ſome reſt, which ſeemed very neceſſary: ſo that this was done in kindneſs to him, and does not deſign any violent action upon him, in order to take him home with them, and to confine him as a mad man; tho' the following words ſeem to incline to ſuch a ſenſe; *for they ſaid, he is beſide himſelf*: ſome render it, *he is gone out*; that is, out of doors, to preach again to the people, which they might fear would be greatly detrimental to his health, ſince he had had no ſleep the night before; had been much fatigued all that morning, and for the throng of the people could take no food; ſo that for this reaſon they came to take him with them, to their own habitations, to prevent the ill conſequences of ſuch conſtant exerciſe without refreſhment. Moreover, tho' this may not be the ſenſe of the word, yet it is not to be underſtood of downright madneſs and diſtraction, but of ſome perturbation of mind, which they imagined, or heard, he was under; and anſwers to a phraſe frequently uſed by the *Jews*, that ſuch an one, נטרפה דעתו, *his knowledge is ſnatched away*, or his mind is diſturbed; which was ſometimes occaſioned by diſorder of body: ſo it is ſaid [z], "a deaf woman, or one that is fooliſh, or "blind, ושנטרפה דעתה, *or whoſe mind is diſturbed*; and if there are any wiſe women, they prepare "themſelves, and eat of the oblation." On that phraſe, *whoſe mind is diſturbed*, the note of *Maimonides* is, "it means a ſick perſon, whoſe underſtanding is "diſturbed thro' the force of the diſeaſe:" and was ſometimes the caſe of a perſon when near death [a]: and it was uſual to give a perſon that was condemned to die, and going to be executed, a grain of frankincenſe in a cup of wine, כדי שתטרף דעתו, *that ſo his knowledge may be ſnatched away*, or his mind diſturbed [b], and he intoxicated; that ſo he might not be ſenſible of his pain, or feel his miſery; in all which caſes, there was nothing of proper madneſs: and ſo the kinſmen and friends of Chriſt, having heard of the ſituation that he was in, ſaid one to another, he is in a tranſport and exceſs of mind; his zeal carries him beyond due bounds; he has certainly forgotten himſelf; his underſtanding is diſturbed; he is unmindful of himſelf; takes no care of his health; he will certainly greatly impair it, if he goes on at this rate, praying all night, and preaching all day, without taking any reſt or food: wherefore they came out, in order to diſſuade him from ſuch exceſſive labours, and engage him to go with them, where he might have reſt and refreſhment, and be compoſed, and retire.

Ver. 22. *And the Scribes which came down from Jeruſalem*, &c.] Or, *but the Scribes*, &c. who had an averſion to Chriſt, and a different opinion of him: theſe were they, who having heard much of the doctrine and miracles of Chriſt, came down from *Jeruſalem*, which lay in the upper, and higher part of the land of *Iſrael*, into *Galilee*, a low country, to make their obſervations upon him; and take every advantage they could againſt him, being men, in their way, letter learned, and artful, and cunning: theſe ſaid, *he hath Beelzebub*; or, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions render it, *Beelzebub is in him*: ſometimes they call him *Beelzebub*; ſometimes ſay that he caſt out devils by him; and here, that he had him, or was in him; *Beelzebub* poſſeſſed him, and aſſiſted him, and there was a confederacy and familiarity between them: *and by the prince of devils caſteth he out devils*; for ſo they reckoned *Beelzebub* to be; ſee the notes on *Matt.* x. 25. and xii. 24.

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[w] Broughton's Require of Conſent, in his works, p. 629.

[x] Haggada Shel Peſach, p. 6. Ed. Rittangel. & in Sed Tephillot Ed. Baſil, fol. 243. 2. Juchaſin, fol. 36. 1.

[y] Vajikra Rabba, §. 6. fol. 151. 1.

[z] Miſn. Nidd c. 2. §. 1.

[a] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 68. 1.

[b] Ib. fol. 43. 1. Bemidbar Rabba, §. 10. fol. 198. 4.

Ver. 23. *And he called them unto him,* &c.] The *Jeruſalem-Scribes*, to come nearer to him, and attend to what he had to ſay in defence of his character and miracles: *and ſaid unto them in parables*; ſimilitudes, and proverbial expreſſions, as the following ſeem to be, *how can ſatan caſt out ſatan?* or one devil caſt out another? how unreaſonable is it to ſuppoſe it? can it ever be thought that ſuch, whoſe intereſt it is to unite, would ever oppoſe and diſpoſſeſs one another? if therefore, as if he ſhould ſay, I am *Beelzebub*, or have him, and he is in me, and I am in confederacy with him; was this the caſe, can any think I ſhould ever caſt him out of others, as I do?

Ver. 24. *And if a kingdom be divided againſt itſelf,* &c.] Any of the kingdoms of this world, and the kingdom of *ſatan*: *that kingdom cannot ſtand*; not long; its inteſtine broils and diviſions will ſoon bring it to deſolation; ſee the note on *Matt.* xii. 25.

Ver. 25. *And if a houſe be divided againſt itſelf,* &c.] Any family, ſmall or great, *that houſe cannot ſtand*; its contentions and diſcords will ſoon bring it down from a comfortable and flouriſhing ſituation, to a very diſtreſſed one; ſee the note on *Matt.* xii. 25.

Ver. 26. *And if ſatan riſe up againſt himſelf,* &c.] As he muſt do in ſuch a caſe as this, if devils are caſt out by *Beelzebub*, the prince of devils: *and be divided*; one devil againſt another, as the above calumny ſuppoſes; *he cannot ſtand, but hath an end:* his kingdom can't ſtand long, but muſt ſoon come to an end; his power and authority will ſoon be deſtroyed, both over his own ſpecies, and among men; ſee the note on *Matt.* xii. 26.

Ver. 27. *No man can enter into a ſtrong man's houſe,* &c.] This is properly a parable; the other ſeem to be proverbs, or ſayings, that were commonly uſed to ſhew the ill conſequences of diſcords, factions, and diviſions, as is explained at large in the note on *Matt.* xii. 29. which ſee.

Ver. 28. *Verily I ſay unto you,* &c.] The *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, who had not only blaſphemed him, but the Spirit of God alſo: *all ſins ſhall be forgiven unto the ſons of men, and blaſphemies wherewith ſoever they ſhall blaſpheme*; God, or the Son of God, angels, and men; and that thro' the blood of Chriſt, and when brought to a ſenſe of the evil of them; for tho' pardon is procured before, it is not applied till then; ſee the note on *Matt.* xii. 31.

Ver. 29. *But he that ſhall blaſpheme againſt the Holy Ghoſt,* &c.] Againſt his perſon, and the works performed by him, by aſcribing them to diabolical power and influence, as the *Scribes* did, *hath never forgiveneſs:* there is no pardon provided in the covenant of grace, nor obtained by the blood of Chriſt for ſuch perſons, or ever applied to them by the Spirit; *but is in danger of eternal damnation.* The *Vulgate Latin* reads it, and ſo it is read in an ancient copy of *Beza*'s, *guilty of an eternal ſin*; a ſin which can never be blotted out, and will never be forgiven, but will be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction; ſee the note on *Matt.* xii. 32.

Ver. 30. *Becauſe they ſaid, he hath an unclean ſpirit.*] They charged Chriſt with having a devil, and his miracles with being wrought by the help of the devil; when, at the ſame time, they knew in their own conſciences they were works which were wrought by the finger and Spirit of God, and ſo were guilty of the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt; the unpardonable ſin, for which there is no remiſſion: and this is mentioned as a reaſon why our Lord ſaid what he did concerning that ſin; becauſe they had been guilty of it, and ſo were liable to everlaſting puniſhment on account of it.

Ver. 31. *There came then his brethren and his mother,* &c.] At the ſame time he was ſpeaking to the *Scribes*, who ſeem to be different perſons from his friends and kinſmen, ver. 21. *and ſtanding without*; for Chriſt was within, in the houſe, talking with the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, and preaching to the people: and the croud being ſo great, that they could not get into the houſe; they *ſent unto him, calling him:* they not only ſent one in to let him know who they were, and that they were without doors, deſirous to ſpeak with him; but alſo, with a voice as loud as they could, called to him themſelves; ſee the note on *Matt.* xii. 46.

Ver. 32. *And the multitude ſat about him,* &c.] In a circle, all around him, to hear him preach; ſo that there was no ſuch thing as the meſſenger coming near him; but the meſſage being whiſpered from one to another, it came to thoſe who ſat neareſt him: *and they ſaid unto him, behold thy mother and thy brethren without ſeek for thee:* in five of *Beza*'s ancient copies, and in his moſt ancient one, are added, *and thy ſiſters:* agreeably, Chriſt hereafter makes mention of ſiſter, as well as mother and brother; ſee the note on *Matt.* xii. 47. and ſo it is read in the *Alexandrian* copy.

Ver. 33. *And he anſwered them,* &c.] The multitude that ſat about him, and informed him of his mother and brethren, being without, and deſirous of ſpeaking with him: *ſaying, who is my mother, or my brethren?* which is ſaid not thro' ignorance or contempt; but either, as diſpleaſed with the interruption given him; or with a view to take an opportunity from hence of expreſſing his ſuperior value to his ſpiritual relations; which looks with no favourable aſpect on the ſuperſtitious notions, and veneration of the virgin *Mary* among the papiſts; ſee the note on *Matt.* xii. 48.

Ver. 34. *And he looked round about on them which ſat about him,* &c.] To find out his diſciples among them, and point them out particularly, by ſtretching forth his hand towards them: *and ſaid, behold my mother and my brethren*; not in a natural, but in a ſpiritual ſenſe; his *mother*, becauſe, in regeneration, he was formed in them; his brethren, becauſe, by adoption, his God was their God, his father their father; ſee the note on *Matt.* xii. 49.

Ver. 35. *For whoſoever ſhall do the will of God,* &c.] By believing in Chriſt, receiving him as a ſaviour, and redeemer, and ſubmitting to him in all his ordinances, as king of ſaints: *the ſame is my brother, and my ſiſter, and my mother:* ſuch are openly, and manifeſtatively related to Chriſt in a ſpiritual ſenſe; and are as dear to him, and more ſo, than ſuch perſons are who ſtand in ſuch a relation to others, or did to him according to the fleſh. And this ſhows not only the near relation, and ſtrong affection which Chriſt has for his people, but that he is not aſhamed of them; and it may be concluded, that he will reſent, in the keeneſt manner, every injury that is done them; ſee the note on *Matt.* xii. 50.

## CHAP. IV.

Ver. 1. AND *he began again to teach by the ſea-ſide*, &c.] He went out of the houſe where he was at *Capernaum*, the ſame day he had the above diſcourſe with the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, and on which his mother and brethren came to ſpeak with him; and from thence he went where he had been before, and taught the people; namely, to the ſea-ſide, the ſhore of the ſea of *Galilee*, or *Tiberias*: *and there was gathered unto him a great multitude*; which followed him from the houſe, and from other parts of the city, and perhaps from the adjacent places: *ſo that he entered into a ſhip, and ſat in the ſea*; in the ſhip at ſea, at ſome little diſtance from the ſhore; the ſea of *Tiberias* being rather a lake, and within land, had no tide, and ſo was ſtill and quiet: *and the whole multitude was by the ſea on the land*; ſtood on the land, all along the ſea-ſhore; ſee the notes on *Matt.* xiii. 1, 2.

Ver. 2. *And he taught them many things by parables*, &c.] As he ſat in the ſhip, and they ſtood on ſhore; *and ſaid unto them in his doctrine*; as he was teaching them, and delivering unto them the doctrine he had received from his father: tho' the *Jews* ſay [c], that "the *Iſraelites* will have no need, לתלמודו של מלך משיח, *of the doctrine of the king Meſſiah*, in the time to come; becauſe it is ſaid, *unto him ſhall the Gentiles ſeek*, and not the *Iſraelites*." But it appears from hence, and many other places, that the *Iſraelites* both ſtood in need of his doctrine, and ſought after it; and very excellent it was; the doctrine of God, and of the grace of God; and was ſpoken with authority, and in ſuch a manner as never man ſpake, and which he delivered to his apoſtles; and which, if miniſters bring not with them, ſhould not be bid God ſpeed.

Ver. 3. *Hearken, behold, there went out a ſower to ſow.*] By whom is meant Jeſus Chriſt, who came forth from God as a teacher, and went out into the land of *Judæa* to preach the Goſpel, which is ſowing ſpiritual things among men; and this may be alſo applicable to any faithful miniſter of the word.

Ver. 4. *And it came to paſs as he ſowed*, &c.] Whilſt he was preaching the Goſpel, caſting about the precious ſeed of the word, he was laden with: *ſome fell by the way-ſide*; the common beaten path: the word was diſpenſed among ſome men comparable to it, on whom it lighted, but made no impreſſion; there it lay, tho' not long, and was not inwardly received, and took no root, and conſequently was of no effect: *and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up*; the devils, who have their abode in the air, eſpecially the prince of the poſſe of them; and the *Syriac* verſion reads it in the ſingular number, *and the fowl came*; that ravenous bird of prey, ſatan, who goes about ſeeking what he may devour; and for this purpoſe attends where the word is preached, to hinder its uſefulneſs as much as in him lies.

Ver. 5. *And ſome fell on ſtony ground*, &c.] The word was preached to ſome perſons who had hearts of ſtone, and which remained ſo: *where it had not much earth*; and ſo could be received only in a notional and ſuperficial way, but could take no place, ſo as to produce any good effect: *and immediately it ſprung up*; a ſudden and haſty profeſſion of the word was made, without a powerful experience of it: *becauſe it had no depth of earth*; if it had, it would have been longer in coming up; more work would have been done by it, which would have required more time, before a profeſſion of it had been made.

Ver. 6. *But when the ſun was up, it was ſcorched*, &c.] When perſecution aroſe becauſe of the word, and that became very hot and vehement, it tried and pierced thro' this thin ſpeculative knowledge of the word, which could not ſtand before it, and bear the heat of it: *and becauſe it had no root, it withered away*; the word had only a place in the head, and not in the heart; wherefore the profeſſion of it was ſoon dropped, and came to nothing.

Ver. 7. *And ſome fell among thorns*, &c.] The word was miniſtred to ſome who were eat up with the cares of the world, and the deceitfulneſs of riches, and other luſts: *and the thorns grew up, and choaked it*; the word did not take place ſo as to beat down, overcome, and root out theſe things, nor even to weaken, and keep under, and prevent the influence of them; but theſe got the aſcendant of the word, and prevailed over it, and made it altogether uſeleſs and unſucceſsful: for whilſt it was adminiſtred, the minds of theſe perſons were after their riches and worldly things, and gave no heed to the word; and at laſt were prevailed upon, not to attend upon it, but drop the profeſſion of it: *and it yielded no fruit*; it was not the means of grace; faith did not come by it, nor any other grace; nor did it produce good works in the life and converſation.

Ver. 8. *And other fell on good ground*, &c.] The word was preached to ſome whoſe hearts were diſpoſed by the Spirit and grace of God to receive it; and their underſtandings were enlightened by it; and they had a ſavoury and comfortable experience of the truths of it, it coming with power to them; it was a good word to them, and thro' the grace of God they became good by it; a good work of grace was wrought upon their ſouls, and they were filled with all goodneſs and righteouſneſs: *and did yield fruit that ſprang up, and increaſed*; they not only appeared, and made an outward profeſſion of the word, and brought forth a little ſhow of fruit, which comes to nothing, as in others; but they were filled with the fruits of righteouſneſs, and increaſed with the increaſe of God, and grew in grace, and in the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus, and continued to bring forth fruit to the end of their lives: *and brought forth ſome thirty, and ſome ſixty, and ſome an hundred*; that is, ſo many fold: in ſome the word of God produced larger and greater effects; the grace of God was more in exerciſe in ſome, than in others, and ſome were more fruitful and uſeful; yet in all of them there was true grace, and a meaſure of it; ſome degree of lively exerciſe, and ſome uſefulneſs.

Ver. 9. *And he ſaid unto them*, &c.] To the multitude of hearers that were on the ſea-ſhore attending to the word preached, and among whom, doubtleſs, there were all thoſe ſorts of hearers mentioned in this parable: *he that hath ears to hear, let him hear*; obſerve, and take notice of what has been ſaid, as being of the greateſt moment and importance: for a larger explanation and illuſtration of this parable, ſee the notes on *Matt.* xiii. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.

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[c] Bereſhith Rabba, §. 98. fol. 85. 3.

Ver. 10. *And when he was alone*, &c.] After the multitude was diſmiſſed, and he either remained in the ſhip, or left it, and retired to ſome private place, it may be to *Simon*'s houſe in *Capernaum*. The *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read, *when they were alone*; meaning as follows, *they that were about him with the twelve*; that is, ſuch diſciples of his, who beſides the twelve, conſtantly attended him; perhaps thoſe who now were, or hereafter were the ſeventy diſciples. The *Vulgate Latin* reads, *the twelve that were with him*. In *Beza*'s moſt ancient copy 'tis read, *his diſciples*; and to this agrees the *Perſic* verſion; and ſo the other Evangeliſts, *Matthew* and *Luke*, relate, that his diſciples came and *aſked of him the parable*; the meaning of it, and why he choſe this way of ſpeaking to the people, *Matt.* xiii. 10. *Luke* viii. 9. tho' that word may include others beſides the twelve.

Ver. 11. *And he ſaid unto them*, &c.] His diſciples; *unto you it is given to know the myſtery of the kingdom of God*; or the myſteries of the kingdom of heaven, the ſecrets of the Goſpel-diſpenſation, the myſterious doctrines of grace; ſee the note on *Matt.* xiii. 11. *but unto them that are without*; *to ſtrangers*, as the *Syriac* and *Arabic* verſions render it, who were not the diſciples of Chriſt, nor admitted to any intimacy with him; who came only to amuſe themſelves with the ſight of his perſon and miracles: *all theſe things are done in parables*; are wrapt up in dark ſayings, and figurative expreſſions, the ſound of which they heard, and might be pleaſed with the pretty ſimilies made uſe of, but underſtood not the ſpiritual meaning of them.

Ver. 12. *That ſeeing they may ſee*, &c.] Which is the end and reaſon of his ſpeaking to them in parables. The paſſage referr'd to is in *Iſ.* vi. 9, 10. See the note on *Matt.* xiii. 14, 15.

Ver. 13. *And he ſaid unto them, know ye not this parable?* &c.] So eaſy to be underſtood, taken from things common, and which fall under every one's obſervation: *and how then will you know all parables?* if not this ſingle one, and which is ſo plain, how will ye be able to underſtand the numerous parables hereafter to be related, and which will be much more difficult?

Ver. 14. *The ſower ſoweth the word.*] Though our Lord thought fit to give the above gentle rebuke to his diſciples for their dulneſs; yet he condeſcends to favour them with an interpretation of the above parable, which here begins: by this it appears, that the ſeed in the parable, before delivered, and which fell on different ſorts of ground, is the word of God, which was preached to hearers of different diſpoſitions: the word is the word of life and truth; the word of peace and reconciliation; the word of faith and righteouſneſs; the word of ſalvation; the word which publiſhes and declares all theſe to be in and by Jeſus Chriſt.

Ver. 15. *And theſe are they by the way-ſide, where the word is ſown*, &c.] Such hearers are repreſented by the way-ſide, in which the ſeed fell; who, coming where the Goſpel is preached, ſtop a while and hear it, and ſo are only caſual and accidental hearers of it: *but when they have heard*; and indeed, whilſt they are hearing, and before they are well got out of the place of hearing, *ſatan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was ſown in their hearts.* The devil, ſignified by the fowl, or fowls of the air, immediately takes notice of ſuch hearers, and is very buſy with them; filling their minds with other things ſuitable to their diſpoſitions, and ſetting before them other objects, whereby their minds are, at once, taken off from what they have been hearing; ſo that all that they have obſerved, and laid up in their memories, is loſt at once, and never thought of any more.

Ver. 16. *And theſe are they likewiſe which are ſown on ſtony ground*, &c.] Such ſort of hearers of the word are ſignified by the ſtony ground, on which the ſeed were ſown, who are conſtant hearers of the word, and have ſome underſtanding of it; and ſome ſort of affection for it, and yet their hearts are not truly broken by it; they are not brought to a thorough ſight and ſenſe of ſin, and of their need of Chriſt, and ſalvation by him; their ſtony hearts are not taken away, and hearts of fleſh given them: *who when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladneſs*; ſeem highly pleaſed, and greatly delighted with it, as being a well-connected ſcheme of things; and which declares things, as heaven and eternal happineſs, which they, from a principle of ſelf-love, are deſirous of enjoying.

Ver. 17. *And have no root in themſelves*, &c.] The word has no root in their hearts, only in their natural affections: nor is the root of grace in them; there is no heart-work, only ſpeculative notions, and flaſhy affections: *and ſo endure but for a time*; they continue hearers and profeſſors of the Goſpel but for a ſmall ſeaſon; like the *Jews*, who rejoiced in the miniſtry of *John* the *Baptiſt* for a while, and then left him: *afterwards when affliction, or perſecution ariſeth for the word's ſake, immediately they are offended.* As ſoon as any ſmall degree of trouble comes upon them, and eſpecially when there is a hot perſecution of the profeſſors of religion, becauſe of the Goſpel they have embraced; ſuch hearers are ſtumbled at theſe things, and can't bear the loſs of any thing, or endure any thing ſevere for the ſake of the word they have profeſſed a pleaſure in; and therefore rather than ſuffer, they relinquiſh at once their profeſſion of it.

Ver. 18. *And theſe are they that are ſown among thorns*, &c.] Such hearers of the word are deſigned by the thorny ground, upon which other ſeed fell, as it was ſown, who are of worldly diſpoſitions; who are immoderately careful and anxious about the things of this life, and are bent upon acquiring earthly riches, and gratifying their carnal and ſenſual appetites: *ſuch as hear the word*; who notwithſtanding are prevailed upon thro' cuſtom, or the dictates of their conſciences, to attend upon the miniſtry of the word.

Ver. 19. *And the cares of this world*, &c.] The perplexing and diſtreſſing cares of it to get as much of it as they can, for themſelves and families, fill their minds, and poſſeſs their ſouls even when and while they are hearing the word: *and the deceitfulneſs of riches*; or riches which are deceitful, eſpecially when truſted in, and being obtained, they don't give the ſatisfaction they promiſe: *and the luſts of other things entring in*; carnal deſires after other objects, which are pleaſing to the ſenſual mind entering into their hearts, and gaining the aſcendant there: *choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful*; theſe being more attended to than the word is, that is quite loſt, and becomes uſeleſs, and unprofitable.

Ver. 20. *And theſe are they which are ſown on good ground*, &c.] Such hearers who are intended by the good ground on which other ſeed fell, are thoſe who are made good men by the grace of God; for there is none good naturally, nor that doeth good, no not one: theſe are *ſuch who hear the word, and receive it*; as the word of God, in whoſe hearts it works effectually; who receive it not into their heads only, but into their hearts; and having received it, hold it faſt, and abide by it in the worſt of times: *and bring forth fruit, ſome thirty fold, ſome ſixty, and ſome an hundred*; all bring forth good fruit of the ſame quality, tho' not of the ſame quantity: for a larger expoſition of this explanation of the parable, ſee the notes on *Matt.* xiii. 19, 20, 21, 22, 23.

Ver. 21. *And he ſaid unto them,* &c.] At the ſame time after he had explained the parable of the ſower; for tho' the following parabolical and proverbial expreſſions were delivered by Chriſt at other, and different times, and ſome of them twice, as related by other Evangeliſts; yet they might be all of them expreſſed or repeated at this time, by our Lord, ſhewing why he explained the above parable to his diſciples; and that tho' he delivered the myſteries of the Goſpel in parables to them that were without, yet it was not his deſign that theſe things ſhould be always kept a ſecret, and that from all men: for as the Goſpel might be compared to ſeed, ſo likewiſe to a candle, the deſign and uſe of which is to give light to men: wherefore he aſks, *is a candle brought to be put under a buſhel, or under a bed, and not to be ſet on a candleſtick?* when a candle is brought into a room, in the night, where company are together, to converſe, or read, or work; is it proper that it ſhould be covered with a buſhel, or any other hollow veſſel? or when brought into a bed-chamber, is it right to put it under the bed? is it not moſt fitting and convenient, that it ſhould be ſet in a candleſtick, and then it will be of uſe to all in the room? ſo the Goſpel, which is the candle of the Lord, he had lighted up in the evening of the *Jewiſh* world, in the land of *Judæa*; it was not his will that it ſhould be always, and altogether, and from all men, covered with parables, and dark ſayings, without any explanation of them; but that the light of it ſhould be communicated, eſpecially to them his diſciples, who were to be the lights of the world, and which were to ſhine openly before men, for their good, and the glory of his heavenly Father; ſee *Matt.* v. 14, 15, 16.

Ver. 22. *For there is nothing hid,* &c.] In theſe parables, and figurative expreſſions uſed by Chriſt, *which ſhall not be manifeſted,* ſooner or later, to his diſciples: *neither was any thing kept ſecret*; any doctrine of the Goſpel, or myſtery of the kingdom: *but that it ſhould come abroad*; it was deſigned to be publiſhed in all *Judæa*, and afterwards, throughout the whole world, for the benefit of God's choſen ones, to their converſion, comfort, and edification: wherefore, it becomes the miniſters of the Goſpel to keep back nothing that may be profitable to the churches, nor ſhun to declare the whole counſel of God; but faithfully diſpenſe the myſteries of grace, and commend the truth to every man's conſcience, without any fear of men, or dreading the effects and conſequences of things; ſince nothing is declared in the word, or made known, but with a deſign to be publiſhed to others, to anſwer ſome divine end and purpoſe; ſee the note on *Matt.* x. 26.

Ver. 23. *If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.*] What is now delivered, being very momentous and important; ſee *Matt.* xi. 15.

Ver. 24. *And he ſaid unto them,* &c.] At the ſame time, tho' he had ſaid what follows at another time, ſtill continuing his diſcourſe with his diſciples: *take heed what you hear*; diligently attend to it, ſeek to underſtand it, and lay it up in your minds, and memories, that it may be of uſe to you in time to come, and you may be uſeful in communicating it to others: *with what meaſure ye mete, it ſhall be meaſured unto you*; a common proverb among the *Jews*, uſed on various occaſions, and to different purpoſes; ſee the note on *Matt.* vii. 2. Here it ſeems to intimate, that if the diſciples carefully hearkened to what they heard from Chriſt, and ſtudiouſly laboured to underſtand it, and faithfully diſpenſed it to others, in return, a larger meaſure, and greater degree of ſpiritual knowledge, would be beſtowed upon them: for it follows, *and unto you that hear, ſhall more be given*; that is, that hear ſo as to underſtand, keep, and make a good uſe of what they hear, more ſhall be communicated to them; they ſhall have an increaſe of knowledge in the doctrines of grace, and myſteries of the Goſpel.

Ver. 25. *For he that hath, to him ſhall be given,* &c.] He that has Goſpel-light and knowledge, and makes a proper uſe of it, he ſhall have more; his path ſhall be as the path of the juſt, which ſhines more and more to the perfect day; the means of grace and knowledge ſhall be bleſſed to him, he attending conſtantly thereon, that he ſhall arrive to ſuch a knowledge of the Son of God as to be a perfect man in compariſon of others, who are in a lower claſs; and ſhall come to the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs of Chriſt, ſhall grow up to maturity, and be a man in underſtanding: and he that has the truth of grace, tho' its beginning is but ſmall, yet that making and keeping him humble, as it always does, he ſhall have more grace, or that he has, ſhall open and enlarge in its actings and exerciſes; his faith ſhall grow exceedingly, he ſhall abound in hope thro' the power of the Holy Ghoſt, and his love to God, and Chriſt, and to the ſaints, ſhall be greater and greater; and he ſhall increaſe in humility, patience, ſelf-denial, *&c.* and ſo he that has gifts for public uſefulneſs, and does not neglect them, but ſtirs them up for the profit of others, he ſhall have an increaſe of them; he ſhall ſhine as a ſtar in Chriſt's right hand, and appear brighter and brighter in the firmament of the church: *and he that hath not, from him ſhall be taken, even that which he hath*; or ſeemed to have, or thought he had, *Luke* viii. 18. a ſaying often uſed by Chriſt, both with reſpect to the ignorant *Jews*, and profeſſing Chriſtians, and even, as here, to the diſciples themſelves, reſpect perhaps being had to *Judas*. He that has only a ſpeculative notion of the Goſpel, and is without any experience and practice of it, in courſe of time his candle is put out; his light becomes darkneſs; he drops and denies the truths he held, and relinquiſhes the profeſſion of them: and he that has only counterfeit grace, a feigned faith, a falſe hope, and a diſſembled love, in due time; theſe will be diſcovered, and the name of them, and the character he bore, on account of them, will be taken from him: for true grace is never taken away, nor loſt; it is a ſolid, permanent thing, and is inſeparable to everlaſting glory and happineſs: but bare notions of the Goſpel, and a mere ſhow of grace, are unſtable and tranſient things; as alſo are the greateſt gifts without the grace of God. *Judas* had doubtleſs all the appearance of a true Chriſtian; he had the Goſpel committed to him, and the knowledge of it, and gifts qualifying him to preach it, and a commiſſion from Chriſt for it, yea, even a power of working miracles to confirm what he preached; and yet not having true grace, all was taken away from him, and were of no uſe unto him in the buſineſs of ſalvation: and ſo ſometimes it is, that even in this life the idol and worthleſs ſhepherd has his right arm clean dried up, and his right eye utterly darkened; his miniſterial light and abilities are taken away from him; theſe being either not uſed at all by him, or uſed to bad purpoſes; ſee *Matt.* xiii. 12. and xxv. 29.

Ver. 26. *And he ſaid*, &c.] He went on ſaying the following parable, which was delivered at the ſame time that the parable of the ſower was, tho' omitted by *Matthew*; and is here placed between that, and the other concerning the grain of muſtard-ſeed; which ſhows the time when it was ſpoken. The deſign of it is to ſet forth the nature of the word, and the miniſtration of it; the conduct of the miniſters of the Goſpel, when they have diſpenſed it; the imperceptibleneſs of its ſpringing and growth; the fruitfulneſs of it, when it has taken root, without the help of man; the gradual increaſe of grace under the inſtrumentality of the word; and the gathering of gracious ſouls, when grace is brought to maturity: *ſo is the kingdom of God*; ſuch is the nature of the Goſpel-diſpenſation; and ſuch are the things that are done in it, as may fitly be repreſented by the following; *as if a man ſhould caſt ſeed into the ground:* by *the man*, is not meant Chriſt, for he ſleeps not; and beſides, he knows how the ſeed ſprings and grows; but any Goſpel-miniſter, who is ſent forth by Chriſt, bearing precious ſeed: and by *ſeed* is intended, not gracious perſons, the children of the kingdom, as in the parable of the tares; nor the grace of God in them, tho' that is an incorruptible and an abiding ſeed; but the word of God, or Goſpel of Chriſt, ſo called for its ſmallneſs, the diminutive character it bears, and contempt it is had in by ſome; and for its choiceneſs and excellency in itſelf, and in the account of others; and for its generative virtue under a divine influence: for the Goſpel is like the manna, which was a ſmall round thing, as a coriander ſeed; and as that was contemptible in the eyes of the *Iſraelites*, ſo the preaching of the Goſpel is, to them that periſh, fooliſhneſs; and yet it is choice and precious ſeed in itſelf, and to thoſe who know the value of it, by whom it is preferred to thouſands of gold and ſilver; and, as worthleſs and unpromiſing it may ſeem to be, it has a divine virtue put into it; and, under the influence of powerful and efficacious grace, it is the means of regenerating ſouls, and produces fruit in them, which will remain unto everlaſting life: though, as the ſeed is of no uſe this way, unleſs it is ſown in the earth, and covered there; ſo is the Goſpel of no uſe for regeneration, unleſs it is by the power of God let into the heart, and received there, where, thro' that power, it works effectually. By *caſting* it into the earth, the preaching of the word is deſigned; which, like caſting ſeed into the earth, is done with the ſame ſort of ſeed only, and not with different ſorts, with plenty of it, and at the proper time, whatever diſcouragements there may be, and with great ſkill and judgment, committing it to God to raiſe it up again: for the faithful diſpenſers of the word don't ſpread divers and ſtrange doctrines; their miniſtry is all of a-piece; they always ſow the ſame-like precious ſeed, without any mixture of the tares of error and hereſy; and they don't deal it out in a narrow and niggardly way; they don't reſtrain and conceal any part of truth, but plentifully diſtribute it, and declare the whole counſel of God; and tho' there may be many diſcouragements attend them, many temptations ariſe to put off from ſowing the word; the weather bad, ſtorms and tempeſts ariſe, reproaches and perſecutions come thick and faſt, ſtill they go on; uſing all that heavenly ſkill, prudence, and diſcretion God has given them, preaching the word in ſeaſon, and out of ſeaſon; and when they have done, they leave their work with the Lord, knowing that *Paul* may plant, and *Apollos* water, but it is God only that gives the increaſe: and by the *ground*, into which it is caſt, is meant the hearers of the word, who are of different ſorts; ſome like the way-ſide, others like the ſtony-ground, and others like the thorny earth, and ſome like good ground, as here; whoſe hearts are broke up by the Spirit of God, the ſtonineſs of them taken away, and they made ſuſceptive of the good word.

Ver. 27. *And ſhould ſleep*, &c.] That is, the man that caſts in the ſeed, who repreſents the miniſters of the Goſpel: and, as applied to them, is not to be underſtood of natural ſleep, and indulging themſelves in that; much leſs of ſpiritual ſloth and indolence, as if they cared not what became of the ſeed ſown, whether it ſprung up, and came to any thing, or no; for neither of theſe belong to the characters of the true miniſters of the word: for tho' bodily ſleep in them, as in other men, is neceſſary for the ſupport of nature, and to put them in a capacity of diſcharging their work; yet perhaps none have leſs of it than ſtudious and laborious preachers of the Goſpel; and much leſs do they indulge a ſpiritual ſleep and ſlothfulneſs; tho' this may ſometimes attend them, as well as others: but then, whilſt they ſleep, in this ſenſe, tares are ſown, and they ſpring up, and not the good ſeed of the word, as in this parable; beſides, as they labour in the word and doctrine, by ſtudying and preaching it, ſo they follow their miniſtrations with inceſſant prayers that they be ſucceeded to the converſion of ſinners, and comfort of ſaints; nor can they be eaſy, unleſs they have ſome ſeals of their miniſtry: but rather, this may be underſtood of the ſleep of death; for ſo it often is, that the ſeed ſown by them does not appear in the fruits of it to the churches of Chriſt, among whom they have miniſtred, until after they are fallen aſleep in Jeſus: tho' it ſeems beſt to underſtand it of their holy ſecurity, confidence, and ſatisfaction in their own minds, that it will turn to profit and advantage, both to the good of ſouls, and glory of God, not deſpairing of ſucceſs; but having left their work with their Lord, they ſit down eaſy and ſatisfied, believing that the word ſhall proſper to the thing whereunto it is ſent: *and riſe night and day*; which ſhows their diligence and laboriouſneſs, and their conſtant attendance to other parts of their work, riſing up early, and ſitting up late, to prepare for, and diſcharge their miniſterial work; and their continued expectation of the ſpringing up of the ſeed ſown, which accordingly does in proper time: *and the ſeed ſhould ſpring and grow up, he knoweth not how*; 'tis a myſtery in nature, how the ſeed under the clods, where it dies before it is quickened, ſhould ſpring and grow up, and bring forth fruit; and ſo it is in grace, how the word of God firſt operates on a ſinner's heart, and becomes the ingrafted word there; the time when, and much leſs the manner how, grace, by this means, is implanted in the heart, are not known to a ſoul itſelf, and ſtill leſs to the miniſters of the word, who ſometimes never know any thing of it; and when they do, not till ſome time after: this work is done ſecretly, and powerfully, under the influence of divine grace, without their knowledge, tho' by them as inſtruments; ſo that though the ſowing and planting are theirs, all the increaſe is God's: this may encourage attendance on the miniſtry of the word, and teach us to aſcribe the work of converſion entirely to the power and grace of God.

Ver. 28. *For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herſelf*, &c.] Without any further help, or cultivation from the huſbandman; though under the influence of the ſun, dews, and ſhowers of rain from heaven: this is ſaid, not to denote that man of himſelf, upon hearing the word, can bring forth the fruit of grace in himſelf; he cannot regenerate himſelf, nor quicken, nor convert himſelf; he can't believe in Chriſt, nor love the Lord of himſelf; nor repent of his ſin, nor begin, or carry on the good work; he can neither ſanctify his heart, nor mortify the deeds of the body; or even bring forth the fruits of good works, when converted. For all theſe things are owing to the Spirit, power, and grace of God: men are regenerated according to the abundant mercy of God, of water and of the Spirit, by the word of truth, through the ſovereign will and pleaſure of God; and they are quickened, who before were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, and were as dry bones, by the Spirit of God breathing upon them: converſion in the firſt production, is the Lord's work; *turn thou me, and I ſhall be turned:* faith in Chriſt is not of ourſelves, it is the gift of God; and ſo is repentance unto life; love is one of the fruits of the Spirit, and in ſhort, the whole work of grace is not by might, nor by power of man, but by the Spirit of the Lord of hoſts; who begins and carries on, and performs it until the day of Chriſt: the work of ſanctification, is therefore called the ſanctification of the Spirit; and it is through him, the deeds of the body are mortified: and indeed, without Chriſt, believers themſelves can do nothing at all; even can't perform good works, or do any action that is truly and ſpiritually good. But the deſign is to ſhew, that as the earth without human power, without the huſbandman, under the influence of the heavens, brings forth fruit; ſo without human power, without the Goſpel miniſter, the word having taken root under divine influence, through the ſun of righteouſneſs, the dews of divine grace, and operations of the bleſſed Spirit, it riſes up and brings forth fruit: *firſt the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear*; which, as it very aptly deſcribes the progreſs of the ſeed from firſt to laſt; ſo it very beautifully repreſents the gradual increaſe of the work of grace, under the inſtrumentality of the word, accompanied with the Spirit and power of God. Grace at firſt appearance is very ſmall, like the ſmall green ſpire, when it firſt ſhoots out of the earth: light into a man's ſelf, his heart, his ſtate and condition, in the knowledge of Chriſt, and the doctrines of the Goſpel, is but very ſmall; he is one of little faith, and weak in the exerciſe of it: faith is but at firſt a ſmall glimmering view of Chriſt, a venture upon him, a peradventure there may be life and ſalvation for ſuch an one in him; it comes at length to a reliance and leaning upon him; and 'tis ſome time before the ſoul can walk alone by faith on him: its experience of the love of God is but ſmall, but in proceſs of time, there's a growth and an increaſe; light increaſes, which ſhines more and more unto the perfect day; faith grows ſtronger and ſtronger; experience of the love of God is enlarged; and the believer wades in theſe waters of the ſanctuary; not only as at firſt up to the ankles, but to the knees and loins; when at length they are a broad river to ſwim in, and which cannot be paſſed over.

Ver. 29. *But when the fruit is brought forth*, &c.] Unto perfection, and is fully ripe; ſignifying that when grace is brought to maturity, and faith is performed with power, and the good work begun is perfected; then, as the huſbandman, *immediately he putteth in the ſickle*; and cuts its down, and gathers it in; *becauſe the harveſt is come*; at death, or at the end of the world, which the harveſt repreſents: when all the elect of God are called by grace, and grace in them is brought to its perfection, and they have brought forth all the fruit they were ordained to bear, they'll then be all gathered in; either by Chriſt himſelf, who comes into his garden, and gathers his lillies by death; or by the angels, the reapers, at the cloſe of time, who will gather the elect from the four winds; or the miniſters of the Goſpel, who ſhall come again with joy, bringing their ſheaves with them; being able to obſerve with pleaſure a greater increaſe, and more fruit of their labours, than they knew of, or expected.

Ver. 30. *And he ſaid*, &c.] Still continuing his diſcourſe on this ſubject, and in order to convey to the minds of his diſciples clearer ideas of the Goſpel diſpenſation, the ſucceſs of the Goſpel, and the uſefulneſs of their miniſtration of it, for their encouragement, how unpromiſing ſoever things might then be: *whereunto ſhall we liken the kingdom of God, or with what compariſon ſhall we compare it?* It was uſual with the *Jewiſh* doctors, when about to illuſtrate any thing in a parabolical way, to begin with ſuch like queſtions; as, למה הדבר דומה, *to what is this thing like*[d]*?* when the anſwer is to ſuch or ſuch a thing, as here.

Ver. 31. *It is like a grain of muſtard-ſeed*, &c.] That is, the kingdom of God ſpoken of in the preceding verſe, is like unto a grain of muſtard-ſeed; by which is meant, either the Goſpel, or the Goſpel church-ſtate, or the grace of God in the hearts of his people, and it may include them all: the Goſpel is ſo called, becauſe it treats of the two latter; but more eſpecially, becauſe it brings life and immortality to light, or points to the kingdom of heaven, directs the way unto it, and ſhews what qualifies perſons for it, and gives them a claim unto it: and the Goſpel church-ſtate may be ſo called, becauſe here Chriſt dwells, and rules as king; the members of it are his ſubjects, and the ordinances of it are his laws, to which they are obedient: and the grace of God in the hearts of his people may be ſo called, becauſe it is a governing principle in them; it reigns through righteouſneſs unto eternal life, and by it Chriſt reigns in and over them: now the kingdom of God in each of theſe ſenſes, may be compared to a grain of muſtard-ſeed, for the ſmallneſs of it, as follows; *which when it is ſown in the earth, is leſs than all the ſeeds that be in the earth.* The Goſpel was firſt preached by very few perſons, and theſe of no figure and account, eſpecially at their firſt ſetting out. *Joh* the *Baptiſt* came preaching the kingdom of God cloathed with a garment of camel's hair, and wit a leathern girdle about his loins; our Lord him ſelf made no pompous appearance, there was n form nor comelineſs in him; he was a man of ſor rows, and acquainted with griefs, and of a mean de ſcent and occupation; his diſciples were fiſherme and illiterate perſons; thoſe to whom it was preach ed, and by whom it was received at firſt, were b few, and theſe were the poor and the unlearne and publicans and ſinners. The Goſpel churc ſtate at firſt, conſiſted of very few perſons, Chriſt and his twelve apoſtles; and at his deat

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[d] T. Hieroſ. Bava Bathra, fol. 16. 2. T. Bab. Zebachim, fol. 82. 1. & Sabbat, fol. 108. 1. & paſſim.

the number of the diſciples at *Jeruſalem*, men and women, were but an hundred and twenty; the ſeveral Goſpel churches formed in the *Gentile* world, roſe from ſmall beginnings; from the converſion of a very few perſons, and theſe the filth of the world, and the offſcouring of all things. The grace of God in the hearts of his people at firſt, is very little; it can ſcarcely be diſcerned by themſelves, and is ready to be deſpiſed by others; their light and knowledge, their faith and experience, being ſo exceeding ſmall.

Ver. 32. *But when it is ſown it grows up*, &c.] So the Goſpel, when it was preached, it ſpread notwithſtanding all the oppoſition made againſt it by the *Jews* and *Gentiles:* there was no ſtopping it; though the *Jewiſh Sanhedrim* charged the apoſtles to ſpeak no more in the name of Jeſus, they regarded them not; though *Herod* ſtretched forth his hands againſt the church, and killed one apoſtle, and put another in priſon, yet *the word of God grew and multiplied*, *Acts* xii. 1, 2, 3, 24. and Goſpel churches when ſet up, whether in *Judæa*, or among the *Gentiles*, preſently had additions made unto them, and *grew up*, as holy temples in the Lord: and wherever the grace of God is really implanted, there's a growing in it, and in the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus: *and becometh greater than all herbs:* the Goſpel exceeds the traditions of the *Jews*, and the philoſophy of the *Gentiles*, and any human ſcheme whatever, in its nature, uſefulneſs, and the largeneſs of its ſpread: and the Goſpel church-ſtate will e'er long fill the world, and all nations ſhall flow unto it; when the *Jews* ſhall be converted, and the fulneſs of the *Gentiles* ſhall come, it will be a greater kingdom, than any of the kingdoms of the earth ever were: and the grace of God in the heart, is vaſtly above nature, and does that which nature can never perform; and which ſpreads and enlarges, and at laſt iſſues in eternal glory: *and ſhooteth out great branches, ſo that the fowls of the air may lodge under the ſhadow of it:* by whom are meant, ſaints; ſuch to whom the Goſpel is come in power, and who have the grace of God wrought in their hearts, who are partakers of the heavenly calling: theſe come where the Goſpel is preached, and where gracious ſouls are met together, even in the ſeveral Goſpel churches; where they not only come and go, but where they lodge, abide, and continue, under the ſhadow of the Goſpel, and Goſpel ordinances, and that with great delight and pleaſure; ſinging ſongs of praiſe to God, for his electing and redeeming love, and for calling grace, and for all ſpiritual bleſſings, and Goſpel privileges: for a larger explanation and illuſtration of this parable, ſee the notes on *Matt.* xiii. 31, 32.

Ver. 33. *And with many ſuch parables*, &c.] As thoſe of the tares, of the leaven in three meaſures of meal, of the treaſure hid in the field, the pearl of great price, the net caſt into the ſea, and of the Scribe inſtructed unto the kingdom of God; which though not related at length here, are by the Evangeliſt *Matthew*, in ch. xiii. together with others elſewhere: *ſpake he the word unto them*; preached the Goſpel to the multitude, *as they were able to bear it:* meaning either that he condeſcended to their weakneſs, accommodated himſelf to their capacities, and made uſe of the plaineſt ſimilies; and took his compariſon from things in nature, the moſt known and obvious, that what he intended might more eaſily be underſtood: or rather, he ſpoke the word to them in parables, as they were able to hear, without underſtanding them; and in ſuch a manner on purpoſe, that they might not underſtand; for had he more clearly expreſſed the things relating to himſelf, as the Meſſiah, and to the Goſpel diſpenſation, ſo as that they could have took in his meaning, ſuch were their pride, their wickedneſs, and the rancour of their minds, that they would have at once roſe up, and attempted to have deſtroyed him.

Ver. 34. *But without a parable ſpake he not unto them*, &c.] For the above reaſon, as well as for the accompliſhment of ſcripture; ſee the note on *Matt.* xiii. 34, 35. *And when they were alone, he expounded all things to his diſciples*; after they returned with him from the ſea-ſide, to the houſe in *Capernaum*, where he uſually was when there; ſee *Matt.* xiii. 36. The multitude being diſmiſſed, he unfolded and explained all theſe parables to his diſciples, and led them into a large knowledge of himſelf, and the myſteries of the kingdom of heaven; whereby they were furniſhed for the work he had called them to, and deſigned them for.

Ver. 35. *And the ſame day when the even was come*, &c.] After he had finiſhed his parables among the multitude, and had explained them to his diſciples: *he ſaith unto them*; his diſciples, *let us paſs over unto the other ſide:* that is, of the ſea of *Galilee*, or lake of *Genneſaret*, to the country of the *Gadarenes*, and *Gergeſenes*; with a view for retirement and reſt, after the fatigue of the day; and for the trial of the faith of his diſciples, by a ſtorm which he knew would ariſe, whilſt they were on the ſea; and for the ſake of a miracle he was to work on the other ſide, after related.

Ver. 36. *And when they had ſent away the multitude*, &c.] Who had been attending him all day on the ſea-ſhore; though they ſeem to have been diſmiſſed by Chriſt, when he went into the houſe, and privately interpreted the parables to his diſciples; ſee *Matt.* xiii. 36. wherefore it is poſſible, that upon Chriſt's going to the ſea-ſhore again, in order to take boat for the other ſide, they might gather together again; when the diſciples acquainted them that he was not about to preach any more to them, but was going to the other ſide of the lake; upon which they departed: and *they took him even as he was in the ſhip*; which may be underſtood of his being taken and carried in the ſhip, in which he had been preaching all the day, without being moved into another; though this does not ſo well agree with his quitting that, and going home to his houſe in *Capernaum*; where, being alone with the diſciples, he opened the parables to them. Some think it refers to the ſituation and poſture in which he laid himſelf, as ſoon as he entered the ſhip; placing himſelf at the ſtern, and laying his head upon a pillow there, and ſo they carried him: others, that they took him into the ſhip, as he was alone without the multitude, who were ſent away, only the diſciples with him, which ſeems beſt: *and there were alſo with him other little ſhips*; or boats, that were in company with that, in which Chriſt was; and had in them either ſea-faring men upon buſineſs, taking fiſh, or carrying paſſengers over; or might have in them perſons, who were going along with Chriſt to the other ſide: theſe ſeem to be ordered in providence to be in company, that they might be witneſſes of the after miracle.

Ver. 37. *And there aroſe a great ſtorm of wind*, &c.] Called *Lælaps*, a wind that is ſuddenly whirled about upwards and downwards, and is ſaid to be a ſtorm, or tempeſt of wind with rain; it was a ſort of a hurricane: *and the waves beat into the ſhip, ſo that it was full*; of water, and ready to ſink. *Beza* ſays in one copy it is read, βυθιζεσθαι,

θαι, and ſo in one of *Stephens*'s. It was immerſed, covered all over with water, and was going down at once to the bottom; ſo that they were in imminent danger, in the utmoſt extremity; ſee the note on *Matt.* viii. 24.

Ver. 38. *And he was in the hinder part of the ſhip,* &c.] That is, Chriſt was in the ſtern of the ſhip: the *Perſic* verſion renders it, *he was in the bottom of the ſhip, in a corner,* but very wrongly; here he was *aſleep on a pillow,* which ſome ſay was a wooden one, framed at the ſtern: however, he was faſt aſleep on it, being greatly fatigued with the work of the day; ſee the note on *Matt.* viii. 24. *And they awake him, and ſay unto him, Maſter, careſt thou not that we periſh?* The diſciples came to him and jogged him, and awoke him out of ſleep; ſaying, Maſter, ariſe, and ſave us, or we are loſt: haſt thou no concern for us? how canſt thou lie ſleeping here, when we are in ſuch danger? are our lives of no account with thee? is it a matter of no moment with thee, whether we are ſaved or loſt? They ſeem to ſay this, not ſo much praying and interrogating, as complaining and reproving.

Ver. 39. *And he aroſe and rebuked the wind,* &c.] He aroſe from off his pillow, and ſtood up; and in a majeſtic and authoritative way reproved the wind, as if it was a ſervant that had exceeded his commiſſion; at which he ſhews ſome reſentment: *and ſaid unto the ſea, peace, be ſtill;* as if that which was very tumultuous and boiſterous, and threatened with ſhipwrack and the loſs of lives, had raged too much and too long: *and the wind ceaſed, and there was a great calm;* which was very unuſual and extraordinary; for after the wind has ceaſed, and the ſtorm is over, the waters of the ſea being agitated thereby, keep raging, and in a violent motion, for a conſiderable time; whereas here, as ſoon as ever the word was ſpoken, immediately, at once, the wind ceaſed, and the ſea was calmed: a clear proof this, that he muſt be the moſt high God, who gathers the winds in his fiſts, and ſtills the noiſe of the ſeas and their waves.

Ver. 40. *And he ſaid unto them,* &c.] His diſciples, *why are ye ſo fearful?* ſince he was with them in perſon, whoſe power to keep and preſerve them, they had no room to queſtion, when they reflected on the miracles they had ſo lately ſeen performed by him: *how is it that ye have no faith?* That is, in exerciſe: faith they had, but it was very ſmall, and ſcarcely to be called faith: they did indeed apply to him to ſave them, which ſhowed ſome faith in him; but then they feared it was too late, and that they were paſt all hope, and were juſt periſhing; ſee the note on *Matt.* viii. 26.

Ver. 41. *And they feared exceedingly,* &c.] That is, the men in the ſhip, the mariners to whom the ſhip belonged, and who had the management of it: *and ſaid to one another,* as perſons in the greateſt amazement, *what manner of man is this, that even the wind and the ſea obey him?* Surely this perſon muſt not be a mere man; he muſt be more than a man; he muſt be truly God, that has ſuch power over the wind and ſea. This beſt ſuits with the mariners, ſince the diſciples muſt have known before, who and what he was; though they might be more eſtabliſhed and confirmed in the truth of Chriſt's deity, by this wonderful inſtance of his power.

## CHAP. V.

Ver. 1. AND *they came over unto the other ſide of the ſea,* &c.] Of *Galilee,* or *Tiberias; into the country of the Gadarenes:* in the Evangeliſt *Matthew* it is called, *the country of the Gergeſenes,* as it is here in the *Arabic* and *Ethiopic* verſions. The *Vulgate Latin* reads, *of the Geraſenes,* and ſo ſome copies, from *Geraſa,* a place in the ſame country; but the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read, *Gadarenes,* as do moſt copies; ſo called from *Gadara,* a city either adjacent to, or within the country of the *Gergeſenes;* which was called by both names, from theſe different places. It was not far from *Tiberias,* the place from whence this ſea has its name, over which Chriſt and his diſciples paſſed, *John* vi. 1. *Chammath* was a mile from [e] *Tiberias,* and this *Chammath* was ſo near to the country of *Gadara,* that it is often called, חמת דגדר, *Chammath of Gadara* [f]; unleſs it ſhould be rather rendered, *the hot baths of Gadara:* for ſo it is [g] ſaid, that at *Gadara* are the hot baths of *Syria;* which may be the ſame with the hot baths of *Tiberias,* ſo often mentioned in the *Jewiſh* writings [h]; hence the town of *Chammath* had its name, which was ſo near to *Tiberias,* that it is ſometimes reckoned the ſame with it [i]. *Pliny* [k] places this *Gadara* in *Decapolis,* and *Ptolemy* [l] in *Cœlo Syria;* and *Meleager,* the collector of *Epigrams,* who is called a *Syrian,* is ſaid [m] to be a *Gadarene,* a native of this *Gadara.* Mention is made of the whirlpool of *Gadara* [n], which remained ever ſince the flood. It appears to be an Heathen country, both from its ſituation, and the manners of the people.

Ver. 2. *And when he was come out of the ſhip,* &c.] As ſoon as he was landed, *immediately there met him out of the tombs, a man with an unclean ſpirit.* The *Jews* have a notion, that a man by dwelling among the tombs, becomes poſſeſſed with an unclean ſpirit: hence they ſay of one that ſeeks to the dead, or a necromancer [o], this is he that ſtarves himſelf, and goes *and lodges in the tombs;* כדי שתשרה עליו רוח טומאה, *that ſo an unclean ſpirit may dwell upon him:* which notion may ariſe from unclean ſpirits hurrying perſons poſſeſſed by them, unto ſuch places; partly for the terror, both of themſelves and others; and partly to poſſeſs the minds of men with a perſuaſion, that they have power over the dead, and which is very great in ſuch places. This caſe is the ſame with that, which is mentioned in *Matt.* viii. 28. as appears partly from its following the ſtorm, from which the diſciples had a remarkable deliverance; and partly from the country, in which this affair happened; for the country of the *Gergeſenes,* and of the *Gadarenes,* is the ſame, as has been obſerved; only it is called by different names, from two principal places in it: as alſo from various circumſtances in this relation; as the character of the poſſeſſed being exceeding fierce, dwelling among the tombs, and coming out from thence; the expoſtulation of the devil with Chriſt, and adjuration not to torment him; his entreaty to go into the herd of ſwine, and the leave he had; the deſtruction of the ſwine in the ſea; the fear and flight of the ſwineherds; the report they made to their maſters and others;

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[e] T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 2. 2.

[f] T. Hieroſ. Erubin, fol. 23. 3. & Trumot, fol. 41. 3. & Sabbat, fol. 5. 4.

[g] Eunapius in Vita Iamblici, p. 26.

[h] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 108. 1. T. Hieroſ. Sabbat, fol. 6. 1.

[i] T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 6. 1.

[k] l. 5. c. 18.

[l] l. 5. c. 15.

[m] Fabricii Bibliotheca Græc. T. 2. p. 683.

[n] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 108. 1.

[o] Ib. fol. 65. 2. Nidda, fol. 17. 1. & Chagiga, fol. 3. 2.

and the requeſt of the people in general to Chriſt, that he would depart out of their coaſts. And though *Matthew* makes mention of two that were poſſeſſed, and *Mark* but of one, there is no contradiction in the one to the other; for *Mark* does not ſay there were no more than one; had he, it would have been a glaring contradiction to the other Evangeliſt; but as he has put it, there is none, and it creates no difficulty: wherefore the *Jew* [p] has no reaſon to object this as he does, as if the Evangeliſts claſhed with one another; and *Mark* may only take notice of this one, becauſe he was the fierceſt of the two, and had the moſt devils in him, having a legion of them; and becauſe the converſation chiefly paſſed between Chriſt and him; and becauſe the power of Chriſt was more manifeſtly ſeen in the diſpoſſeſſion of the devils out of him.

Ver. 3. *Who had his dwelling among the tombs*, &c.] Which is one of the characters of a madman among the *Jews*; who ſay it is [q] "the ſign of a madman, that he goeth out in the night, והלן בבית הקברות, *and lodges among the tombs*, and rents his garments, and loſes what is given to him." The ſame they ſay, in the ſame place, of an hypocondriac, and melancholy man; and of *Kordiacus*, which they give out [r] is a dæmon that poſſeſſes, and has power over ſome ſort of perſons: *and no man could bind him, no, not with chains*; ſo as to hold him for any length of time: not only cords were inſufficient to hold, but even chains of iron; ſo ſtrong was he through the poſſeſſion; for this could not be by his own natural ſtrength.

Ver. 4. *Becauſe that he had been often bound with fetters and chains*, &c.] Trial had been made ſeveral times, to no purpoſe; his arms had been bound with chains, and his feet with fetters, which was very proper to prevent doing hurt to himſelf, and injury to others: *and the chains had been plucked aſunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces*; as if they had been twine threads; ſuch was his ſtrength, through the force of madneſs, and the poſſeſſion of ſatan, and his diabolical influence: *neither could any man tame him*; by any methods whatever; even ſuch who undertook the cure of madneſs, or to exorciſe thoſe that were poſſeſſed: this man was ſo furious and outragious, that he was not to be managed any way, either by art or force.

Ver. 5. *And always night and day, he was in the mountains*, &c.] And this being in an Heathen country, would have rendered him an unclean perſon, if he had not been poſſeſſed with an unclean ſpirit; for ſo runs one of the *Jewiſh* canons [s]: "he that walks in an Heathen land, on mountains and rocks, is unclean." *And in the tombs*; which very likely were on the mountains, and cut out of them, it being uſual to cut their ſepulchres out of rocks: *crying, and cutting himſelf with ſtones*; with ſharp pieces of ſtone, which he picked up among the broken tomb-ſtones, or from off the mountains, where he was night and day; and beſides taking up ſtones with his hands, and cutting himſelf with them, he might cut his feet with the ſharp ſtones of the mountains, in which he ran about: theſe mountains were thoſe, that encompaſſed the ſea of *Tiberias*; for of it is ſaid, שהרים מקיפין אותה, *that the mountains ſurround it* [t]: for the place where this man was, was near the ſea of *Tiberias*, over which Chriſt was juſt now come; and as ſoon as he arrived on ſhore, he met him, and found him in this condition. This man was a lively emblem, of a man in a ſtate of nature and unregeneracy: he had *an unclean ſpirit*, as every natural man has; his ſoul or ſpirit is defiled with ſin, particularly his mind and conſcience: this pollution is natural to him; he brings it into the world with him; it is very univerſal, it has ſpread itſelf over all the powers and faculties of his ſoul, and is what he can't cleanſe himſelf from: *who can ſay I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my ſin? Prov.* xx. 9. Nothing that he can do, or can be done for him by a mere creature, can free him from it; nothing but the blood of Chriſt, and that cleanſes from all ſin: this man, through the poſſeſſion of ſatan, was a madman, and exceeding fierce and furious: there is a ſpirit of madneſs in all unregenerate men; they are exceeding mad againſt God, and Chriſt, and the ſaints, as *Saul* was before converſion, *Acts* xxvi. 9, 10, 11. For who but madmen would ſtretch out their hands againſt God, ſtrengthen themſelves againſt the Almighty, run upon him, even on his neck, and upon the thick boſſes of his bucklers? *Job* xv. 25, 26. Who but ſuch would oppoſe themſelves to the Son of God, or do deſpight to the Spirit of grace, who are equal in power and glory with God the Father? or kick againſt the pricks, by perſecuting the members of Chriſt? Who but men out of their ſenſes, would ſeek to ruin and deſtroy themſelves, both ſoul and body? This man was altogether under the power and influence of ſatan, and had a legion of devils within him. Satan is in every unconverted man, in every child of diſobedience; and works effectually in him, and leads him captive at his will: and he has beſides a ſwarm of fleſhly luſts in him, which have the government over him. This man had his dwelling among the tombs, where the dead lay: ſo unregenerate men dwell among dead ſinners, they have their converſation among the men of the world, who are dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, and according to the courſe of it: and as this man could not be bound with chains and fetters, but theſe were broke aſunder by him; ſo wicked men are not to be bound, reſtrained, and governed, by the laws, commands, and ordinances of God; they deſpiſe them, break through them, and cannot be ſubject to them; their language is, *let us break their bands aſunder, and caſt away their cords from us*, *Pſal.* ii. 3. And as no man could tame this man, ſo it is not in the power of men, by the force of moral ſuaſion, by all the arguments, expoſtulations, exhortations, promiſes, or threatenings, they can make uſe of, to influence the carnal minds of men, or make any real change in them; or bring them into a ſubjection to the law of God, or Goſpel of Chriſt, and remove from them the ſpirit of madneſs, and oppoſition to all that is good: and to ſay no more; as this man was miſchievous to himſelf, and cut himſelf with ſtones, ſo carnal men are the worſt enemies to themſelves; they cut and wound themſelves with their ſins, though like the madman, they are not ſenſible of it; and if grace prevent not, will deſtroy themſelves, both ſoul and body, with their tranſgreſſions.

Ver. 6. *But when he ſaw Jeſus afar off*, &c.] For it ſeems the tombs among which this man dwelt, were at ſome diſtance from the ſea-ſhore; wherefore when it is ſaid, *ver.* 2. that this man met Jeſus, as ſoon as he came out of the ſhip; the meaning is, that he then came forth to meet him, as he might do upon ſight of perſons landing afar off; though he might not know then, who Jeſus was: but coming nearer, and perceiving who he was, ſuch was the power of Chriſt over the devils in him, that though ſore againſt their wills, they obliged him to move on ſpeedily towards him; ſo that *he ran and worſhipped him*: he made all imaginable haſte to him; and when he came up to him, fell down at his feet before him, acknowledging his ſuperiority and power, whom no chains nor fetters could bind, nor any man tame; nor durſt any man paſs that way, for fear of him; and yet, upon ſight of Chriſt, without a word ſpoken to him, he runs and proſtrates himſelf before him. This is an inſtance of the ſuperiority of Chriſt over the devils, who knowing who he is, are filled with horror at him, fall down before him, and in their way do homage to him; though it is impoſſible they ſhould be ſpiritual worſhippers of him: unleſs this is rather to be underſtood of the man himſelf, who, at the ſight of Chriſt, might have his ſenſes for the preſent reſtored, and a knowledge of Chriſt given; to whom he ran ſpeedily, and threw himſelf at his feet, hoping for relief from him: however, it may be an emblem of a poor awakened ſinner, having a diſtant ſight of Chriſt; who, upon it, makes haſte unto him, and proſtrates itſelf before him, believing he is able, if willing, to ſave him from the power of ſatan, the evil of ſin, and from eternal ruin and damnation.

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[p] Jacob Aben Amram, porta veritatis, N°. 1028. apud Kidder's Demonſtr. of the Meſſiah, par. 3. p. 51.

[q] T. Hieroſ. Gittin, fol. 48. 3. & Trumot, fol. 40. 2.

[r] Jarchi & Bartenora in Miſn. Gittin, c. 7. §. 1.

[s] Miſn. Oholot, c. 18. §. 6.

[t] T. Hieroſ. Erubin, fol. 25. 2.

Ver. 7. *And cried with a loud voice*, &c.] The man poſſeſſed with the devil; or the devil in him, making uſe of his voice, expreſſing great fear, dread, and horror, at the appearance of Chriſt in theſe parts: *and ſaid, what have I to do with thee, Jeſus, thou Son of the moſt high God?* The devils in in the man, own the being of a God, and his ſupreme government over all, under the title of the moſt high. The word here uſed, anſwers to the *Hebrew* word, עליון, *Elion*, a name of God known to the ancient *Canaanites*: hence *Melchizedek*, a *Canaanitiſh* king, is called the prieſt of the moſt high God, *Gen.* xiv. 18. And among the *Phenicians*, he is called *Elioun*; which a *Phenician* writer [u] ſays, ſignifies *the moſt high*: and hence in *Plautus* [w], he goes by the name of *Alon*, which is the ſame word a little differently pronounced; and by the ſame name he might be known among other neighbouring nations of the *Jews*, and by the *Gadarenes*; and the devil now being in a *Gadarene*, makes uſe of this name. Devils believe there is one God, and tremble at him; and they confeſs that Jeſus of *Nazareth*, who was born of the virgin, according to the human nature, is the Son of God according to his divine nature: and whereas they had no intereſt in him, as a Saviour, they deſired they might have nothing to do with him as God; and ſince they had no ſhare in the bleſſings of his grace, they beg they might not feel the power of his hand. Truly they chuſe not to have any thing to do with God himſelf; they have caſt off allegiance to him, and rebelled againſt him; and have left their firſt eſtate, and departed from him; and ſtill leſs do they care to have any thing to do with his Son: and indeed it ſeems as if it was the decree and counſel of God, made known unto them, that the Son of God ſhould aſſume human nature, and in it be the head over principalities and powers, as well as men, which gave umbrage to them; upon which they apoſtatized from God, being unwilling to be under ſubjection to the man Chriſt Jeſus; though whether they will or no, they are obliged unto it: for though they deſire to have nothing to do with Chriſt, yet Chriſt has ſomething to do with them; he had when he was here on earth, and when he hung upon the croſs, and will have when he comes again to judge both quick and dead: they might be glad, one would think, to have to do with him as a Redeemer; but this they are not, their ſin being the ſame with that againſt the Holy Ghoſt: they are malicious, obſtinate, and inflexible, they cannot repent; and there's no pardon, nor was there any provided for them; they were paſſed by in the counſel and purpoſes of God's grace, and were not taken notice of in the covenant of grace: Chriſt took not on him their nature, but the nature of men; yea, he came to deſtroy them, and their works; ſo that indeed they had nothing to do with him as a Saviour, though he had ſomething to do with them as a judge, and which they dreaded: however, they own, and acknowledge him to be the Son of the moſt high God; they know and confeſs as much of him, and more too, than ſome that call themſelves chriſtians, and hope to be ſaved by Chriſt; and yet at the ſame time own, they had nothing to do with him. Men may know much of Chriſt notionally; may know, and confeſs him to be God, to be the Son of God, in the higheſt and true ſenſe of the phraſe; to be the Meſſiah, to have been incarnate, to have ſuffered, died, and riſen again; to be aſcended to heaven, from whence he'll come again; and yet have no more to do with him, or have no more intereſt in him, than the devils themſelves; and will, at the laſt day, be bid to depart from him. *I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not*: not that he required an oath of Chriſt, that he would ſwear to him by the living God, that he would not diſtreſs him; but he moſt earneſtly and importunately intreated and beſeeched him, in the name of God; ſee *Luke* viii. 28. that he would not diſpoſſeſs him from the man, and ſend him out of that country, to his own place, to his chains and priſon; but ſuffer him either to lodge in the man, or walk about ſeeking, as a roaring lion, his prey: for it is torment to a devil to be caſt out of a man, or to have his power curtailed, or to be confined in the bottomleſs pit, from doing hurt to men; ſee the note on *Matt.* viii. 29.

Ver. 8. *For he ſaid unto him*, &c.] Or he had ſaid unto him, as ſoon as he came up to him, and fell before him; even before he had confeſſed, and adjured him; and which indeed drew out the confeſſion from him, that he was ſuperior to him, and therefore became his ſupplicant: *come out of the man thou unclean ſpirit*; which was ſaid with ſo much authority and power, that there was no withſtanding it: the devil knew he was not a match for him; that he muſt, at his command, quit his poſſeſſion, and therefore fell to confeſſion and intreaty. Chriſt will not dwell where ſatan does; when therefore he is about to take up his reſidence in the hearts of any, he outs with ſatan; he binds the ſtrong man armed, and diſpoſſeſſes him; he cauſes the ſpirit of uncleanneſs to depart; he ſanctifies the heart by his grace and Spirit, and ſo makes it a proper habitation for him to dwell in by faith; and this is done by mighty power: a man can't deliver himſelf out of the hands of ſatan, or cauſe him to quit his hold of him, or the unclean ſpirit to depart;

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[u] Sanchoniatho in Philo Bybl. apud Euſeb. prepar. Evangel. l. 1. c. 10. p. 36.

[w] In Pœnulo.

part; nor can he ſanctify and cleanſe himſelf, and make himſelf meet for the maſter's uſe: this is all owing to efficacious grace.

Ver. 9. *And he aſked him, what is thy name?* &c.] Which queſtion Chriſt put, not for his own ſake; for he was not ignorant of his name, nor of the number of the unclean ſpirits which were in the man; but partly, that it might be known what a miſerable condition this poor man was in, being infeſted, and vexed with ſuch a large company of devils; and partly, that his own pity and power in delivering him, might be more manifeſt: *and he anſwered, ſaying, my name is Legion:* the *Syriac* verſion renders it, *our name is Legion*; the reaſon of which name is given, *for we are many*; as a *Roman* legion did conſiſt of many, though its number was not always alike: in the time of *Romulus*, a legion conſiſted of three thouſand foot, and three hundred horſe; afterwards, when the city was increaſed, of ſix thouſand foot, and ſix hundred horſe; ſometimes it was ſix thouſand and two hundred foot, and three hundred horſe; ſometimes four thouſand foot, and three hundred horſe; ſometimes five thouſand foot, and three hundred horſe[x]. Some make a legion to conſiſt of ſix thouſand ſix hundred ſixty ſix; and others make it much larger, even twelve thouſand five hundred: however, the number in a legion was many; hence the word is retained among the *Jews*, and is uſed for a large number, either of perſons or things; as, לגיון אחד משל זיתים, *a legion of olives*[y]: that is, a large number of them; though ſometimes it is uſed of a ſingle perſon, who has others under him, as the general of an army: thus it is ſaid[z], that one man ſhould ſay to another, "from whence art "thou? he replies, from ſuch a *legion* am I;—— "the man went to the legion——the legion heard, "and was afraid——the man ſaid, wo, unto me! "now will the legion ſlay me——the legion heard, "*&c.*" And again[a], "a certain legion aſked "*R. Abba*, is it not written, *&c.*" Once more[b], "Lo! ſuch a legion ſhall go with thee, to keep "thee, *&c.*" Upon which the *Gloſs* is, שר הצבא, *the general of an army*; ſo called, becauſe he had a legion, or a large number of ſoldiers under his command: and juſt ſo this unclean ſpirit is called by this name, becauſe he had a great many more with him, and under him, in that man; ſometimes it is only uſed of a ſingle perſon himſelf, as of a king's ſervant ſent into a foreign country, to collect his[c] tax: a legion was reckoned by the *Jews* unclean and defiled, whatſoever place they entered into[d]; how much more unclean muſt this man be, that had a legion of unclean ſpirits in him! From hence it appears, that the devils are very numerous; for if there was a legion of them in one man, how many muſt there be in all the children of diſobedience, to maintain their ground, and ſupport their intereſt among them? As there is an innumerable company of holy angels to encamp about the ſaints, and do them all the ſervice they can, and are appointed to; ſo there is undoubtedly an innumerable company of devils, who do all the hurt they can, or are permitted to do, unto the ſons of men: hence they are expreſſed by words, which ſignify number as well as power; as principalities and powers, the rulers of the darkneſs of this world, ſpiritual wickedneſs in high places, the power or poſſe of the air, the angels of ſatan, the angels that ſinned and left their habitations, *&c.* As alſo that they are in a body, and in the form of an army; with a general at the head of them, the prince of devils, and king of the bottomleſs pit: there are whole ſquadrons and regiments of them, yea, even legions; which are formed in battle array, and make war againſt Chriſt, the ſeed of the woman; as they did when he was in the garden, and hung upon the croſs, which was the hour and power of darkneſs; and againſt his members; as they did in *Rome* pagan againſt the chriſtian church, and in *Rome* papal, againſt the ſame, *Rev.* xii. 7, 8, 17. and what a mercy it is for the ſaints, that beſides twelve legions of good angels and more, which are ready to aſſiſt and protect them, they have God on their ſide, and therefore it ſignifies not who is againſt them; and they have Chriſt with them, who has ſpoiled principalities and powers; and greater is the Holy Spirit that is in them, than he that is in the world.

Ver. 10. *And he beſought him much*, &c.] The devil that was at the head of this legion, who had the reſt under his command, he, in their name, and on their behalf, intreated Jeſus with great earneſtneſs. This ſhows the authority Chriſt has over the devils, and their ſubjection to him; they are not only obliged to quit their former poſſeſſion, when he gives orders, but they can't go any where elſe, or where they would, without his leave: though the man they were in could not be bound and held with chains and fetters of iron, through the great ſtrength they put forth in him; yet theſe themſelves are bound and held in chains, and can't move without Chriſt's permiſſion, or as he is pleaſed to lengthen out the chain unto them: and though they are no humble ſuppliants to him for grace and mercy, yet they are, that they may continue where they are; or be ſuffered to be ſomewhere elſe, to do miſchief to the ſouls and bodies of men: and though they are ſuch proud ſpirits, they be, they are very willing to humble themſelves, and in the moſt ſubmiſſive and preſſing manner, aſk a favour, even of him whom they hate, when they have an end to anſwer by doing injury to others; and in this, as well as in many other things, they are imitated by them who are truly called the children of the devil, and do the luſts of him their father. *That he would not ſend them away out of the country*; that if he did think fit to diſpoſſeſs them from that man, that however he would permit them to ſtay in that country, and not drive them wholly from thence; and which they might be the more deſirous of, becauſe it was an Heathen country, inhabited by the blind *Gentiles*, that knew not God, or apoſtate *Jews*, or both; among whom their power and authority were very great; and where they had long been, and had had a large experience of the tempers and diſpoſitions of men, and knew how to bait their temptations with ſucceſs.

Ver. 11. *Now there was there nigh unto the mountains*, &c.] Where this man often was, ver. 5. according to *Beza*, the mountains of *Galaad*, which ran through that country, or the mountains that ſurrounded *Tiberias*. Some copies, as the *Alexandrian* copy and others, read *at*, or *about the mountain*, in the ſingular number. The *Vulgate Latin* and *Arabic* verſions read, *about the mountain*. The *Syriac* and *Ethiopic*, *at the mountain*; ſo in *Luke* viii. 32. *a great herd of ſwine feeding*; on one ſide of the mountain, or mountains; it may be called a great one, for there were about two thouſand hogs in it.

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[x] Alexander ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 1. c. 5. Liv. Hiſt. l. 8. c. 8.

[y] Bereſhit Rabba, §. 20. fol. 17. 4.

[z] Zohar in Gen. fol. 96. 4. & Imre Binah in ib.

[a] Ib. in Exod. fol. 50. 2.

[b] Ib. fol. 51. 4.

[c] Vajikra Rabba, §. 30. fol. 170. 4. Mattanot Cehuna in ib.

[d] T. Bab. Cholin, fol. 123. 1.

Ver. 12. *And all the devils beſought him*, &c.] The whole legion of them, not only their chief, in the name of the reſt, but all of them earneſtly entreated him; they were all humble ſupplicants, not from love, but fear, and with a view to do miſchief: though the word *all* is omitted in ſome copies, as it is in the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, and *Perſic* verſions; neither has the *Ethiopic* the word *devils*, but both are retained in the *Arabic* verſion: *ſaying, ſend us into the ſwine, that we may enter into them.* The *Perſic* verſion renders it, *ſeeing thou driveſt us from the man, give leave that we may enter into the ſwine*; which is rather a paraphraſe than a verſion, and expreſſes the ſenſe very well. They choſe to be any where, rather than depart the country; and eſpecially than to be ſent into the deep, the abyſs, or bottomleſs pit; and they choſe to be ſent into the ſwine, as being impure creatures like themſelves; and no doubt with a view to deſtroy them, that they might ſatisfy themſelves as much they could, with doing miſchief; though not to that degree they would, nor to thoſe perſons they were deſirous of; and ſo bring as much odium and reproach upon Chriſt as they could, who gave them leave. The devils are unwearied in doing miſchief, they can't reſt unleſs they are about it; and they chuſe to be concerned in doing it in a leſſer way, if they are not allowed to do it as largely as they would: if they are not ſuffered to touch the lives of men, or ruin their ſouls, it is ſome ſatisfaction to them to be ſuffered to hurt their bodies; and if that is no longer permitted, rather than be doing nothing, they are deſirous of doing injury to irrational creatures, the property of men: all which ſhows, the malice and wickedneſs of theſe evil ſpirits; ſee the note on *Matt*. viii. 31.

Ver. 13. *And forthwith Jeſus gave them leave*, &c.] For the reaſon of this, ſee the note on *Matt*. viii. 32. *and the unclean ſpirits went out*; of the man, in whom they had for ſome time dwelt: *and entered into the herd of ſwine*; according to the leave given them by Chriſt: this ſhows, not only the exiſtence of ſpirits, but their going from one to another, ſhows, that they are circumſcribed by ſpace; that they are here, and not there, or there, and not here: there is an *ubi*, a ſomewhere, where they are; and whilſt there, are not elſewhere: *and the herd ran violently down a ſteep place into the ſea.* The *Syriac* and *Arabic* verſions read, *the herd ran to the rock*, or *promontory*, and *fell into the ſea.* The *Ethiopic*, *the herd grew mad, and was carried headlong into the ſea:* the ſenſe is, that the devils having entered into them, it had a like effect on them, as on the man poſſeſſed; they ran mad, and were hurried on by the devils, to the rocks on the ſea-ſhore; where, falling down the precipice, they were all loſt; and a conſiderable loſs it was to their owners: for *they were about two thouſand*; a very large herd, but there were devils enow in that one man, to poſſeſs all theſe, and run them into the ſea: *and were choked in the ſea*; not ſuffocated by the devils, but drowned in the waters of the ſea, or lake, as *Luke* calls it; the lake of *Genneſareth*, or ſea of *Tiberias* and *Galilee*; which, as often obſerved, were the ſame. Though ſome think it was not this lake or ſea, but ſome other place of water near *Gadara*. *Strabo* ſays [c], that in the country of *Gadara*, there was a very bad laky water, of which if cattel taſted, they caſt their hair, hoofs, and horns; which perhaps may be the ſame with what the *Talmudiſts* call [f], בלועה דגדר, *the whirlpool of Gadara*; ſaid to be from the time of the deluge, and ſo called from its ſwallowing up every thing that came into it; but the ſea of *Tiberias* ſeems rather to be the place, where this herd periſhed. The *Jew* [g] objects to the deſtroying this herd of ſwine as an unjuſt action, being a great injury to the owners; and ſeeks to blacken the character of Chriſt, as being concerned in it: but, as biſhop *Kidder* [h] well obſerves, it does not appear that Jeſus deſtroyed it; it were the devils that did it: he ſuffered them indeed to go into it, nor did he reſtrain the natural power which they had; nor did he think fit to do it, nor was he obliged to it: but had he deſtroyed it himſelf, ſince he is Lord of all, the proprietor of all creatures, who has all under him, and at his diſpoſe, can give and take away as he pleaſes, no charge of evil and injuſtice can be brought againſt him; and this ſhould be ſatisfactory to a chriſtian, who believing him to be God over all bleſſed for ever; though it will not be to a *Jew*: let it therefore be further obſerved, that the owners of theſe ſwine, were either *Jews* or *Gentiles*; if they were *Jews*, and they brought up theſe ſwine in order to eat them themſelves, to deſtroy them was a juſt puniſhment, for their violation of the law of God, *Deut*. xiv. 8. And if they brought them up to ſell to others, this was contrary to their own canons; ſee the note on *Matt*. viii. 30. to the rules and cuſtoms of their own country, which were made as a fence to keep off from breaking the above law; and ſuch a practice could only proceed from an avaricious diſpoſition, of which this was a proper rebuke: or if they were *Gentiles* that were the owners of them, theſe were idolatrous perſons, worſhippers of devils; and it was but a righteous thing, to ſuffer the devils, whom they worſhipped, to do this miſchief to their property, to whom they devoted themſelves ſoul and body; and a *Jew* can't well find fault with this, who believes that idolaters can't be puniſhed too ſeverely: add to this, what the above learned prelate obſerves; this practice of the *Gentiles* in breeding hogs, was a temptation to the *Jews* to follow the ſame buſineſs, and even to taſte of the forbidden fleſh; ſo that to uſe his words, it was in truth an act of grace and favour to the *Jews*, to remove from them ſo dangerous a ſnare, and ſo bad an example: and it may be added, by ſuffering the devils to go into the ſwine, ſeveral valuable ends were anſwered, infinitely preferable to the herd of ſwine; ſuch as evincing the truth of the diſpoſſeſſion; ſhewing the greatneſs of the mercy to the diſpoſſeſſed; the power of Chriſt over the devils; and making for the ſpread of the fame of this miracle the more; as well as giving further proof of the malignity and miſchievous diſpoſition and actions of theſe evil ſpirits; by which the inhabitants of the adjacent places might learn, how hurtful they were to them, and what a bleſſing it was to be rid of them: and therefore ought to have been thankful to Chriſt for this diſpoſſeſſion, notwithſtanding the loſs of their ſwine; but ſuch an effect it had not upon them, but the reverſe, as the words following ſhow.

Ver. 14. *And they that fed the ſwine*, &c.] Not the owners, but the keepers of them, the ſwine-herds, *fled*; being aſtoniſhed at the power of Chriſt, affrighted at the noiſe of the devils, and terrified at the ſight and loſs of the ſwine: *and told it in the city and country*; or *in the fields:* they went into the city of *Gadara*, and told the ſtory of the diſpoſſeſſion of the devils out of the man, that had been for ſome time troubleſome in thoſe parts; and of their entrance into the ſwine, and the deſtruction of them: and they went into the fields, or country adjacent; they went to the *villages* thereabout, as the *Syriac* and *Ethiopic* verſions render the word; or to thoſe houſes that were in the fields, ſcattered about, here, and there one, and where perhaps the owners of the herd lived: and they not only haſted away to the owners of the ſwine, to acquaint them with what had happened, in order to remove all blame from themſelves, and any ſuſpicion of negligence in them; to make it appear that it was not their fault, or owing to any careleſſneſs of theirs the ſwine periſhed; as that they ſuffered them to go too near the ſea-ſide, and did not keep a good look-out, and were not, as they ſhould have been, between them and the ſea, to have prevented ſuch an accident: this they not only did, but the affair, in all its circumſtances, being ſuch an amazing one; as the diſpoſſeſſion of the devils out of the man; the health, the calmneſs, and happy condition the diſpoſſeſſed was in; the entrance of the devils into the ſwine; their madneſs, and precipitant running into the ſea, and ſuffocation there; that they told it to every body they met with, whether in the fields belonging to *Gadara*, or in the city itſelf; which drew out a large concourſe of people to ſee what was done to the man that had been poſſeſſed, and to the ſwine, and alſo to ſee the perſon who had done all this; and which made the miracle the more notorious; city and country rung of it: ſo that, as *Matthew* ſays, *the whole city came out to meet Jeſus*; and *Luke* obſerves, that *the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about beſought him to depart*, &c. So we ſometimes read, in the *Jewiſh* writings, of the men, or inhabitants of the field, as oppoſed to the men, or inhabitants of the city, who differed both in their clothes and diet. "The garments, "דבני מחוזא, *of the children*, or *inhabitants of* "*the city*, who live deliciouſly, and do no work, "are broad like womens; but the garments, "דבני חקליתא, *of the children of the field*; ſuch "as do buſineſs in the field, are ſhort [i]:" and ſo of their food, 'tis obſerved [k], that the bread, דחקלאי, *of the men of the field*, which the Gloſs explains by בני כפר, *the children*, or *inhabitants of a village*, is what they put much flour into; but the bread, דמחוזא, *of a city*, which the Gloſs interprets of בני כרך, *the children*, or *inhabitants of a walled town*, or *city*, is what they do not put much flour into. *And they went out to ſee what it was that was done*: that is, the inhabitants of the city of *Gadara*, and thoſe that dwelt in the villages, and in lone houſes in the fields, went forth to the places where the poſſeſſed man uſed to be, and where Jeſus and he now were, and where the ſwine uſed to feed, to ſee with their own eyes, and ſatisfy themſelves of the truth of the narration the ſwineherds gave them.

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[c] Geograph. l. 6.

[f] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 108. 1.

[g] Jacob Aben Amram, port. ver. Nº. 1028. apud Kidder, Demonſt of the Meſſiah, par. 3. p. 51.

[h] Kidder ib. p. 52.

Ver. 15. *And they come to Jeſus*, &c.] Who had wrought this miracle, and of which, and whom, the keepers of the ſwine had given them ſome account: *and ſee him that was poſſeſſed of the devil, and had a legion.* The *Vulgate Latin* and *Ethiopic* verſions leave out the laſt clauſe, *and had a legion*, and ſo *Beza*'s ancient copy; the *Perſic* verſion renders it, *the legion being gone out of him*: they ſaw, along with *Jeſus*, the man who had been poſſeſſed with a legion of devils, whom they knew very well to be the ſame man; *ſitting, and clothed, and in his right mind, and they were afraid*; not of the man, as they were before, when he was poſſeſſed, not daring to come that way becauſe of him; but of Chriſt, and his amazing power; who was able to diſpoſſeſs a legion of devils, and reſtore a man to his perfect ſenſes, to ſuch compoſure and decency, who was before in ſuch a dreadful condition, and ſo exceeding furious and outragious: they ſaw the man was ſtill and quiet, harmleſs and inoffenſive; they had nothing to fear from him; but they knew not what to make of Chriſt: they might take him for an exorciſt, or a magician, and fear that he would exerciſe his art to the ruine and deſtruction of them: they did not fear and reverence him as a divine perſon, but they dreaded him, as one poſſeſſed of a power of doing hurt: they were conſcious to themſelves of their ſins, and that they deſerved the juſt judgments of God upon them; and they were afraid that Chriſt was ſent to execute them upon them: and it is obſervable, that they ſay not one word to him, by way of complaint, for the loſs of their ſwine; but thought themſelves well off, could they but get rid of him. There was a ſtrange change and alteration in the man; he, who before was running about among the tombs, and upon the mountains, and ſcarce ever ſat ſtill, but was always in motion, as perſons diſtracted commonly are, was now *ſitting* at the feet of Jeſus, his kind benefactor, *Luke* viii. 35. and he who before was naked, and whenever any clothes were put upon him, tore them off again, and to pieces, as mad men uſually do, was now *clothed*; perhaps with ſome the ſwineherds had left behind them, in their fright, or the diſciples had with them: and he who before was quite out of his ſenſes, knew not what he ſaid, or did, was now *in his right mind*; of a ſound mind, of a good underſtanding, ſober, modeſt, and knowing. This man, as whilſt under the poſſeſſion of ſatan, was an emblem of a man in a natural eſtate; ſo, being now diſpoſſeſſed, he very aptly repreſented a converted man; who, being brought out of a ſtate of nature, out of an horrible pit, a pit wherein is no water, is *ſitting* at the feet of *Jeſus*; where he places himſelf, imploring his grace and mercy, intreating him to receive and ſave him, reſolving, if he periſhes, he'll periſh there; and where he is, as a ſcholar, at the feet of his maſter, hearing his words, and receiving inſtruction from him; and which alſo is expreſſive of his ſubmiſſion to his Goſpel and ordinances, and of pleaſure and continuance under them; as well as of that calmneſs and ſerenity of mind, which attends a ſenſe of juſtification, pardon, reconciliation, and adoption, and hope of glory: and whereas, before he was naked, and without a righteouſneſs, or, which was no better than filthy rags; he is now *clothed* with the robe of righteouſneſs, and garments of ſalvation, with fine linen, clean and white, which is the righteouſneſs of the ſaints, with change of raiment, and clothing of wrought gold; the righteouſneſs of Chriſt being not only imputed to him by the father, but revealed in the Goſpel, brought near by the Spirit, and put upon him, and received by faith; as well as having put on the new man, and being clothed with humility, and other graces of the Spirit, and with the garments of a holy converſation; and ſo will at laſt be clothed with the ſhining robes of immortality and glory. Such an one, who before was not himſelf, is now *in his right mind*; is come to himſelf like the prodigal; is become ſenſible of the evil of ſin, and is brought to true repentance for it; and of his loſt ſtate and condition, of his need of Chriſt, and ſalvation by him; has his ſpiritual ſenſes exerciſed upon Chriſt; beholds the lovelineſs and ſuitableneſs of him as a ſaviour, hears his voice, handles him, the word of life, taſtes the ſweetneſs there is in him, and in his Goſpel, and ſavours the things of his Spirit; and whoſe ſenſes alſo are exerciſed to diſcern between good and evil, and truth and error; who likewiſe has a new heart, and a right ſpirit created in him; and has the ſame mind in him, as was in Jeſus Chriſt, for humility and lowlineſs; and whoſe mind is ſtayed upon him; and truſts in him.

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[i] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 12. 1. & Gloſſ. in ib.

[k] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 37. 2.

Ver. 16. *And they that ſaw it,* &c.] Not the keepers of the ſwine, for they were fled and gone; but others that were eye-witneſſes of the whole affair, who lived in houſes hard by, or were working in the fields; or the diſciples of Chriſt: *told them how it befel to him that was poſſeſſed with the devil*; gave a particular account, how, upon the firſt ſight of Chriſt, he ran to meet him, and fell down and worſhipped him; how Chriſt ordered the unclean ſpirit to come out of him; and how he was diſpoſſeſſed of a legion of devils by a word ſpeaking: *and alſo concerning the ſwine*; how, at the requeſt of the devils, and by the leave of Chriſt, they entered into them; upon which they ran mad; and betaking themſelves to the rocks by the ſea-ſide, fell down the precipice, and were ſuffocated in the ſea.

Ver. 17. *And they began to pray him,* &c.] That is, the inhabitants of the city of *Gadara*, and of the villages round about, very earneſtly importuned him *to depart out of their coaſts*; fearing, leſt for their ſins, ſome ſorer judgment ſhould fall upon them, than the loſs of their ſwine; ſince they perceived he was a perſon of great power and authority; which ſhows great ignorance and worldly-mindedneſs: they knew not how great a perſon they had among them; that he was the Son of God, and Saviour of the world: they might have known from the miracles wrought, that he was a very wonderful and extraordinary perſon; but then they conſidered him as one endued with great power, rather to do them hurt, than good; as one ſent to ſcourge them for their ſins, than to ſave them from them: ſuch very contrary notions have carnal men of Chriſt; they are afraid of being ſufferers, or loſers by him; they don't care to part with their ſwiniſh luſts for him: theſe they prefer to a ſaviour, and love the world, and the things of it, more than he, and therefore are not worthy of him; ſee the note on *Matt.* viii. 34.

Ver. 18. *And when he was come into the ſhip,* &c.] For at the requeſt of theſe men, who were unworthy of his preſence, and of any favour from him, either by his doctrine, or miracles, he turned back to the ſea-ſide again; and as he was about to take ſhip, *he that had been poſſeſſed with the devil, prayed him that he might be with him*: for when Jeſus turned his back upon the *Gadarenes*, and returned to the ſea-ſhore, this poor man, who had received ſo great a benefit by him, roſe up and followed him; and when he perceived that he was entering on ſhip-board, in order to go over into another country, earneſtly intreated he might go over with him in the ſhip, and continue with him: which he did, partly to teſtify his great love to him, and the grateful ſenſe he had of the mercy he had received from him; and partly, that he might enjoy his preſence, and have his protection: for he might fear, that when he was gone, and ſhould he remain in that country, the devils would repoſſeſs him with greater rage and fury. So gracious ſouls who know Chriſt, and have received out of his fulneſs, and grace for grace, earneſtly deſire to be with him, to enjoy communion with him, receive inſtruction from him, and be always under his care, influence, and protection. For to be with Chriſt, is to have his gracious preſence; to have nearneſs to him, and fellowſhip with him; to have familiarity and acquaintance with him, yet more and more; to be guided with his counſel, and upheld with the right hand of his righteouſneſs; than which, nothing can be more deſirable to thoſe that ſpiritually and ſavingly know him: for ſuch deſires ariſe from the knowledge they have of his perſonal glories and excellencies, as the Son of God; and as mediator, he has all power to protect them, all ſtrength to ſupport them, all grace to ſupply them, all wiſdom to direct them, all proviſions to feed them, and all bleſſings of grace and glory to beſtow upon them; and from the gracious experience they have had of his favour and loving-kindneſs, which is better than life; and from the ſenſe they have of their need of him; for without him they can do nothing; they can't perform any duty aright, nor withſtand any temptation, or bear up under any affliction: they are ſenſible of the bleſſed effects of his preſence; they know it brings light to their ſouls in darkneſs; that it quickens them when dead and lifeleſs in their frames and duties, and enlivens their ſpirits when dull and heavy; that it comforts and rejoices their hearts, and puts more joy and gladneſs into them, than any outward bleſſing whatever; that it removes their fears, and emboldens them againſt their enemies, and is their ſafety and defence; that it makes ordinances pleaſant and delightful, and gives contentment in the meaneſt ſtate; there is nothing enjoyed by them in this life which gives them the pleaſure and ſatisfaction that does: and hence it is that they often deſire even to depart out of this world, that they may be with Chriſt, which is far better; and indeed, if the preſence of Chriſt is ſo ſweet and deſirable now, what will the everlaſting, and uninterrupted enjoyment of his preſence be in the world to come? for in his preſence is fulneſs of joy, and at his right hand are pleaſures for evermore.

Ver. 19. *Howbeit, Jeſus ſuffered him not,* &c.] He being as able to preſerve him from thoſe evil ſpirits, when abſent, as preſent; and beſides, to take him along with him, would look like oſtentation and boaſting, which Chriſt was averſe unto; and more eſpecially as is clear from what follows, he choſe he ſhould ſtay behind, becauſe he had work for him to do in thoſe parts, which would be for the glory of God, the ſpread of the knowledge of himſelf, and his Goſpel, among his friends, relations, and countrymen: wherefore it follows, *but ſaith unto him, go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compaſſion on thee*: he bids him go to his *own houſe*, as it is in *Luke*, ch. viii. 39. to the place of his former abode; to the town, or city, where he before dwelt, and where his father and mother, brethren and ſiſters, wife and children might live; and there relate to them what great things the Lord, or God, as the *Ethiopic* verſion reads, had done for him; by caſting out a legion of devils from him, and had reſtored him to his perfect ſenſes and health, and had had compaſſion on him, both as to his ſoul and body, and had wrought a great ſalvation for him. So ſuch as are called by grace, and are turned from darkneſs to light, and from the power of ſatan unto God, ought to go t

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their chriſtian friends, and to the church of God, and declare in *Zion* the great things which God has done for their ſouls; in enlightening, quickening, converting, and comforting them, to the glory of his rich mercy, and abundant grace. They are *great things* indeed which the Lord has done for his people: he has done great things for them in eternity; he has loved them with an everlaſting love; he has choſen them in his Son to holineſs and happineſs; he has made a covenant with him, for them, full of ſpiritual bleſſings and promiſes; he has provided him, as a ſaviour, for them, and has appointed, and called him to that work; all which is more or leſs made known to them in effectual vocation, when they receive the Spirit of God, that they may know the things which are freely given to them of God. The Lord Jeſus Chriſt has done great things for them, as before time, by engaging for them as their ſurety; ſo, in time, by taking upon him their nature, by bearing their ſins, and ſuffering in their room and ſtead, thereby working out a great ſalvation, which, in converſion, is brought near, and applied unto them. And the Lord, the Spirit, does great things for them, when he calls them by his grace, and afterwards; in opening their eyes who were born blind, and who otherwiſe muſt have lift them up in hell; and in bringing them into the marvellous light of the Goſpel; in quickening them, when dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, who otherwiſe muſt have died the ſecond death; in cauſing them to hear the voice of Chriſt in the joyful ſound of the word, who otherwiſe muſt have heard the curſes of a righteous law; in taking away their ſtony hearts, and giving them hearts of fleſh; in reſcuing them out of ſatan's hands; in leading them to Chriſt for righteouſneſs, life, and ſalvation; in diſcovering pardoning grace and mercy to them, thro' the blood of Chriſt; in delivering out of many and great temptations; in applying great and precious promiſes, ſuitably and ſeaſonably; and in reſtoring them when backſlidden, and ſpeaking comfortably to them; in witneſſing to their ſpirits, their adoption; and in ſealing them up to the day of redemption; and all this flows from divine *compaſſion*, and not from any motive and merit in the creature. It was ſovereign pity and compaſſion; the Lord *has mercy on whom he will have mercy, and has compaſſion on whom he will have compaſſion*, *Rom.* ix. 15. It was diſcriminating mercy: this man was not only diſpoſſeſſed of ſatan, but poſſeſſed of ſpecial grace, which cauſed him to deſire to be with Chriſt, when his countrymen deſired him to depart from them; it was ſhown him, when he had no pity on himſelf, when he cut and wounded himſelf; and it was beſtowed upon him, when he could not help himſelf, when he had a legion of devils within him: and now theſe great things, which ſpring from great love and mercy, ſhould be told to others, eſpecially to them that fear the Lord, to the churches of Chriſt: this is the will of God, and has been the practice of the ſaints in former ages; it rejoices the hearts of God's people to hear of theſe things, and enhances the glory of the grace of God: and what may ſerve to encourage ſouls to ſuch a work is, that it is to their *friends* they are to declare theſe things; who are well diſpoſed to them, rejoice at their converſion, ſympathize with them in their troubles, know what the things they ſpeak of mean, and gladly receive them into their affections and fellowſhip.

Ver. 20. *And he departed, and began to publiſh in Decapolis*, &c.] He ſubmitted to the will of Chriſt, though he could gladly have gone with him; he hearkened to his inſtructions, took his advice, and obeyed his commands, as every one that has received favours from him ought to do: and he went not only to his own, or his father's houſe, and acquainted his neareſt friends and relations with what had befallen him; but he publiſhed the account, as *Luke* ſays, ch. viii. 39. *throughout the whole city*, very likely of *Gadara*, where he might be a native; and which, as *Pliny* [l] relates, was in *Decapolis*, and agrees with the accounts of both the Evangeliſts: here he publiſhed, as Chriſt had ordered him, *how great things Jeſus had done for him*; only inſtead of ſaying the Lord had done them for him, he attributed them to Jeſus, who is Lord and God; and by that miracle, as by many others, gave full proof of his deity, as well as Meſſiahſhip. This is an inſtance of the obedience of faith, and is a conſiderable branch of it; for, as with the heart, men believe in Chriſt unto righteouſneſs, ſo, with the mouth, confeſſion muſt be made to the glory of that ſalvation which Chriſt has wrought out: many are backward to this part of the ſervice of faith, thro' fears, thro' unbelief, and ſatan's temptations; but this man, tho' to have continued with Chriſt was greatly deſirable by him, yet he ſubmits to his will and pleaſure, and is obedient to his orders; and that at once, immediately dropping his ſuit unto him, no longer inſiſting on his being with him; for he was ſenſible of the great obligations he was laid under to him, and ſaw it to be his duty to obſerve whatever he commanded him: and this was indeed but a reaſonable piece of ſervice, and what, if he had not been ordered to do, one would think he could not have done otherwiſe; at leaſt, had he not, he would not have acted the grateful and generous part: and indeed, if ſuch for whom the Lord has done great things as theſe, ſhould hold their peace, the ſtones would even cry out. *And all men did marvel*; at the power of Jeſus, at the miracle wrought by him, and the benefit the man had received, who they all knew had been in ſo deplorable a condition. It is not only marvellous to the perſons themſelves, for whom great things are done by the Lord; but it is amazing to others, to angels and men, when it is conſidered, who they are, on whoſe account they are wrought; great ſinners, very unworthy of ſuch high favours, yea, deſerving of the wrath of God, and of eternal damnation; and likewiſe, who it is that has done theſe things for them, the Lord of heaven and earth; he againſt whom they have ſinned, and is able both to ſave, and to deſtroy; he who is the Great God, is their Saviour; to which may be added, the conſequence of theſe things, they iſſue in everlaſting glory and happineſs.

Ver. 21. *And when Jeſus was paſſed over again*, &c.] Over the ſea of *Tiberias*, that part of it which was neceſſary to go over from the country of *Gadara*, to *Capernaum*, *by ſhip*, or *boat*, *unto the other ſide*. This may ſeem to ſome unneceſſary to be added; and it may be aſked, what way but by ſhip, or boat, could he have gone over to the other ſide of the ſea of *Galilee*? To which it may be replied, there was a bridge at *Chammath* of *Gadara* [m], over an arm of this ſea, over which Chriſt and his diſciples might have paſſed, and have gone by land to *Capernaum*; ſo that this phraſe is very neceſſarily and ſignificantly uſed: *much people gathered unto him*; who had before attended on his miniſtry in theſe parts, and had ſeen his miracles; as the caſting out of an unclean ſpirit from a man, healing the centurion's ſervant, curing the man ſick of the palſy, and *Simon*'s wife's mother of a fever, and a man that had a withered hand: *and he was nigh unto the ſea*; he ſeems to have been at *Capernaum*, which was nigh unto the ſea, and in the houſe of *Matthew* or *Levi*, whom he had called at the ſea-ſide from the receipt of cuſtom; ſee *Matt.* ix. 9, 10, 18.

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[l] Nat. Hiſt. l. 5. c. 18.

[m] T. Hieroſ. Erubin, fol. 22. 4.

Ver. 22. *And behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the ſynagogue*, &c.] Having heard of his return, and where he was; ſee the note on *Matt.* ix. 18. *Jairus by name*; in *Hebrew* יאיר, *Jair:* and *Jerom* ſays [n], it ſignifies *enlightening*, or *enlightened*; deriving it from אור, *to be light:* and it is no doubt *a Jewiſh* name, ſince he was a ruler of the ſynagogue; and beſides, it is often mentioned in the Old Teſtament, and particularly in *Eſth.* ii. 5. where, in the *Septuagint*, it is read Ιαιρος, *Jairus*. *Matthew* makes no mention of his name; but both *Mark* and *Luke* do. *And when he ſaw him, he fell at his feet:* as ſoon as he came into his preſence, tho' he was a perſon of ſuch authority; yet having heard much of the doctrine and miracles of Chriſt, and believing him to be a great prophet, and man of God; though he might not know that he was the Meſſiah, and truly God, threw himſelf at his feet; and, as *Matthew* ſays, *worſhipped him*; ſhewed great reverence and reſpect unto him, gave him homage, at leaſt in a civil way, tho' he might not adore him as God.

Ver. 23. *And beſought him greatly*, &c.] Uſed much importunity with him, and was very urgent in his requeſts: *ſaying, my little daughter lieth at the point of death*, or *is in the laſt extremity*; juſt breathing out her laſt; for ſhe was not actually dead when he left her, tho' ſhe was before he returned, and was at this time, as he might expect, expiring, or really gone; ſee the note on *Matt.* ix. 18. I pray thee *come and lay thine hands on her, that ſhe may be healed, and ſhe ſhall live*; expreſſing faith in the power of Chriſt to reſtore his daughter, tho' in the utmoſt extremity; yet ſeemed to think his preſence, and the impoſition of his hands, were neceſſary to it.

Ver. 24. *And* Jeſus *went with him*, &c.] Immediately, without objecting to the weakneſs of his faith: *and much people followed him*; to ſee the miracle performed, which they were exceedingly fond of: *and thronged him*; ſo that it was with ſome difficulty and trouble that he paſſed along the ſtreets to the ruler's houſe.

Ver. 25. *And a certain woman which had an iſſue of blood twelve years.*] See the note on *Matt.* ix. 20. This woman was in the croud that thronged Jeſus, as he paſſed thro' the ſtreets of *Capernaum*. *Euſebius* relates [o], that it was reported, that this woman was of *Cæſarea Philippi*, where her houſe was to be ſeen; where were extant ſome wonderful monuments of the benefits conferr'd upon her by Chriſt; as that at the door of her houſe was an effigy of a woman in braſs, ſet upon an high ſtone on her bended knees, and arms ſtretched out like a ſupplicant; and oppoſite to her, another effigy of a man, of the ſame metal, ſtanding, and decently clothed in a tunic, and his hand ſtretched out to the woman; at whoſe feet, upon the pillar, a ſtrange form of a plant aroſe, reaching up to the border of the brazen tunic, which is a remedy againſt all diſeaſes; and he ſays it remained to his times, and was then to be ſeen: and *Theophylact* [p] ſays, in the times of *Julian* the apoſtate it was broke to pieces. But this woman rather ſeems to be an inhabitant of *Capernaum*, in the ſtreets of which the after cure was wrought; and therefore what credit is to be given to the above accounts, I leave to be judged of. It may be more uſeful to obſerve, that this profluvious woman is an emblem of a ſinner in a ſtate of nature: as her diſeaſe was in itſelf an uncleanneſs, and rendered her unclean by the law, whereby ſhe was unfit for the company and ſociety of others; ſo the diſeaſe of ſin, with which all are infected, is a pollution itſelf, and of a defiling nature; all the members of the body, and all the powers and faculties of the ſoul are polluted with it, and the whole man is filthy in the ſight of God, and is pronounced unclean by the law of God; and ſuch perſons are very unfit for the ſociety of ſaints on earth, and much leſs to be with thoſe in heaven, nor even to be with moralized perſons; for evil communications corrupt good manners: openly profane and impure ſinners are infectious, and to be avoided. Likewiſe, as this woman's diſeaſe was of long ſtanding, ſhe had it twelve years, and it was become inveterate and ſtubborn, and not eaſy to be removed; ſo ſuch is the diſeaſe of ſin, and indeed it is much worſe; it is what is brought into the world with men, and is as old as themſelves; is natural to them, and cannot be removed by any ordinary and natural methods, but requires ſupernatural power and grace; and it is in ſuch a like caſe and condition, that the Spirit of God finds his people, when he quickens, ſanctifies, and cleanſes them: *and when I paſſed by thee, and ſaw thee polluted in thine own blood, I ſaid unto thee when thou waſt in thy blood live*, *Ezek.* xvi. 6.

Ver. 26. *And had ſuffered many things of many phyſicians*, &c.] She took many a nauſeous medicine, and had gone thro' courſes of phyſick with different phyſicians; for there were many among the *Jews* that pretended to the cure of fluxes; and various are the preſcriptions the *Jewiſh* doctors give for ſuch a diſorder, as may be ſeen in their *Talmud* [q]; and many of which Dr. *Lightfoot* [r] has tranſcribed: and among the reſt, they direct to the uſe of gum of *Alexandria*, alum, ſaffron, *Perſian* onions, cummin, and *Fænum Græcum*, put into wine and drank. *And had ſpent all that ſhe had*; had waſted her ſubſtance, and brought herſelf to poverty, by purſuing the directions given her; ſo that ſhe was not in circumſtances now to employ a phyſician; *and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worſe:* the ſeveral medicines ſhe had taken had done her no good, had not, in the leaſt, reſtrained and checked the diſorder, but it was rather increaſed thereby. This is often the caſe of perſons who are, in ſome meaſure, ſenſible of the diſeaſe of ſin, but are ignorant of the proper methods to be taken for the cure of it. They apply to their own works of righteouſneſs, moral and civil, to the duties of religion, private and publick, to a legal repentance, external humiliation and tears, and an outward reformation of life, hoping hereby, in proceſs of time, to be rid of their diſorder, and be in good health; whereas theſe are phyſicians of no value, and of no real ſervice in their caſe: they are ſo far from being the better, that they are rather worſe and worſe, there being ſo much impurity, imperfection, and ſin, in all theſe things, and which is increaſed by a dependance on them; that their iniquities grow upon them, and the ſcore of their tranſgreſſions is become greater, and their diſtemper the more inveterate, and leſs eaſy to be cured;

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[n] De Hebr. Nominibus in Luc.

[o] Eccl. Hiſt. l. 7. c. 18.

[p] In Matt. ix. 20.

[q] T. Bab. Sabbat fol. 110. 1, 2.

[r] Hor. Heb. in loc.

yea, not only they ſpend their money for that which does not bring them a cure, and exhauſt all the ſtock of nature's power to no purpoſe, but they alſo *ſuffer* much hereby. For ſuch a courſe of action, ſuch conduct and methods as theſe bring them into a ſpirit of bondage; for when they fail in their duties, don't come up to the rules preſcribed them, what terror of mind poſſeſſes them? what horror and wrath does the law work in their conſciences? what a fearful looking for is there of fiery indignation, to conſume them? it can't be expreſſed what ſome have ſuffered by following ſuch preſcriptions.

Ver. 27. *When ſhe had heard of Jeſus*, &c.] Of the many miracles he had wrought, and cures he had performed, in caſes as difficult and deſperate as hers, or more ſo; and that he was now paſſing along the ſtreets, *came in the preſs behind*; though ſhe was ſo weak, and much enfeebled, as ſhe muſt needs be, by ſuch and, ſo long a diſorder; yet ſhe ventures into the croud, which were puſhing and preſſing after Chriſt; and got up to him, behind him, being aſhamed to tell her caſe, and deſire a cure: *and touched his garment*; the hem, or border of it, with her hand, very ſoftly, and in a private manner, ſo as not to be obſerved by any. Chriſt is the ſinner's laſt ſhift; it tries every one firſt before it comes to him; it ſpends all its money, ſtrength, and time, with others, to no purpoſe; and finding them all to be uſeleſs and unſerviceable, it applies to him, who is the only phyſician that can give relief in this caſe: like this woman, having heard of his ability to ſave to the uttermoſt thoſe that come to him; and being encouraged by the many cures of the worſt of ſinners, of ſuch who were in the moſt deſperate condition, preſſes in the throng, through a great many temptations, difficulties, and diſcouragements thrown in the way by ſatan, and its own evil heart of unbelief, and which ariſe from a ſenſe of vileneſs and unworthineſs; and in a modeſt and baſhful manner, fearing it ſhould be thought preſumption in him, and yet perſuaded it is the only way for a cure, and that it is to be had in this way, lays hold on the robe of Chriſt's righteouſneſs, and the garments of his ſalvation; or, in other words, thus reaſons with himſelf: tho' I am ſuch a vile, ſinful, unrighteous, and impotent creature, yet ſurely in the Lord there is righteouſneſs and ſtrength, if I can but by faith lay hold thereon; tho' it be but in a weak way, only by a touch, and in a trembling manner; I ſhall be juſtified from all things, I could not be juſtified by all the works of righteouſneſs I have been doing, and that evidentially and comfortably; and therefore I'll venture and draw nigh unto him, and tho' he ſlay me I'll truſt in him; I'll throw off my own filthy rags of righteouſneſs; I'll make mention of, and lay hold on his righteouſneſs, and that only; he ſhall be my ſalvation. And ſuch an one finds, as this woman afterwards did, a perfect cure, cleanſing from all ſin, a free and full forgiveneſs of it, and complete juſtification from it.

Ver. 28. *For ſhe ſaid*, &c.] Within herſelf, ſuch were her thoughts, and ſo great her faith: *if I may touch but his clothes I ſhall be whole*; ſee the note on *Matt.* ix. 21.

Ver. 29. *And ſtraightway the fountain of her blood was dried up*, &c.] It was uſual with the *Jews* to call the womb, in which the child is formed, מקור, *a fountain*[s]; and becauſe, from hence, iſſued the blood in a menſtruous and profluvious perſon, they called it, as here, מקור דמיה, *the fountain of her blood*[t]; and ſometimes uſe the ſame phraſe of the drying up of it, as in this place: they ſay[u], when a woman is ſearched and found to be pure, ſhe is forbidden her houſe, עד שיתנגב מעיינה, *until her fountain be dried up*; ſo that as no blood iſſued from it, there was none in it, and which was now this woman's caſe, as ſhe found; *and ſhe felt in her body that ſhe was healed of that plague:* ſhe not only found by that quick alteration there was in her animal ſpirits, which were now free and vigorous; but ſhe perceived, in that part of her body, from whence the iſſue ſprung, that ſhe was perfectly well, and that the diſorder was entirely gone, which had been for ſo many years a ſore affliction to her, and a ſevere correction and chaſtiſement of her, as the word uſed implies. It properly ſignifies *a ſcourge*, as every affliction is, a ſcourge for ſin; and very likely this woman's diſeaſe was on the ſame account: ſometimes afflictions are God's ſcourges in a way of wrath, and ſometimes in a fatherly way, in love: *for whom the Lord loveth he chaſteneth, and ſcourgeth every ſon whom he receiveth*, *Heb.* xii. 6. and who, as he wounds, he heals, and which is ſenſibly perceived by his people. The word *plague* carries in it ſomething more dreadful, and fitly enough expreſſes the nature of ſin, which is a peſtilential diſeaſe; the corruption of nature, indwelling ſin is called the *plague of the heart*, 1 *Kings* viii. 38. It is a loathſome diſeaſe, and without the grace of God, a mortal one; the body of ſin, is a body of death; and all ſin is of the ſame nature and kind; the end of it is deſtruction and death: the healing of it is the forgiveneſs of ſin, which is thro' the blood of Chriſt, and the application of it to the ſoul; which, when made, is ſenſibly felt, for it immediately produces ſpiritual joy, peace, and comfort: this makes the bones, which were broken, to rejoice; this bids every ſon and daughter of the Lord God Almighty to be of good chear; it cauſes the inhabitants of *Zion* to hold their peace, and no more ſay they are ſick, becauſe their ſins are forgiven them. And a man may as eaſily perceive when his ſpiritual maladies are healed in this way, as when he is cured of any bodily diſorder.

Ver. 30. *And Jeſus immediately knowing in himſelf*, &c.] As ſoon as ever the woman had touched his garments, and had a cure, Chriſt, who knew all things in his ſpirit, or divine nature, that dwelt in him, knew what was done, that the woman had touched him, and was healed thereby; though, as not without his knowledge, ſo neither without his will, and entirely by his power: *that vertue was gone out of him*; to the healing of ſome perſon, tho' not at all to the diminution of that vertue, which remained as powerful and effective in him as ever. This ſhows that there was an internal eſſential vertue in Chriſt to cure diſeaſes: it was not what he derived from another, or exerciſed under another's influence; but what was his own, and which he put forth as the Lord God omnipotent. The apoſtles of Chriſt cured diſeaſes, but not by their own power and holineſs, by any innate vertue in them; but in the name of Chriſt, and by power derived and received from him: but Chriſt, being God, had infinite vertue within himſelf, which went forth from him when he pleaſed, to the curing of whatſoever diſeaſe he thought fit; and which was no ways leſſened by the frequent exertions of it; no more than the light and heat of the ſun by the continual emanations of them; only there is this difference between the emiſſion of light and heat from the ſun, and the ſending forth vertue from Chriſt, that the one is by the neceſſity of nature, without knowledge, or will, but the other voluntarily, and when, and as he pleaſes. The ſame holds good with reſpect to healing ſpiritual diſeaſes: Chriſt has a power within him to forgive all treſpaſſes; and vertue may be ſaid to go out of him to this purpoſe, when it is his will to make application of pardoning mercy to his people; which requires an exertion of power, as well as a diſplay of grace. *Turned him about in the preſs, and ſaid, who touched my clothes?* that is, turned himſelf towards the woman behind him, tho' the preſs was ſo large about him, and aſked who touched his clothes; not for his own ſake, who knew very well who had done it; but that the cure might be known to others: not for the ſake of oſtentation and popular applauſe, but for the manifeſtation of his glory, and for the glory of God, and for the ſtrengthening the faith of *Jairus*, who was with him, and with whom he was going to raiſe his daughter to life; and alſo that he might have an opportunity of ſhewing forth, and commending this poor woman's faith, and of confirming the cure wrought, and of diſmiſſing her with the utmoſt pleaſure and joy.

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[s] Maimon. Iſſure Bia, c. 4. §. 20, 22. & 5. 3. & 6. 1. Miſn. Nidda, c. 2. §. 5. Moſes Kotſenſis Mitzvot Tora, pr. neg. 111.

[t] T. Hieroſ. Nidda, fol. 50. 2.

[u] T. Hieroſ. Nidda, fol. 48. 4.

Ver. 31. *And his diſciples ſaid unto him,* &c.] *Peter*, and they that were with him; after the croud that were about him denied that any of them had touched him; ſee *Luke* viii. 45. *thou ſeeſt the multitude thronging thee, and ſayeſt thou who touched me?* They ſeem aſtoniſhed at his queſtion, and anſwer with ſome degree of warmth, and almoſt ready to charge it as weak and impertinent; ſince, as there was ſuch a croud about him, preſſing him on every ſide, he could not but be touched by many; and therefore to aſk who touched him, when this was the caſe, they thought was a very ſtrange and unneceſſary queſtion.

Ver. 32. *And he looked round about,* &c.] The preſs and throng of people, on every ſide of him; though he knew very well where ſhe ſtood, who had done the thing, and had received the cure: *to ſee her that had done this thing*; how ſhe looked, and whether her countenance, and the confuſion ſhe was thrown into by the queſtion, would not betray her; though he himſelf wanted no ſuch ſigns, by which to diſcover her. Chriſt, as God, being omniſcient, knew who ſhe was, and where ſhe was; and, as man, did not want to ſee her to gratify his curioſity: nor was his view to chide her for what ſhe had done, but to expreſs his well-pleaſedneſs in her faith and actions, and to obſerve it to others, and the cure ſhe had; not in an oſtentatious way, to gain glory to himſelf, but to commend her faith, and encourage others in the exerciſe of it on him; and eſpecially *Jairus*, the ruler of the ſynagogue, who was with him, and in great diſtreſs, on account of his daughter, whom Chriſt was going to raiſe from the dead.

Ver. 33. *But the woman fearing and trembling,* &c.] Leſt ſhe ſhould be reproved, and ſuffer the penalties of the law, for appearing in publick during the time of her uncleanneſs, *Lev.* xv. 25. or that Chriſt was diſpleaſed with her, for her taking an improper method to obtain her cure; or leſt he ſhould recal it, or was angry with her for concealing it, and attempting to go away undiſcovered, and without ſo much as thanking him for it. After converſion, after ſouls have laid hold on Chriſt for righteouſneſs and life; after they have had the pardon of their ſins, and are cured of their diſeaſes, they are not without their fears and tremblings, tho' there is no juſt reaſon for them: they fear where no fear is; that is, where there is no true cauſe of fear; which was this woman's caſe: they are ſometimes afraid they have no intereſt in Chriſt, and in his love; that they are hypocrites; that the truth of grace is not in them; that they ſhall never hold out to the end; that they ſhall periſh, and come ſhort of eternal glory, notwithſtanding they know, as this woman did, what has been done in them, and done for them. *Knowing what was done in her*, and by her; being conſcious to herſelf that ſhe was the perſon that had touched him, and that upon it the fountain of her blood was dried up, and ſhe was thoroughly healed of her diſeaſe: *came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth.* Chriſt did not point her out, though he knew her; or call her by her name, tho' he could have done it, and have ordered her to come to him, and account for her conduct: he had ſaid enough to work upon her, and engage her to come; who came of herſelf, and with the greateſt reverence to his perſon, and ſenſe of her own unworthineſs, threw herſelf at his feet, and gave him a relation of the whole matter, with the utmoſt truth and exactneſs; what had been her caſe, what was her faith, and what ſhe had done, and what a cure ſhe had received; and which ſhe acknowledged with the greateſt thankfulneſs. In ſome copies 'tis added, *before all*; before Chriſt and his diſciples, and the throng of people that were along with him: ſhe that came behind Chriſt, and privately took hold of the hem of his garment, her faith, ſecretly going out unto him; now appears openly before him, not being able to hide herſelf any longer. Nor is ſhe aſhamed to tell what ſhe had done, and had been done in her: truth is to be ſpoken, even all the truth; no one has reaſon to be aſhamed of that, and eſpecially of the truth of grace, truth in the inward parts; this is what God requires, and gives, and delights in. The ſecret experiences of grace in our ſouls we ſhould not be aſhamed to relate to others; this makes for the glory of divine grace, and the good of others. In ſome copies 'tis read, *and told him all her cauſe before all*; her whole affair, how it had been with her, and now was, and what was the cauſe of her taking ſuch a method ſhe did.

Ver. 34. *And he ſaid unto her, daughter,* &c.] Inſtead of reproving her, or ſhewing any anger, or reſentment at her, as ſhe feared, he ſpeaks to her in a very ſoft, kind, and tender manner, and called her *daughter*; which was not only an expreſſion of affection and civility, this being an affable, courteous way of ſpeaking, uſed by the *Jews*; but might ſignify her ſpiritual relation thro' him, being a child of God by adopting grace. She was a daughter of *Abraham* by natural deſcent, as was the woman bound by *ſatan* eighteen years, *Luke* xiii. 16. and ſo ſhe was likewiſe in a ſpiritual ſenſe, being one that walked in the ſteps of his faith, believing in hope againſt hope: and ſhe was alſo a daughter of the Lord God Almighty, as her faith ſhewed her to be, *Gal.* iii. 26. and to this our Lord may chiefly refer; ſhe was one of thoſe that were predeſtinated to the adoption of children, and were given to Chriſt as ſuch; and who are evidentially the children of God by faith in him: and to have a teſtimony of adoption from the Spirit of God, and from the mouth of Chriſt himſelf, as this woman had; how great a bleſſing is it! *thy fait hath made thee whole:* through faith in Chriſt ſh received the cure from him; for it was not her act of faith that either merited, or procured it, but his power, and he himſelf the object of her faith that effected it: tho' he is pleaſed to take no further notice of the vertue that went out from him; but commends her faith, for her further and future encouragement in the exerciſe of it, and for the encouragement of others to believe in him. In the *Greek* text it is, *thy faith hath ſaved thee*; both from her bodily diſeaſe, and from her ſins: not that there is ſuch an intrinſic virtue in faith as to deliver from either; for certain it is, that it was not virtue that went out of her faith, but vertue which went out from Chriſt that cured her of her iſſue; tho' faith was the means of drawing it out; or it was that, thro' which, vertue from Chriſt exerted itſelf, and produced ſuch an effect: and it is as certain, that not faith, but Chriſt, is the author and cauſe of ſpiritual ſalvation: faith looks to Chriſt for ſalvation, and receives every bleſſing of it from him, as righteouſneſs, peace, pardon, adoption, and eternal life; ſo that believers are ſaved by grace, thro' faith; thro' the exerciſe of that grace they have the joy, and comfort of ſalvation now; and thro' it they are kept, by the power of God, unto the full poſſeſſion of it hereafter. *Go in peace*; to thine houſe; all health and happineſs attend thee; let no uneaſy thought, about what has paſſed, dwell on thy mind; be joyful and thankful for the mercy received, and never fear, or dread, a return of the diſorder. Peace is the effect of faith in Chriſt, of pardon thro' his blood, and ſalvation in him; true ſpiritual, ſolid peace is enjoy'd in a way of believing; it is the fruit of a view of intereſt in juſtification by faith in Chriſt's righteouſneſs; and nothing more effectually produces and ſecures it than a ſenſe of all ſpiritual diſeaſes being healed, or an application of pardoning grace and mercy, thro' the blood of Chriſt; which itſelf ſpeaks better things than that of *Abel*, even pardon, and ſo peace: ſuch who are bleſſed in this manner, and walk under a view and ſenſe of theſe things, go in peace all their days, and at laſt enter into peace, even into the joy of their Lord. *And be whole of thy plague*: ſhe was ſo already; but this was a confirmation of it, and what might aſſure her, that ſhe ſhould remain ſo, and no more be afflicted with that chaſtiſement. Sin pardoned, tho' ſought for, ſhall not be found; nor condemnation come upon the pardoned ſinner; he is whole and ſound, and ſhall be no more ſick, and much leſs die the ſecond death.

Ver. 35. *While he yet ſpake*, &c.] The above things to the poor woman, in commendation of her faith, and for her future encouragement, peace, and comfort in ſoul and body: *there came from the ruler of the ſynagogue's houſe certain that ſaid*. The *Vulgate Latin* renders it, *from the ruler of the ſynagogue*, and which is indeed the literal verſion of the phraſe; but they could not come from him in perſon, for he was with *Jeſus*: hence ſome verſions, as the *Arabic* and *Ethiopic*, read, *there came to the ruler of the ſynagogue*; but the ſenſe is eaſy, by ſupplying the word *houſe*, as we do, and as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions alſo do. *Luke* ſpeaks but of *one* that came, ch. viii. 49. whereas this Evangeliſt ſuggeſts there were more, which is no contradiction; for *Luke* does not ſay there was but one; there might be more that came with the news, tho' but one related it as the mouth of the reſt; or they might come one after another with it. *Which ſaid, thy daughter is dead, why troubleſt thou the maſter any further?* theſe brought him the account that his daughter was actually dead, which he himſelf feared before; and therefore they thought it was in vain to give Chriſt any further trouble to drag along thro' a croud of people preſſing him; whom they looked upon as a very worthy perſon, an eminent doctor and prophet, a maſter in *Iſrael*, and one that had done great cures on living perſons in diſtreſs; yet imagined it was wholly out of his power to raiſe one from the dead, of which, as yet, they had had no inſtance, unleſs the raiſing of the widow of *Naim*'s ſon was before this, as indeed it ſeems to be; but perhaps theſe perſons, who were ſome of the relations, or domeſticks of the ruler, had heard nothing of it; for if they had, they might have hoped he would have exerted his power in raiſing the ruler's daughter, as well as the widow's ſon.

Ver. 36. *As ſoon as Jeſus had heard the word that was ſpoken*, &c.] By thoſe that came from the ruler's houſe; as that his daughter was dead, and it was to no purpoſe to give him any farther trouble, ſince all hope of recovery was now gone: *he ſaith unto the ruler of the ſynagogue*; who was overwhelmed with trouble, and quite diſpirited, and ready to ſwoon and die away; *be not afraid, only believe*: don't be diſcouraged at theſe tidings, or diſtruſt my power to help thee, only believe that I am able to raiſe her, even from the dead; and fear not, but it will be done. If a man can but believe, he has no reaſon to fear; for what is it that almighty power can't do? it can raiſe the dead; there is nothing can ſtand in its way, or ſtop its courſe; and faith in it ſurmounts difficulties which are inſuperable to carnal ſenſe and reaſon: this was the ſupport and foundation of *Abraham*'s faith; hence he was ſtrong in the exerciſe of it, and believed in hope againſt hope, becauſe he was fully perſuaded that God was able to perform what he had promiſed, *Rom.* iv. 18, 20, 21. And whereas the ruler had expreſſed ſome faith in Chriſt, that his daughter, tho' at the point of death, would be healed by him and live, provided he would but come and lay his hands on her; and Chriſt had aſſented to go along with him, and had given him an intimation that he would reſtore her; he had nothing to do but to believe in him, that even tho' ſhe was dead, he was able to raiſe her from the dead, as well as to recover her at the point of death, and that he would do it; but, oh! this thing, *only believe*, how hard a matter is it, tho' there is ſo much encouragement to it both in the power and will of Chriſt! Faith is not of a man's ſelf at firſt; it is the gift of God, and the operation of his Spirit; and the lively and comfortable exerciſe of it is owing to the influence of efficacious grace: but if Chriſt, who is the author and finiſher of faith, ſays *believe*, or *only believe*; ſuch power goes along with his words, as doubtleſs did at this time, as cauſes ſouls to exerciſe faith in him; and the more faith, the leſs fear; and ſuch walk moſt comfortably in themſelves, and moſt to the glory of Chriſt, who walk by faith on him. This word *only* does not exclude the exerciſe of other graces, but rather implies it, for where this grace is in exerciſe, generally ſpeaking, others are; nor the performance of good works, which are the fruits and effects of true faith, and without which faith is dead; but it ſtands oppoſed to fears and doubting, and to all carnal reaſonings, as well as to all truſt and confidence in other objects beſides Chriſt.

Ver. 37. *And he ſuffered no man to follow him*, &c.] To the houſe of the ruler, but diſmiſſed the multitude, being not deſirous of the honour and applauſe of men: probably what he ſaid to the ruler, was privately, and with a low voice, ſo that the multitude did not hear him; and underſtanding by the meſſengers that the child was dead, were the more eaſily prevailed upon to depart, ſince they might conclude there was nothing now to be done; *ſave Peter, and James, and John, the brother of James:* three favourite diſciples, who were a ſufficient number of witneſſes; and who were taken alone along with Chriſt on ſome other occaſions, as at his transfiguration, and when in the garden.

Ver. 38. *And he cometh to the houſe of the ruler of the ſynagogue*, &c.] Along with him, and the three diſciples above-mentioned; and the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions read, *and they came*, the above perſons: *and ſeeing the tumult*; the throng and croud of people, of relations, friends, neighbours, and acquaintance, on this occaſion, all in a hurry, and in one motion or another, expreſſing their concern by words and geſtures. *And them that wept and wailed bitterly*; the mourning women, the ſame with the *Preficæ* of the *Romans*, who ſung mournful ſongs, and made hideous noiſes, being hired for this purpoſe; as alſo thoſe who played doleful tunes on muſical inſtruments; ſee the note on *Matt.* ix. 23.

Ver. 39. *And when he was come in*, &c.] Into the houſe, within doors, into one of the apartments, and where the company of mourners, and the pipers and mourning women were, ſinging and ſaying their doleful ditties: *he ſaith unto them, why make ye this ado and weep?* why all this tumult and noiſe? this grief and mourning, whether real or artificial? *the damſel is not dead, but ſleepeth:* not but that ſhe was truly dead, but not ſo as to remain under the power of death: ſhe was like a perſon in a ſleep, who would in a little time be awaked out of it; and which was as eaſily performed by Chriſt, as if ſhe had been only in a natural ſleep; ſee the note on *Matt.* ix. 24.

Ver. 40. *And they laughed him to ſcorn*, &c.] The ſervants of the houſe that had laid her out; and the neighbours and relations that were come in on this occaſion, and had ſatisfied themſelves that ſhe was dead; and the players on the pipe and flute, with the mourning women, who got their livelihood this way; ſee the note on *Matt.* ix. 24. *but when he had put them all out*; of the houſe, or that part of it where he was; that is, ordered them to depart, with the leave and conſent of the maſter of the houſe: *he taketh the father, and the mother, of the damſel, and them that were with him*; either with *Jairus*, who had accompanied him to Chriſt, and returned with him; the *Ethiopic* verſion reads it, *with them*, who were with the father and the mother of the damſel, their near relations, and intimate friends; or rather with Chriſt, namely, the three diſciples, *Peter*, *James*, and *John: and entereth in where the damſel was lying*; into an inner room, where the child was laid out on a bed.

Ver. 41. *And he took the damſel by the hand*, &c.] See the note on *Matt.* ix. 25. *And ſaid unto her*; in the *Syriac* language, which was then commonly ſpoken by the *Jews*, and well underſtood: hence the *Syriac* verſion expreſſes the following words without an interpretation, *Talitha Cumi*. The *Ethiopic* verſion reads it, *Tabitha Cumi*; and ſo do ſome *Greek* copies, and *Latin* verſions, taking it to be the ſame word as in *Acts* ix. 36. whereas that ſignifies *Dorcas*, *a roe*; but this word is of another ſignification, as here explained, *which, is being interpreted, damſel (I ſay unto thee) ariſe.* The phraſe, *I ſay unto thee*, is no part of the interpretation of the above *Syriac* words; but is added by the *Evangeliſt*, as being what was expreſſed by Chriſt at the ſame time, ſignifying his authority and power over death; only *damſel ariſe*, is the interpretation of them. טלי, *Tali*, ſignifies a *boy*, and טליתא, *Talitha*, a *girl*; and ſo they are often uſed in the *Targums* [w], and in the *Talmud*: the one is uſed for a boy of ſeventeen years of age [x], and the other for a girl of ſixteen or ſeventeen years of age [y]; ſo that this child might well be called by this name, ſince ſhe was but twelve years of age; and קומי, *Cumi*, is the imperative of קום, *to ariſe.*

Ver. 42. *And ſtraightway the damſel aroſe, and walked*, &c.] As ſoon as ever the above words were pronounced by Chriſt, ſuch divine power went along with them, that the child returned to life; and raiſed herſelf up from the bed, got off of it, and walked about the room in perfect health and ſtrength: *for ſhe was of the age of twelve years*; and ſo, when alive and well, was able to walk; tho' one of this age was called a little one, as this is by another Evangeliſt; ſee the note on *Matt.* ix. 18. *and they were aſtoniſhed with a great aſtoniſhment*; they were exceedingly amazed at ſuch a ſignal inſtance of the power of our Lord, even both the parents of the child, and the diſciples of Chriſt.

Ver. 43. *And he charged them ſtraitly that no man ſhould know it*, &c.] From them, immediately, and whilſt he was upon the ſpot; for that the thing could be long concealed, it was not reaſonable to ſuppoſe: this charge he gave, to ſhew his diſlike of oſtentation and popular applauſe, and to avoid the envy of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, and prevent the people from making any attempts to proclaim him king; his time not being yet come to die, he having ſome other work to do; and a more full manifeſtation of him being reſerved for another time, and to be done in another way. *And commanded that ſomething ſhould be given her to eat*; which would be an evidence not only that ſhe was really alive, but that ſhe was reſtored to perfect health: ſhe was both raiſed from the dead, and entirely freed from the diſtemper ſhe laboured under before her death; death had cured her of that, as it does of all diſtempers: ſhe did not riſe with it, but was free from it; and was now like one that had been aſleep for a while, and was hungry upon it; as children of ſuch an age generally are upon riſing from ſleep.

## CHAP. VI.

Ver. 1. AND *he went out from thence*, &c.] From *Capernaum*; *and came into his own country*; or *city*, as the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read, the city of *Nazareth*; ſo called becauſe it was the place where Chriſt was conceived, and where he was educated; for which he had a regard, and was willing it ſhould partake of the benefit of his doctrine and miracles: *and his diſciples follow him*; as they did where-ever he went; and which is a true characteriſtic of a diſciple of Jeſus.

Ver. 2. *And when the ſabbath-day was come*, &c.] For it ſeems that it was on a week-day, or on one of the common days of the week, that he entered into the city, where he remained without making himſelf known, till the ſabbath-day came: and then *he began to teach in the ſynagogue*; that is, at *Nazareth*; where he expounded the law and the prophets, and preached the Goſpel: *and many hearing him were aſtoniſhed*. The *Vulgate Latin* adds, *at his doctrine*; and ſo it is read in *Beza*'s moſt ancient copy: *ſaying, from whence hath this man theſe things?* This ſkill of explaining ſcripture, this doctrine which he teaches, and theſe miracles he is ſaid to work? this queſtion they the rather put, becauſe they had known him from the beginning: he had lived long among them, and they knew he had not learnt of men, and therefore wondered how he came by ſuch things as theſe: *and what wiſdom is this which is given to him, that even ſuch mighty works are wrought by his hands?* which were but the other day employed in ſervile work, and mechanical operations.

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[w] Targum Hieroſ. in Deut. xxii. 21. & Targum Sheni in Eſther. ii. 9.

[x] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 142. 2. Gloſſ. in ib.

[y] Ib. fol. 91. 2.

Ver. 3. *Is not this the carpenter?* &c.] Some copies read, *the carpenter's ſon*, as in *Matt.* xiii. 55. and ſo the *Arabic* and *Ethiopic* verſions; but all the ancient copies, *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, and *Perſic* verſions, read *the carpenter*: ſuch may Chriſt be reaſonably thought to be, ſince his father was; and which buſineſs he might follow, partly through the meanneſs and poverty of his parents; and partly that he might ſet an example of induſtry and diligence; and chiefly to bear that part of the firſt *Adam*'s curſe, which was to eat his bread with the ſweat of his brow: nor ought this to have been objected to him by the *Jews*, with whom it was uſual for their greateſt doctors and Rabbins, to be of ſome trade or ſecular employment; ſo *R. Jochanan* was a ſhoe-maker[z], *R. Iſaac* was a blackſmith[a], *R. Juda* was a taylor[b], *Abba Saul* and *R. Jochanan*, were undertakers for funerals[c]; *R. Simeon* was a ſeller of cotton[d], *R. Nehemiah* was a ditcher[e], *R. Joſe bar Chelphetha* was a ſkinner[f]; and others of them were of other trades, and ſome exceeding mean: the famous *R. Hillell* was a hewer of wood, and *Carna*, a judge in *Iſrael*, was a drawer of water[g]; and ſo *Maimonides* ſays, "the great wiſe "men of *Iſrael*, were ſome of them hewers of "wood and drawers of water[h]." They ſay, "a "man is obliged to learn his ſon an honeſt and "eaſy trade[i]:" there are ſome buſineſſes they except againſt[k], but this of a carpenter is not one; yea, they ſay, "if a man does not teach his ſon "a trade, it is all one as if he taught him thievery[l]." Nor did they think it at all inconſiſtent with learning; for they have a ſaying[m], that "beautiful is the learning of the law, along with a "trade." The *Jews* ought not to have flouted Chriſt with this trade of a carpenter, ſince, according to them, it was neceſſary that a carpenter, in ſome caſes, ſhould be a regular prieſt; as in repairing of the temple, eſpecially the holy of holies. So ſays *Maimonides*[n]; "there was a trap-door, or "an open place in the floor of the chamber, open "to the holy of holies, that workmen might enter "thereby into the holy of holies, when there was "a neceſſity of repairing any thing; and ſince we "make mention of workmen, it may be obſerved "here, when there is need of building in the midſt "of the temple, great care ſhould be taken, "שיהיה האומן כהן כשר, *that the workman, or* "*carpenter, be a right prieſt*." Yea, they expreſsly ſay, that the Meſſiah is one of the four carpenters in *Zech.* i. 20. *And the Lord ſhewed me four carpenters*; they aſk[o], "who are the four carpenters? "Says *R. Chana bar Bizna*, ſays *R. Simeon* the "ſaint, *Meſſiah* the ſon of *David*, Meſſiah the ſon "of *Joſeph*, and *Elijah*, and a prieſt of righteouſneſs." This is with ſome variation elſewhere expreſſed thus[p], "*and the Lord ſhewed me four carpenters*; and theſe are they, *Elijah*, and the king "*Meſſiah*, and *Melchizedek*, and the anointed for "war." And one of their commentators[q] on the ſame text ſays, "our Rabbins of bleſſed memory, "explain this verſe of the days of the Meſſiah;" and then cites the above paſſage out of the *Talmud*; and another[r] refers unto it; ſee the note on *Matt.* xiii. 55. The inhabitants of *Nazareth* go on, in order to reproach Jeſus, calling him *the ſon of Mary*; a poor woman of their town, and perhaps now a a widow, ſince no mention is made of *Joſeph*: *the brother of James and Joſes, and of Juda and Simon?* who were all of them the ſons of *Alpheus* or *Cleophas*, who was himſelf brother, or his wife, ſiſter to *Joſeph* or *Mary*; ſo that Chriſt was the near kinſman of theſe his ſons: and it was uſual with the *Jews* to call ſuch an one a brother, and even indeed a more diſtant relation. The *Vulgate Latin*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, inſtead of *Joſes*, read *Joſeph*: *and are not his ſiſters here with us? And they were offended at him*; either at the manner he came by his wiſdom, with which he delivered ſuch doctrine he did; and by his power, through which he wrought his mighty works, or miracles; they ſuſpecting he came by them in an unlawful way, through familiarity with the devil, which they ſometimes charged him with having: or at the meanneſs of his trade and employment; they could by no means think of him as the Meſſiah, who made ſo contemptible a figure, and was brought up in ſuch a low way of life; and the rather, ſince one of their kings in common, was not to be a mechanic, or at leaſt of any mean occupation: one of their canons runs thus[s]; "they don't appoint to be a king, or an high-prieſt, one that "has been a butcher, or a barber, or a bath-keeper, "or a tanner; not becauſe they were unfit, but "becauſe their buſineſs was mean, and the people "would always deſpiſe them." Other trades are elſewhere[t] mentioned, from among whom a king, or an high-prieſt, were never taken; as founders, combers, borers of hand-mills, druggiſts, weavers, notaries, fullers, a letter of blood, or a ſurgeon, &c. particularly ſuch as related to women's buſineſs. Now, as it was not uſual to chuſe any one to be a king that wrought at a trade, they could not bear that the king Meſſiah ſhould be of one; and becauſe Jeſus was, they were offended at him, and rejected him as the Meſſiah. Or they were offended at the meanneſs of his extraction and deſcent, his father, and mother, and brethren, and ſiſters, being all perſons in low circumſtances of life; whereas they expected, the Meſſiah would be born and brought up as a temporal prince, in great grandeur and ſplendor; ſee the notes on *Matt.* xiii. 55, 56, 57.

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[z] Pirke Abot, c. 4. §. 11. T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 104. 2. Cetubot, fol. 34. 1. & 58. 2. Bava Kama, fol. 71. 1.

[a] T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 24. 1. Sanhedrin, fol. 96. 1. Bava Bathra, fol. 170. 1.

[b] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 164. 2.

[c] T. Bab. Nidda, fol. 24. 2.

[d] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 28. 2. Megilla, fol. 17. 1. & 18. 2.

[e] Caphtor, fol. 75. 2

[f] Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 30. 1.

[g] Maimon. in Pirke Abot, c. 4. §. 5.

[h] Ib. Hilch. Talmud Tora, c. 1. §. 9.

[i] Miſn. Kidduſh. c. 4. §. 14. T. Bab. Kidduſh. fol. 82. 1. & Beracot, fol. 63. 1.

[k] T. Kiduſh. ib.

[l] Ib. fol. 30. 2.

[m] Pirke Abot, c. 2. §. 2.

[n] In Miſn. Middot, c. 4. §. 5.

[o] T. Bab. Succa.

[p] Shirhaſhirim Rabba, fol. 11. 4.

[q] R. David Kimchi in Zech. i. 20.

[r] R. Sol. Jarchi in ib

[s] Maimon. Hilch. Melachim, c. 1. §. 6.

[t] T. Bab. Kidduſhin, fol. 82. 1.

Ver. 4. *But Jeſus ſaid unto them*, &c.] The following proverb; *a prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own houſe*; the ſame as in *Matt*. xiii. 57. ſee the note there. Only the phraſe, *among his own kin*, is here added: very probably ſome of thoſe that made theſe reflections, were ſome diſtant relations of *Joſeph*, or *Mary*; for as *Jeſus* was now in his own country and city, and in his own native place, ſo among his kindred and relations; who envied his gifts and attainments, and objected to him his riſe from that branch of their family, which was the moſt mean and abject.

Ver. 5. *And he could there do no mighty work*, &c.] Or miracle; not that Chriſt had no power in himſelf to work miracles, though their unbelief and contempt of him were very great; but it was not fit and proper that he ſhould do any there, ſince ſuch were their prejudices againſt him: it is an uſual way of ſpeaking with the *Hebrews*, when either it is not *fit* and proper that a thing ſhould be done, or they *will* not do it, to ſay it *can't* be done; ſee *Gen*. xix. 22. and xxxvii. 4. and even it is ſaid of God himſelf, *So that the Lord could no longer bear, becauſe of your evil doings*, *Jer*. xliv. 22. Not but that he could, if he would, but he would not; nor was it fit and proper that he ſhould; the ſame is the ſenſe here: beſides, in *Matt*. xiii. 58. 'tis ſaid, *he did not many mighty works there*; and ſo the *Arabic* verſion here, *and he did not many mighty works there*; he did not think it proper to do any of any great conſequence, nor did he. Wherefore the *Jew* [u] has no reaſon to object this to the divinity of Chriſt, as if there was a want of power in him. Chriſt is omnipotent, and he has given proof of his almighty power, by the miracles which he has wrought; and though he wrought no mighty work *there*, yet he wrought many elſewhere, which ſufficiently atteſt the truth of his proper deity: the emphaſis lies upon the word *there*; though he did not work any conſiderable miracle in that place, he did in others; which ſhows, that it was not a defect of power in him, that was the reaſon of it, but ſomething elſe; and *Matthew* gives the reaſon of it, and ſays, it was *becauſe of their unbelief*: not that their unbelief was an over-match for his power; he could have removed that, if he had thought fit, but he did not do it; he, who is the author and finiſher of faith, could have took away their unbelief, as the man that brought his dumb child to Chriſt, concluded he could; and therefore ſaid to him, *Lord, help my unbelief*, *Mark* ix. 24. Chriſt ſometimes required of the perſons he was about to heal, faith in him, that he could heal them; and ſo did his apoſtles, *Matt*. ix. 28. *Acts* xiv. 9. Not that faith contributed any thing to the cure, but it was the way and means in which Chriſt was pleaſed to communicate his healing vertue: beſides, when perſons applied to him for healing, and expreſſed their faith in him, it gave him an opportunity of working a miracle for that purpoſe; but now theſe people did not ſo much as aſk ſuch a favour of him, and ſo gave him no occaſion of doing any mighty work; for which reaſon it may be ſaid, he could not, no opportunity offering: and moreover, ſeeing they diſbelieved him, and rejected him as the Meſſiah, they were unworthy of having any wrought among them; and it was but juſt and right, to do none: nay, it was rather an inſtance of kindneſs not to do any among them; ſince had he, and they had remained impenitent and unbelieving, as he knew they would, theſe would have been aggravations of their condemnation. *Save that he laid his hands upon a few ſick folk, and healed* them. There were ſome few ſick people that had faith in him, and came to him, beſeeching him to heal them; and accordingly he did lay his hands on them, and cured them, which was a way he ſometimes uſed: and theſe cures he wrought, to ſhew his power, what he could do, and what benefits they might have enjoyed by him, and to leave them inexcuſable.

Ver. 6. *And he marvelled becauſe of their unbelief*, &c.] Which was the reaſon, as *Matthew* ſays, ch. xiii. 58. why he did not many mighty works there, becauſe they continued their prejudices againſt him, and their unbelief in him, notwithſtanding what he did do, which was matter of admiration to him; wherefore he took his leave of them, as an ungrateful and unworthy people; and it is never after obſerved, that he returned there any more. It was a ſurprize to Chriſt, as man, that his countrymen ſhould not believe in him, but reject him as the Meſſiah, on account of the above things; ſince they knew his parentage and education, and mean employ among them, even almoſt to that time; and yet ſuch were his miniſtry and miracles, and ſuch were his wiſdom and power he was poſſeſſed of, that they could not account for; they might at leaſt have concluded, ſeeing it was clear to them he had not them from men, that he had a miſſion and commiſſion from God, and was qualified by him for ſuch ſervice and work; though they might have carried their reaſonings further, and it was marvellous they ſhould not, and have believed him to be more than a man, to have been a divine perſon, and the true Meſſiah: the proofs of Chriſt's deity and Meſſiahſhip are ſo plain and inconteſtable, that it is amazing that there ſhould be any, who have read them or heard of them, that ſhould be deiſts, or continue unbelievers. Such unbelief muſt be owing to a wretched ſtupidity, and judicial blindneſs of mind. *And he went round about the villages teaching*: he took a circuit throughout all the little towns and villages round about *Nazareth*, inſtructing the ignorant country people, in the things concerning the kingdom of God.

Ver. 7. *And he called unto him the twelve*, &c.] *His twelve diſciples*, as ſome copies read; whom he had before called by his grace, and had appointed and ordained them his apoſtles, but had not yet publickly ſent forth; in order to which, he now called them to him, and gave them their commiſſion, qualifications, and inſtructions: *and began to ſend them forth by two and two*: he firſt ſent forth one couple, and then another; the reaſon of his ſending them by pairs, was partly for the ſake of company, and that they might be uſeful and aſſiſting to one another; and partly to ſhew their agreement in doctrine; and that they might be proper and ſufficient witneſſes of it, whereby it might be eſtabliſhed; and the rather, being thus ſent by pairs into different parts, their meſſage would be the ſooner diſpatched, than if they had all went together: *and gave them power over unclean ſpirits*: that is, *to caſt them out*; as it is expreſſed in *Matt*. x. 1. ſee the note there; and which is here added in the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions. Many things are omitted by this Evangeliſt, which are mentioned by *Matthew*: he does not give us the names of the twelve apoſtles; the reaſon of that indeed may be, becauſe they are related by him in ch. iii. 16—19. and he did not chuſe to repeat them here: nor does he take any notice of the places where the apoſtles were to go, and where not; nor of the perſons to whom, or not; as not into the way of the *Gentiles*, nor into any of the cities of the *Samaritans*, but to the loſt ſheep of the houſe of *Iſrael*: nor does he ſay any thing of the ſubject matter of their miniſtry, or what they had in charge to publiſh; as that the kingdom of heaven is at hand, or the Goſpel-diſpenſation: nor does he obſerve the ſeveral things they were to do in confirmation of their doctrine and miſſion; as healing the ſick, cleanſing lepers, raiſing the dead, and caſting out devils: he only relates the directions given them with reſpect to their journey, in the following verſes; the reaſon of all which ſeems to be, becauſe he refers not to the ſame time as *Matthew* does, to their appointment and ordination; but to the time they were ſent out, and proceeded on their journey.

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[u] MS. Luſit. N. 83. apud Kidder, Demonſtr. of the Meſſiah, par. 2. p. 59.

Ver. 8. *And commanded them that they ſhould take nothing for* their *journey*, &c.] To accommodate them in it, except thoſe things after directed to: *ſave a ſtaff only*; a ſingle one, for ſtaves in the plural number are forbidden, *Matt.* x. 10. ſee the note there; *no ſcrip, no bread, no money in their purſe.* Travellers uſed to put their bread, or any other ſort of food into their ſcrips, and their money in their girdles; but the diſciples were not allowed to carry either, becauſe proviſion were to be made for them wherever they came at free coſt, it being what their labour was worthy of; ſee the notes on *Matt.* x. 9, 10.

Ver. 9. *But be ſhod with ſandals*, &c.] Which were different from ſhoes, and more fit to travel with, and therefore allowed when ſhoes were forbidden; ſee the note on *Matt.* x. 10. though ſome think there was no difference between ſhoes and ſandals, and that Chriſt in *Matt.* x. 10. does not forbid the taking of ſhoes, but two pair of ſhoes; as not two coats, nor two ſtaves, but one of a ſort only. *And not put on two coats*; that is, at a time; an inner and an outward one, or one at one time, and another at another: they were forbid change of raiment; the reaſons for it ſee in the note on *Matt.* x. 10. From all which it appears, that as a miniſter of the Goſpel ought not to be a worldly minded man, that minds earth and earthly things, and ſeeks to amaſs wealth and riches to himſelf, and preaches for filthy lucre's ſake; nor to be a ſenſual and voluptuous man, ſerving his own belly, and not the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, feeding himſelf, and not the flock; ſo neither ſhould he be filled with worldly cares, overwhelmed in worldly buſineſs, and entangled with the affairs of this life: he ought to have his mind free from all ſollicitude and anxious concern, about a ſubſiſtence for himſelf and his, that ſo he may with greater and more cloſe application, attend to his miniſtry, to preparations for it, and the performance of it; and give up himſelf entirely to the word and prayer, and not have his mind diſtracted with other things: upon which account it is highly neceſſary, that the people to whom he miniſters ſhould take care, that a ſufficient proviſion be made for him; that he may live without any anxious care and thought about ſuch things, and his mind be more intent about the work he is called unto: and which is what our Lord chiefly deſigns by all this, who has ordained that they that preach the Goſpel, ſhould be comfortably provided for, and live of it; and which, as it makes for the peace of their minds that miniſter, it iſſues in the advantage of thoſe who are miniſtered to.

Ver. 10. *And he ſaid unto them*, &c.] He continued giving orders and directions to them, ſaying, *in what place ſoever ye enter into an houſe, there abide till ye depart from that place*: that is, in whatſoever city or town they ſhould come to, the firſt houſe they went into, they ſhould continue in, during their ſtay in that city or town, and not ſhift from houſe to houſe; ſee the note on *Matt.* x. 11.

Ver. 11. *And whoſoever ſhall not receive you, nor hear you*, &c.] Who would neither take them into their houſes, nor hear what they had to ſay to them: *when ye depart thence*; from the houſe, or the city, or town, in which it is: *ſhake off the duſt under your feet, for a teſtimony againſt them*; that they had been with them, and attempted to preach the Goſpel to them, but they deſpiſed and rejected it; wherefore they departed from them as an unworthy people, againſt whom the duſt of their feet would riſe as a teſtimony, in the day of judgment; ſee the note on *Matt.* x. 14. *Verily, I ſay unto you, it ſhall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city.* This clauſe is omitted in ſome copies, and ſo it is in the *Vulgate Latin* verſion, and may perhaps be tranſcribed from *Matt.* x. 15. ſee the note there; though it is in moſt copies, and is read in the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions. It is certain that there will be a day of judgment; it is fixed, God has appointed it, though it is not known by men or angels: this will be univerſal; all muſt appear in it before God, the judge of all, *Jews* and *Gentiles*; ſuch who have lived in the earlier ages of time, as well as thoſe that will live nearer that day; ſuch who have only had the dim light of nature to guide them, and alſo who have been favoured with the Goſpel revelation: the inhabitants of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, though they have had the judgments of God upon them in this world, they will not eſcape the righteous judgment of God hereafter; things are not over with them, there is ſtill a reckoning to be made, an account to paſs with them; their full puniſhment is not yet executed, even though they have been ſuffering the vengeance of eternal fire; their bodies muſt be raiſed, and they muſt receive for the things which they have done in them, and which they have ſo dreadfully and unnaturally abuſed; and yet, as vile ſinners as they have been, and as ſore a puniſhment as they are worthy of, their puniſhment will be milder and more tolerable, than that of the inhabitants of ſuch places, where the Goſpel has been preached, and they have deſpiſed and rejected it. May the inhabitants of our land, eſpecially of ſome parts of it, as of *London*, and others, conſider this!

Ver. 12. *And they went out*, &c.] From that part of the country where they then were, ſome one way, and ſome another, two by two, with theſe inſtructions, and according to theſe directions; in order to preach the word, and work miracles, in the ſeveral parts where they were ſent: *and preached that men ſhould repent*; both of the evil practices which they were guilty of, and of the bad principles they had imbibed, and change both their ſentiments and their conduct: this they exhorted them to, as *John* the *Baptiſt*, and Chriſt, had done before, who ſet out in their miniſtry the ſame way; and theſe, as they did alſo, preached the Goſpel, and the things appertaining to the kingdom of God, and Goſpel diſpenſation, and called upon men to believe them. For faith and repentance went together in Chriſt's miniſtry, *Mark* i. 15. and ſo they did in the miniſtry of *John* the *Baptiſt*, *Acts* xix. 4. and in the miniſtry of the apoſtles, *Acts* xx. 21. When they preached that men ſhould repent, it does not from hence follow, that they have a power to repent of themſelves: for ſuch is the condition of men by nature, that they neither ſee their need of repentance, and their hearts are ſo hard and obdurate, that they cannot work themſelves up to it, or work it in them, and exerciſe it; this requires the powerful and efficacious grace of God to produce it, and it is a gift of his grace; and if he gives the means, and not the grace of repentance itſelf, it will never appear: but the apoſtles preaching that men ſhould repent, ſhows that they were in ſuch a ſtate as to need it; and how neceſſary it was for them to have it, ſeeing without it they muſt all periſh: and ſuch a miniſtration is proper, to awaken the minds of men to a ſenſe of the need of it, and to direct them to Chriſt the Saviour, who is exalted to give it, as well as the remiſſion of ſins.

Ver. 13. *And they caſt out many devils*, &c.] Which they had power given them to do; and this they did, in confirmation of their miſſion and doctrine, and for the benefit of miſerable creatures, who were poſſeſſed by them; and to ſhew their power over the devils, and as a prelude of what they were to be the inſtruments of, in caſting ſatan out of the ſouls of men, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*; and eſpecially, in the ejection of him out of the *Gentile* world: *and anointed with oil many that were ſick, and healed them.* This they were doubtleſs directed to by Chriſt, as an outward ſign of healing; but not as a medicine; otherwiſe there would have been no miracle in the cure: though it is certain, the *Jews* uſed anointing with oil medicinally in many caſes, as the means of healing; but they did not always ſucceed, as the apoſtles did: on the day of atonement [w], "it was not lawful to anoint "part of the body, as the whole body; but if a "man was *ſick*, or had ulcers on his head, he "might *anoint* according to his uſual way, and "no notice was taken on't." Again [x], "a man "may not anoint with wine, or vinegar, but he "may anoint with oil: he that has a pain in his "head, or has ulcers upon him, סך שמן, *he may "anoint with oil*, but he may not anoint with wine "and vinegar: wine of the ſecond tithe, which "they mix, is forbidden to anoint with; oil of "the ſecond tithe, which they mix, is lawful to "anoint with." . And it is elſewhere ſaid [y], that "*R. Meir* allowed of the mixing of oil and wine, "לסוך לחולה, *to anoint the ſick* on a ſabbath; "but when he was ſick, and we ſought to do ſo "to him, he would not ſuffer us." But that oil was uſed by the apoſtles as a medicine for the healing of diſeaſes, cannot well be thought; ſince oil, tho' it may be uſeful in ſome caſes, it is not an univerſal medicine, which is proper to all; nor were the apoſtles inſtructed by Chriſt in the art of phyſic, but were poſſeſſed by him with extraordinary gifts, to cure the diſorders of the body, for the confirmation of the Goſpel, which they preached; and it is eaſy to obſerve, that healing the ſick by anointing with oil, is joined with the extraordinary power of caſting out devils; and it was the ſame power by which they performed the one, as the other; ſee *Luke* ix. 1, 2, 6. Hence it appears, that this paſſage gives no countenance to the uſe of ſuch a practice in our days; ſince theſe were apoſtles only, who uſed it, who were extraordinary perſons, and whoſe office in the church was an extraordinary one, and is now ceaſed; and healing in this way, was by an extraordinary power beſtowed upon them, which has ceaſed; and therefore the rite, or ceremony of anointing with oil, for ſuch a purpoſe, ſhould be of courſe diſcontinued; however, it cannot be ſupported by this inſtance, whatever countenance it may ſeem to have from *James* v. 14. for it muſt be owned, there is ſome difference in the paſſages: the perſons that anointed here were apoſtles, there the elders of the church; the perſons anointed there, were good people, the members of the church, but here any ſort of perſons, and chiefly, if not altogether unbelievers; the healing of them is aſcribed to the prayer of faith in *James*, but here to the extraordinary power of the apoſtles, by anointing with oil; though it may be, the healing was equally miraculous in the one, as the other: but be this as it will, nothing can be concluded from hence, in favour of the ſacrament of extreme unction, uſed by the *Papiſts*; who adminiſter that to perſons, juſt at the point of death, and that for the remiſſion of their ſins, and the ſaving of their ſouls; whereas oil was uſed by the apoſtles to ſick perſons, and for the recovery of their bodily health. But ſince theſe were extraordinary cures which they performed this way, why did they make uſe of oil at all, ſeeing the vertue of healing did not come from that, and they could as well have healed ſickneſſes without it, as with it? To which it may be replied, that they did not always make uſe of it; ſometimes only words were expreſſed, ſometimes only hands were laid on the ſick, and ſometimes the ſick perſons were healed by handkerchiefs and aprons taken from them; which ſhow, that the *healing* vertue was not in the means, nor was it tied to any: moreover, this was only uſed as an outward ſign of healing, and might have ſome ſpiritual ſignificancy in it; it might ſhow, that they were ſent forth by Chriſt the anointed one, who is anointed with the oil of gladneſs above his fellows; it might be ſymbolical of the grace of the Spirit, which is often compared to oil, which they themſelves were poſſeſſed of in a large meaſure, and which is communicated through the miniſtration of the Goſpel; and it might be ſignificative of the Goſpel itſelf, which brings light and joy, health and comfort along with it, to the ſouls of the men, which they were the happy meſſengers of.

Ver. 14. *And king Herod heard* of him, &c.] *Of Jeſus*, as the *Syriac* verſion ſupplies it; or *the miracles of Jeſus*, as the *Perſic* verſion. This *Herod* here called a *king*, as he might be by his courtiers, and the common people, is the ſame with the *Tetrarch* in *Matt.* xiv. 1. *Luke* ix. 7. for he was only *Tetrarch* of *Galilee*. This was *Herod Antipater*, the ſon of *Herod* the great; the fame of Jeſus reached his ears, he being governor of thoſe parts, which were moſtly viſited by Chriſt: *for his name was ſpread abroad*; by means of his miniſtry and miracles, and through thoſe of his diſciples, whom he had ſent two by two into all parts of the country: *and he ſaid that John the Baptiſt was riſen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do ſhew forth themſelves in him*; for *Herod* had ſome time before put *John* to death; and hearing of theſe wonderful things that were done by Chriſt, his conſcience ſmote him for the murder of *John*; and ſuch a thought ſtruck into his mind, that he was riſen from the dead, and did theſe miracles: and the more he thought of it, the more ſtrongly he was perſuaded of it; and told it to his courtiers with a great deal of aſſurance, that it was certainly he; ſee the note on *Matt.* xiv. 2.

Ver. 15. *Others ſaid that it is Elias*, &c.] This was the opinion, either of many of the *Jews*, who expected that *Elias* the *Tiſhbite* would come in perſon, before the coming of the Meſſiah; and thought by the appearance and wonderful works of Jeſus, that he was now come: or of *Herod*'s courtiers, who ſaid this to divert him, from his notion of *John* the *Baptiſt*, which they might perceive was very diſtreſſing to him; though the former ſeems rather to be the ſenſe: *others ſaid, that it is a prophet*; or *the prophet*, that was to come, whom *Moſes* had ſpoken of, and the *Jews* expected; this was the opinion of others of them: *or as one of the prophets*. The word ἢ, *or*, is left out in ſome copies; and ſo it is in the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions; and then the ſenſe is, this new prophet lately raiſed up, is as one of the old prophets, *Iſaiah*, *Jeremiah*, and others; or one of them had riſen up.

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[w] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 77. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Shebitat Aſhur, c. 3. §. 9.

[x] T. Hieroſ. Maaſer Sheni, fol. 53. 2.

[y] Ib. Beracot, fol. 3. 1. & Sabbat, fol. 14. 3.

Ver. 16. *But when Herod heard* thereof, &c.] Either of Chriſt, or rather of the different opinions about him, *he ſaid, it is John, whom I beheaded*: the thought ſtuck cloſe to him, and continued with him; he could not get rid of it, nor perſuade himſelf to the contrary; nor could any of his ſervants get him off of it, but he affirmed it with the greateſt aſſurance imaginable. Theſe different ſentiments of the people concerning Jeſus, greatly perplexed the mind of *Herod*, as appears from *Luke* ix. 7, 8, 9. for it was firſt given out by others, and not by *Herod*, that *John* the *Baptiſt* was riſen from the dead; which he hearing of, gave him great uneaſineſs: he thoroughly conſidered the matter; he called to mind how he had uſed him, impriſoned him, and put him to death. At firſt he could not receive it, that ſince he was beheaded by him, he ſhould be reſtored to life; but hearing of the miracles that were done by him, his conſcience accuſed him, his fancy worked, and at length he firmly believed it, that he muſt be riſen: and this ſentiment, which he himſelf gave into at laſt, diſtreſſed him above all the reſt, becauſe of his concern in his death, fearing he was come to life to take vengeance on him: it might not ſit very eaſy upon his mind, to hear that *Elias* had appeared, the fore-runner of the Meſſiah, the king of the *Jews*; who himſelf might be quickly expected, and who he might fear, would ſeize upon, and take away that part of the kingdom which he was poſſeſſed of: and even to be told, that one of the prophets was riſen from the dead, might be ſhocking to him; imagining that ſomething of conſiderble moment was to be done, ſome revolution to e made; that the people would be ſtirred up by im, to attempt a change of government: but the rſt of theſe made the greateſt impreſſion on him, nd what he could not get off, but fully gave into, s a thing unqueſtionable. He owns he beheaded *John*; he was conſcious to himſelf of the ſin, and onfeſſes it; he does not lay it to the charge of *Hedias* and her daughter, though they requeſted it; e guilt of it lay upon his conſcience, and he eaded this appearance of *John*, as he fancied. nd if he was a *Sadducee* before, as he has been ought to be, he now changed his mind, and beved a reſurrection from the dead. So men may convinced of ſin, and entertain other and better tions of religion, and yet not be converted rſons.

Ver. 17. *For Herod himſelf had ſent forth*, &c.] ne of his guard, a detachment of ſoldiers, *and hold upon John*; who ſeized upon him, and k him up: *and bound him in priſon*; in the caſtle of *Machærus*: *for Herodias ſake, his brother Philip's wife, for he had married her*; whilſt his brother was living, and who had had children by her; ſee the note on *Matt.* xiv. 3.

Ver. 18. *For John had ſaid unto Herod*, &c.] He had been perſonally with him, and had plainly and freely told him of his ſin, and faithfully reproved him for it; alledging what he had done, was contrary to the law of God: *it is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xiv. 4.

Ver. 19. *Therefore Herodias had a quarrel againſt him*, &c.] Was angry with him, conceived wrath, and laid up hatred againſt him, and was an adverſary to him; which is the ſenſe of the *Oriental* verſions. She bore him an inward grudge, and lay in wait to take the firſt opportunity of diſpatching him: *and would have killed him, but ſhe could not*; being hindered by *Herod*, who as yet would not ſuffer it; partly through fear of the people, and partly through the reſpect he had for *John*.

Ver. 20. *For Herod feared John*, &c.] Had him in great reſpect; he had a great veneration for him; which was the reaſon that *Herodias* could not as yet accompliſh her deſign againſt him, and vent her rage upon him. Though ſome underſtand this not of his reverence, but of his dread of him: he knew as follows, that he was a man exemplary for juſtice and holineſs, which gained him great eſteem among the people; wherefore, though *Herod*, as well as *Herodias*, could very willingly have put him to death, yet, as *Matthew* ſays, *he feared the multitude*; who in general, had an high opinion of *John* as a prophet, and a holy good man: he feared therefore to take away his life, leſt they ſhould riſe and rebel againſt him; nor would he ſuffer *Herodias* to do it, for the ſame reaſon. *Knowing that he was a juſt man, and an holy*; by what he had heard of him, by his own converſation with him, and the obſervation he had made upon his tenets, and conduct. He was a *juſt*, or *righteous* man, in a civil, legal, and evangelical ſenſe: he did that which was juſt, between man and man; he did to others, as he would be done by himſelf; he was outwardly righteous before men, he lived ſoberly and righteouſly; nor was he chargeable with any notorious breach of the law; his converſation was ſtrictly moral: and he was juſt, or righteous before God, through the righteouſneſs of Chriſt imputed to him; in whom he believed, and to whom he looked as the Lamb of God, that taketh away the ſin of the world: but it was in the former ſenſe, that he was known by *Herod* to be a juſt man; who only could paſs ſuch a judgment upon him, by his outward conduct and manner of life: and ſo as he had true principles of internal holineſs wrought in him by the Spirit of God, with which he was filled from his mother's womb; he was externally holy in his walk and converſation, which was viſible to others, and was taken notice of by this wicked prince: the former of theſe characters may regard his juſtice, uprightneſs, and integrity among men; the latter, his piety and devotion unto God: and the whole agrees with the account the *Jewiſh* hiſtorian [z] gives of him, that he was "an excellent "good man, who ſtirred up the *Jews* to the ſtudy "of virtue, and eſpecially piety and juſtice." Theſe were epithets, which uſed to be given to men, famous for religion and piety; ſo we read of *Simeon*, צדיק, *the juſt* [a], and of *R. Simeon*, חסידא, *the holy one* [b]: *and obſerved him*; or *kept him* in cuſtody, in priſon, as the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, and *Ethiopic* render it; and did not put him to death, but preſerved him from the deſigns of *Herodias* againſt him. Or he obſerved and took notice of what he had heard him ſay in his miniſtry; he laid it up, and kept it in his mind, and memory; the remembrance of which kept him in awe, and he durſt not, and could not for the preſent, give heed to the ſollicitations of *Herodias*, or ſuffer her to take away his life: and he alſo obſerved his exemplary life and converſation, which was ſo juſt and upright, that his conſcience would not admit him, to give him up to her will and pleaſure. *And when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly:* when he heard *John* explain the law and the prophets, open the writings of the Old Teſtament, preach the doctrine of repentance towards God, and faith in the Meſſiah to come; ſet forth the evil, danger, and puniſhment of ſin, and exhorted to a holy life and converſation; taught the doctrine of baptiſm for the remiſſion of ſin by Chriſt, and ſpoke of the glories and happineſs of a future ſtate, and of the nature of the Goſpel diſpenſation, juſt now uſhering in; *Herod*, like one of the ſtony ground hearers, received the word with joy, was pleaſed with it, and in ſome things outwardly reformed; but the word did not take root in his heart, and therefore what external effects it produced, came to nothing; nor was he able to withſtand the luſts and corruptions of his heart. The ſenſe ſeems to be, that while he was hearing *John*, his natural affections were moved, and he had a kind of pleaſure in the things he delivered; juſt as the *Jews*, for a ſeaſon rejoiced in his light, *John* v. 35. his natural conſcience dictating to him, that the things which were ſpoken, were right, and juſt, and good; and they were delivered in ſuch a ſolemn and ſtriking manner, as commanded attention and awe; and were things of ſuch a nature and importance, that from a principle of ſelf-love, he could not but wiſh himſelf an intereſt in: and ſo far they had ſuch an influence upon him, as to engage him to do many things in an external way, which had the appearance of good, at leaſt of moral good: ſo that it is manifeſt from hence, that perſons may have a natural affection for the miniſtry of the word, and ſeem delighted with it for a while; yea, may do a great many good actions, which ſeem to be ſuch; and yet the word come in word only, and not in power: there may be all this, and yet true grace may not be wrought, and the word not be the engrafted word, which is able to ſave. In one of *Beza*'s copies, and ſo in one of *Stephens*'s, and in the *Coptic* verſion, inſtead of *he did many things*, it is read, *he heſitated much*; he was perplexed and diſtreſſed, he did not know what to do with himſelf; his conſcience was uneaſy, ſome things were pleaſing to him, and others greatly afflicted him; his mind was diſtracted, he could not tell what to think, ſay, or do: however, it had ſuch an effect upon him, that he had ſome reſpect for *John*; a veneration of him; at leaſt, ſome fear and dread of him, which kept him from taking away his life, or ſuffering any others to do it.

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[z] Joſeph. Antiqu. l. 18 c. 7.

[a] Pirke Abot, c. 1. §. 2.

[b] T. Bab. Succah, fol. 52. 2.

Ver. 21. *And when a convenient day was come*, &c.] For *Herodias*; who had long ſought and watched for an opportunity of avenging herſelf on *John*, and ſuch a time *Herod*'s birth-day proved; though ſome think, that this phraſe is the ſame with, יום טוב, *a good-day*; often uſed by the *Jews* for a feſtival; any one of their feaſt-days; there is a tract in their *Miſna* which bears this name; and that ſuch a day was this. But not one of the feſtivals of the *Jews* was this, as either their paſſover, or pentecoſt, or feaſt of tabernacles, which *Herod* had no regard to; but his own birth-day, which he kept as a feſtival, in eating, and drinking, and dancing; and ſo was a very opportune and ſeaſonable time for *Herodias* to take the advantage of *Herod* when in a good humour, amidſt his company, and in his cups, to ſollicit that, which ſhe had often done without ſucceſs: and ſo it was now, *that Herod on his birth-day made a ſupper to his Lords, high captains, and chief eſtates of Galilee:* this birth-day, was either the day of his natural, or civil birth; the day when he was born into the world, or of his acceſſion to the throne; ſee the note on *Matt.* xiv. 6. when he made a grand entertainment in the evening for his nobles, and the officers of the army, the captains of thouſands, and the principal men, thoſe of the firſt rank and quality in *Galilee*, of which he was *Tetrarch*.

Ver. 22. *And when the daughter of the ſaid Herodias came in*, &c.] To the hall, where *Herod* and his gueſts were, after ſupper was over; or rather, whilſt at it: ſhe is called the daughter of *Herodias*, and not of *Herod*; ſhe having had her not by him, but by his brother *Philip:* her name is thought to be *Salome*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xiv. 6. *and danced and pleaſed Herod, and them that were with him*; at ſupper, his lords, captains, and principal men in his dominions; ſee the note as before. *The king ſaid unto the damſel, aſk of me whatſoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee*; which ſhows how exceedingly pleaſed he was; and the more, in that ſhe gave ſuch general pleaſure to his whole company.

Ver. 23. *And he ſware unto her*, &c.] He added an oath to what he had before ſaid, the more to confirm it, and to encourage her in her requeſt, and which he repeated in ſtronger language: *whatſoever thou ſhalt aſk of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xiv. 7.

Ver. 24. *And ſhe went forth and ſaid unto her mother*, &c.] The king having made ſuch a promiſe to her, and annexed his oath to it, ſhe thought proper before ſhe aſked any thing of him, to withdraw from the hall and company, and conſider with herſelf, and conſult with her mother, who was not at the entertainment; it being not uſual in thoſe eaſtern countries, for women to ſit at table, at any grand feſtival; to whom ſhe reported the offer the king had made, and deſired ſhe would be pleaſed to direct her, what requeſt to make: ſaying, *what ſhall I aſk?* To which her mother made anſwer, without taking any further time to think of it, being prepared for it, and determined in her mind, whenever ſhe had an opportunity of aſking a favour of the king, what it ſhould be: *and ſhe ſaid the head of John the Baptiſt.* So ſweet is revenge that to have her will on that great and good man was more to her, than to have half the king's dominions.

Ver. 25. *And ſhe came in ſtraightway with haſ unto the king*, &c.] Having had her mother's advice, and being haſtened by her, ſhe immediatel returned to the hall, where the king and his gueſ were, with much concern, eagerneſs, and diligence *and aſked, ſaying, I will that thou give me by and in a charger, the head of John the Baptiſt:* her p tition proceeding upon a promiſe with an oath, is pr ſented by way of demand; inſiſting upon it, th in a very little time, *this hour*, as the *Syriac* verſi renders it, within an hour's time, or leſs; *and he* as *Matthew* has it, in that very place, and wh the company was there; that orders ſhould be giv to cut off the head of *John* the *Baptiſt*, and that that ſhould be brought, in a large diſh, unto her; and this was what ſhe had to aſk, and inſiſted upon the immediate and punctual performance of it; ſee the note on *Matt.* xiv. 8.

Ver. 26. *And the king was exceeding ſorry*, &c.] See the note on *Matt.* xiv. 9. *yet for his oath's ſake*, and *for their ſakes which ſat with him*; as *Matthew* adds, *at meat*; for it ſeems as if ſupper was not over, when all this was tranſacting. *He would not reject her*; deny her her requeſt, or ſend her away without granting it; which could not be without grieving her, and treating her with contempt, and defrauding her of the promiſe; all which ideas are expreſſed by ſome verſions.

Ver. 27. *And immediately the king ſent an executioner*, &c.] See the note on *Matt.* xiv. 10. *and commanded his head to be brought*; ordered him to cut off his head in priſon, and bring it away forthwith in a charger to him: *and he went and beheaded him in the priſon*; according to his orders.

Ver. 28. *And brought his head in a charger*, &c.] In a large diſh, to *Herod*, who *gave it to the damſel*; the daughter of *Herodias*, as ſhe had requeſted: *and the damſel gave it to her mother*; who had inſtigated her to it; ſee the note on *Matt.* xiv. 11.

Ver. 29. *And when his diſciples heard of it*, &c.] That is, when the diſciples of *John* heard of this barbarous execution of their maſter, *they came*; to the priſon in the caſtle of *Machærus*, *and took up his corps*; the trunk of his body; for his head was carried away, to glut the revenge of *Herodias*; *and laid it in a tomb*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xiv. 12.

Ver. 30. *And the apoſtles gathered themſelves together*, &c.] The twelve apoſtles of Chriſt, whom he had ſent out, two by two, into differents parts, having gone thro' them, and finiſhed the embaſſy, they were ſent about, met together in one place, and came in a body together, *unto Jeſus*: their Lord and maſter, who had ſent them, and to whom they were accountable, as all the miniſters of the Goſpel are: *and told him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught*: they gave him an exact and full account of what miracles were wrought by them, what diſeaſes they had cured, and what a number of devils they had caſt out; and alſo what doctrines they had preached, and what ſucceſs in all they had had: ſo every Goſpel-miniſter muſt give an account of his miniſtrations to Chriſt.

Ver. 31. *And he ſaid unto them*, &c.] After he had heard their account, was ſatisfied with it, and approved of what they had ſaid and done: *come ye yourſelves a-part into a deſert place, and reſt a-while*; where they might be free from noiſe and hurry, and take ſome reſt and refreſhment, after their weariſome journey, hard labours, and great fatigue in preaching and working miracles; which ſhows the great compaſſion, tenderneſs, and care of Chriſt for his diſciples: *for there were many coming and going, and they had no leiſure ſo much as to eat*; the people were continually going to and fro; as ſoon as one company was gone, who came with their ſick and diſeaſed to be healed, or upon one account or another, another came: ſo that there was no opportunity of private meditation and prayer, nor of ſpiritual converſe together; nor even ſo much as to eat a meal's meat for the refreſhment of nature.

Ver. 32. *And they departed into a deſert place*, &c.] Which belonged to the city of *Bethſaida*, *Luke* ix. 10. *by ſhip, privately*; over ſome part of the ſea of *Tiberias*, this place lying on a more remote ſide of it.

Ver. 33. *And the people ſaw them departing*, &c.] The multitude that came to and fro, ſaw Chriſt and his diſciples taking ſhip, and launching off; for tho' they were as private as could be, and intended to have gone in a very private manner, yet the people obſerved them: *and many knew him*; Jeſus; ſome copies read, *them*; and ſo do the *Syriac* and *Ethiopic* verſions; they knew both Chriſt and his diſciples, tho' they were in the ſhip, and at ſome diſtance: *and ran afoot thither out of all cities, and out-went them, and came together unto him*; they went on foot, as they might from *Capernaum*, *Nazareth*, and the parts adjacent, over the bridge at *Chammath* of *Gadara*, to this place, that belonged to *Bethſaida*; whither they perceived they ſteered, and made ſuch haſte, that they got thither before them; and the people that flocked from ſeveral cities met together, and came to Jeſus, to hear his doctrine, and ſee his miracles.

Ver. 34. *And Jeſus when he came out*, &c.] Of the ſhip, and was got aſhore, *ſaw much people*; who came partly from the places where he came from, and partly from the cities and towns adjacent: *and was moved with compaſſion towards them*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xiv. 14. the reaſon follows, *becauſe they were as ſheep, not having a ſhepherd.* Chriſt obſerved, that they were hungring and thirſting after the word of righteouſneſs, and had no faithful, ſpiritual paſtors to feed them with knowledge and underſtanding; for the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* were blind guides, and ſhepherds that could not underſtand; ſo that the people were ready to periſh for lack of knowledge, not having any ſpiritual comfort and refreſhment under their miniſtry: hence they followed Chriſt, where-ever he went, with great zeal and fervency, earneſtly deſiring the bread of life: this moved his compaſſion, ſo that tho' his view in coming to this place was retirement, and that his diſciples might have ſome reſt and refreſhment, and might ſolace themſelves in private converſation with him, and each other; yet poſtponing private advantage to public good, inſtead of reproving them for giving him this freſh trouble, kindly and tenderly received them: *and he began to teach them many things*; relating to the kingdom of God, the Goſpel-diſpenſation, the doctrines and ordinances of it; things relating to their ſpiritual and eternal welfare, the comfort, and ſalvation of their immortal ſouls: and he dwelt long upon theſe ſubjects, becauſe he found they were very ignorant, and needed inſtruction, and were very deſirous of it; as well as healed all ſuch of bodily diſeaſes that ſtood in need thereof; of which *Matthew* only takes notice; as *Mark* only of doctrine; but *Luke* mentions both doctrine and miracles of healing.

Ver. 35. *And when the day was now far ſpent*, &c.] Or *much time was gone*, in teaching the people, and healing the ſick: *his diſciples came unto him*; nearer to him, as he was preaching, or healing the ſick: *and ſaid, this is a deſert place, and now the time is far paſſed*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xiv. 15.

Ver. 36. *Send them away*, &c.] Leave off preaching, diſmiſs the aſſembly; ſee *Matt.* xiv. 15. *that they may go into the country round about*; or *into the fields*; that is, to the odd houſes, which were here and there in the fields; ſee the note on ch. v. 14. *and into the villages*; the little country-towns that were near at hand: *and buy themſelves bread, for they have nothing to eat*: they brought no proviſions with them, and there were none to be had in that deſert place; and it was high time they had ſome refreſhment; for the uſual time of dining was paſt, the firſt evening was come, the day was on the decline, and was far ſpent.

Ver. 37. *He anſwered and ſaid unto them, give ye them to eat*, &c.] This he ſaid to try their faith, and make way for the following miracle: *and they ſay unto him, ſhall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat?* This might be juſt the ſum of money they now had in the bag, as *Grotius*, and others conjecture; and the ſenſe be, ſhall we lay out the two hundred pence, which is all we have in hand, to buy bread for this multitude? is it proper we ſhould? is it thy will that ſo it ſhould be? and if we ſhould do ſo, as *Philip* ſuggeſts, *John* vi. 7. it would not be enough to give every one a little: wherefore they ſay this, as amazed that he ſhould propoſe ſuch a thing unto them; or the reaſon of mentioning ſuch a ſum, as Dr. *Lightfoot* obſerves, might be, becauſe that this was a noted and celebrated ſum among the *Jews*, and frequently mentioned by them. A virgin's dowry, upon marriage, was *two hundred pence*[c]; and ſo was a widow's; and one that was divorced[d], if ſhe inſiſted on it, and could make good her claim: this was the fine of an adult man, that lay with one under age; and of a male under age, that lay with a female adult[e]; and of one man that gave another a ſlap of the face[f]. This ſum anſwered to ſix pounds and five ſhillings of our money.

Ver. 38. *And he ſaith unto them, how many loaves have ye?* &c.] This he ſaid, not as ignorant, but as willing to try their faith yet more, and that the after miracle might be more manifeſt and illuſtrious: *go and ſee*; meaning, either that they ſhould examine their own ſtore, if they had any; or rather go and ſee what was to be had upon the ſpot, among the company, for money: *and when they knew, they ſay five loaves and two fiſhes:* when they had made enquiry what proviſions there were, and the moſt that could be got at any rate, they tell him, *Andrew*, *Simon Peter*'s brother, particularly, that there was a boy among the multitude that had five barley loaves, and two ſmall fiſhes; and, at the ſame time, ſuggeſts, that they were nothing for ſo great a company.

Ver. 39. *And he commanded them to make all ſit down*, &c.] Chriſt ordered his diſciples, without any more ado, to cauſe the whole multitude, men, women, and children, to ſit, or lie down, as they uſed to do at table, when about to take a meal; and as they had no table before them, nor beds, or couches to ſit, or lie down upon, he directed them to place them *by companies upon the green graſs*; that there might be ſome order among them, as at a meal; and that their number might be the more eaſily known; and that all of them might more plainly ſee the miracle that was to be wrought; and the proviſion be more orderly diſtributed to them.

Ver. 40. *And they ſat down in ranks*, &c.] Or *beds*; in ſuch form as little beds are placed in a garden, or as rows of vines in a vineyard, in which form the ſcholars of the wiſe men ſat in their ſchools: it is ſaid[g], “ *R. Eliezer ben Azariah* expounded before the wiſe men in the vineyard “ (*i. e.* the univerſity) of *Jabneh*; tho' was there “ a vineyard there? but theſe are the diſciples “ of the wiſe men, who are made, or placed, “ שורות שורות, *rows, rows*, or *in ranks*, as a vineyard.” *By hundreds, and by fifties*; that is, an hundred in *each* bed, or row, and fifty in *each* bed, or row, as the word ανα ſignifies: each diſtinct bed, or row, had either a hundred, or fifty in it.

Ver. 41. *And when he had taken the five loaves and two fiſhes*, &c.] Out of the hands of thoſe that brought them into his own: *he looked up to heaven, and bleſſed, and brake the loaves*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xiv. 19. *and gave them to his diſciples to ſet before them*; the multitude, in order to eat of them: *and the two fiſhes divided he among them all*; that every one might have a part. The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read, *they divided*; that is, the apoſtles.

Ver. 42. *And they did all eat, and were filled.*] See the note on *Matt.* xiv. 20.

Ver. 43. *And they took up twelve baſkets full of the fragments*, &c.] Of the broken pieces of bread, after all had eat, and were ſatisfied: *and of the fiſhes*; what remained of them: for tho' there was but one loaf for a thouſand perſons and more, and two ſmall fiſhes to be divided among five thouſand and more; yet, thro' the wonderful power of Chriſt increaſing both, as they were diſtributing and eating, there was enough of both for them all, and ſuch a quantity of each left as filled twelve baſkets.

Ver. 44. *And they that did eat of the loaves*, &c.] And alſo of the fiſhes; for they all eat of both: *were about five thouſand men:* the word ωσει, *about*, is omitted in the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, *Arabic*, *Perſic* and *Ethiopic* verſions, reading five thouſand men certain. The Evangeliſt *Matthew* adds, *beſide children and women*.

Ver. 45. *And ſtraightway he conſtrained his diſciples*, &c.] The reaſons of this ſee in the note on *Matt.* xiv. 22. *to get into the ſhip*; in which they came to this place, and which was waiting for them: *and to go to the other ſide before unto Bethſaida*; or rather *to go to the other ſide over-againſt Bethſaida*; for they were now in a deſert belonging to that city: wherefore they were ordered to go, and did go to the other ſide of the ſea of *Tiberias*, or *Galilee*, even to *Capernaum*, as appears from *John* vi. 17, 24, 25. *while he ſent away the people*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xiv. 22.

Ver. 46. *And when he had ſent them away*, &c.] Either his diſciples, or rather the multitude: *he departed into a mountain to pray:* after his diſciples were gone, and he had diſmiſſed the people, he went from the deſert, where he had been, up into a mountain; being a retired place, to ſpend ſome time in private prayer to God; ſee the note on *Matt.* xiv. 23.

Ver. 47. *And when even was come*, &c.] The ſecond evening, and it was properly night: *the ſhip was in the midſt of the ſea*; of *Galilee*, about twenty-five or thirty furlongs from the ſhore; ſee *John* vi. 19. *and he alone on the land*; upon the mountain. This is obſerved, partly to ſhew what diſtreſs the diſciples were in, in the midſt of the ſea, having a hard gale of wind, and their maſter not with them; and partly to ſhew that there was no way, humanly ſpeaking, of Chriſt's getting to the ſhip, in order to go over; and is an illuſtration of the following miracle, of walking ſo many furlongs, as he muſt, upon the water, in a ſtormy, bluſtering night, to get to it.

Ver. 48. *And he ſaw them toiling in rowing*, &c.] He ſaw them either with his bodily eyes from the mountain on which he was; or he perceived in his Spirit, he knew, by virtue of his omniſcience as God, what diſtreſs his diſciples were in; being toſſed about with the waves of the ſea, and were labouring with all their might and main againſt the wind; and were vexed and tortured, as the word ſignifies,

[c] Miſn. Cetubot, c. 1. §. 2. & 4. 7. & 5. 1.

[d] Ib. c. 2. §. 1. & 11. 4.

[e] Ib. c. 1. §. 3.

[f] Miſn. Bava Kama, c. 6. §. 8.

[g] T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 7. 4. Vid. Gloſſ. in T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 42. 2.

ſignifies; they were in the utmoſt pain and uneaſineſs of mind, as well as fatigue of body, aſſiſting the men in rowing; for the ſhip they were in was no other than a veſſel managed by oars; and hard work it was to keep it from being over-ſet: *for the wind was contrary unto them*; it blew from the other ſide they were making to, full in their face, hard againſt them; ſo that it was with great toil and difficulty, that they got any thing forward: *and about the fourth watch of the night*; or three o'clock in the morning: ſo that it is very likely, that as the evening when they took to the veſſel was ſun-ſetting, or about ſix o'clock, they had been nine hours at ſea, and had got but twenty-five or thirty furlongs from ſhore; ſee the note on *Matt.* xiv. 25. *he cometh unto them walking upon the ſea:* being in this diſtreſs, Chriſt came down from the mountain to the ſea-ſide; and then, by his divine power, as the mighty God, that treadeth on the waves of the ſea, he walked upon the ſurface of the waters of it; *as on dry land*, as the *Perſic* verſion adds: *and would have paſſed by them*; that is, he made as though he would; ſee *Luke* xxiv. 28. By the courſe he ſteered, by the ſwiftneſs of his motion, and his ſeeming negligence of them, it looked as tho' he intended to have gone by them, and ſaid nothing to them, tho' this was far from his real deſign.

Ver. 49. *But when they ſaw him walking on the ſea*, &c.] See the note on *Matt.* xiv. 26. *they ſuppoſed it had been a ſpirit*; a phantom, a ſpectre, an apparition, a nocturnal dæmon: *and cried out*; as men affrighted at the ſight, and fearing they ſhould be hurt by it, or that it portended ſome evil to them; ſee the note, as before.

Ver. 50. *For they all ſaw him, and were troubled*, &c.] Had it been only ſeen by one, it might have been thought a fancy, and the effect of mere imagination; but as every one ſaw it, it was out of all doubt that ſo it was, and which gave them the greater concern: *and immediately he talked with them*; as ſoon as they ſaw him, *that very moment*, as the *Syriac* renders it; that ſo by hearing his voice their fears might be allayed: *and ſaith unto them, be of good chear, it is I, be not afraid*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xiv. 27.

Ver. 51. *And he went up unto them in the ſhip*, &c.] That is, after *Peter* had deſired he might be bid to come to him upon the water, and having got leave, made an eſſay; but the wind being boiſtrous, and beginning to ſink, he cried out for help; when Chriſt ſtretched out his hand, and ſaved him; and then he, together with *Peter*, went up into the ſhip to the reſt of the diſciples, as is related by *Matthew*, tho' omitted by this Evangeliſt: *and the wind ceaſed*; from blowing; it was laid at once, as ſoon as ever Chriſt entered the ſhip: *and they were ſore amazed in themſelves beyond meaſure, and wondered.* The *Ethiopic* verſion adds, *at him*; they were aſtoniſhed, when they found it was Chriſt, and not a ſpirit; and they were more amazed at his walking upon the ſea; and they marvelled ſtill more abundantly, when they obſerved that the wind ceaſed upon his coming into the ſhip; their amazement was beyond expreſſion, and therefore a heap of words are made uſe of to ſignify it by.

Ver. 52. *For they conſidered not the miracle of the loaves*, &c.] Which they had ſeen but the day before; they did not attend to it, nor learn from it, as they might, the wonderful glory of Chriſt, and the greatneſs of his power; which was as much an act of omnipotence, as either his walking upon the water, or cauſing the wind to ceaſe, or more ſo. *For their heart was hardened*; or *blinded*; not by ſin, or againſt Chriſt, much leſs in a judicial way; but there was a great deal of dulneſs and ſtupidity, and want of attention in them. The glory of Chriſt, which he manifeſted, and ſhewed forth in his miracles, was not ſo clearly and fully diſcerned, attended to, and acknowledged by them, at it might reaſonably be thought it would; for notwithſtanding theſe miracles, which they daily ſaw, they ſtood in need of divine illuminations, that the darkneſs of their minds being removed, they might behold the glory of Chriſt, as the glory of the only-begotten of the father.

Ver. 53. *And when they had paſſed over*, &c.] The lake of *Genneſaret*, or ſea of *Galilee*, *they came into the land of Genneſaret*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xiv. 34. to *Capernaum*, as appears from *John* vi. 17, 24. for *Capernaum* was in the land of *Genneſaret*; to which agrees what *Joſephus* ſays, that the land of *Genneſaret* was watered with a very excellent ſpring, which the inhabitants of that place call *Capernaum*[h]; *and drew to the ſhore:* this is omitted in the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions; and the *Arabic* reads, *and they caſt anchors.*

Ver. 54. *And when they were come out of the ſhip*, &c.] Chriſt and his diſciples, and were aſhore, *ſtraightway they knew him*; that is, the men of that place, as in *Matt.* xiv. 35. ſee the note there; and ſo the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions read here, *the inhabitants of that country*, the country of *Genneſaret*; they knew him, having ſeen and heard him before.

Ver. 55. *And ran through that whole region round about*, &c.] That is, the inhabitants of that part of the country where Chriſt landed, ran many of them themſelves, and others ſent meſſengers into all parts of it, on every ſide: *and began to carry about in beds thoſe that were ſick*; or lame, or ſo diſordered that they could not walk, or bear any other way of being carried; theſe they brought to him, *where they heard he was:* in whatſoever part of the country they could learn he was in; for he went about from place to place doing good.

Ver. 56. *And whitherſoever he entered into villages, or cities, or country*, &c.] Whether in ſmaller towns, or larger cities, or the fields, where were houſes here and there one: *they laid the ſick in the ſtreets*; or *markets*, in any public places: *and beſought him that they might touch but the border of his garment*; if they might not be admitted to touch his perſon, or he did not chuſe to lay his hands on them: *and as many as touched him*; or *it*, the border of his garment, as they deſired: *were made whole*; of whatſoever ſickneſs, or diſeaſe, they were afflicted with; ſee the note on *Matt.* xiv. 36.

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[h] De Bello Jud. l. 3. c. 35.

# CHAP. VII.

Ver. 1. THEN *came together unto him the Phariſees*, &c.] Having heard of his miracles, and that he was come into the land of *Genneſaret*; they conſulted with one another, and came together to Jeſus, to watch and obſerve what was ſaid and done by him, and take what advantage they could againſt him. These were not of that country, but were of *Jeruſalem*, as were their companions the *Scribes: and certain of the Scribes which were of Jeruſalem*; for the fame of Chriſt had reached the metropolis of the nation; and theſe men being the more artful and cunning of the whole ſect, either came of themſelves, or were ſent by the *Sanhedrim*, to make their obſervations upon his doctrine and conduct; ſee the note on *Matt.* xv. 1.

Ver. 2. *And when they ſaw ſome of his diſciples*, &c.] An opportunity ſoon offered of giving them an handle againſt him; for obſerving ſome of his diſciples to ſit down to meat, they took notice that they *eat with defiled (that is to ſay, with unwaſhen) hands*, and *they found fault*; with them, and charged them with the breach of the traditions of the elders, and took an occaſion from hence of quarrelling with Chriſt. The *Jews* uſe the ſame phraſe the Evangeliſt here does, and interpret it in juſt the ſame manner: ſo, ſpeaking of things eaten, בידים מסואבות, *with defiled hands*; that is, ſays the commentator [i], it is all one as if it was ſaid, בלא נטילת ידים, *without waſhing of hands*; which was eſteemed a very great crime, and eſpecially if done in a contemptuous way: for they ſay [k], “ he “ that deſpiſeth waſhing of hands, ſhall be rooted “ out of the world; for in it is the ſecret of the “ decalogue;” and particularly to eat with unwaſhen hands, was unpardonable in a diſciple of a wiſe man; for they looked upon this to be the characteriſtic of one of the vulgar people, a common and illiterate man: for they aſk [l], “ who is “ one of the people of the earth, or a plebeian? “ he that does not eat his common food with pu- “ rity.” By this alſo they diſtinguiſhed a *Jew* from a *Gentile*; if he waſhed his hands, and bleſſed, he was known to be an *Iſraelite*, but if not, a *Gentile* [m]; ſee the note on *Matt.* xv. 2.

Ver. 3. *For the Phariſees, and all the Jews*, &c.] The far greater part of them; all, excepting the *Sadducees*; and eſpecially the *Phariſees*, were very tenacious of this tradition of waſhing hands before eating: hence *Phariſees* are deſcribed as ſuch, אוכלי חוליהן בטהרה, *that eat their common food with cleanneſs* [n], i. e. of hands: theſe, *except they waſh their hands oft, eat not*; or except they waſh very curiouſly, with great care, diligence, and exactneſs, as the *Syriac* verſion ſuggeſts; and about which there are various rules given, to be obſerved with great ſtrictneſs [o]. Some render the words, *they waſh their hands to the elbow*; and this is a rule with the *Jews*, which is cloſely to be abode by, that the waſhing of hands is to be, עד פרק, *to the joint*, which joins the hand and arm together [p]: particularly 'tis obſerved [q], that “ waſhing of the hands “ for the eating of the offering, is unto the elbow, “ and for common food, to the joints of the fin- “ gers: he that eats with an ancient man, and “ does not waſh his hands to the elbow, he may “ not eat with him.” Well may it be added, *holding the tradition of the elders:* nor do the *Jews* pretend the authority of the ſcriptures as obliging them to ſuch rules; for, they ſay, the command concerning waſhing of hands is, מדברי סופרים, *from the words of the Scribes* [r]; and is מצות חכמים, *a command of the wiſe men* [s]. The tradition is this: “ they waſh hands for common food, but for “ the tithe, and for the firſt offering, and for that “ which is holy, they dip them, and for the ſin “ offering; for if the hands are defiled, the body “ is defiled [t].” And this tradition of the elders, the *Scribes*, and *Phariſees*, ſtrictly obſerved.

Ver. 4. *And* when they come *from the market*, &c.] In *Beza*'s moſt ancient copy, and in one of *Stephens*'s, it is read as we ſupply, *when they come:* wherefore this reſpects not things bought in the market, a ſenſe favoured by all the *Oriental* verſions, for many of them could not be waſhed; but the perſons of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, who when they came from market, or from any court of judicature, immerſed themſelves all over in water, according to the true ſenſe of the word βαπτιζω here uſed: for, “ if the *Phariſees* touched but the gar- “ ments of the common people, they were defiled, “ all one as if they had touched a profluvious “ perſon, וצריכן טבילה, *and needed immerſion*;” and were obliged to it [u]: hence, when they walked the ſtreets, they walked on the ſides of the way, that they might not be defiled, by touching the common people [w]: *wherefore, except they waſh, they eat not*, or immerſe themſelves in water, as well as uſed, טבילת ידים, *immerſion of the hands*, or waſhing of the hands by immerſion; and which, if only intended, is ſufficient to ſupport the primary ſenſe of the word, *baptizo: and many other things there be which they have received to hold*; by tradition from their elders; *as the waſhing of cups and pots, brazen veſſels, and of tables:* and here the word βαπτισμος, *baptiſm*, is rightly uſed in its proper and primary ſignification; for all theſe things were, according to the traditions of the elders, waſhed by immerſion: “ in a laver, they ſay [x], which holds forty “ ſeahs of water, which are not drawn, every de- “ filed man dips himſelf, except a profluvious “ man; and in it מטבילין את כל הכלים הטמאין, “ *they dip all unclean veſſels*;” *as cups*, *pots*, *and brazen veſſels:* very particularly brazen veſſels are mentioned, becauſe earthen ones that were unclean, were to be broken [y]; which were all waſhed before eaten in, even on a ſabbath-day, and that by dipping: [z] “ *diſhes*, in which they eat at evening, “ (*i. e.* of the ſabbath) they waſh them, to eat in “ in the morning; in the morning they waſh them, “ to eat in at noon; at noon they waſh them, to “ eat in at the *Minchah*; and from the *Minchah*, “ and forward, they don't waſh again: but *cups*, “ and *jugs*, and *pots* they waſh, and it goes thro' “ all the day; for there is no fixed time for drink- “ ing.”

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[i] Bartenora in Miſn. Cholin, c. 2. §. 5.

[k] Zohar in Numb. fol. 100. 3.

[l] T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 61. 1.

[m] Bemidbar Rabba, fol. 228. 4.

[n] Gloſſ. in T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 18. 2. Maimon. & Bartenora in Miſn. Chagiga, c. 2. §. 7.

[o] Vid. Maimon. Hilch. Beracot, c. 6.

[p] T. Bab. Cholin, fol. 106. 1, 2. Maimon. Hilch. Beracot, c. 6. 4. Maimon. & Bartenora in Miſn. Eracin, c. 5. §. 1. Zohar in Deut. fol. 115. 2.

[q] T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 12. 1.

[r] Maimon. Hilch. Mikvaot, c. 11. §. 1.

[s] Ib. Beracot, c. 6. §. 2.

[t] Miſn. Chagiga, c. 2. §. 5.

[u] Maimon. in Miſn. Chagiga, c. 2. §. 7.

[w] Ib. Hilch. Abot Tumaot, c. 13. §. 8.

[x] Ib Hilch. Mikvaot, c. 9. §. 5.

[y] Maimon. Hilch. Mikvaot, c. 1. §. 3.

[z] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 118. 1. Vid. Maimon. Hilch. Sabbat, c. 23. 7.

“ ing.” All ſuch veſſels, whether had of a *Gentile*, or an *Iſraelite*, or even a wiſe man, were to be immerſed before uſed [a]. “ He that buys a veſſel for the uſe of a feaſt, of *Gentiles*, whether “ molten veſſels, or glaſs veſſels——מטבילן, *they* “ *dip them*, in the waters of the laver; and after “ that they may eat and drink in them: and ſuch “ as they uſe for cold things, as *cups*, and *pots*, “ and *jugs*, they waſh them, ומטבילן, *and dip* “ *them*, and they are free for uſe: and ſuch as they “ uſe for hot things, as *cauldrons* and *kettles*, *(brazen* “ *veſſels)* they heat them with hot water, and “ ſcower them, ומטבילן, *and immerſe them*, and “ they are fit to be uſed: and things which they “ uſe at the fire, as ſpits and gridirons, they heat “ them in the fire, till the cruſt (the covering of “ ruſt, or dirt) falls off, ומטבילן, *and dip them*, “ and they may be lawfully made uſe of.—This “ is the immerſion with which they immerſe veſſels “ for a feaſt, bought of *Gentiles*; and after that “ they are free for eating and drinking; for the “ buſineſs of uncleanneſs and purification is only “ from the words of the *Scribes* — and none are “ obliged to this immerſion, but molten veſſels for “ a feaſt, bought of *Gentiles*; but if he borrows of “ *Gentiles*, or a *Gentile* leaves in pawn molten veſſels, (made of caſt *braſs*, or *iron*) he waſhes, or “ boils, or heats in the fire, but need not immerſe “ them; and ſo if he buys veſſels of wood, or “ veſſels of ſtone, he waſhes, or boils them, but “ need not dip them; and ſo earthen veſſels need “ not be immerſed; but thoſe that are covered with “ lead, are as molten veſſels, וצריכין טבילה, *and* “ *need immerſion*.” And not only ſuch that were bought of *Gentiles*, but even that were made by *Jews*, and ſcholars too, were to be immerſed in water. “ *Veſſels*, they ſay [b], that are finiſhed in “ purity, even tho’ a diſciple of a wiſe man makes “ them, care is to be taken about them, lo! theſe “ ought to be *immerſed*:” and alſo *tables*, at which they eat; and becauſe their poſture at them were lying, reclining, or leaning; hence the word κλινων is uſed for them here: theſe were capable of defilement in a ceremonial ſenſe, according to the traditions of the *Jews*: one of their rules is this [c]; “ every veſſel of wood, which is made for the uſe “ of veſſels, and of men, as, השולחן, *a table*, a “ bed, *&c.* receive defilement.” And there were ſeveral ſorts of tables, which, by their laws, were unclean, or might be defiled by the touch of unclean perſons, or things: ſo they ſay [d], “ a table, “ and ſide-board, which are made leſs, or covered “ with marble, if there is a ſpace left, in which “ cups may be ſet, they may be defiled. *R. Judah* “ ſays, if a ſpace is left, in which may be put “ pieces, *i. e.* of bread or fleſh: a table of which “ the firſt of its feet is taken away is clean; if the “ ſecond is taken away it is clean; if the third is “ taken away it may be defiled.” Again [e], every veſſel of wood, that is divided into two parts is clean, excepting a *double table*, &c. *i. e.* a table which conſiſted of various parts, and were folded together when it was removed: and theſe were waſhed by covering them in water; and very nice they were in waſhing them, that the water might reach every part, and that they might be covered all over; that there might be nothing which might ſeparate between them and the water, and hinder its coming to them: as for inſtance, pitch being upon a table, whether within or without, divided between that and the water; and when this was the caſe, it was not rightly waſhed [f]: but to waſhing tables by immerſion, there is no objection; wherefore, to perplex this matter, and give further trouble, it is inſiſted on, that the word ſhould be rendered *beds*; and it muſt be owned that it is ſo rendered in the *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, (in the *Arabic* verſion the clauſe is omitted) and in many modern tranſlations; and we are contented it ſhould be ſo rendered. And theſe beds deſign either the couches they lay, or leaned upon at meals; or the beds they ſlept in at nights: theſe were capable of being polluted, in a ceremonial ſenſe; for of ſuch pollution, and ſuch waſhing, are we to underſtand theſe traditions: for thoſe things regard not the bare waſhing of them when naturally unclean, when they ought to be waſhed; and it is the cuſtom of all people to waſh them when this is the caſe. A bed, and bedſtead, are capable of ſuch pollution as ſoon as they are ſhaved with a fiſh-ſkin, or are completed without poliſhing [g]; that is, as ſoon as they are finiſhed; and there are ſeveral ways by which they are defiled. A bed is defiled, טמא מת, *by one that is defiled with the dead* [h]; that is, who has touched a dead body, and he ſits upon the bed, or touches it, he defiles it. Again, a bed that is made to lie upon, is defiled, מדרס, *by treading* [i]; that is, it is defiled if a man, or a woman, that has a *gonorrhœa*, or a menſtruous woman, or one in child-birth, or a leper, ſhould ſit, ſtand, lie, hang, or lean upon it; yea, if any thing ſhould touch it, which has been touched by any of theſe. Alſo, a bed which is not made for to lie upon, but to lay a dead body on, is defiled in the ſame way; and ſo are even the pillow and bolſter [k]. Now theſe were to be waſhed when they had received any defilement, and that by immerſion. Their canons run thus: “ מטה, *a bed*, that “ is wholly defiled, if, הטבילה, *he dips* it, part by “ part, it is pure [l];” again [m], “ הטביל בו את המטה, “ *if he dips the bed in it*, (the pool of water) al“ though its feet are plunged into the thick clay “ (at the bottom of the pool) it is clean.” If it ſhould be inſiſted upon, that it ought to be ſhewn, and proved, that the very bolſters and pillows on which they lay and leaned, were waſhed in this way, we are able to do it: “ הכר והכסת, *a pil*“ *low*, or *a bolſter* of ſkin, when a man lifts up the “ ends, or mouths of them, out of the water, the “ water which is within them will be drawn; what “ ſhall he do? מטבילן, *he muſt dip them*, and lift “ them up by their fringes [n].” In ſhort, it is a rule with the *Jews*, that “ wheresoever, in the law, “ waſhing of the fleſh, or of cloaths, is mention“ ed, it means nothing elſe than the dipping of “ the whole body in water—for if any man waſh “ himſelf all over, except the top of his little fin“ ger, he is ſtill in his uncleanneſs [o].” So that the Evangeliſt uſes the words βαπτιζω, and βαπτισμος, moſt properly, without departing from their primary and literal ſenſe; nor could he have uſed words more appoſite and fit. Various rules, concerning theſe things, may be ſeen in the treatiſes *Celim* and *Mikvaot*. Hence it appears, with what little ſhew of reaſon, and to what a vain purpoſe this paſſage is ſo often appealed to, to leſſen the ſenſe of the word βαπτιζω, *baptizo*; as if it did not ſignify to dip, but a ſort of waſhing, ſhort of dipping; tho' what that waſhing is, is not eaſy to ſay, ſince veſſels and cloaths are in common waſhed by putting them into water, and covering them with it: this paſſage therefore is of no ſervice to thoſe who plead for ſprinkling, or pouring water in baptiſm, in oppoſition to immerſion; nor of any diſſervice, but of real uſe to thoſe who practiſe immerſion, and muſt confirm them in it. Nor need they have recourſe to a various reading, which one of the manuſcripts in the *Bodleian* library furniſhes with, which is, *unleſs they are ſprinkled*; which reading muſt be wrong, not only becauſe, contrary to all other copies, but alſo to the uſages of the *Jews* in the waſhing of themſelves.

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[a] Maimon. Hilch. Maacolot Aſurot, c. 17. §. 3, 5, 6.

[b] Ib. Hilch. Abot Hatumaot, c. 12. §. 6.

[c] Maimon. Hilch. Celim, c. 4. §. 1.

[d] Miſn. Celim, c. 22. §. 1, 2.

[e] Ib. c. 16. §. 1.

[f] Miſn. Mikvaot, c. 9. §. 5. Maimon. Hilchot Mikvaot, c. 3. §. 2.

[g] Miſn. Celim, c. 16. §. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Celim, c. 5. §. 1.

[h] Maimon. ib. c. 27. §. 3.

[i] Miſn. Celim, c. 18. §. 5, 6. & c. 24. §. 8. Maimon. ib. c. 27. §. 7.

[k] Miſn. Celim, c. 23. §. 4.

[l] Maimon. Hilch. Celim, c. 26. §. 14.

[m] Miſn. Mikvaot, c. 7. §. 7.

[n] Ib. §. 6. & Celim, c. 16. 4.

[o] Maimon, Hilch. Mikvaot, c. 1. §. 2.

Ver. 5. *Then the Phariſees and Scribes aſked him,* &c.] Not the diſciples, but Chriſt himſelf; for their chief view was to find fault, and quarrel with him: *why walk not thy diſciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with unwaſhen hands?* or *with common*, that is, defiled *hands*, as in ver. 2. So the words are read in *Beza*'s moſt ancient copy, and in one of *Stephens*'s copies, and in the *Vulgate Latin* verſion. The word *common* is uſed for that which is unclean or unholy, *Acts* x. 14, 28. *Rom.* xiv. 14. *Heb.* x. 29. and ſo ſignifies unwaſhen hands, as we read, and render it: beſides, *common hands* may have ſome reſpect to the hands of the common people, the vulgar and illiterate, who ſhewed no regard to this tradition, but eat their common food without waſhing their hands. Inſtead of *the tradition of the elders*, the *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *the conſtitution of the Scribes and Phariſees*; and which are ſometimes by the *Jews* called, דברי סופרים, *the words*, or *ſayings of the Scribes*[o], and are preferred by them to the written law; and the ſame are commonly called הליכות, *ways*, in which a man is to walk, and according to which he is to ſteer his courſe of life; and to which reference is here had in the word, *walk*, uſed by the *Phariſees*; who ſuggeſt, that theſe deciſions, conſtitutions, and traditions of the elders, were the rule, according to which men ought to order their manner of life and converſation; blaming the diſciples, that they did not conform to them, and particularly in the caſe of eating bread, which they did without waſhing their hands, which was ſtrictly enjoined among theſe canons; and they wanted to know the ſenſe of Chriſt upon it. Tho' they might have known from the ſcriptures, particularly from *Ezek.* xx. 18, 19. that it was their duty, as well as the diſciples of Chriſt, to walk, not in the ſtatutes of their fathers, nor obſerve their judgments, the laws and ordinances inſtituted by them; but to walk in the ſtatutes of the Lord, and to keep his judgments, and do them: not the traditions of men, but the word of God, ſhould be the rule of walk and converſation; and as many as walk according to this rule, peace will be upon them; but thoſe that walk according to the commandments of men, juſtly deſerve the character given of ſuch by the prophet *Iſaiah*, whoſe words our Lord produces in the following verſes.

Ver. 6. *He anſwered and ſaid unto them,* &c.] *Matthew* poſtpones the following citation and application of the prophecy of *Iſaiah*, to the account of the command of God being broken by the tradition of *Corban*; which *Mark* makes the anſwer of Chriſt to begin with: *well hath Eſaias propheſied of you hypocrites*; which in *Matthew* is read, *ye hypocrites, well did Eſaias prophecy of you*; to the ſame ſenſe as here: for the prophecy of *Iſaiah* not only deſcribed the hypocrites of his time, but had reſpect chiefly to the *Jews* in ſucceeding ages, in the times of Chriſt, and both before and after; when they would, as they did, greatly degenerate, and loſt the power and ſpirituality of religion, and had only the form of it; left the word of God for the traditions of men, and were given up to great ſtupidity, and to judicial blindneſs: hence the apoſtle *Paul* refers to a paſſage in the ſame chapter, *Iſ.* xxix. 10. and applies it to the *Jews* in his time. *Rom.* xi. 8. ſee the note on *Matt.* xv. 7. ſaying, *as it is written* in *Iſ.* xxix. 13. *this people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.* In the prophet *Iſaiah* more is ſaid than is here cited; and ſo in *Matthew* more is produced, and the whole is there expreſſed thus: *this people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me*: they preſented their bodies before the Lord in the ſynagogues, or in the temple, and prayed to him with an air of devotion and fervency, and offered up their praiſes to him, for their external privileges and bleſſings; but, alas! this was all lip-labour; there was no lifting up their hearts, with their hands, unto God; theſe were not united to fear his name, but were diſtracted in his worſhip, and carried away from him to other objects; ſee the note on *Matt.* xv. 8.

Ver. 7. *Howbeit, in vain do they worſhip me,* &c.] This is the continuation of the citation out of *Iſaiah*, as is alſo what follows: *teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.* As all theſe traditions mentioned were ſuch; as waſhing their hands before they eat bread, and their whole bodies, when they came from the market, or from any court of judicature, or concourſe of men, where they had been touched by the common people, and the waſhing of cups, pots, brazen veſſels, and tables, or beds; theſe they taught the people, and enjoined them the obſervance of them, inſtead of inſtructing them in the doctrines of the bible, reſpecting the Meſſiah, and ſalvation by him, the right fear, and true worſhip of God, his ordinances and ſtatutes: wherefore their worſhip of him, tho' attended with a great ſhow of ſanctity and religion, was a vain thing, a mere empty thing, devoid of life, power, and ſpirituality, unacceptable to God, and of no real uſe, profit, and advantage to themſelves: it neither iſſued in the glory of God, nor brought any true pleaſure, or ſolid peace to themſelves; and they would find, by ſad experience, that their hope of being in the favour of God, and of enjoying eternal happineſs on account of it, would prove a vain hope; ſee the note on *Matt.* xv. 9.

Ver. 8. *For laying aſide the commandment of God,* &c.] Meaning not any particular commandment, but all the commandments of God, the whole written law; to which they preferred the oral law, or the traditions of the elders, and the deciſions of their doctors. So the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read, *the commandments of God. Ye hold the tradition of men*: very ſignificantly are the elders, whom the *Jews* revered, and whoſe traditions and conſtitutions they extolled above the ſcriptures, called *men*, in diſtinction from *God*, whoſe commands they neglected; which expoſes and aggravates their ſin, that they ſhould leave the one, which had the ſtamp of divine authority on them, and hold the other, which were only the devices of mens brains; *as the waſhing of pots and cups.*

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[o] T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 3. 2.

The *Arabic* verſion adds, *and veſſels*, from ver. 4. and the *Ethiopic* verſion, between *chalices* and *cups*, places *monies*; as if they alſo contracted uncleanneſs in ſome caſes, and needed waſhing: and indeed, there is a tradition to this purpoſe [p], “ דינר שנפסל, *a penny which is rejected* (that is, as the commentators ſay [q], which a kingdom or province has made void, or which wants weight) if any one prepares it to hang about the neck of a child, it is *unclean*; and ſo a *Sela* (which was the value of four-pence) and it is prepared to weigh with it, is *unclean*.” *And many other ſuch like things you do*; ſo many, that it is almoſt endleſs to reckon up. The treatiſe *Celim*, or *of veſſels*, in the *Miſna*, is full of rules, concerning the cleanneſs and uncleanneſs, of almoſt all things in uſe with men; and ſo of what do, and what do not ſtand in need of waſhing. And theſe things they did, not according to the commandment of God, nor did they pretend to it; but according to the words of the *Scribes*, and traditions of the elders, which reached to all ſorts of veſſels: their rule is this [r]; “ veſſels made of wood, and of ſkin, and of bone, and of glaſs, if they are plain, they are clean; but if they are hollow, (or made to hold things) they are liable to pollution.” Which *Maimonides* [s] explains thus, “ veſſels of wood, and of ſkin, and of bone, if hollow, receive defilement from the words of the law; but if they are plain, as tables, a ſeat, a ſkin on which they eat, they don't receive defilement, but, מדברי סופרים, *from the words of the Scribes*.” And this waſhing of veſſels, not only concerned ſuch as were for private uſe, but the veſſels of the ſanctuary: ſo it is ſaid [t]; “ after a feaſt, at the cloſe of a good day, or feſtival, *they dip all the veſſels in the ſanctuary*; becauſe the *common people* have *touched* them at the feaſt, in the time of keeping it: wherefore they ſay, touch not the table (the ſhew-bread table) when they ſhow it to them that come up to the feaſt, that it may not be defiled by touching it; and if after the feaſt, it is found (polluted) *it muſt be dipped*——and all the veſſels are obliged to immerſion, excepting the golden altar, and the altar of braſs.” So that our Lord might well ſay, *and many ſuch like things ye do*.

Ver. 9. *And he ſaid unto them*, &c.] He continued his diſcourſe, ſaying, *full well*, or *fairly*, *ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition:* theſe words may be conſidered, as ſpoken ironically, thus; as pious and excellently good men, you, in a very fair and handſome manner, reject and make void the commandments and laws of God; and it is very fit it ſhould be ſo, in order to preſerve your own traditions, that nothing may be wanting to keep up the honour of them, and a due regard to them. The *Arabic* verſion reads the words by way of interrogation, *is it fit that you ſhould omit the commandments of God, and keep your own ſtatutes?* and ſo the *Ethiopic*, *do ye rightly make void the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own commandment?* Which makes them come nearer to the paſſage in *Matthew*; ſee the note on *Matt*. xv. 3.

Ver. 10. *For Moſes ſaid*, &c.] That is, God by *Moſes*; for the following precept was ſpoken by God, and written by him on one of the tables of ſtone, and delivered into the hands of *Moſes*, to be given to the children of *Iſrael: honour thy father and thy mother*, *Exod*. xx. 12. the ſanction of which law is, *and whoſo curſeth father or mother, let him die the death*, *Exod*. xxi. 17. As the former of theſe commands is to be underſtood, not only of honouring parents in thought, word, and deed, but alſo of providing for them, when in want and diſtreſs, through poverty and old age; ſo the latter is to be interpreted, not merely of wiſhing or imprecating the moſt dreadful things upon parents, which ſome may not be guilty of, and yet tranſgreſs this command; but likewiſe of every ſlight put upon them, and neglect of them, when in neceſſitous circumſtances: and both theſe laws were broken by the *Jews*, through their tradition hereafter mentioned; ſee the note on *Matt*. xv. 4.

Ver. 11. *But ye ſay*, &c.] Your elders, doctors, and wiſe men, in oppoſition to God and *Moſes: if a man ſhall ſay to his father or his mother, it is Corban, that is to ſay, a gift*; in the ſame manner is this word interpreted by *Joſephus*, who ſpeaking of ſome that call themſelves *Corban* unto God, ſays [u] in the *Greek* tongue, δωρον δε τȣτο σεμαινει, *this ſignifies a gift:* now, according to the traditions of the elders, whoever made uſe of that word to his father or his mother, ſignifying thereby, that what they might have expected relief from at his hands, he had devoted it; or it was as if it was devoted to ſacred uſes; adding, *by whatſoever thou mighteſt be profited by me*, he ſhall be free; and not under any obligation to regard and relieve his parents, let their caſe and circumſtances be what they would. This is the form of a vow, which a man having made on purpoſe, to free himſelf from the charge of the maintenance of his parents, when reduced, repeats unto them; or which he makes upon their application to him: various forms of this kind of vows, are produced in the note on *Matt*. xv. 5. which ſee: this was not the form of an oath, or ſwearing by *Corban*, or the ſacred treaſury in the temple, mentioned in *Matt*. xxvii. 6. of which I don't remember any inſtance; nor was it a dedication of his ſubſtance to holy and religious uſes; to the ſervice of God and the temple; but it was a vow he made, that what he had, ſhould be as *Corban*, as a gift devoted to ſacred uſes: that as that could not be appropriated to any other uſe, ſo his ſubſtance, after ſuch a vow, could not be applied to the relief of his parents; though he was not obliged by it to give it for the uſe of the temple, but might keep it himſelf, or beſtow it upon others. *L. Capellus* has wrote a very learned diſſertation upon this vow, at the end of his *Spicilegium* on the New Teſtament; and our very learned countryman, Dr. *Pocock*, has ſaid many excellent things upon it, in his miſcellaneous notes on his *Porta Moſis*; both which ought to be read and conſulted, by thoſe who have learning and leiſure.

Ver. 12. *And ye ſuffer him no more to do ought for his father, or his mother*.] According to the *Jewiſh* canons [w], if a man vowed a thing which is contrary to a command, he was obliged to keep his vow, and break the command: thus, if a man vowed that his father or his mother ſhould never receive any benefit from what he had, but that his ſubſtance was as *Corban*, or as any thing devoted to divine ſervice, he was obliged to keep his vow; nor was he allowed after this, to do any thing for his father, or mother, however poor or helpleſs they might be; unleſs he applied to a wiſe man to revoke his vow, or to give him liberty to do it; for he could not do it of himſelf, as wicked as it was;

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[p] Miſn. Celim, c. 12. §. 7.

[q] Jarchi & Bartenora in ib.

[r] Miſn. Celim, c. 2. §. 1.

[s] Hilch. Celim, c. 1. §. 10.

[t] Maimon. Hilch. Miſhcab Umoſhab, c. 11. §. 11.

[u] Antiqu. Jud. l. 4. c. 4. §. 4.

[w] Maimon. Hilch. Nedarim, c. 3. §. 1.

and though he might heartily repent of it, and was ever ſo willing to make it null and void: and though a diſſolution of it by a wiſe man was allowed of, yet hereby they ſet up their own power and authothority againſt God, and his law; they did not reſcind the vow, becauſe it was contrary to the command of God: for notwithſtanding its being contrary to the command of God, it was to be obſerved, though to the breaking of that, unleſs looſed by a wiſe man, at the man's requeſt; whereby they eſtabliſhed their magiſterial power and authority, without any regard to the honour and glory of God; and therefore what follows, is juſtly obſerved by our Lord; ſee the note on *Matt.* xv. 6.

Ver. 13. *Making the word of God of none effect, through your tradition*, &c.] *Beza* ſays, in his moſt ancient copy 'tis read, *your fooliſh tradition*; and ſuch it was indeed, that a vow made raſhly, and in a paſſion, or if ever ſo deliberately entered into, ſhould be more binding upon a man than the law of God; that rather than break this, he ſhould tranſgreſs a divine command; and that though he might ſee his folly, and repent of his ſin in making ſuch a wicked vow, he could not go back from it, without the permiſſion of a wiſe man: ſhould his poor diſtreſſed parents come to him for aſſiſtance, he was obliged to anſwer them, that he had bound himſelf by a vow, that they ſhould receive no advantage from his ſubſtance; and ſhould they remonſtrate to him the command of God, to honour them and take care of them, and obſerve that that command is enforced by promiſes and threatenings; he had this to reply, and was inſtructed to do it, that it was the ſenſe of the wiſe men and doctors, and agreeable to the traditions of the elders, to which he ought rather to attend, than to the words of the law, that he ſhould keep and fulfil his vow, whatever command was neglected or broken by it. *Which ye have delivered:* they received it from their anceſtors, and delivered it to their diſciples; and 'tis in this way, that all their traditions were delivered: they ſay [x], that “ *Moſes* “ received the law, (the oral law) at *Sinai*, “ ומסרה, *and delivered* it to *Joſhua*; and *Joſhua* “ to the elders, and the elders to the prophets; and “ the prophets to the men of the great ſynagogue; “ the laſt of which was *Simeon* the juſt; and *Antigonus* a man of *Socho*, received it from him; “ and *Joſe ben Joezer*, a man of *Tzeredah*, and “ *Joſe ben Jochanan*, a man of *Jeruſalem*, received “ it from *Antigonus*; and *Joſhua ben Perachiah*, “ (ſaid to be the maſter of Jeſus Chriſt) and *Nitthai* the *Arbelite*, received it from them; and “ *Judah ben Tabai*, and *Simeon ben Shetach*, received “ it from them; and *Shemaiah* and *Abtalion* re- “ ceived it from them; and from them *Hillell* and “ *Shammai*.” Who were now the heads of the two grand ſchools of the *Jews*; theſe received, and delivered out theſe traditions to the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, and they to their diſciples: *and many ſuch like things do ye*; meaning, that there were many other traditions beſides this now mentioned; whereby, inſtead of preſerving the written law, which they pretended, theſe were an hedge unto [y], they, in a great many inſtances, made it void.

Ver. 14. *And when he had called all the people unto him*, &c.] The *Vulgate Latin*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, inſtead of *all*, read *again*, and ſo do ſome copies: having ſaid what was ſufficient to ſtop the mouths of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, about their unwarrantable traditions; he turns himſelf to the common people, who ſtood at ſome diſtance, becauſe of theſe venerable doctors, and called to them to come nearer to him: *he ſaid unto them, hearken to me every one of you, and underſtand*; ſignifying, he had ſomething of moment to ſay to them, which they would do well to attend unto, and what they ſhould be deſirous of underſtanding aright, it being what concerned every one of them; ſee the note on *Matt.* xv. 10.

Ver. 15. *There is nothing from without a man*, &c.] As any ſort of food and drink, whether it be received, with, or without waſhing of the hands: *that entering into him can defile him*; in a moral ſenſe, or render him loathſome and unacceptable in the ſight of God: *but the things which come out of him*; the *Arabic* verſion reads, *out of the mouth of man*, as in *Matt.* xv. 11. for the things are, all ſinful words which proceed from the imaginations and luſts of the heart; as all idle, unchaſte, blaſphemous, and wrathful words and expreſſions: and may include evil thoughts, words, and actions; which actions firſt in thought, take their riſe from the corrupt heart of man; and in word, come out of the mouth; and in action, are performed by ſome one or other of the members of the body: theſe are *they that defile the man*; his mind and conſcience, the faculties of his ſoul, and the members of his body; and render him abominable in the ſight of God, and expoſe him to his wrath and diſpleaſure; ſee the note on *Matt.* xv. 11. The ſenſe of the whole is, that not what a man eats and drinks, and in whatſoever way he does either, though he may eat and drink with unwaſhen hands, or out of cups, pots, and platters, not properly waſhed, according to the traditions of the elders, renders him a polluted ſinful man, in the ſight of God; or ſuch an one, whoſe company and converſation are to be avoided by good men; but that it is ſin in the heart, and what proceed from it; as all evil thoughts, wicked words, and impure actions; which denominate a man filthy and unclean, and expoſe him to the abhorrence of God, and of his people: the words may be rendered, *there is nothing from without a man——can make him common*; that is, as a plebeian, a vulgar common man, a ſinful wicked man, as the common people were, or at leaſt were ſo eſteemed by the *Phariſees*; nothing that he took into his body, by eating or drinking, could put him into the claſs of ſuch perſons: *but the things which come out of him*; out of his heart, by his lips: *thoſe are they that make a man common*; or a vulgar wicked man. The *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *it is not what enters from without into the mouth of man, which can defile him*; *but only what goes out of the heart of man, this defiles the man:* the *Perſic* verſion adds, *and is the ſin of death*; or ſin unto death, a deadly, mortal ſin.

Ver. 16. *If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.*] See the note on *Matt.* xi. 15.

Ver. 17. *And when he was entered into the houſe*, &c.] Very probably at *Capernaum*, and it may be the houſe of *Simon* and *Andrew*, where he uſed to be when there: *from the people*; being ſeparated from them, having diſmiſſed and left them, when he and his diſciples were by themſelves alone: *his diſciples aſked him concerning the parable*; that ſaying of his to the people, which was ſomewhat dark and intricate to them; that nothing without a man going into him defiled him, but what comes out of him: this was aſked by *Peter*, in the name of the reſt; ſee the note on *Matt.* xv. 15.

Ver. 18. *And he ſaith unto them*, &c.] With ſome warmth of ſpirit and reſentment, at their ſtupidity;

[x] Pirke Abot, c. 1. §. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. [y] Ib. §. 1.

pidity; *are ye ſo without underſtanding alſo?* As well as others, and to ſuch a degree; and *yet*, as *Matthew* expreſſes it, ſo wretchedly ſtupid, and ſo long, and as much, as others: *do ye not perceive?* common ſenſe will tell you, *that whatſoever thing from without entereth into the man, it cannot defile him*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xv. 16.

Ver. 19. *Becauſe it entereth not into his heart*, &c.] Which is the ſeat and fountain of all moral pollution; and if that is not defiled, no other part can be; and that that is not defiled by eating and drinking, unleſs in caſe of intemperance, is clear; becauſe food and drink do not go into it: *but into the belly*; it is taken in at the mouth, goes down the throat, and is received into the ſtomach, and from thence it paſſes through the bowels: *and goeth into the vault*; בית הכסא, *the private houſe*, as the *Jews* call it, without going into the heart at all: *purging all meats*; that which it leaves behind, is pure and nouriſhing; and whatever is groſs and impure, is carried with it into the vault, ſo that nothing remains in the man that is defiling.

Ver. 20. *And he ſaid*, &c.] Continued to ſay in his diſcourſe; though this is left out in the *Syriac* verſion; *that which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man*; meaning, not his excrements, which were unclean by the law, *Deut.* xxiii. 13. but what comes out of his heart, by his mouth; or is expreſſed in action, as appears by what follows; ſee the note on *Matt.* xv. 18.

Ver. 21. *For from within, out of the heart of man*, &c.] The inſide of man is very bad, his inward part is not only wicked, but wickedneſs itſelf, yea, very wickedneſs, *Pſal.* v. 9. in him dwells no good thing naturally, his heart is wicked, and deſperately ſo; it is full of evil; and out of the abundance of it, proceed the evil things hereafter mentioned; all its powers and faculties are vitiated, there is no place clean; the underſtanding and judgment are dreadfully corrupted; the mind and conſcience are defiled; the affections are inordinate; not only the thought, but every imagination of the thought of the heart is evil, and that continually: what good thing therefore, can come out of ſuch a *Nazareth* as this? Nothing, but what follows: for from hence *proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders*; which ſeveral things are related in *Matt.* xv. 19. ſee the note there; only the order here is a little different; *murders* which are here mentioned laſt, are there put after *evil thoughts*.

Ver. 22. *Thefts*, &c.] Theſe alſo are mentioned in *Matthew*, but *Mark* omits *falſe witneſſes*, and adds the following; which, excepting *blaſphemy*, are not taken notice of by the other Evangeliſts; *covetouſneſs, wickedneſs, deceit, laſciviouſneſs, an evil eye, blaſphemy, pride, fooliſhneſs*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xv. 19.

Ver. 23. *All theſe evil things come from within*, &c.] All evil thoughts, words, and actions, take their riſe from the inward parts of man; from his heart; which is ſadly corrupted, and is the fountain from whence all theſe impure ſtreams flow. And if theſe come from within, then not from without; they are not by imitation, or are the mere effects of example in others: example may indeed, and often does, draw out the evil that is within; but it does not produce it there; if it was not there before, it could not draw it out from thence: and if all theſe evils come from within, then the inward part of man muſt be ſinful and polluted, previous to the commiſſion of theſe evil things; and from whence ſprings then that inward pollution? It is the fruit of original ſin, of *Adam*'s tranſgreſſion; the conſequence of which is, a corrupt nature, which is derived to all his poſterity: for his nature being corrupted by ſinning, and he having all human nature in him, the individuals of it could not be propagated by ordinary generation, without the pollution of ſin cleaving to them; *who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one*, *Job* xiv. 4. Nor has there ever been any inſtance to the contrary, but the man Chriſt Jeſus; whoſe human nature was holy, it not deſcending from *Adam* by ordinary generation; otherwiſe, all men, as *David* was, are *ſhapen in iniquity, and conceived in ſin*, *Pſal.* li. 5. and this is the ſource and ſpring of all ſinful actions, internal and external. *And defile the man*; both ſoul and body; all the powers and faculties of the ſoul, and all the members of the body; or *make a man common*: theſe ſhew him to be one of the common people, a very ſinful man; as ſuch were reckoned, and therefore are called emphatically, *ſinners*; and are joined with *publicans*, who were eſteemed the worſt of ſinners: from all which it appears, that ſin in thought, word, and deed, is the defiling thing, and is what ought to be carefully avoided; and not meats, and the manner of eating them, provided moderation is uſed.

Ver. 24. *And from thence he aroſe*, &c.] From the land of *Genneſaret*, or from *Capernaum*, which was in it: *and went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon*; two cities of *Phœnicia*: not into them, but into the borders of them; into thoſe parts of *Galilee*, which bordered on *Phœnicia*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xv. 21. *And entered into an houſe*; in ſome one of the towns, or cities, in thoſe parts; which houſe might be, for the entertainment and lodging of ſtrangers: *and would have no man know it*; took all proper precaution as man, that no body ſhould know who, and where he was; that the *Gentiles*, on whoſe borders he was, might not flock to him, which would create envy and diſguſt in the *Jews*: *but he could not be hid*; he had wrought ſo many miracles in *Galilee*, and his fame was ſo much ſpread, and he had been ſeen, and was known by ſo many perſons, that, humanly ſpeaking, it was next to impoſſible, that he ſhould be long unknown in ſuch a place.

Ver. 25. *For a certain woman*, &c.] One way and means by which he came to be more openly diſcovered who he was, was this; a woman in thoſe parts, *whoſe young daughter had an unclean ſpirit*; a devil, with which ſhe was poſſeſſed; hearing of ſome miracles, he had wrought in healing the ſick, and caſting out devils; and underſtanding that he was in ſuch a place, made all haſte to him; and with great reſpect and reverence to ſo venerable a perſon, threw herſelf at his feet, and earneſtly entreated mercy for her child; believing he had power to caſt the devil out of her, though at a diſtance from her.

Ver. 26. *The woman was a Greek*, &c.] Or *Gentile*, an Heathen woman, which made her faith the more remarkable. So the *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions call her; which ſhe might be, and was, though ſhe was a woman of *Canaan*, as ſhe is ſaid to be in *Matt.* xv. 22. for though the land of *Iſrael* in general, was called the land of *Canaan*, yet there was a particular part, which was at firſt inhabited by *Canaan* himſelf, which bore this name; and is the ſame with *Phœnicia*, of which this woman was an inhabitant, and therefore ſhe is afterwards called a *Syrophœnician*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xv. 22. And this place was now inhabited by *Gentiles*; hence the *Jews* often diſtinguiſh between an *Hebrew* and a *Canaanitiſh* ſervant; of which take an [z] inſtance or two; "an *Hebrew* ſervant is obtained by money, "and by writing——a *Canaanitiſh* ſervant is obtained by money, and by writing, and by poſſeſſion." Again[a], "he that does injury to an *Hebrew* ſervant, is bound to all theſe (*i. e.* to make compenſation for loſs, pain, healing, ceſſation from buſineſs, and reproach) excepting ceſſation from buſineſs—but he that hurts a *Canaanitiſh* ſervant, that belongs to others, is bound to them all." And by a *Canaanitiſh* ſervant, they underſtand any one that is not an *Iſraelite*; for an *Hebrew* and a *Canaanite*, are manifeſtly oppoſed to one another. This woman being of *Phœnicia*, as appears by what follows, which was ſometimes called *Canaan*, might be ſaid to be a woman of *Canaan*, and alſo a *Gentile*. *A Syrophœnician by nation*; or *extract*. The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions, ſay ſhe was *of Phœnicia of Syria*; and the latter, by way of explanation, *of Emiſa*. The *Arabic* verſion adds, *her extraction was of Ghaur*; and the *Ethiopic* verſion ſays, ſhe was *the wife of a Syrophœnician man*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xv. 22. *And ſhe beſought him, that he would caſt forth the devil out of her daughter*; which ſhe was perſuaded, by what ſhe had heard of him, he was able to do, by a word ſpeaking, though her daughter was not preſent.

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[z] Miſn. Kidduſhin, c. 1. §. 2, 3.

Ver. 27. *But Jeſus ſaid unto her*, &c.] Not directly and immediately, upon her firſt requeſt; for he anſwered not a word to that; but after his diſciples had deſired ſhe might be ſent away, her cries being ſo troubleſome to them; and after ſhe had renewed her requeſt to him; ſee *Matt.* xv. 23, 24, 25. *Let the children firſt be filled:* according to this method, our Lord directed his apoſtles, and they proceeded: as he himſelf was ſent to the loſt ſheep of the houſe of *Iſrael*, he ordered his diſciples to go to them, and preach the Goſpel to them, and work miracles among them; and not go in the way of the *Gentiles*, nor into any of the cities of the *Samaritans*; but when they had gone through the cities of *Judæa*, he ordered them, after his reſurrection, to go into all the world, and preach the Goſpel to all nations, beginning at *Jeruſalem:* and this order they obſerved in other places, where there were *Jews*; they firſt preached to them, and then to the *Gentiles*; knowing that it was neceſſary, that the word of God ſhould be firſt ſpoken to them; and it was the power of God to the *Jew* firſt, and then to the *Gentile:* and the expreſſion here uſed, though it gives the preference to the *Jew*, does not exclude the *Gentile*; nay, it ſuppoſes, that after the *Jews* had had the doctrines of Chriſt, confirmed by his miracles, ſufficiently miniſtered unto them, for the gathering in the choſen ones among them, and to leave the reſt inexcuſable; and ſo long as until they ſhould deſpiſe it, and put it away from them, judging themſelves unworthy of it; that then the *Gentiles* ſhould have plenty of Goſpel proviſions ſet before them, and ſhould eat of them, and be filled; and ſhould have a large number of miracles wrought among them, and a fulneſs of the bleſſings of grace beſtowed on them. The *Jews* are meant, who were the children of God by national adoption; who were firſt to be filled with the doctrines and miracles of Chriſt, before the *Gentiles* were to have them among them; as they were, even to a loathing and contempt of them: *for it is not meet to take the childrens bread, and to caſt it unto the dogs:* as by *the children* are meant the *Iſraelites*, who were not only the children of *Abraham* by natural deſcent, but the children of God, to whom pertained the adoption, by virtue of the national covenant made with them; ſo by *the dogs*, are meant the *Gentiles*, who were reckoned as ſuch by the *Jews*; and by the *bread*, which it was not fit and proper ſhould be taken from the one for the preſent, and caſt to the other, is deſigned the miniſtry of the Goſpel; which is as bread, ſolid, ſubſtantial, wholeſome, and nouriſhing; and the miraculous cures wrought on the bodies of men, which accompanied it: now it was not meet and convenient as yet, that theſe things ſhould be taken away from the *Jewiſh* nation, until they had anſwered the ends for which they were deſigned, and the *Jews* ſhould expreſs their loathing and abhorrence of them; which when they did, they were taken away from them, and were miniſtered to the nations of the world, they contemptuouſly called dogs; ſee the note on *Matt.* xv. 26.

Ver. 28. *And ſhe anſwered and ſaid unto him, yes, Lord*, &c.] Agreeing to, and acquieſcing in, what he ſaid; which ſhe ſeemed to have underſtood, though delivered in a proverbial way; and very appoſitely replies, *yet the dogs under the table, eat of the childrens crumbs*; which they leave, or let fall: ſignifying that ſhe did not envy the bleſſings of the *Jews*, or deſire any thing might be done injurious to them; only that this favour might be granted her, which ſhe owned ſhe was unworthy of, that her daughter might be healed. She tacitly owns, that the character of dogs belonged to the *Gentiles*, and to her and her's among the reſt; that they were vile and baſe in themſelves, inferior to the *Jews*, as to privileges, like dogs under the table; that the proviſions with which the table of the Goſpel miniſtry was furniſhed, was not for them; at leaſt, that they were quite undeſerving of them: but however, whereas dogs were allowed to eat crumbs which now and then fell from the table, or out of the childrens hands and laps; ſo ſuch unworthy *Gentiles* as ſhe, might be allowed a ſmall benefit or favour by the bye, when it did not take from, and was no diſadvantage to the *Jews*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xv. 27.

Ver. 29. *And he ſaid unto her, for this ſaying*, &c.] Or word of faith; in which ſhe expreſſed ſuch great faith in him: the *Perſic* verſion reads it, *go thy way*; *for with the bleſſing of this word, the devil is gone out of thy daughter:* as if this ſaying referred to the word of Chriſt, and the divine power, that went along with it, to the ejection of the devil; when it refers to the ſaying of the woman, and not to the words of Chriſt, which follow: *go thy way*; in peace, thy requeſt is granted; it is as thou wouldſt have it: *the devil is gone out of thy daughter*. Chriſt, who as God is every where, and whoſe divine power reaches to all places, perſons, and things, had, in a ſecret and powerful manner, caſt the devil out of this woman's daughter; without going to her, or ſpeaking to him, his power had wrought the miracle effectually.

Ver. 30. *And when ſhe was come to her houſe*, &c.] For with thoſe words of Chriſt, ſhe was abundantly ſatisfied, and went away with as great a faith, and as ſtrong a perſuaſion of the diſpoſſeſſion, as that ſhe came with, that Chriſt was able to effect it: and accordingly *ſhe found the devil gone out*; of her daughter; that ſhe was entirely diſpoſſeſſed of him, and no more vexed and tormented with him, but in perfect eaſe, and at reſt: *and her daughter laid upon the bed*; without any violent motions, convulſions, and toſſings to and fro, as before; but compoſed and ſtill, taking ſome reſt, having been for ſome time greatly fatigued with the poſſeſſion. The *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *ſhe found her daughter cloathed*

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[a] Miſn. Bava Kama, c. 8. §. 3.

*cloathed and ſat upon the bed*; for perſons in theſe poſſeſſions, would often put off their cloaths, and tear them in pieces; and were ſeldom compoſed, and rarely ſat long in a place or poſture; but now it was otherwiſe with her.

Ver. 31. *And again departing from the coaſts of Tyre and Sidon*, &c.] The *Vulgate Latin* verſion reads, *and coming out again from the borders of Tyre, he came through Sidon*; and ſo two of *Beza*'s copies; the *Arabic* verſion, which *De Dieu* made uſe of, reads *to Sidon*; as he muſt needs come to it, if he came through it; though the verſion in the *Polyglott* Bible of *Walton*'s reads, מיין, *from Sidon*: but the greater number of copies, and the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read as we do, and which is righteſt; ſince it does not appear, that Chriſt went out of the land of *Iſrael*, into any Heathen cities: and beſides, *Sidon* was further off from *Galilee* than *Tyre*, and ſo did not lie in his way to it; and therefore 'tis not likely he ſhould paſs through that city, in order to go to it. The *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *and coming out again from Tyre, he went through Sidon*: both theſe places were in *Phœnicia*, and it is probable that the woman before mentioned, might belong to one or other of them. According to this verſion, ſhe may be thought to be of *Tyre*, and that it was there, where the above diſcourſe paſſed between Chriſt and her; though ſome *Dutch* pictures, Dr. *Lightfoot* [b] takes notice of, repreſent her as praying for her daughter, at the gate of *Sidon*; and *Borchard* the monk, as he relates from him, ſays, that before the gate of *Sidon* eaſtward, there is a chappel built in the place, where the *Canaanitiſh* woman prayed to our Saviour for her daughter. But Chriſt, for the reaſon before given, could be in neither of theſe places, being out of the land of *Iſrael*; beſides, the text is expreſs, that it was to the borders of this country he came, and from thence he went; and not to, or from, or through any of theſe places. *He came unto the ſea of Galilee*; or *Tiberias*, the ſame with the lake of *Genneſaret*: he came to thoſe parts of *Galilee*, which lay by it, where he had been, before he went to the borders of *Tyre* and *Sidon*: *through the midſt of the coaſts of Decapolis*; of this place, ſee the note on *Matt.* iv. 25. It was a country which conſiſted of ten cities, from whence it had its name: now not through the middle of theſe cities, or of this country, as the *Ethiopic* verſion reads; but through the midſt of the borders of it Chriſt paſſed, which lay in his way from the coaſts of *Tyre* and *Sidon*, to the ſea of *Galilee*. The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions render the words, *unto the borders of Decapolis*, or *the ten cities*; and the *Arabic* verſion, *unto the middle of the coaſts of the ten cities*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xv. 29.

Ver. 32. *And they bring unto him one that was deaf*, &c.] There were two ſorts of perſons that were called deaf among the *Jews*; one that could neither hear nor ſpeak; ſuch were they who were born deaf; and ſo having never heard any thing, it was impoſſible they ſhould ever ſpeak: the other ſort were they that could ſpeak, but not hear; who loſt their hearing by ſome diſaſter or another, but retained their ſpeech [c]: of this ſort ſeems to be this man, who though he had ſome difficulty in ſpeaking, yet could ſpeak a little, *and had an impediment in his ſpeech*; or could *ſcarcely ſpeak*, as the word ſignifies; though it is ſometimes uſed by the *Septuagint*, for one that was entirely dumb, as in *Iſa.* xxxv. 6. and ſo it is here rendered *dumb*, by the *Vulgate Latin*, and other verſions; yet it ſeems to deſign one that ſtammered, and could not ſpeak plainly, and without great difficulty: he was tonguetied, as it ſhould ſeem from ver. 35. This man, the inhabitants of the parts where Chriſt now was, his relations or friends, bring to him, having heard of his fame, and perhaps they had ſeen miracles performed by him: *and they beſeech him to put his hand upon him*; firmly believing, that upon his ſo doing, the man's hearing would come to him, and he would ſpeak without difficulty: very likely they had ſeen cures performed by Chriſt in this way, or at leaſt had heard, that by laying his hands on perſons diſordered, they had been reſtored to the right uſe of their ſenſes, or limbs; wherefore they moſt earneſtly intreated, he would be pleaſed to do the ſame favour to this poor man. The caſe of this man, much reſembles that of a ſinner, in a ſtate of nature, who is deaf to the voice, both of law and Goſpel: he does not hearken to the commanding voice of the law, or attend to its precepts, nor can he be ſubject to it; nor does he hear its menaces and curſes, nor is he at all affected and diſturbed with theſe things; and, like the deaf adder, he ſtops his ear to the charming voice of the Goſpel; he deſpiſes it, and has it in the utmoſt abhorrence: he is deaf to all the inſtructions, directions, cautions, and exhortations, of the miniſters of the word; and even of his beſt friends, relations, and acquaintance: nor can he ſpeak the language of *Canaan*; it is a ſtrange language to him; he can neither talk it himſelf, nor underſtand it in others; for as he has no experience of the grace of God in him, he muſt be dumb, and cannot ſpeak of what he has no knowledge: and indeed, it may be obſerved of ſuch who are under the firſt workings of the Spirit of God upon the ſoul; that they are often as it were tongue-tied, and through fear or baſhfulneſs, or the temptations of ſatan, care not to ſpeak; or with great difficulty, are brought to ſpeak of what God has done for them; and at firſt, it is but in a liſping, ſtammering way, they do ſpeak of theſe things: and as the friends and relations of this man, having a great opinion of Chriſt, and a perſuaſion of his ability to relieve and cure him, bring him unto him, that he might put his hands upon him; ſo do ſuch who know Chriſt themſelves, and have felt the power of his grace upon their own ſouls, bring their deaf and dumb, their relations in a ſtate of nature, under the means of grace; being very deſirous that Chriſt would make bare, and put forth his mighty arm of grace, and lay hold upon them, and work a good work in them, and give them ears to hear his voice, and a tongue to ſpeak his praiſe.

Ver. 33. *And he took him aſide from the multitude*, &c.] To ſhun all appearance of oſtentation and vain-glory: *and put his fingers into his ears*; the finger of his right hand into his left ear, and the finger of his left hand into his right ear: *and he ſpit and touched his tongue*; that is, either he ſpit upon his tongue, for ſo the *Vulgate Latin* renders it, *ſpitting he touched his tongue*; and the *Perſic* verſion thus, *he caſt his ſpittle on his tongue*; or rather, he ſpit on his finger, and touched his tongue with it. Theſe actions were not done as means of healing, or as having any natural virtue, or tendency in them, to effect a cure; but to ſhow the power of Chriſt, that by the mere touch of his finger, and by the ſpittle of his mouth, as well as by laying on of hands, as was deſired, and by a word ſpeaking,

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[b] Chorograph. Decad. in Mark, ch. vi. §. 1.

[c] Miſn. Trumot, c. 1. §. 2. & Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

ing, he could at once remove this, or any ſuch diſorder. The taking this man aſide from the multitude, is an emblem of the Lord's ſeparating his people from the reſt of the world, when he calls them by his grace; for as they are diſtinguiſhed from others, in the choice of them in Chriſt, and in redemption by him; ſo in effectual vocation, they are bid to come out from among them, and by the power of divine grace, they are brought out from among them, and give up themſelves to Chriſt, and to his churches: and Chriſt's putting his fingers into the ears of this man, repreſents the exertion of his power, and his removing by the finger of his Spirit, the obſtructions of ſpiritual hearing; or rather, the planting of the ſpiritual ear, or forming a principle of ſpiritual hearing in the ſoul: and his touching his tongue with the ſpittle of his mouth, may lead us to obſerve the application of his word, through the efficacy of his grace, as a means of looſing his tongue, and opening his lips, to ſhew forth his praiſe.

Ver. 34. *And looking up to heaven*, &c.] To his Father there, by whom he was ſent, and from whom, as man, he received his authority and power; though this was not for aſſiſtance in the working of this miracle, which he had power to do of himſelf; nor do we find that he put up any requeſt to his Father: but he ſeems to have made uſe of this motion, not for his own ſake, but for the ſake of the man; to teach him, that every good gift, bleſſing, mercy, and favour, and ſo this he was about to partake of, was from above: *he ſighed*; not as unequal to the work of healing the man, or as deſpairing of doing it; but as commiſerating the caſe of the poor man, and reflecting with concern upon his ſin, that had been the occaſion of it. Theſe actions of looking up to heaven and ſighing, as they may be underſtood in a ſpiritual ſenſe, or with relation to the ſpiritual healing of a ſinner, may ſhow that ſuch a bleſſing comes from above: it is received from heaven; it is God that gives the hearing ear, as well as the ſeeing eye; and that in a ſpiritual, as well as in a natural ſenſe: and therefore this directs to apply to God for it, whether for a man's ſelf, or for others; and when enjoyed, to look up again to heaven, and return thanks for it: and alſo that ſuch a favour flows from divine mercy and compaſſion, Chriſt pitying the caſe of perſons in ſuch a condition; and he being an high-prieſt that can have compaſſion on thoſe that are in diſtreſs, and having ability to help them, makes uſe of it, and expreſſes both his pity and his power, as in the following manner. *And ſaith unto him*; in the *Syriac* language, which he then ſpoke, אתפתח, *Ethphatha*, or *Ephphatha*; *that is*, being interpreted, *be opened*, both ears and mouth. And this way of ſpeaking is uſed by the *Jews*, of a deaf man being reſtored to hearing, as of a blind man's being reſtored to ſight; of which, take the following inſtance[d]; "a minor that receives (*i. e.* a divorce) "and afterwards becomes adult, or a deaf man, "ונתפקח, *and is opened* (*i. e.* his ears are opened, "or his hearing is reſtored) or a blind man, ונתפתח, "*and is opened* (has his ſight again) or a fool, and "he is reſtored to his reaſon, or a *Gentile*, and he "becomes a proſelyte, is unfit or unlawful (to "carry a divorce from a man to his wife) but, פקח, "*one that is open*, and afterwards becomes deaf, "and then again *opened*; פתיח, or *open*, and afterwards become blind, and again *opened*; or a fool, "and is reſtored to his ſenſes, and again becomes a "fool, he is right or fit," (for the above purpoſe.) It is common with them to call one that hears well, in diſtinction from a deaf man, *one that is open*[e]. This is an inſtance of the power of Chriſt in curing diſorders, merely by a word ſpeaking, without the uſe of means; for what he did before, were not as means of healing, but ſignificative of his power; which now went along with his word, and which was expreſſed with great majeſty and authority: and ſuch a power attends the word of his grace, to the opening of the heart, to give heed to the things which are ſpoken; and to the opening of the ear to diſcipline, and ſealing inſtruction to it; and to the opening of the mouth and lips, in praiſe and thankfulneſs.

Ver. 35. *And ſtraightway his ears were opened*, &c.] 'Tis in the *Greek* text, *his hearings*; the inſtruments of his hearing, and ſo rightly rendered, *his ears*; the *Perſic* verſion reads, *both his ears*; but the word *both* is unneceſſary, ſince the word, *ears*, takes in both. Such a power went along with the words of Chriſt, when he ſaid, *be opened*; that immediately, as ſoon as ever the words were pronounced, the man's hearing came to him, and he heard as quick as ever he did before he loſt it, or as any other man: *and the ſtring of his tongue*; which cauſed it to cleave to his jaws, or the roof of his mouth, and hindered him from ſpeaking plainly, *was looſed, and he ſpake plain*; פשיקאית, *eaſily*, as the *Syriac* verſion renders it; without any difficulty to himſelf, and ſo as to be readily underſtood by others. Thus thoſe whoſe ears are opened, and whoſe tongues are looſed in a ſpiritual manner by Chriſt, ſpeak plainly of what they have heard and ſeen, and felt; they can give a plain and clear account of the work of God upon their ſouls; how they have been convinced of the impurity of their nature, the corruptions of their hearts, and the exceeding ſinfulneſs of ſin, in heart, lip, and life; how they have ſeen Chriſt to be an all-ſufficient and ſuitable Saviour, and have been directed, and encouraged, to go to him for healing, pardon, righteouſneſs, and everlaſting ſalvation: they can tell what promiſes have been applied to them, and what comforts they have enjoyed; how buſy ſatan has been with them, and what temptations of his they have been delivered out of, and by what means: in a word, they can ſpeak plainly of the love of God to them; of the glories and excellencies of Chriſt; of their faith and hope in him, and love to him; and of the operations of the Spirit of God upon their hearts; and of the glories of the world to come, they are in the expectation of, ſo far as they are taught of God.

Ver. 36. *And he charged them*, &c.] The man that had his hearing and ſpeech reſtored to him, and thoſe that brought him, and as many as were witneſſes of the miracle: *that they ſhould tell no man*; of the cure that was wrought, being not deſirous of the applauſe of men; and knowing it would bring upon him the envy of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*; and be a means of putting the common people upon ſetting him up as a temporal king, ſuch as they expected the Meſſiah would be: *but the more he charged them, ſo much the more a great deal they publiſhed it*; or *ſpake of him*, as the *Ethiopic* verſion reads it; for they looked upon his charge merely to proceed from modeſty, and that made them the more forward to ſpeak of his greatneſs, and in his praiſe, to publiſh his mighty works, and ſpread the fame of his miracles far and near. So, ſuch who have received the grace of God, are become acquainted with Chriſt, and have a real experience of divine things, cannot but ſpeak of them; they are like new wine which hath no vent; and are ready to burſt like new bottles; to forbear ſpeaking is a pain, and wearineſs to them; nay, they think, ſhould they hold their peace, the ſtones in the walls would cry out. Wherefore, partly for the glory of God, the magnifying of the riches of his grace, and the honour of Chriſt, and the bleſſed Spirit; and partly to ſhew their own ſenſe of things, the gratitude of their minds, and the thankfulneſs of their hearts, as well as for the uſe, comfort, edification, and inſtruction of others, they muſt ſpeak, and cannot be ſilent, whatever reſtraints are laid upon them.

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[d] Miſn. Gittin, c. 2. §. 6.

[e] Vid. Miſn. Yebamot, c. 14. §. 10. & T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 114. 2.

Ver. 37. *And were beyond meaſure aſtoniſhed*, &c.] The man that was cured, the men that brought him, and the whole multitude were exceedingly, beyond all expreſſion, amazed at what was done, in this caſe, and many others; for there were other miracles alſo wrought at this time; ſee *Matt.* xv. 30, 31. The grace of God, in opening the ears and heart of a ſinner, and cauſing the tongue of the dumb to ſing his praiſe, is very aſtoniſhing, to men and angels; to the perſons themſelves that partake of it; and to all the ſaints that hear of it: it is amazing that ſuch grace ſhould be beſtowed at all; and it is more, that it ſhould be communicated to ſuch unworthy perſons it is; as alſo, that it ſhould produce ſuch effects it does; that it ſhould make ſuch a ſurprizing change, and be attended with ſuch bleſſed conſequences: *ſaying, he hath done all things well*; not by *Beelzebub*, the prince of devils, as ſaid the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*; nor in any oſtentatious manner, for the ſake of the honour and applauſe of men, as they plainly ſaw; but for the good of mankind, and for the glory of God: and as all the miraculous works, which Chriſt did, were well done by him, ſo all other works of his: all that he did in eternity before the world was, he did well; what he did in the council and covenant of grace, in eſpouſing the perſons and cauſe of his people, and in all his federal tranſactions and ſuretyſhip-engagements for them: he drew nigh to God on their account; he chearfully agreed to what his father propoſed; he entered into a covenant with him, and took the care and charge of all his people, and of all promiſes and bleſſings of grace for them: and whatſoever he has done in time is well done; as his aſſumption of human nature; taking a nature, and not a perſon, this of a virgin, and an holy nature, tho' ſubject to ſinleſs infirmities, and this in due and proper time; alſo his ſubjection to the law, moral, civil, and ceremonial, as it became him to fulfil all righteouſneſs; and his preaching the Goſpel, which he did with authority, and which he ſpake as never man did, and which he confirmed by his miracles; but eſpecially the great work of redemption he came about, was well done by him: this he has thoroughly done; he has redeemed his people from the law, its curſe, and condemnation; he has ranſomed them out of the hands of ſatan; he has ſaved them from all their ſins; he has procured the remiſſion of them, made reconciliation for them, and brought in an everlaſting righteouſneſs: he has done this work to the ſatisfaction of all parties; to the glory of all the divine perfections, of juſtice, as well as of grace and mercy; to the contentment and pleaſure of all the divine perſons, his father, himſelf, and the bleſſed Spirit; and to the joy of angels and men: and all that he has done, or is now doing in heaven, as an advocate and interceſſor, is done well; and we may be aſſured, that all that he will do hereafter, as the judge of quick and dead, will be done in like manner. *He maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb*, or thoſe that could not ſpeak, at leaſt without a great deal of difficulty *to ſpeak*; an inſtance of both which there was in this ſingle man's caſe.

# CHAP. VIII.

Ver. 1. IN *thoſe days*, &c.] The *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *on that day*; as if it was on the ſame day that the deaf man was healed; and ſo it might be; and on the third day from Chriſt's coming into thoſe parts; and ſo is very properly expreſſed, *in thoſe days*; ſee ch. vii. 31. compared with the following *verſe*: *the multitude being very great*: for the number of men that eat, when the following miracle was wrought, were about four thouſand; ſee ver. 9. The *Vulgate Latin*, *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions add, *again*; referring to the former miracle of the five thouſand, who were fed with five loaves, and two fiſhes, ch. vii. 44. *And having nothing to eat*; what they might have brought with them being expended, and they in a deſert, where nothing was to be had, nor bought for money: *Jeſus called his diſciples to him, and ſaith unto them*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xv. 32.

Ver. 2. *I have compaſſion on the multitude*, &c.] Chriſt is a compaſſionate ſaviour both of the bodies and ſouls of men: he had compaſſion on the ſouls of this multitude, and therefore had been teaching them ſound doctrine; and he had compaſſion on the bodies of many of them, and had healed them of their diſeaſes; and his bowels earned towards them all; *becauſe*, ſays he, *they have now been with me three days, and have nothing to eat*; for if they brought any food with them, it was all ſpent, and they were in a wilderneſs, where nothing was to be got; where they had no houſe to go into, nor bed to lie upon, and no proviſions to be bought; and in this caſe they had been two nights and three days; which ſhewed great affection and zeal in theſe people, and a cloſe attachment to Chriſt, in expoſing themſelves to all theſe difficulties and hardſhips, which they ſeemed to bear with much patience and unconcernedneſs. The *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions prefix the word *behold* to this clauſe, as expreſſing admiration at their ſtay with him ſo long in ſuch a place.

Ver. 3. *And if I ſend them away faſting to their own houſes*, &c.] Gr. *to their own houſe*, or home; but all the *Oriental* verſions render it as we do, in the plural, *their own houſes*, or habitations; and it ſeems from hence that they were now faſting, and at leaſt had had no food all that day, whatever they might have the day before, which is not certain. *They will faint by the way*; for want of food their ſtrength will be exhauſted, their animal ſpirits will fail, their nerves will be looſened, they will not be able to perform their journey, or get to the end of it: *for divers of them came from far*; perhaps ſome had followed him from the coaſts of *Tyre* and *Sidon*, from whence he came laſt; and others from *Decapolis*, thro' the midſt of the borders of which he paſſed hither; and others from different parts, who had heard of his coming; ſee the note on *Matt.* xv. 32.

Ver. 4. *And his diſciples anſwered him*, &c.] The *Syriac* verſion renders it, *ſay unto him*; and the

*Perſic* and *Ethiopic*, *ſaid unto him*; forgetting the late miracle of feeding five thouſand with five loaves and two fiſhes, when they had now a leſs number, and more proviſions: *from whence can a man ſatisfy theſe men with bread here in the wilderneſs?* from what place, and by what ways and means can it be thought, that ſuch a quantity of bread can be got at any rate in a deſert, as to ſatisfy ſo large a number of hungry men? ſee the note on *Matt*. xv. 33.

Ver. 5. *And he aſked them, how many loaves have ye?* &c.] See the note on *Matt*. xv. 34. *and they ſaid, ſeven. Matthew* adds, *and a few little fiſhes*, which are here afterwards mentioned.

Ver. 6. *And he commanded the people to ſit down on the ground*, &c.] See the note on *Matt*. xv. 35. *and he took the ſeven loaves, and gave thanks, and brake them*; ſee the note on *Matt*. xv. 36. *and gave to his diſciples to ſet before* them, the multitude, *and they did ſet* them *before the people*; in which they were obedient to their Lord's commands, tho' they were ſo forgetful, unbelieving, and ſtupid.

Ver. 7. *And they had a few ſmall fiſhes*, &c.] Which they alſo acquainted Chriſt with, and brought out unto him: *and he bleſſed, and commanded to ſet them alſo before* them. It looks, by this account, as if the fiſhes were bleſſed, and brake, and diſtributed ſeparately, after the bleſſing, breaking, and diſtribution of the bread; and ſo the *Syriac* verſion renders it, *upon whom alſo he bleſſed*; and the *Perſic* thus, *and he alſo bleſſed the fiſhes*; but, according to *Matthew* they were both bleſſed, and brake, and diſtributed together, as it is highly reaſonable to ſuppoſe they were both eat together; ſee the note on *Matt*. xv. 36.

Ver. 8. *So they did eat, and were filled*, &c.] Chriſt and his diſciples, and the whole multitude: they not only had ſome, but they had all enough; a full meal. It was ſurprizing that it could be divided ſo, as that every one ſhould have a bit; but that they ſhould all be ſatisfied to the full, is amazing: *and they took up of the broken meat that was left ſeven baſkets*; as many as there were loaves; ſee the note on *Matt*. xv. 37.

Ver. 9. *And they that had eaten were about four thouſand*, &c.] That is, men, *beſides women and children*, as *Matthew* obſerves; ſee the note on *Matt*. xv. 38. *and he ſent them away*; ſome that came dumb with their ſpeech, and deaf with their hearing; others that were maimed, with perfect healing of their wounds, and with their limbs ſound and whole; others that came lame, he diſmiſſed leaping; and others that were blind, with their ſight reſtored to them, and all of them full.

Ver. 10. *And ſtraightway he entered into a ſhip, with his diſciples*, &c.] As ſoon as ever he had diſmiſſed the multitude, he took ſhipping with his diſciples; for he was at the ſea of *Galilee*, either at a place near it, or upon the ſhore of it; ſee ch. vii. 31. *and came into the parts of Dalmanutha*; which *Matthew* calls, *the coaſts of Magdala*; ſee the note on *Matt*. xv. 39. The *Arabic* verſion reads it, *Magdal*; and in two of *Beza*'s copies it is read, *Madegada*; but the *Syriac* verſion reads, *Dalmanutha*; and the *Perſic*, *Dalmanuth*; and the *Ethiopic*, *Dalmathy*: it was a city in the coaſts of *Magdala*, and is thought by Dr. *Lightfoot* to be the ſame with *Tzalmon*, or *Salmon*, a place often mentioned [f] in the *Jewiſh* writings.

Ver. 11. *And the Phariſees came forth*, &c.] Out of their houſes; who dwelt in the coaſts of *Magdala*, and parts of *Dalmanutha*, and came to Jeſus, hearing of his being arrived in their neighbourhood: *and began to queſtion with him*; or to diſpute with him, it being their manner to carry on diſputations by queſtions and anſwers. The *Perſic* verſion has the queſtion they put, and about which they diſputed, *if thou art the Chriſt*; in proof of which they required a ſign: *ſeeking of him a ſign from heaven, tempting him*; ſee the note on *Matt*. xvi. 1.

Ver. 12. *And he ſighed deeply in his ſpirit*, &c.] In his human ſoul; and which ſhows that he had one, and was ſubject to grief and ſorrow, and all paſſions and infirmities, excepting ſin. This deep ſigh was on account of the hardneſs of their hearts, the malignity of their minds, and inſincerity of their intentions; who had no view to come at truth by this enquiry, but to enſnare him: *and ſaith, why doth this generation ſeek after a ſign?* when ſo many have been ſhewn among them, and they will not believe: *verily I ſay unto you, there ſhall no ſign be given to this generation*; ſuch as they deſired; namely, one from heaven. The Evangeliſt *Matthew* adds, *but the ſign of the prophet Jonas*; ſee the note on *Matt*. xvi. 4. and xii. 40.

Ver. 13. *And he left them*, &c.] As a perverſe and hardened generation of men, and as ſuch with whom it was not worth while to diſcourſe: *and entering into the ſhip again*; which brought him over, and waited for him: *departed to the other ſide*; of the ſea of *Galilee*, towards *Bethſaida*, ver. 22.

Ver. 14. *Now* the diſciples *had forgotten to take bread*, &c.] At *Dalmanutha*, or *Magdala*, or whatever place in thoſe parts they were at, before they took ſhipping, as was their uſual method. *Neither had they in the ſhip with them more than one loaf*; for thirteen paſſengers of them. The *Perſic* verſion reads the whole thus: *and they forgot to take bread with them, not indeed one loaf, and there was no bread with them in the ſhip*; ſee the note on *Matt*. xvi. 5.

Ver. 15. *And he charged them*, &c.] When they were in the ſhip, and had juſt recollected themſelves, that they had took no care to bring any proviſions with them: *ſaying, take heed, beware of the leaven of the Phariſees, and of the leaven of Herod*: in *Matthew*, inſtead of *the leaven of Herod*, it is read, *the leaven of the Sadducees*; which are either the ſame, *Herod* and his courtiers being *Sadducees*, or favourers of them; or the *Sadducees* being ſticklers for *Herod*, and his government, which the *Phariſees* had no good opinion of; or elſe diſtinct from one another; and ſo Chriſt cautions againſt the doctrines of the *Phariſees*, which regarded the traditions of the elders, and of the *Sadducees*, concerning the reſurrection, and of the *Herodians*, who thought *Herod* to be the Meſſiah; and againſt the unreaſonable requeſt and demand of them all to have a ſign from heaven, in proof of his own Meſſiahſhip; ſee the note on *Matt*. xvi. 6.

Ver. 16. *And they reaſoned among themſelves*, &c.] Upon Chriſt's giving this caution, and recollecting with themſelves, that they had forgot to buy any proviſions, and take with them: *ſaying, it is becauſe we have no bread*; that he ſays theſe words; tacitly chiding and reproving us, for our want of thought and care; ſee the note on *Matt*. xvi. 7.

Ver. 17. *And when Jeſus knew it*, &c.] As he did immediately, by his omniſcience; for as he knew the thoughts and reaſonings of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, *Matt*. ix. 4. ſo he did thoſe of his own diſciples: *he ſaith unto them, why reaſon ye becauſe ye have no bread?* or imagine that I have given you this caution on that account; or are diſtreſſed becauſe this is your caſe, as if you ſhould be reduced to great difficulties, by reaſon of your forgetfulneſs and negligence: *perceive ye not yet, neither underſtand?* the meaning of the parabolical expreſſions, which he had uſed them to; or his power in providing food for them, and ſupporting a great number of perſons with very little food, of which they had ſome very late inſtances: *have ye your heart yet hardened?* as after the firſt miracle; ſee ch. vi. 52. for it might have been expected, that by a ſecond miracle of the loaves, their underſtandings would have been more enlightened, and their faith encreaſed, and that they would have relinquiſhed their groſs notions, their anxieties, doubts, and unbelief.

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[f] Miſn. Celaim, c. 4. §. 9. & Yebamot, c. 16. §. 6. T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 82. 2.

Ver. 18. *Having eyes, ſee ye not?* &c.] Meaning perhaps both the eyes of their bodies, and of their underſtandings: they had bodily eyes, and with them ſaw the miracles he wrought, and yet took little notice of them; and the eyes of their underſtandings were enlightened by Chriſt, and yet ſaw things but very darkly: *and having ears, hear ye not?* They had their natural hearing, and yet made but little uſe of it; and did not ſo diligently attend to the ſound of Chriſt's words: and tho' they had ſpiritual ears given them to hear, yet were very dull of underſtanding, and taking in things: *and do ye not remember?* the interpretation of parables formerly given, and the miracles of the loaves lately wrought.

Ver. 19. *When I brake the five loaves among five thouſand,* &c.] This, with what follows, chiefly regards the laſt queſtion: *how many baſkets full of fragments took ye up?* don't you remember? have you forgot what was ſo lately done? ſurely you cannot: *they ſay unto him, twelve.* Their memories were hereby refreſhed, and they call to mind the exact number of the baſkets of fragments that were taken up, which were above double the number of the loaves, the multitude were fed with.

Ver. 20. *And when the ſeven among four thouſand,* &c.] That is, when ſeven loaves were broken among four thouſand men, *how many baſkets full of fragments took ye up?* this ſurely you muſt remember, it being ſo recent an action, but juſt done, as it were: *and they ſaid ſeven*; for this, as yet, could not have ſlipped their memories; though they had been reaſoning among themſelves becauſe of their ſtraightneſs of proviſions, as if theſe things had never been done.

Ver. 21. *And he ſaid unto them,* &c.] Since this was the caſe, and they ſo well remembered the miracles he had wrought, and the circumſtances of them: *how is it that ye do not underſtand?* my words concerning the leaven of the *Phariſees*, of the *Sadducees*, and of *Herod*, as to imagine I ſpoke of bread, taken in a literal ſenſe; or that I concerned myſelf about the ſcantineſs of your proviſions, when you might have learnt from my late miracles, how able I am to ſupport you, if you had not ſo much as one loaf with you: wherefore it argues great want both of underſtanding and faith, and ſhows great ſtupidity, ignorance, and unbelief, to give ſuch a ſenſe of my words, and to be anxiouſly concerned on the ſcore of your proviſions.

Ver. 22. *And he cometh to Bethſaida,* &c.] The city of *Andrew*, *Peter*, and *Philip*, *John* i. 44. a fiſhing town, which was ſituated by the ſea of *Galilee*. *Beza*'s ancient copy, and the *Gothic* verſion, wrongly read *Bethany*. The *Vulgate Latin*, *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read, *they came*; Chriſt, and his twelve apoſtles, who landed at this place; *and they bring a blind man to him*; for Chriſt had been here before, and was known by the inhabitants of the place; who, as ſoon as they heard of his arrival, and knowing what miracles were done by him, brought a poor blind man, of their town, to him, to be cured by him: *and beſought him to touch him*; having heard of, or ſeen cures performed by him this way. This man is an emblem of ſuch who are ſpiritually blind: he had no natural ſight at all; he could ſee nothing; he had not the leaſt glimmering of any thing, until he was touched by Chriſt: ſo men, in a ſtate of nature, are quite dark, even darkneſs itſelf, until they are made light by the Lord: they have no ſight, nor ſenſe of themſelves, of their ſinful, loſt, and dangerous eſtate and condition they are in; they know not becauſe they are blind, that they are wretched, and poor, and miſerable, and naked: they have no ſight of Chriſt, neither of the glory of his perſon, nor of the fulneſs of his grace, nor of the nature, neceſſity, and ſuitableneſs of his ſalvation: they are quite blind as to any ſaving knowledge of God in Chriſt, the way of life and peace by him, and the work of the Spirit of God upon the ſoul; or with regard to any ſpiritual experience of the power of Goſpel truths, or views of the glories of another world: and as this man ſeemed to be unconcerned himſelf about the cure of his blindneſs, only his friends were affected with his caſe, and brought him to Chriſt, and ſolicited a cure, ſo it is with unregenerate men; they are inſenſible of their caſe, and ſo thoughtleſs of it, and unaffected with it, and do not, of themſelves, ſeek for a deliverance out of it; nor do they make uſe of means for that purpoſe; but it becomes their friends, relations, and acquaintance, that are ſpiritual, who know their caſe, and their need of Chriſt, and his grace, to bring them to him under the means, and pray unto him, that he would put forth the mighty power of his grace upon them, and give them ſpiritual ſight, to ſee in what a loſt condition they are, and their need of him.

Ver. 23. *And he took the blind man by the hand,* &c.] Not for the ſake of touching him, in order to heal him, as they deſired, but to be his guide: *and led him out of the town*; to ſhun all appearance of vain glory and popular applauſe, being willing to do the miracle in a private manner; and becauſe of the obſtinacy and unbelief of the inhabitants of this place, who were not worthy to be witneſſes of ſuch a cure; ſee *Matt.* xi. 21. *and when he had ſpit on his eyes*; not as a cauſe of healing him; for whatever uſe ſpittle may be of to ſuch that have weak eyes, it can have no cauſal influence upon, or be of any ſervice, in a natural way, to a blind man, to reſtore his ſight unto him: *and put his hands upon him*; as he ſometimes did, when he healed perſons of any diſorder: *he aſked him, if he ſaw ought*; any object whatever, whether he could perceive he had any ſight at all. Chriſt's taking the blind man by the hand, and leading him out of the town, and ſpitting on his eyes, and putting his hands upon him, and then aſking him if he ſaw ought, are emblematical of what he does in ſpiritual converſion, when he turns men from darkneſs to light: he takes them by the hand, which expreſſes his condeſcenſion, grace, and mercy, and becomes their guide and leader; and a better, and ſafer guide they cannot have; he brings them by a way they know not, and leads them in paths they had not known before; makes darkneſs light before them, and crooked things ſtraight, and does not forſake them: he takes them a-part, and ſeparates them from the reſt of the world; he calls them out from thence to go with him, teaching them, that, when enlightened by him, they ſhould have no fellowſhip with the unfruitful works of darkneſs, and the workers of them; for what communion has light with darkneſs? his putting ſpittle upon his eyes, may ſignify the means of grace, the eye-ſalve of the word, which, when attended with a divine power, enlightens the eyes; and which power may be repreſented here by Chriſt's putting his hands upon the man; for the Goſpel, without the power of Chriſt, is inſufficient to produce ſuch an effect; but when it is accompanied with that, it always ſucceeds.

Ver. 24. *And he looked up*, &c.] This is omitted in the *Arabic* and *Perſic* verſions. The ſenſe is, that he opened his eye-lids, and lifted up his eyes, to try if he could ſee, and he could, and did ſee again; his ſight was returned again, tho' very imperfectly as yet: *and ſaid, I ſee men as trees walking:* he ſaw ſome objects at a little diſtance from him, which, by their motion, he ſuppoſed to be men; otherwiſe his ſight was ſo imperfect, that he could not have diſtinguiſhed them from trees: he was capable of diſcerning the bulk of their bodies, and that they walked, or moved forward; but he could not diſtinguiſh the particular parts of their bodies; they ſeemed to be like trunks of trees, in an erect poſture, and which he ſhould have took for ſuch, had it not been for their walking. As this man immediately, upon Chriſt's putting ſpittle on his eyes, and laying his hands on him, had ſight given him, tho' it was very obſcure and glimmering; ſo, as ſoon as ever the Goſpel comes with power, it diſpels the darkneſs of the mind, and introduces light; tho' at firſt it is but very ſmall; it is let in gradually: the ſinner is firſt convinced of the evil of his actions, and then of the ſinfulneſs of his nature; he firſt ſees the ability and ſuitableneſs of Chriſt as a Saviour, and after that his willingneſs, and his intereſt in him as ſuch; and all this is commonly before he is ſo well acquainted with the dignity and infiniteneſs of his perſon, as the Son of God: and it is ſome time before he has his ſpiritual ſenſes exerciſed to diſcern between good and evil, between truth and error; or arrives to a clear and diſtinct knowledge of Goſpel-truths, and a ſtability in them. Hence it is, that ſuch are greatly harraſſed with ſatan's temptations; are diſquieted in their ſouls; are filled with doubts and fears, and are in danger of being impoſed upon by falſe teachers.

Ver. 25. *After that he had put his hands again upon his eyes*, &c.] By the former account it does not appear on what part of him he put his hands; but this determines it; and from hence it ſeems plain, that he firſt ſpit on his eyes, and then cloſed them, and put his hands on them; which laſt action of his he repeated, tho' not the former: *and made him look up.* This is omitted in the *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions. The *Vulgate Latin* reads it, *he began to ſee*; and ſo *Beza*'s ancient copy: but this he did before, upon the firſt impoſition of hands on him. The *Arabic* verſion renders it, *he ſaw well:* this is expreſſed afterwards. The words are an order, or command of Chriſt to the man to lift up his eyes, and try again how he could ſee, and whether any better than before, which he did: *and he was reſtored*; his ſight was reſtored to him as before, and he was perfectly cured of his blindneſs; *and ſaw every man clearly*; or *all things*, as the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read: he ſaw every object diſtinctly, and afar off, as the word uſed alſo ſignifies; he could diſtinguiſh men from trees, and trees from men. This man, as before obſerved, was a very lively emblem of one that is ſpiritually enlightened by the grace of God: Chriſt firſt ſeparated this man from the reſt of the multitude; and ſuch are firſt diſtinguiſhed from others in election, and redemption, and vocation, who are illuminated by the Spirit of God: means were made uſe of by Chriſt for healing this man; tho' the bare actions, without a divine power, would have been inſufficient, as the ſpittle of his mouth, and the impoſition of his hands: and, generally ſpeaking, in the illumination of a ſinner the word of Chriſt's mouth is a means; tho' this, without the efficacy of his grace, is not of itſelf ſufficient. This man, upon his firſt reception of ſight, had a very dim, obſcure, and imperfect view of things; could not well diſtinguiſh one thing from another, tho' he ſaw. As at firſt converſion, the enlightened ſoul has but a very glimmering view of things, particularly of Chriſt, the glory and fulneſs of his perſon, the efficacy of his blood, the excellency of his righteouſneſs, of his ability, willingneſs, and ſuitableneſs as a Saviour; and eſpecially of thoſe doctrines of the Goſpel, that are more ſublime and diſtinguiſhing. But as this man afterwards had a more clear, and diſtinct view of objects; ſo it is with true believers in Chriſt; their ſhining light increaſes, and ſhines more and more unto the perfect day. For Goſpel-light at preſent is not perfect in any: ſuch who have the cleareſt views of things, have ſome darkneſs and imperfection in them; tho' they may be ſaid to ſee all things clearly, in compariſon of what they ſometimes did, and others do: particularly ſaints, under the Goſpel-diſpenſation, ſee more clearly than thoſe under the legal diſpenſation did; the object was at a greater diſtance from them; they ſaw the promiſes afar off; and the medium of their ſight, or thro' which they ſaw, were obſcure types, ſhadows, and ſacrifices, and dark prophecies. *Moſes*, and his law, had a veil over them; but New Teſtament-ſaints, with open face, without a veil, behold, as in a glaſs, the glory of the Lord Jeſus, and of Goſpel-truths: indeed, they that know moſt, ſee things moſt clearly, and ſpeak of them moſt diſtinctly, know but in part, and propheſy but in part, in compariſon of the beatific viſion; when ſaints ſhall ſee face to face, and know, as they are known; they now ſee but thro' a glaſs darkly. How clearly will all things be ſeen in the new *Jeruſalem*-ſtate, when there will be no need of the light of the ſun, or moon of ordinances; but Chriſt, the lamb, will be the everlaſting light thereof, in which the nations of them that are ſaved ſhall walk!

Ver. 26. *And he ſent him away to his houſe*, &c.] Which ſeems to have been in one of the neighbouring villages, or was one of the houſes ſcattered about in the fields for the conveniency of rural buſineſs. *Saying, neither go into the town*; or *that town*, as the *Syriac*, the town, or city of *Bethſaida: nor tell it to any in the town*; to any of the inhabitants of the town, that he ſhould meet with any where, or at any time: the reaſon of this was not merely, or only becauſe Chriſt would have the miracle concealed; but chiefly becauſe the inhabitants of this place were notorious for their impenitence and unbelief. Chriſt had done many wonderful works among them, and yet they repented not; nor did they believe in him; but deſpiſed him, his doctrine, and his miracles; and therefore for their neglect and contempt of ſuch means, he was determined to withdraw them from them. So Chriſt ſometimes deals with nations, cities, and towns, that diſbelieve, reject, and deſpiſe his Goſpel; he takes it away from them, he orders his miniſtring ſervants to preach no more to them; no more to tell them of the good news of life and ſalvation by him: thus he dealt with the *Jews*, who contradicted, and blaſphemed, and judged themſelves, or by their conduct made themſelves appear to be unworthy of the words of eternal life; he took away the kingdom of God, or the Goſpel, from them, and ſent it among the *Gentiles:* and thus he threatened the church of *Epheſus*, for leaving its firſt love, to remove the candleſtick out of its place, in caſe of non-repentance; and a grievous judgment it is upon a place and people, when God commands the clouds to rain no rain upon them, *Iſ.* v. 6. or, in other words, when he enjoins his miniſters no more to tell, or publiſh his Goſpel to them; he determining to withdraw from them, and have no more to do with them; ſo Chriſt, and his diſciples, departed from this place, as is declared in the following verſe.

Ver. 27. *And Jeſus went out, and his diſciples,* &c.] From *Bethſaida*, and even from *Galilee*, *into the towns of Ceſarea Philippi*; in the juriſdiction of *Philip*, tetrarch of *Iturea* and *Trachonitis*; for this *Ceſarea* was rebuilt by him, and called ſo in honour of *Tiberias Cæſar*; and the towns and villages adjacent to it are here intended; ſee the note on *Matt.* xvi. 13. *and by the way he aſked his diſciples*; as they were going from *Galilee* to thoſe parts: *ſaying unto them, whom do men ſay that I am?* not that he needed any information of this; for he knew not only what was ſaid by men, but what was in them; but he put this queſtion, in order to bring out their ſenſe of, and faith in him, and to impart ſomething to them which was neceſſary they ſhould be acquainted with; ſee the note on *Matt.* xvi. 13. where it is read, *whom do men ſay, that I, the ſon of man, am?*

Ver. 28. *And they anſwered,* &c.] That ſome ſaid he was *John* the *Baptiſt*; which was the opinion of *Herod*, and others: *but ſome ſay Elias*; that is, the *Tiſhbite*, whom the *Jews*, in general, expected in perſon before the coming of the Meſſiah, and imagined that Jeſus was he: *and others one of the prophets*; as *Jeremiah*, or *Iſaiah*, or ſome other. The *Vulgate Latin* reads, *as one of the prophets*; and ſo *Beza*'s ancient copy, as in chap. vi. 15. All ſpake highly and honourably of him: the people in common did not look upon him as a mean perſon; they perceived by his doctrine, and more eſpecially by his miracles, that he was an extraordinary one: the ſeveral perſons which they differently took him to be, and make mention of, were ſuch as were of great repute; as *John* the *Baptiſt*, who had lately been among them, and whom all held to be a prophet, and indeed was more than a prophet; and *Elias*, who was ſo very zealous for the Lord of hoſts, and wrought many miracles in his day; and whoſe coming the *Jews* were in expectation of to uſher in the Meſſiah; and none thought him leſs than one of the prophets; and all agreed he was an uncommon man; even one raiſed from the dead, as he muſt be, if he was *John* the *Baptiſt*, or *Elias*, or one of the old prophets; but they knew him not, at leaſt did not confeſs him to be the Meſſiah; he not appearing as a temporal prince, they were taught to believe he would be; ſee the note on *Matt.* xvi. 14.

Ver. 29. *And he ſaith unto them, but whom ſay ye that I am,* &c.] 'Twas for the ſake of this queſtion he put the former; ſee the note on *Matt.* xvi. 15. *and Peter anſwereth and ſaith unto him, thou art the Chriſt*; the Meſſiah that was long ago promiſed, and ſo often propheſied of in the books of *Moſes*, and the prophets; and whom the *Jews* have ſo much and long expected. This confeſſion of *Peter*'s, in which all the apoſtles agreed with him, ſpeaks out what Jeſus really was, and exceeds the moſt exalted ſentiments which the people had of him: he was not the harbinger of the Meſſiah, but the Meſſiah himſelf; not *Elias*, in whoſe Spirit his forerunner was to come, and did come; nor any one of the prophets; but he, who was ſpoken of by all the holy prophets, which have been ſince the beginning of the world. Not one of the various opinions of the people being juſt, and anſwering the true character of *Jeſus*, he demands the ſenſe of his diſciples, which is here given by *Peter* in their name, and which was right; and on account of which he declared *Peter* bleſſed, and aſcribed his knowledge of him not to fleſh and blood, but to the revelation of his father. The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions add, *the Son of the living God*; and ſo *Beza* found it in one ancient copy; but it may be it is only taken from *Matt.* xvi. 16. ſee the note there.

Ver. 30. *And he charged them,* &c.] His diſciples, after he had declared his approbation of *Peter*'s confeſſion of faith, and ſignified he would build his church on that rock, and the gates of hell ſhould not prevail againſt it; and promiſed *Peter* the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and that whatſoever was bound, or looſed by him on earth, ſhould be bound and looſed in heaven; which is omitted by *Mark*, but related by *Matthew:* after this he gave a ſtrict and ſevere charge, *that they ſhould tell no man of him*; that he was the Meſſiah, and the Son of God; ſee the note on *Matt.* xvi. 20.

Ver. 31. *And he began to teach them,* &c.] For as yet he had ſaid nothing to them about his ſufferings and death, at leaſt in expreſs terms; but now they being firmly eſtabliſhed in the faith of him, as the Meſſiah, he thought it proper to inform them, *that the ſon of man muſt ſuffer many things*; meaning himſelf, as that he ſhould be betrayed, apprehended, and bound, ſhould be ſmitten, ſpit upon, buffeted and ſcourged; and which things muſt be done, and he ſuffer them, becauſe it was ſo determined by God, and foretold in the ſcriptures: *and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief prieſts and Scribes*; which compoſed the grand *Sanhedrim* of the nation, and are the builders that were propheſied of by whom he ſhould be rejected, *Pſ.* cxviii. 22. *and be killed*; in a violent manner; his life be taken away by force, without law, or juſtice: *and after three days riſe again*; not after three days were ended, and on the fourth day, but after the third day was come; that is, *on the third day*, as the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read; and even the *Phariſees* themſelves thus underſtood Chriſt, *Matt.* xxvii. 63, 64. ſo the phraſe, *after eight days*, is uſed for the eighth day, being come, or that day ſennight; ſee *Luke* ix. 28. compared with *Matt.* xvii. 1. *John* xx. 26.

Ver. 32. *And he ſpake that ſaying openly,* &c.] Concerning his ſufferings, death, and reſurrection from the dead. He not only ſpoke it before them all, but in plain words, without a figure; ſo that it might be, and was clearly underſtood by them; and he ſpake it as the word will alſo bear, not only very freely, but likewiſe boldly, with an undaunted courage, with intrepidity of mind; being not in the leaſt diſcouraged, nor ſhewing any concern or fear about what was to befal him: *and Peter took him, and began to rebuke him.* *Peter* might more eſpecially be concerned at this free and open account Chriſt gave of his ſufferings and death, becauſe he had juſt now acquainted him, that he ſhould have the keys of the kingdom of heaven; by which he might underſtand ſome high poſt in the temporal kingdom of the Meſſiah he expected; and immediately to hear of his ſufferings and death, damped his ſpirits, and deſtroyed his hopes, and threw him into ſuch difficulties he was not able to remove; and therefore he takes Chriſt aſide, and very warmly expoſtulates with him about what he had ſaid, and chides him for it, and intreats him that he would not think, or talk of ſuch-like things: the words of *Peter* are recorded by *Matthew*, ch. xvi. 22. ſee the note there.

Ver. 33. *But when he had turned about*, &c.] Upon *Peter*, and ſhewed quick reſentment at what he ſaid: *and looked on his diſciples*; he caſt his eye towards them at the ſame time, and expreſſed to them the ſame diſpleaſure in his countenance, they being of the ſame mind: *he rebuked Peter, ſaying, get thee behind me ſatan, for thou ſavoureſt not the things that be of God*; things which were according to the will of God, as the ſufferings of Chriſt were: they were according to the determinate counſel of his will; what he had determined in his purpoſes and council ſhould be; and what he had declared in the ſcriptures of truth, the revelation of his will, would be; and in which, according to them, he ſhould have a great concern himſelf, *Iſa.* liii. 6, 10. and whereby all his divine perfections would be glorified, and therefore may well be ſaid to be the things of God; and which ought to be ſavoured, minded, and attended to, as things of the greateſt moment and importance: and which, though the apoſtle had often read of in the books of the Old Teſtament, yet either had not a clear underſtanding of them, as being the will of God; or however, they were greatly out of his view at this time, his mind being poſſeſſed with notions of a temporal kingdom, and of worldly honour and grandeur: wherefore it follows, *but the things that be of men*; as were the notions of Chriſt's being a temporal prince, that would ſet up a worldly kingdom, and deliver the *Jews* from the *Roman* yoke, and make his ſubjects happy, with an affluence of all worldly things; and particularly his favourites, as the diſciples were: theſe were ſchemes of mens deviſing, and were ſuited to the corrupt nature, and carnal inclinations of men; and theſe things at preſent too much poſſeſſed *Peter*'s mind: wherefore the Lord rebuked him in a very ſevere, tho' juſt manner; being touched in his moſt tender part, and diſſuaded from that which his heart was ſet upon, and he came into the world for; whoſe keen reſentment is ſeen by uſing a phraſe he never did but to the devil himſelf, *Matt.* iv. 10. ſee the note on *Matt.* xvi. 23.

Ver. 34. *And when he had called the people unto him*, &c.] Who, it ſeems, followed him out of *Galilee*, from *Bethſaida*, and theſe parts; for it was in the way from thence to *Ceſarea Philippi*, that Chriſt had this converſation with his diſciples; who walked together alone, the multitude following at ſome diſtance; and the private converſation being ended, Chriſt called, or beckned to the people, to come nearer to him: *with his diſciples alſo*; for what he was about to ſay, concerned them both: *whoſoever will come after me*; in a ſpiritual ſenſe, as this multitude did in a natural one, and which is the ſame as to be a diſciple of his: *let him deny himſelf, and take up his croſs, and follow me*; ſignifying, that his followers muſt deny themſelves of worldly advantages, and ſuffer many things, as well as he, which he had been but juſt before acquainting his diſciples with; ſee the note on *Matt.* xvi. 24.

Ver. 35. *For whoſoever will ſave his life*, &c.] Life is a valuable thing, and all that a man has he will give for it; ſelf-preſervation is a principle in nature; and it becomes every man to take all lawful methods to ſave his life, when it is threatened, or is in danger: but whoever is willing to ſave it, when it is called for to be laid down for Chriſt's ſake; and rather than lay it down, will deny Chriſt, and give up a profeſſion of him, and his Goſpel, *ſhall loſe it*: he ſhall not enjoy it with honour and comfort now, and much leſs with peace, pleaſure, and happineſs hereafter, but ſhall be under the power of the ſecond death: *but whoſoever ſhall loſe his life for my ſake, and the Goſpel's*; that is, ſhall willingly part with it when he is called to it, rather than deny Chriſt and his Goſpel, *the ſame ſhall ſave it*: tho' he will loſe it now, he will find it again in the reſurrection of life; for he will riſe to eternal life; when ſuch, who have apoſtatized from Chriſt, will riſe to ſhame, and everlaſting contempt: this man will have greatly the advantage over ſuch; they'll die the ſecond death, or be deſtroyed ſoul and body in hell; and he'll live for ever with Chriſt, in endleſs pleaſure and glory; ſee the note on *Matt.* xvi. 25.

Ver. 36. *For what ſhall it profit a man*, &c.] In the long run, in the iſſue of things, who by denying Chriſt, and his Goſpel, may not only ſave his life for the preſent, but procure for himſelf great riches and wealth: *if he ſhall gain the whole world*; were that poſſible to be done, and which the ambitious, worldly man is deſirous of; yet ſuppoſing he had his deſire, of what avail would this be in the upſhot of things, ſhould the following be his caſe, as it will, *and loſe his own ſoul?* which is immortal and everlaſting, when the world, and the glory of it paſs away, and ſo is of more worth than the whole world. The world can only be enjoyed for a ſeaſon, and that with a great deal of fatigue and trouble; but the ſoul continues for ever; and if it is loſt and damned, its torment always abides, and the ſmoke of it aſcends for ever; its worm never dies, and its fire is never quenched; ſee the note on *Matt.* xvi. 26.

Ver. 37. *Or what ſhall a man give in exchange for his ſoul?*] To deliver it out of its miſerable ſtate and condition; all the riches of the world, and the whole world itſelf, are not an equivalent to it, or a ſufficient ranſom for it; riches will not profit in the day of wrath, or deliver a ſoul from damnation and ruin: wherefore, if he had the whole world, he could not redeem his ſoul with it; and he has nothing elſe to give for it, and therefore it is paſt all recovery; ſee the note on *Matt.* xvi. 26.

Ver. 38. *Whoſoever therefore ſhall be aſhamed of me*, &c.] As ſuffering, crucified, and put to death; things he had been ſpeaking of before: whoever thro' ſcandal of the croſs, and fear of men, will be aſhamed of Chriſt, and dare not profeſs faith in him, but ſhall conceal and keep it to themſelves: *and of my words*; the doctrines of the Goſpel, of remiſſion of ſins by his blood, of juſtification by his righteouſneſs, and of ſalvation alone by him, with every other truth relating to him, or connected with theſe: *in this adulterous and ſinful generation*; which was ſo both in a moral and ſpiritual ſenſe; for both corporal and ſpiritual adultery prevailed among them. And particularly the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* adulterated the word of God by their falſe gloſſes, in which they acted a very ſinful part; and ſuch was their authority, that few durſt contradict them, or profeſs'd doctrines which were the reverſe of them. Wherefore our Lord aſſures his diſciples and followers, that ſhould they be deterred by theſe men from a free and open profeſſion of him, and his Goſpel, by which it would appear that they were aſhamed of both, *of him alſo ſhall the ſon of man be aſhamed*; will not own ſuch an one for his; he'll take no notice of him; he'll not confeſs his name; but, as one that he is aſhamed of, he'll turn away from him; not ſo much as look at him, or ſay one favourable word to him, or for him; but bid him be gone from him, as a worker of iniquity: this he will do, *when he cometh in the glory of his father*; the ſame that the father has; being his ſon, of the ſame nature with him, and equal to him; and as mediator, endued with power and authority from him, to judge the world; and when he'll be accompanied *with the holy angels*; who will deſcend from heaven with him, and be employed on earth by him; ſee the note on *Matt.* xvi. 27.

# CHAP. IX.

Ver. 1. AND *he ſaid unto them*, &c.] Both to his diſciples, and the multitude, *verily I ſay unto you, there be ſome of them that ſtand here*; that were then living, and upon the ſpot, *which ſhall not taſte of death*, or die, *till they have ſeen the kingdom of God come with power*. When Jeſus was declared both Lord and Chriſt, by the wonderful effuſion of the Holy Spirit; the Goſpel ſpread in the world both among *Jews* and *Gentiles*, in ſpite of all oppoſition, under the power and influence of the grace of God, to the converſion of thouſands of ſouls; and that branch of Chriſt's regal power exerted in the deſtruction of the *Jewiſh* nation; ſee the note on *Matt.* xvi. 28. This verſe properly belongs to the foregoing chapter, to which it is placed in the *Vulgate Latin* verſion; and ſo it concludes one in *Matthew*, and ought not to begin a new chapter.

Ver. 2. *And after ſix days*, &c.] Six days after this diſcourſe with his diſciples, in their way to *Cæſarea Philippi*, and after they were come into thoſe parts: *Jeſus taketh with him Peter, James, and John*; favourite diſciples, and a ſufficient number, to be witneſſes of his transfiguration: *and leadeth them up into an high mountain a-part by themſelves*; where he and they were alone. This was not mount *Tabor*, as is generally ſaid, but either the mountain which *Cæſarea* was at the foot of, or it may be mount *Lebanon*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xvii. 1. *and he was transfigured before them*; the above three diſciples; ſee the note on *Matt.* xvii. 2.

Ver. 3. *And his raiment became ſhining*, &c.] With the rays of glory and brightneſs which darted from his body thro' his clothes, and made them as bright as the light of the ſun at noon-day: *and exceeding white as ſnow*; than which nothing is whiter; *ſo as no fuller on earth can white them*. The *Syriac* verſion renders it, *as men cannot white on earth*; and the *Perſic* thus, *ſo as men could not behold him*. Juſt as the *Iſraelites* could not ſtedfaſtly behold the face of *Moſes*, becauſe of the glory of his countenance, when he came down from the mount; ſee the note on *Matt.* xvii. 2.

Ver. 4. *And there appeared unto them Elias with Moſes*, &c.] Or *Moſes* and *Elias*, as all the *Oriental* verſions read, as in *Matt.* xvii. 3. ſee the note there: *and they were talking with Jeſus*; concerning his deceaſe, and what he was to do and ſuffer at *Jeruſalem*, and of which he himſelf had lately talked with his diſciples; ſo that this might have been a confirmation of theſe things to them; ſee the note on *Matt.* xvii. 3.

Ver. 5. *And Peter anſwered and ſaid to Jeſus*, &c.] He addreſſed himſelf to him, as being more familiar with him; as alſo becauſe he was the principal perſon: wherefore he ſays, *maſter, it is good for us to be here*: the company and converſation were exceeding agreeable to him and his fellow-diſciples; and the glory that Chriſt appeared in ſurpaſſed every thing they had ſeen before: *and let us make three tabernacles*; or, as the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read, *and we will make*, &c. expreſſing not a petition, but a reſolution; to which the *Perſic* verſion premiſes, *if thou wilt give us commandment*; ſubmitting it to the will of Chriſt: *one for thee, and one for Moſes, and one for Elias*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xvi. 4.

Ver. 6. *For he wiſt not what to ſay*, &c.] He did not know what he ſhould ſay, or what was proper to be ſaid by him, at ſuch a time, in ſuch circumſtances, and before ſuch perſons; *for they were ſore afraid*. The *Perſic* verſion reads, *he was*; and ſo the *Latin* tranſlation of the *Syriac*, tho' that itſelf is, *they were*; for all three were filled with conſternation at what they ſaw and heard; ſo that they were ſcarcely themſelves, and knew not well what they ſaid or did.

Ver. 7. *And there was a cloud that over-ſhadowed them*, &c.] *Jeſus*, *Moſes*, and *Elias*, and alſo the diſciples; who, according to *Luke*, entered into it, and ſo were covered by it. *And a voice came out of the cloud, ſaying, this is my beloved ſon, hear him*. This was the voice of God the Father, bearing a teſtimony to the ſonſhip of Chriſt; and was directed, not to *Moſes* and *Elias*, but to the diſciples, enjoining them to hear and obey him, who was the end of the law and prophets; was the great prophet *Moſes* had ſpoken of, and was to be hearkened to, and whom all the prophets had teſtified of, and in whom they all centred; ſee the note on *Matt.* xvii. 5.

Ver. 8. *And ſuddenly when they had looked round about*, &c.] Upon hearing the voice, to ſee if they could obſerve any other object, by whom it was pronounced, and whether the ſame they had ſeen continued: *they ſaw no man any more*; neither *Moſes*, nor *Elias*, not at that time, nor ever after; *ſave Jeſus only with themſelves*: the voice only regarded him, and being directed to them; ſee the note on *Matt.* xvii. 8.

Ver. 9. *And as they came down from the mountain*, &c.] Chriſt, and his three diſciples, *Peter*, *James*, and *John*, whom he led up thither: *he charged them that they ſhould tell no man what things they had ſeen*; on the mount, as the transfiguration of himſelf, the perſons of *Moſes* and *Elias*, and the bright cloud from whence the voice came, which bore teſtimony of Chriſt's ſonſhip: he ordered to keep the whole of this a ſecret from every man, even from their fellow-diſciples, *till the ſon of man were riſen from the dead*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xvii. 9.

Ver. 10. *And they kept that ſaying with themſelves*, &c.] *They retained it in their own mind*, as the *Perſic* verſion renders it; *they kept it cloſe*, as *Luke* ſays, among themſelves, and acquainted no man with it: and which refers either to the whole of Chriſt's charge, relating to the viſion on the mount; or elſe only to what he ſaid about his reſurrection from the dead; and which they took notice of particularly, and laid hold upon, as the word will bear to be rendered; and ſo the *Ethiopic* verſion does render it, *and they obſerved his ſaying*; what he laſt ſaid concerning the ſon of man's riſing from the dead; *queſtioning with one another what the riſing from the dead ſhould mean:* they enquired, diſputed, and reaſoned with one another, what ſhould be the meaning of ſuch an expreſſion: not that they were ignorant of the general reſurrection of the dead; for this was the hope of *Iſrael*, and the general ſenſe of the *Jewiſh* nation: but they did not know what he meant by his particular riſing from the dead; whether he meant it in a literal ſenſe, which ſuppoſed his death; and that tho' he had lately told them of, they knew not how to reconcile to the notions they had of a long and flouriſhing temporal kingdom of the Meſſiah; or whether he meant a reſurrection and glorious enlargement of his kingdom and intereſt, in ſuch manner as they expected.

Ver. 11. *And they aſked him, ſaying*, &c.] Being put in mind of it, by ſeeing *Elias* on the mount, or elſe by what Chriſt had ſaid concerning his reſurrection, or both: *why ſay the Scribes*, the *Vulgate Latin* adds, and *Phariſees*, *that Elias muſt firſt come?* before the Meſſiah comes, or before the ſetting up his kingdom in greater glory; ſee the note on *Matt.* xvii. 10.

Ver. 12. *And he anſwered, and told them*, &c.] Allowing that their obſervation was right, and that this was the ſenſe of the *Scribes*, and that there was ſomething of truth in it, when rightly underſtood: *Elias verily cometh firſt, and reſtoreth all things*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xvii. 11. *and how it is written of the ſon of man, that he muſt ſuffer many things, and be ſet at nought.* The ſenſe of Chriſt is, that *John* the *Baptiſt*, whom he means by *Elias*, comes firſt, and reſtores all things: and, among the reſt of the things he ſets right, this is one, and not one of the leaſt; namely, that he gives the true ſenſe of ſuch paſſages of the ſacred writings, which related to the contemptuous uſage, rejection, and ſufferings of the Meſſiah; as that in theſe he was the lamb of God typified in the ſacrifices of the law, who by his ſufferings and death takes away the ſin of the world; and therefore he exhorted and directed thoſe to whom he miniſtred, to look unto him, and believe in him; ſee *John* i. 29. *Acts* xix. 4.

Ver. 13. *But I ſay unto you, that Elias is indeed come*, &c.] Meaning *John* the *Baptiſt*, who in prophecy is deſigned by him. *And they have done unto him whatſoever they liſted*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xvii. 12. which words ſhould be read in a parentheſis, as they are in the *Vulgate Latin* verſion; for what follows, *as it is written of him*, reſpects not what the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, and the people of the *Jews* did to *John* at their pleaſure; deſpiſing his miniſtry and meſſage, rejecting the counſel of God delivered by him, and remaining impenitent and unbelieving, notwithſtanding his powerful and awakening miniſtry, with many other things, which are no where written of him; but the words regard his coming, and the propheſies concerning him, and particularly, that under the name of *Elijah*, in *Mal.* iv. 5. and which had had their accompliſhment.

Ver. 14. *And when he came to his diſciples*, &c.] The other nine, who were left at the bottom of the mountain, and were waiting for him: *he ſaw a great multitude about them:* there was a multitude that followed him from *Bethſaida* hither; and which, very likely, was greatly increaſed upon Chriſt's arrival in thoſe parts, and the people hearing of it; *and the Scribes queſtioning with them*; diſputing and contending with them about their maſter, his doctrines and miracles, and their miſſion and authority from him; inſulting them, on account of their inability to diſpoſſeſs a dumb ſpirit, hereafter related.

Ver. 15. *And ſtraightway all the people when they beheld him*, &c.] As ſoon as ever they ſaw him, to many of whom, eſpecially thoſe that followed him out of *Galilee*, he was perſonally known. *Were greatly amazed*; either that he ſhould come at that juncture, to aſſiſt and relieve his diſciples, when the *Scribes* were triumphing over them, as ſome think; or rather, as others, on account of that remaining luſtre and glory which was on his countenance, through his transfiguration, and not yet wholly gone off; like that which was on the face of *Moſes*, when he came down from mount *Sinai*: *and running to him, ſaluted him*; wiſhing him all peace and proſperity, expreſſing their great joy at his coming to them; which was very deſirable by them, and exceedingly pleaſing to them, and eſpecially at this time, as both their words and geſture ſhewed.

Ver. 16. *And he aſked the Scribes*, &c.] The *Vulgate Latin* renders it, *he aſked them*; and the *Ethiopic* verſion, *he ſaid unto them*; meaning either that he aſked the diſciples when he came to them, or elſe the people that ran to ſalute him; but the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions read, *the Scribes*; ſeeing them about his diſciples, in cloſe debate with them, and running hard upon them, he aſks them, *what queſtion ye with them?* what is it ye ſeek and require of them? what is your diſpute with them? what is your debate about? The *Vulgate Latin* verſion reads, *what queſtion ye among you?* among themſelves, and one another; and ſo *Beza*'s moſt ancient copy.

Ver. 17. *And one of the multitude anſwered and ſaid*, &c.] The *Scribes* made no reply, being afraid to engage with him, whom they had often found too hard for them; and the diſciples, if they were ſpoken to, were ſilent, thro' ſhame, becauſe they had not ſucceeded in the cure of the perſon brought to them, which gave their enemies an handle againſt them: wherefore the parent of the afflicted child made anſwer, ſaying; the occaſion of this debate between the *Scribes*, and thy diſciples, is as follows: *Maſter, I have brought unto thee my ſon, which hath a dumb ſpirit*; ſignifying, that he had heard much of him, as a very great man, and he believed him to be a maſter in *Iſrael*, who was famous both for doctrine and miracles, and therefore he brought his ſon to him, to be cured by him; but Chriſt not being in the way, he propoſed him to his diſciples, who attempted it without ſucceſs. The caſe of his ſon was, he had a *dumb ſpirit*. The Evangeliſt *Matthew* ſays he was a *lunatick*; and by his account of him it appears, that he had the *epilepſy*, or falling ſickneſs; and which, when upon him, took away the uſe of his ſpeech. And ſo the *Jews* aſcribe dumbneſs to the violence of a diſeaſe: thus they aſk[z]; "what is *Cordiacus?* (καρδιακος) one that "has a diſorder which affects the heart, and cauſes "a deliquium, (a fainting and ſwooning away) but "a man, שנעשה אלם, *who is become dumb*, thro' "the force of a diſeaſe;" which was the caſe of this child: tho' this diſeaſe did not ariſe from natural cauſes, but from a diabolical poſſeſſion; for he had a ſpirit, a foul ſpirit, a devil, as he is called: ſome further account is given of this unhappy caſe, in the next verſe.

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[z] Jarchi in Miſn. Gittin, c. 7. §. 1.

Ver. 18. *And whereſoever he taketh him*, &c.] The ſpirit, or devil, whether it be near fire, or water, or whatſoever danger, or dangerous place: *he teareth him*; or throws him into it, or daſhes him againſt it; or inwardly racks, tortures, and convulſes him: *and he fometh*; at the mouth, like one that is mad: *and gnaſheth with his teeth*; through the exceſſive pain he is in: *and pineth away*; his fleſh is withered, dried up, and conſumed away. This was the ſad deplorable caſe this child was in, who was his father's only child, and therefore his health and life were very deſireable: now he further obſerves to Chriſt, ſaying, *and I ſpake to thy diſciples that they ſhould caſt him out, and they could not.* Chriſt being abſent, he intreated the diſciples, who had power againſt unclean ſpirits, to caſt them out; that they would make uſe of it, and diſpoſſeſs this dumb and evil ſpirit; and who did make trial to caſt him out, but were not able to effect it; ſee the note on *Matt.* xvii. 16.

Ver. 19. *He anſwereth them*, &c.] The father of the child, and who is included in the reproof afterwards given, for his unbelief, and taking part with the *Scribes* againſt his diſciples; though the *Vulgate Latin*, *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, read, *them*; meaning not his diſciples, but the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, with the father of the child: *and ſaith, O faithleſs generation, how long ſhall I be with you? how long ſhall I ſuffer you? bring him unto me*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xvii. 17.

Ver. 20. *And they brought him unto him*, &c.] The father of the child, and thoſe that were with him, brought the child to Jeſus, into his preſence, before him: *and when he ſaw him*; that is, either when Jeſus ſaw the child, or the child ſaw Jeſus; or the evil ſpirit in him, and by him, which were all at once: *ſtraightway the ſpirit tare him*; threw him into a violent fit, ſhook him, and convulſed him in a dreadful manner; knowing his time was ſhort, and being filled with indignation and rage, that he ſhould be obliged, as he knew he muſt, to quit the child very ſpeedily; and was therefore reſolved to do all the miſchief, and put him to all the pain he could: *and he fell on the ground*; at the feet of Jeſus, not being able to ſtand, through the violent motions and convulſions he threw him into: *and wallowed, foming*; rolled about from ſide to ſide, foming at the mouth, and in the moſt exquiſite rack and torture.

Ver. 21. *And he aſked his father*, &c.] As he lay rolling about in this miſerable condition, that the length and ſtubborneſs of his diſorder might be known, and ſo the cure the more remarkable, and appear the more expreſſive of his divine power and goodneſs: *how long is it ago ſince this came unto him?* ſince this evil ſpirit entered into him, and theſe diſorders have attended him? *and he ſaid of a child*; or *from his infancy*; ſo that it was not for any actual ſin that he had committed, that this ſore affliction came upon him; and yet he could not be without ſin, ſince it was not agreeable to the juſtice, mercy, and goodneſs of God, to afflict, or ſuffer to be afflicted, one that is innocent; and therefore muſt be tainted with original ſin, which is the ſource and pring of all afflictions, calamities, and judgments.

Ver. 22. *And oft times it hath caſt him into the* re, &c.] When he has been near it; ſo that one art or other of his body has been ſcorched, or urnt, and his life in danger: and *into the waters to deſtroy him*: when he has been near any brook, or river, it has thrown him into it, in order to drown him, as into the fire, to burn him. The *Ethiopic* verſion before fire and water reads, *into the deep*; meaning either the ſea, or ſome deep pit, or off a precipice. All this is ſaid to aggravate the caſe, and ſhew the miſerable condition the child was in, from the frequency of the fits, and the danger he was expoſed to: *but if thou canſt do any thing*. This man's faith was very weak, and perhaps weaker than when he firſt came from home with his child. He had brought him to the diſciples of Chriſt, and they could not cure him; the evil ſpirit was as ſtrong, or ſtronger in him, than ever; he now lay in a violent fit, and in a moſt miſerable condition; ſo that he was almoſt ready to deſpair of healing: ſome ſmall hopes he had, that Chriſt might be able to relieve in this caſe; but he puts an *if* upon his power, and earneſtly intreats him, if he had any, he would put it forth: *have compaſſion on us, and help us*; his child that lay in ſuch a deplorable condition, rolling on the ground at his feet; and himſelf, who was greatly afflicted for him: he tries, in very moving language, both the power and pity of Chriſt; and begs that if he had either, he would exert them on this occaſion.

Ver. 23. *Jeſus ſaid unto him, if thou canſt believe*, &c.] As the man put an *if* on the power of Chriſt, Chriſt puts an *if* on the faith of the man; and tacitly ſuggeſts, that power was not wanting in himſelf, but faith in him; and ſhould that cure not be performed, it would not be owing to any inability in him, but to his own incredulity. The *Arabic* verſion renders it, *what is this thy ſaying, if thou canſt do any thing?* What doſt thou mean by it? Thou oughteſt not to doubt of my power; there's no reaſon for it, after ſo many miracles wrought; upbraiding the man with his unbelief; and the *Ethiopic* verſion renders it thus, *becauſe thou ſayeſt, if thou canſt:* wherefore to ſhow that power was not wanting in him, provided he had but faith, it follows, *all things are poſſible to him that believeth*; that is, *to be done* to him, as the *Syriac* and *Ethiopic* verſions ſupply: for all things are not poſſible to be done by the believer himſelf, but all things are poſſible to be done for him, by God, or Chriſt, or the Spirit of God: thus our Lord, as he elſewhere does, aſcribes that to faith, which is done by a divine power.

Ver. 24. *And ſtraightway the father of the child cried out*, &c.] As ſoon as ever he found it was put upon his faith, and that the iſſue of things would be according to that, he expreſſed himſelf with much vehemency, being in great diſtreſs; partly with indignation at his unbelief, and partly thro' fear of miſſing a cure, by reaſon of it: *and ſaid with tears*; repenting of his unbelief, and grieved at the preſent weakneſs of his faith; which he very ingenuouſly confeſſes, ſaying, *Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief*; not forward, but out of the way: he found in himſelf ſome ſmall degree of faith in the power of Chriſt, but it was mixed with much unbelief, through the greatneſs of the child's diſorder; and therefore deſires it might be removed from him, and he might be helped againſt it: he ſaw it was not in his own power to believe; nor had he ſtrength of himſelf to oppoſe his unbelief; but that both faith muſt be given him, and power againſt unbelief. The *Syriac* verſion renders it, *help*, לחסירוה הימנותי, *the defect of my faith*: fill up that which is lacking in it, 'tis very deficient, Lord, increaſe it; and the *Arabic* and *Ethiopic* tranſlate thus, *help the weakneſs of my faith.* He found his faith very weak, he deſires it might be ſtrengthened, that he might be ſtrong in faith, and give glory to God; and in this way unbelief is helped, or men helped againſt it: every believer, more or leſs, at one time or another, finds himſelf in this man's caſe; and alſo that it is neceſſary to make uſe of the ſame petition; for faith is but imperfect in this life, and often very weak and defective in its exerciſe.

Ver. 25. *When Jeſus ſaw that the people came running together*, &c.] לותה, *to him*, as the *Syriac* verſion adds, and ſo the *Perſic*; upon hearing the vehement cry of the father of the child, and the earneſt ſollicitations he made, expecting that ſomething would be done: *he rebuked the foul ſpirit*; that brought this diſorder on the child, had continued it ſo long, and with ſo much violence. *Matthew* calls this foul ſpirit, *the devil*, ch. xvii. 18. ſee the note there: *ſaying unto him, thou dumb and deaf ſpirit*; ſo calling him, not becauſe the ſpirit was dumb and deaf, but becauſe he had been the cauſe of dumbneſs and deafneſs in the child: he had at times taken away both his ſpeech and hearing: *I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him.* Chriſt, in an authoritative way, ordered the unclean ſpirit to quit his poſſeſſion, and never attempt to regain it more. This he ſaid, partly with regard to the devil, who would be deſirous of re-poſſeſſion; and partly with reſpect to the diſeaſe, which had its intervals, and returned at certain times; and alſo with reſpect to the father of the child, to confirm his faith in the cure, and that he might be in no pain about the return of the diſorder.

Ver. 26. *And* the ſpirit *cried, and rent him ſore*, &c.] We rightly ſupply, *the ſpirit*, as do the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions, *the dæmon*; for it was he, and not the child, that cried, and made an hideous noiſe, at his ejection; being filled with wrath and rage, that he muſt be obliged to quit the poſſeſſion he had ſo long held; and therefore, in ſpite and malice, before it left him, ſhook and tore him, and threw him into dreadful convulſions: *and came out of him*; though ſore againſt his will, being obliged to it, by the ſuperior power of Chriſt: *and he was as one dead*; that is, the child, when the devil had left him, lay as ſtill as if he had no breath, nor life in him: *inſomuch that many ſaid, he is dead*; really dead; that there was no life in him, nor any hopes of his coming to himſelf again.

Ver. 27. *But Jeſus took him by the hand*, &c.] *Took hold of the hand of the child*, as the *Perſic* verſion renders it; *and lifted him up*; from the ground, on which he was caſt by the ſpirit; *and he aroſe:* this is omitted in the *Syriac* and *Arabic* verſions, though in one edition of the latter, according to *De Dieu*, it is rendered, *and he ſtood*; to which is added, *and went into his own houſe.* The *Perſic* verſion, inſtead of this clauſe reads, *and the child was healed*; and all the expreſſions ſhew, that he was perfectly well.

Ver. 28. *And when he was come into the houſe*, &c.] Perhaps into the man's houſe whoſe child he had healed, or into ſome other in theſe parts, for the ſake both of retirement and refreſhment: *his diſciples aſked him privately, why could not we caſt him out?* The nine diſciples, who were particularly concerned in this matter, fearing they had loſt the power of caſting out devils, conferred upon them, enquired of Jeſus, when he was alone, why they could not caſt the dæmon out of the child, when they had ejected unclean ſpirits out of many others; ſee the note on *Matt.* xvii. 19.

Ver. 29. *And he ſaid unto them*, &c.] *Matthew*, beſides the following reaſon, aſſigns another, as given by our Lord, why they could not caſt out the foul ſpirit, which was their unbelief; of which they were guilty in ſome ſort, as well as the *Jews*, and the father of the child; but *Mark* omits it, and only relates this as the reaſon; *this kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and faſting*; which they had not obſerved; ſee the note on *Matt.* xvii. 21.

Ver. 30. *And they departed thence*, &c.] From the coaſts of *Cæſarea Philippi*, from that part of the country where the mountain was, on which Chriſt was transfigured, and at the foot of which the above miracle was wrought. This is to be underſtood of Chriſt and his twelve diſciples, though the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read in the ſingular number, *he went out*; not alone, but with his diſciples, as the following account ſhows: *and paſſed through Galilee*; in order to go to the coaſts of *Judæa*, and ſo to *Jeruſalem*, where he was ſhortly to ſuffer: and therefore that his journey might not be retarded, and he be hindered by the converſation of the people in *Galilee*, and their importunity to ſtay with them, and teach, and work miracles among them, he paſſed through the country, in as private a manner as could be: *and he would not that any man ſhould know it*; partly for the reaſon juſt mentioned, and partly that he might have the opportunity of converſing alone with his diſciples, and of reminding, and informing them, of ſome important things, which 'twas neceſſary they ſhould be acquainted with, and obſerve.

Ver. 31. *For he taught his diſciples, and ſaid unto them*, &c.] What he had ſome little time before ſuggeſted to them; ſee ch. viii. 31. *The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men:* in one of *Beza*'s copies it is read, *ſinful men*, as in *Luke* xxiv. 7. and ſo the *Perſic* verſion reads here, and adds *rebellious.* This is repreſented as if it was already done, becauſe it was determined and agreed upon, that it ſhould be; and becauſe, in a very little time, the Son of man would be delivered into the hands of wicked men, according to the will of God, with his own conſent, by the means of *Judas*, the *Jews*, and *Pilate: and they ſhall kill him*; put him to death, in a violent manner, contrary to all law and juſtice: *and after that he is killed*; this is omitted in the *Arabic* verſion, and in the *Perſic* verſion in the room of it 'tis read, *and ſhall put him into a ſepulchre*; that being what followed next upon his death: and *he ſhall riſe the third day*. This Chriſt always takes care to mention, for the comfort of his diſciples, when he tells them of his death.

Ver. 32. *But they underſtood not that ſaying*, &c.] Meaning either the whole of what he had ſaid, concerning his delivery, death, and reſurrection: and which then muſt be interpreted with ſome limitation; for they muſt underſtand the ſenſe of hi words, which were clear and expreſs; eſpeciall concerning his death, which affected their mind with trouble and grief; for *Matthew* ſays, *they wer exceeding ſorry* upon it, ch. xvii. 23. ſee the not there; but they could not underſtand how it coul be, and upon what account, and for what end, holy and good, and innocent a man as he wa could be put to death; nor how this could conſi with his character, as the Son of God, the Meſſia and king of *Iſrael*; and with the notions they h of the Meſſiah's abiding for ever, and ſetting up temporal kingdom on earth: or this may rega only his reſurrection from the dead; which wheth it was to be taken in a literal or myſtical ſenſe, th could not tell: *and were afraid to aſk him*; l

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they ſhould be upbraided with their ignorance and ſtupidity, as they had been lately rebuked by him for their unbelief, and the neglect of their duty; and as *Peter* had been ſeverely reprimanded for expoſtulating with him about the ſelf-ſame things, delivered by him to them, not long before.

Ver. 33. *And he came to Capernaum,* &c.] Where he met with the collectors of the tribute-money, and paid it to them, as related by *Matthew,* ch. xvii. 24. though *Mark* takes no notice of it. The *Vulgate Latin* and the *Syriac* verſions, read in the plural number, *they came*; Chriſt and his twelve apoſtles; and which is the ſenſe of the words, read in the ſingular number; for Chriſt came not alone, but with his diſciples: *and being in the houſe*; of *Simon* and *Andrew,* very likely where he uſed to be when at *Capernaum: he aſked them, what was it that ye diſputed among yourſelves by the way?* Whilſt in their journey from *Cæſarea Philippi,* to *Galilee*; or as they travelled through the parts of *Galilee* to *Capernaum.* This queſtion Chriſt put, not as ignorant of what had paſſed among them, but in order to have the caſe laid before him; that he might reprove them for their pride and ambition, and have an opportunity of teaching them humility, and of informing them of the nature of his kingdom, and ſubjects; concerning which, they had entertained very wrong notions. The phraſe *among yourſelves,* is omitted in the *Vulgate Latin* and *Arabic* verſions, but ſtands in the *Syriac, Perſic,* and *Ethiopic.*

Ver. 34. *But they held their peace,* &c.] Fearing a reprimand, for their vanity and affectation of worldly grandeur: *for by the way they had diſputed among themſelves, who* ſhould be *the greateſt*; that is, who ſhould be advanced to the higheſt poſt, and have the greateſt place of authority, honour, and dignity, in the temporal kingdom of the Meſſiah, they expected would be in a little time ſet up: for notwithſtanding what Chriſt had ſaid to them, concerning his being given up to the power of men, and concerning his death and reſurrection, they ſtill retained their former principle, to which they knew not how to reconcile his dying; and therefore choſe rather to leave his meaning in ſuſpenſe, and remain ignorant about it, than quit ſo darling a notion: and doubtleſs this diſpute was occaſioned by what Chriſt had ſaid to them; who afterwards, getting by themſelves, talked about it, which led on to a warm conteſt, about precedence in his kingdom.

Ver. 35. *And he ſat down,* &c.] As their maſter, as one having authority; and in order to examine into this matter, and paſs judgment upon it: *and called the twelve*; all the diſciples, who though they might not be all engaged in this diſpute, nor equally criminal, yet were all poſſeſſed of the ſame notion; and therefore Chriſt calls them all unto him, what he had to ſay, being pertinent unto them all: *and ſaith unto them, if any man deſire to be firſt*; to have the pre-eminence, and be in the chief place in the kingdom of the Meſſiah, *the ſame ſhall be laſt of all, and ſervant of all:* his pride and vanity ſhall be checked; his ambitious views ſhall be fruſtrated; inſtead of being firſt, he ſhall be laſt; and inſtead of having ſuperior reverence and reſpect, he ſhall be debaſed, and treated with neglect and contempt; and inſtead of being the maſter over others, ſhall be the ſervant of all. Some copies read, *let him be*; and ſo the *Perſic* verſion, *let him be laſt, and miniſter to every one*; and the *Ethiopic* thus, *let him ſubject himſelf to all, and be ſervant to all*; for the only way to preferment in Chriſt's kingdom, or in the Goſpel diſpenſation, is humility and meekneſs, and performing the loweſt ſervices to all, with diligence and chearfulneſs.

Ver. 36. *And he took a child,* &c.] Which was in the houſe, and which he called unto him, and ſet by him, as the other Evangeliſts obſerve: *and ſet him in the midſt of them*; his diſciples, that all might ſee and learn from this inſtance: *and when he had taken him in his arms*; and embraced him, to ſhow his great regard to humility, and humble perſons: *he ſaid unto them*; the following words.

Ver. 37. *Whoſoever ſhall receive one of ſuch children,* &c.] That is, any believer, who is like to ſuch a child, for humility, meekneſs, and lowlineſs of mind; and ſo the *Syriac* verſion renders it, איך הנא טליא, *one like to this child*; and ſo the *Arabic* and *Perſic* verſions; for it can't be thought that Chriſt's meaning is, that whoever takes up any little child, embraces, and takes notice of it, as he did, does what is after related; but that whoever ſhews reſpect, and peforms the leaſt office of love and kindneſs to the meaneſt believer, comparable to a little child, for the above excellent qualities, and he does this, ſays Chriſt, *in my name*; on account that he belongs to Chriſt, is one of his, bears his image, partakes of his grace, is loved by him, and ſhall be glorified with him: ſuch is Chriſt's great regard to his humble followers, that he takes it all one as if done to himſelf: *he receiveth me*; this humble believer, being a member of his, and like unto him, and reſpected by him; *and whoſoever ſhall receive me*; Chriſt, in any of his members: *receiveth not me*; that is, not him only; for he does receive him, otherwiſe there would be a contradiction in the words; but his meaning is, that he does not hereby receive him, by receiving one of his, nor him ſo much, as his Father: *but him that ſent me*; for as ſhowing reſpect to one of Chriſt's members, is ſhowing reſpect to him; ſo ſhowing reſpect to Chriſt, is ſhowing reſpect to his Father, from whence he came, by whom he was ſent, in whoſe name he acted, and whoſe work and ſervice he was concerned in.

Ver. 38. *And John anſwered him, ſaying,* &c.] Taking notice of what Chriſt juſt now ſaid, and obſerving how well pleaſing it was to him, to receive in a meek and humble manner, the leaſt believer in his name; and reflecting upon an action, in which he and ſome of his fellow-diſciples were concerned, and which he perceived was not ſo agreeable to this rule of Chriſt, thought proper to relate it to him; that he might have his ſenſe of it, and give him an opportunity of enlarging on a ſubject, ſo ſuitable to the temper and diſpoſition of this beloved diſciple. *Maſter, we ſaw one caſting out devils in thy name:* very likely he called him *Rabbi,* as the *Syriac* verſion renders it, or *Rabboni,* as in *John* xx. 16. a title commonly given to Chriſt, both by his diſciples and others: the caſe related, very probably happened, when the diſciples being ſent forth by Chriſt to preach the Goſpel, and caſt out devils, took a tour through *Judæa* and *Galilee,* where they ſaw this man. *John* was not alone; there were others with him, at leaſt another, who was an eye-witneſs with him; for the apoſtles were ſent out, by two and two: who this man was, is not ſaid, his name is not mentioned, perhaps was unknown to the apoſtles; though *Beza* ſays, in one ancient exemplar 'tis read, *we knew one.* This perſon not only attempted to caſt out devils, but really did; and that more than one; but in which of Chriſt's names he did it, is not expreſſed: if in the name of the Meſſiah, Dr. *Lightfoot*'s conjecture may be right, that he was one of *John*'s diſciples; who had been baptized in the name of the Meſſiah, that was juſt expected to come; to whom, as to others of his diſciples, was given a power of caſting out devils, to make the way of the Meſſiah more plain; wherefore the reaſon why he did not caſt out devils in the name of Jeſus, but in the name of the Meſſiah, and did not follow him, nor his diſciples, was not out of contempt, but ignorance, not knowing that Jeſus of *Nazareth* was the Meſſiah: or if he caſt out devils in the name of Jeſus, which ſeems moſt likely, he might be, as others think, a diſciple of *John*'s, who really did believe in Jeſus, though he did not aſſociate with his diſciples, but continued with the diſciples of *John*: wherefore it is ſaid, *and he followeth not us*; was neither one of the twelve apoſtles; nor one of the ſeventy diſciples; nor even one of the lower claſs, of the profeſſed diſciples of Jeſus. This clauſe is omitted in the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions: *and we forbad him*; going on in this way, caſting out any more devils: *becauſe he followeth not us*; was not one of their company, nor any of Chriſt's diſciples; who had received no authority and commiſſion from Chriſt, to do what he did: wherefore they feared, that by ſuch an irregular way of proceeding, the dignity of Chriſt would be leſſened, and ſome diſhonour and reproach reflected on him: and beſides the honour of Chriſt, they might conſult their own; and their caſe be too much like that of *Joſhua*, when *Eldad* and *Medad* propheſied in the camp. This clauſe is left out in the *Vulgate Latin*, but ſtands in all the *Eaſtern* verſions.

Ver. 39. *But Jeſus ſaid, forbid him not*, &c.] Neither him, nor any other they ſhould hereafter meet with, who might be caſting out devils in his name, giving this as a reaſon for it; *for there is no man which ſhall do a miracle in my name*; or *miracles*, as the *Syriac* verſion, as to caſt out devils, or heal any ſickneſs and diſeaſe, *that can lightly ſpeak evil of me*: ſuch a man can never reproach and blaſpheme that name, which he makes uſe of in doing, and by which he does wonderful works; no man can call Jeſus accurſed, who caſts out devils in his name; ſee 1 *Cor.* xii. 3. if he has ſpoken evil of him before, he can't do it *again*, as the *Perſic* verſion renders it, with any face; or he can't do it *quickly*, *immediately*, as the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions interpret it: there muſt be ſome time before ſuch an one apoſtatizes, if he ever does; he can't very eaſily and readily go into a way of blaſpheming that name, by which he does his mighty works; his conſcience will not admit of it; and beſides, it would be contrary to his intereſt; it muſt ſink his credit, and he loſe the eſteem and applauſe of men, he had gained by his miracles; for to diſhonour that name, would be to reproach himſelf.

Ver. 40. *For he that is not againſt us, is on our part.*] Many copies read, *he that is not againſt you, is for you*; as this man; he was not againſt either Chriſt, or his diſciples; he was doing the ſame work, promoting the ſame intereſt, and deſtroying the kingdom of ſatan: and therefore, though he did not follow them, and had not his commiſſion immediately from Chriſt; yet, inaſmuch as he was oppoſing the ſame common enemy, and did nothing againſt them, he ought to be reckoned as one for them, and on their ſide. 'Tis a proverbial expreſſion, ſignifying that all that are not againſt a man, and take not the part of his enemy, are to be accounted his friends.

Ver. 41. *For whoſoever ſhall give you a cup of water to drink*, &c.] Not only one that does a miracle in the name of Chriſt, but he that ſhews the leaſt reſpect, or does the leaſt kindneſs to any one of his; ſee the note on *Matt.* x. 42. is to be reckoned a friend, and is ſo accounted by Chriſt; and will be ſooner or later taken notice of by him, eſpecially, if what he does, be it ever ſo little, is done on his account: *in my name, becauſe ye belong to Chriſt*; or as the *Syriac* verſion renders it, *on account that ye are Chriſt's*; are his diſciples, are called by his name, are partakers of his grace, bear his image and likeneſs, are loved by him, intereſted in him, given to him, redeemed by him, called by his grace, and ſhall be with him: *verily, I ſay unto you, he ſhall not loſe his reward*; ſee the note on *Matt.* x. 42.

Ver. 42. *And whoſoever ſhall offend one of theſe little ones that believe in me*, &c.] Whoſoever ſhall do the leaſt injury to the meaneſt perſon that believes in Chriſt, who are mean both in their own eyes, and the eyes of others; for Chriſt is not ſpeaking of little children in age, who are neither capable of believing in Chriſt, nor are they ready to take offence; but of ſuch as belong to him; his diſciples and followers, of whom he is ſpeaking in the preceding verſe: *it is better for him that a mill-ſtone were hanged about his neck, and he were caſt into the ſea*; and drowned there: the alluſion is to the drowning of malefactors, by tying a ſtone, or any heavy thing about their necks, and caſting them into the ſea. *Caſaubon*, and others, have ſhewn out of Heathen writers, that this has been a practice of ſome nations, particularly the *Grecians*: *Jerom* ſays, Chriſt ſpeaks according to the cuſtom of the country; this being a puniſhment of the greateſt crimes among the *Jews*; but I have no where met with it in their writings: Chriſt's ſenſe is, that ſuch who give offence to any of his miniſters or people, how mean ſoever they may appear, ſhall undergo the ſevereſt puniſhment; ſee the note on *Matt.* xviii. 6.

Ver. 43. *And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off*, &c.] I have obſerved on *Matt.* v. 30. that by the *Jewiſh* canons, cutting off of the hand was ordered in ſome caſes there mentioned; which, though literally enjoined, muſt not be underſtood, as though the *Jewiſh Sanhedrim* had a power of inflicting ſuch a puniſhment, on perſons found guilty of the things inſtanced in; or that it was required they ſhould do this to themſelves; but ſuch rules were delivered in ſuch language, to ſhew the heinouſneſs of the crimes committed, to expreſs an abhorrence of them [g], and to deter perſons from them; and to ſhew, as the *Gloſs* [h] on one place obſerves, that it is better, that the hand be cut off; or it ſhould be more eligible to the perſon himſelf, to have it cut off, than to be guilty of ſuch evil: and in like manner, Chriſt there and here, directs to what is moſt proper and fit to be done; even to part with what is ever ſo near and dear, rather than be drawn into evil by it: and his ſenſe in this place is, that the deareſt friends and acquaintance, or be they what they will, though ever ſo near and dear, like a right hand, the inſtrument of action, that obſtruct the ſpiritual welfare of men, are to be renounced and parted with, and treated as real enemies, and of the moſt pernicious conſequence; ſee the note on *Matt.* v. 29, 30. *It is better for thee to enter into life maimed*: not that there will be any ſuch thing, as upon the reſurrection, going into heaven without a limb; for the words are to be underſtood, not literally, but figuratively; and the ſenſe is, it is better to part with every thing here, that is detrimental to a man's doing, or enjoying, what is ſpiritually good, and enter into eternal life, *than having two hands, to go into hell*; than by enjoying ſuch perſons and things, agreeable to the fleſh, to the ruin of the ſoul, and be caſt into hell; *into the fire that never ſhall be quenched*. This is a periphraſis of hell, and is an alluſion to the valley of *Hinnom*, from whence hell has its name, here and elſewhere; where a conſtant fire was kept, for the burning of polluted things: one of the *Jewiſh* writers ſays [i], that it "was a "place in the land near to *Jeruſalem*, and was a "place contemptible; where they caſt things de"filed, and carkaſſes; and there was there, "אש תמיד, *a continual fire*, to burn polluted "things and bones; and therefore the condemna"tion of the wicked, in a parabolical way, is called "*Gehinnom*." And ſays another of them [k], "*Ge*"*hinnom* is a place known, near to *Jeruſalem*, and "a valley, שאין האש נכבית, *whoſe fire is never* "*quenched*; and in which they burn bones of de"filement, and carkaſſes, and other polluted "things." This whole clauſe is left out, in the *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions; and the phraſe, *that never ſhall be quenched*, is not in the *Arabic* verſion.

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[g] Maimon. in Miſn. Nidda, c. 2. §. 1.

[h] In T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 108. 2.

Ver. 44. *Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.*] The paſſage referred to, is in *Iſa.* lxvi. 24. and as there, the words are ſpoken of ſuch, as tranſgreſſed againſt the Lord; ſo here, of ſuch as offended any of Chriſt's little ones, or were offended by an hand, a foot, or eye, and retained them: by *their worm* is meant, their conſcience; for as a worm that is continually gnawing upon the entrails of a man, gives him exquiſite pain; ſo the conſciences of ſinners, will be continually flying in their faces, bringing their ſins to remembrance, accuſing them of them, upbraiding them with them, aggravating them, tormenting them for them, filling them with dreadful anguiſh and miſery, with twinging remorſes, and ſevere reflections, and which will never have an end. This will be always the caſe; conſcience will be ever diſtreſſing, racking, and torturing them; it will never ceaſe, nor ceaſe doing this office: and ſo the *Chaldee paraphraſe* of *Iſ.* lxvi. 24. renders this phraſe, נשמתהון לא ימותון, *their ſouls ſhall not die*; but ſhall ever continue, in the dreadful torments and unſpeakable horrors, of a corroding conſcience: and by *the fire* may be meant, the fire of divine wrath let into their ſouls, which will never be extinguiſhed; and ſo *Jarchi* interprets the phraſe in *Iſaiah*, *their fire*, בגיהנם, *in hell*. It is a tradition of the *Jews* [l], that the light, or fire, which God created on the ſecond day, *there is no quenching it for ever*; as it is ſaid, *for their worm ſhall not die, neither ſhall their fire be quenched*, *Iſa.* lxvi. 24. the paſſage which is here referred to; the reaſon they give is, becauſe it is the fire of hell: the ſenſe of which is ſometimes given by the *Jewiſh* doctors thus [m]; *their worm ſhall not die* from the body, *and the fire ſhall not be quenched* from the ſoul.

Ver. 45. *And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off*, &c.] Such who are that to men, as the foot is to the body, the ſupport of them, through whom they have their maintenance and ſubſiſtence; and yet theſe, if they are a means of cauſing them to ſtumble and fall, or of leading out of the ways of Chriſt, and off from him, their company is to be ſhunned and abſtained from; *it is better for thee to enter halt into life.* The *Vulgate Latin* verſion reads, *eternal life*, which is undoubtedly intended by *life*; and ſo reads the *Cambridge* copy of *Beza*'s; and the meaning is, that it is better to go alone without ſuch company into heaven, *than having two feet to be caſt into hell, into the fire that never ſhall be quenched*; ſee the note on the preceding verſe.

Ver. 46. *Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.*] The *Perſic* verſion renders it, *becauſe from thence there can be no deliverance*; which is rather an interpretation of theſe figurative expreſſions, and is a good one; ſince they deſign the eternity of hell torments, as well as point at the anguiſh and miſery of them.

Ver. 47. *And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out*, &c.] Than which, nothing is dearer to man, it being very tender, and exceeding uſeful: this metaphor the Lord ſometimes makes uſe of, to ſhew how dear his people are unto him, and what a tender concern he has for them, *Deut.* xxxii. 10. *Pſal.* xvii. 8. *Zech.* ii. 8. And here it may deſign ſuch, as are moſt beloved by men, and are their moſt intimate acquaintance, and boſom friends; and yet theſe are to be parted with, when they prove ſnares and ſtumbling-blocks, or give offence, by endeavouring to draw into ſin, and from Chriſt: *it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye*; that kingdom, which God has prepared for his people, from the foundation of the world; and of his rich grace, gives unto them, and in which they will enjoy him to all eternity: *than having two eyes, to be caſt into hell-fire.* In the two inſtances before it is added, *that never ſhall be quenched.*

Ver. 48. *Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.*] This is repeated again, not only to aſſure the truth of the thing, but to raiſe the attention of the mind unto it, and to fix an awful impreſſion upon it: the *Perſic* verſion renders it, *from whence thou ſhalt never find redemption*: there's no redemption from hell, as *Origen* and others have thought.

Ver. 49. *For every one ſhall be ſalted with fire*, &c.] That is, every one of thoſe that tranſgreſs the law of God, offend any that believe in Chriſt, retain their ſins, and ſinful companions; every one of them that are caſt into hell, where the worm of conſcience is always gnawing, and the fire of divine wrath is always burning, with that fire every one of them ſhall be ſalted: that fire ſhall be to them, what ſalt is to fleſh; as that keeps fleſh from putrefaction and corruption, ſo the fire of hell, as it will burn, torture, and diſtreſs rebellious ſinners, it will preſerve them in their beings; they ſhall not be conſumed by it, but continued in it: ſo that theſe words are a reaſon of the former, ſhewing and proving, that the ſoul in torment ſhall never die, or loſe any of its powers and faculties; and particularly, not its gnawing, torturing conſcience: and that the fire of hell is inextinguiſhable; for though ſinners will be inexpreſſibly tormented in it, they'll not be conſumed by it; but the ſmoke of their torments ſhall aſcend for ever and ever: and that they will be ſo far from being annihilated by the fire of hell, that they ſhall be preſerved in their beings in it, as fleſh is preſerved by ſalt: *and every ſacrifice ſhall be ſalted with ſalt*; referring to *Lev.* ii. 13. *With all thine offerings thou ſhalt offer ſalt*; not only the meat-offerings, but the burnt-offerings, and all others, were to be offered with ſalt [n]; of which, the *Jews* ſay the following things [o]: "It is an affirmative

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[i] Kimchi in Pſ. xxvii. 13.

[k] R. Iſaac Sangari, Sepher Coſri, fol. 57. 2.

[l] T. Bab. Peſachim, fol. 54. 1. & Gloſſ. in ib.

[m] Zohar in Exod. fol. 62. 3.

[n] Piſke Toſeph. Ceritot, c. 1. art. 3.

[o] Maimon. Hilch. Iſſure Mizbeach, c. 5. §. 11, 12, 13.

[p] Vid. ib. in Miſn. Menachot, c. 3. §. 2.

“precept to ſalt all the ſacrifices, before they go up to the altar, as it is ſaid, *Lev.* ii. 13. *With all thine offerings thou ſhalt offer ſalt*; and there is nothing brought to the altar without ſalt, except the wine of drink-offerings, and blood, and wood; and this thing is a tradition, and there is no ſcripture to ſupport it; and the commandment is to ſalt the fleſh very well, as one ſalts fleſh for roaſting, who turns the part, and ſalts it; tho' if he ſalts the whole, with even one grain of ſalt, it is right: he that offers without any ſalt at all, is to be beaten; as it is ſaid, *thou ſhalt not ſuffer the ſalt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking*: and tho' he is to be beaten, the offering is right, and acceptable, except the meat-offering.——The ſalt, with which they ſalt all the ſacrifices, is from the congregation, as the wood; and a private perſon does not bring ſalt, or wood, for his offering, from his own houſe: and in three places [p] they put on ſalt, in the chamber of ſalt, and upon the aſcent of the altar, and upon the top of the altar: in the chamber of ſalt they ſalt the ſkins of the holy things; and upon the aſcent of the altar they ſalt the parts (of the ſacrifice); and upon the top of the altar they ſalt the handful, and the frankincenſe, and the meat-offerings, that are burnt, and the burnt-offerings of fowls.” Something of this kind alſo obtained among the Heathens, who thought their ſacrifices were not rightly offered, nor acceptable to God, unleſs ſalt was uſed with them [q]. Now our Lord in this has either reſpect to the ſame perſons, as before; and ſignifies hereby, that the wicked in hell ſhall be victims to divine juſtice, and ſacrifices to his wrath and vengeance; and that as the ſacrifices under the law were ſalted with ſalt, theſe ſhall be ſalted with the fire of hell, and ſhall never be utterly deſtroyed; but ſhall ever remain the objects of God's ſore diſpleaſure, and fiery indignation: or he may have reſpect to a different ſort of perſons, even to the ſaints and people of God, who are an holy, living, and acceptable ſacrifice to him; and in the prophecy referred to in the context, *Iſ.* lxvi. 20. they are ſaid to be brought *for an offering to the Lord——as the children of Iſrael bring an offering in a clean veſſel into the houſe of the Lord*: and ſo as the ſacrifices of the *Jews* were ſalted with ſalt, and became acceptable to God; ſuch who are ſeaſoned with the grace of God, are preſerved from the corruptions of the world, are acceptable in the ſight of God, and are kept ſafe to his kingdom and glory.

Ver. 50. *Salt is good*, &c.] To make meat ſavoury, and keep fleſh from corrupting; and ſo is the grace of God, to ſeaſon mens hearts, make their diſcourſe ſavoury, and preſerve them from the corruption of ſin: and ſo men made partakers of the grace of God; they are good and uſeful to others, both by their words and actions, and eſpecially miniſters of the Goſpel, who are *the ſalt of the earth*, *Matt.* v. 13. ſee the note there; and here Chriſt may chiefly intend his apoſtles: *but if the ſalt hath loſt its ſaltneſs, wherewith will ye ſeaſon it?* there's no recovering it, it becomes good for nothing; ſee the note on *Matt.* v. 13. *have ſalt in yourſelves*; the doctrine of grace, and word of Chriſt, prudence in talk and converſation, and holineſs of heart and life, ſo as to behave wiſely towards them that are without: *and have peace one with another*; which the God of peace calls unto, the Goſpel of peace requires, and the grace of God teaches. Salt is an emblem of firm union, concord, and agreement; hence the covenant of peace is called a covenant of ſalt, *Numb.* xviii. 19. compared with ch. xxv. 12. This exhortation very appoſitely follows upon the making mention of ſalt, in different ſenſes; eſpecially, this exhortation was the more neceſſary to the diſciples at this time, ſince they had been very lately warmly diſputing the point among themſelves, who ſhould be greateſt in the kingdom of the Meſſiah; and which had occaſioned this diſcourſe of Chriſt's.

## CHAP. X.

Ver. 1. AND *he aroſe from thence*, &c.] From *Galilee*, and particularly from *Capernaum*: *and cometh into the coaſts of Judæa*; into thoſe places, which bordered on that part of the land of *Iſrael*, called *Judæa*, as diſtinct from *Galilee*: *by*, or rather *to the farther ſide of Jordan*; which he croſſed at the bridge of *Chammath*: the particular place he came to was *Bethabara*; ſee *John* x. 40. and i. 28. where *John* formerly preached, and baptized: *and the people reſorted unto him again*; great multitudes followed him out of *Galilee*, and more doubtleſs flocked to him from the adjacent parts, when they heard of his coming again to them. *And as he was wont, he taught them again*: it had been his cuſtom before, and ſo it was whereever he went, to preach the word of God, and teach men what was profitable to them, and uſeful for the good of their immortal ſouls; and ſo he did now, and here; and not only ſo, but healed many of them of their bodily diſorders, as *Matthew* relates, ch. xix. 2.

Ver. 2. *And the Phariſees came unto him*, &c.] As they every where did; not to be inſtructed by him, but to enſnare him: *and aſked him, is it lawful for a man to put away his wife?* that is, as *Matthew* adds, *for every cauſe*, ch. xix. 3. ſee the note there: for a divorce might be lawfully made for a cauſe, or reaſon; namely, adultery, but not for any, or every cauſe; which is the ſenſe of this queſtion of the *Phariſees*; and which they put, not for information, but *tempting him*; trying to entangle him by oppoſing the authority of *Moſes*, ſhould he deny the lawfulneſs of divorces, or by objecting his former doctrine, *Matt.* v. 32. and ſo expoſe him as an inconſiſtent preacher, ſhould he allow them to be lawful for every reaſon. This clauſe is placed in the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions before the queſtion.

Ver. 3. *And he anſwered and ſaid unto them*, &c.] Very prudently and wiſely, *what did Moſes command you?* according to *Matthew*, he put another queſtion to them; ſee ch. xix. 4. no doubt but both were put, and this after they had urged the authority and law of *Moſes*; and therefore he very pertinently aſks them, what *Moſes* had ſaid about divorces, what law he had left; and puts them upon producing and repeating it, that the ſenſe of it might be examined, and it be conſidered, upon what account it was given.

Ver. 4. *And they ſaid*, &c.] By way of reply, *Moſes ſuffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away*. *Moſes* did not command them to divorc divorce their wives, only ſuffered them to do ſo; and gave orders that if they could not bear that they ſhould live with them, but would divorce them, that they ſhould give them a bill, which ſhould certify, they were ſo divorced, and then ſend them out of their houſes, free to marry other men; this law, or permiſſion, is in *Deut.* xxiv. 1. of the form of a bill of divorcement, ſee the note on *Matt.* v. 31.

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[p] T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 21. 2. & Baal Hatturim in Lev. ii. 13.

[q] Servius in Virgil. Æneid. l. 2. p. 568, 569. & l. 12. p. 1751. Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 4. c. 17.

Ver. 5. *And Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto them,* &c.] With reſpect to this command, or ſufferance of *Moſes*, which they urged: *for the hardneſs of your heart he wrote you this precept*; it was not becauſe it was right in its own nature, or according to the original will of God; but, becauſe the *Jews* were ſuch cruel, and hard-hearted men, that if this had not been permitted, ſome of them, that had wives not ſo agreeable to them, would have uſed them in a very inhuman manner, if not murdered them; and therefore to prevent further, and greater miſchief, *Moſes* indulged them with ſuch a precept; ſee the note on *Matt.* xix. 8.

Ver. 6. *But from the beginning of the creation,* &c.] Of the world, or of man: מתחלת ברייתו של עולם, *from the beginning of the creation of the world*, is a way of ſpeaking often uſed by the *Jews* [r]: the phraſe *of the creation* is left out in the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions; and ſo it was in *Beza*'s moſt ancient copy, and 'tis only read, *from the beginning*, as in *Matt.* xix. 4, 8. ſee the note there: *God made them male and female*; the firſt that were created, *Adam* and *Eve*, the firſt parents of mankind, the firſt couple that came together were one male and one female; ſo that there could be no polygamy or divorce: *Adam* could not have more wives than one; nor could he put away *Eve*, and marry another; no proviſion was made for any ſuch uſages and practices; ſee the note on *Matt.* xix. 4. In the *Complutenſian* edition, 'tis added, *and ſaid*, the following words.

Ver. 7. *For this cauſe ſhall a man leave his father and mother,* &c.] The *Perſic* verſion adds, *and brethren and ſiſters*, tho' without any foundation in the original text, in *Gen.* ii. 24. from whence this paſſage is cited; or in any copy of the Evangeliſt: *and cleave to his wife*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xix. 5.

Ver. 8. *And they twain ſhall be one fleſh,* &c.] This is the remaining part of the citation out of *Gen.* ii. 24. ſee the note on *Matt.* xix. 5. *ſo then they are no more twain, but one fleſh*; as *Adam* and *Eve* were both by creation and marriage: and ſo two perſons, a man and woman, being lawfully married together, become one fleſh, or *one body*, as the *Arabic* and *Perſic* verſions render the phraſe; and therefore the wife is to be loved by the huſband as his own body, and from whom there ſhould be no ſeparation, until death, but in caſe of adultery; ſee the note on *Matt.* xix. 6.

Ver. 9. *What therefore God hath joined together,* &c.] See the note on *Matt.* xix. 6.

Ver. 10. *And in the houſe,* &c.] To which Chriſt retired, after he had put the *Phariſees* to ſilence, and diſmiſſed the multitude: *his diſciples aſked him again of the ſame matter*; concerning the affair of divorces, he had been diſcourſing with the *Phariſees* about; ſome things being ſaid, they had not been uſed to, and which they did not thoroughly underſtand; and therefore choſe privately to converſe with him on this ſubject, for their further information.

Ver. 11. *And he ſaith unto them,* &c.] The ſame things as in *Matt.* v. 32. and xix. 9. ſee the notes there: *whoſoever ſhall put away his wife, and marry another*; when there is no uncleanneſs in the caſe; when his former wife has not injured him by violating the marriage-bed: *committeth adultery againſt her*; to the injury of his lawful wife; or *upon her*, or *with her*, with the perſon he marries. The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions leave out the phraſe, *againſt her*.

Ver. 12. *And if a woman ſhall put away her huſband,* &c.] Not that there was the ſame law, or the ſame ſufferance by the law of *Moſes*, for a woman to put away her huſband, as for the huſband to put away the wife; nor was it practiſed among the *Jews*, unleſs it became to be in uſe about this time, in their declining ſtate, having taken it from the *Gentiles*; of whom they ſay [s], that "they divorce one another: ſays *R. Jochanan*, "אשתו מגרשתו, *his wife divorces him*, and gives "him the dowry." So *Salome*, the ſiſter of *Herod* the great, ſent a bill of divorce to her huſband *Coſtobarus*; and in this ſhe was followed by *Herodias*, the daughter of *Ariſtobulus*, as *Joſephus* [t] relates; and which his own wife alſo did. And by ſuch examples the practice might prevail among the *Jews*: and we have a ſtory told [u] us of a holy man, and a holy woman, who were married, and had no children, וגרשו זה את זה, *and they divorced one another*; and the one went and married a wicked woman, and ſhe made him wicked; and the other went and married a wicked man, and ſhe made him righteous: but I do not find that this practice was approved, or eſtabliſhed by any rule, or canon. They allow [w] indeed a woman to write her huſband's divorce of her, with proper witneſſes; and they alſo oblige one, that was eſpouſed in her minority, and refuſes her huſband, when adult, to write a bill of refuſal; the form of that, and the rules about it, take as follow [x]: "they don't allow "one to marry a minor; he that marries a minor "that is fatherleſs, and ſhe is not pleaſed with her "huſband, lo! ſhe may refuſe, and go away, and "ſhe has no need of a divorce from him, becauſe "the eſpouſals of a minor are not perfect eſpouſals, "as we have explained: and ſo a minor, whom her "father marries, and ſhe becomes a widow, or is "divorced whilſt ſhe is a minor, lo! ſhe is as one "fatherleſs, in her father's life-time; and if ſhe "marries whilſt ſhe is a minor, ſhe may refuſe— "how does ſhe refuſe? ſhe ſays before two witneſſes, I don't like ſuch an one my huſband; or I "don't like the eſpouſals with which my father, "or my brother, eſpouſed me; and ſuch-like words "——The two, before whom the minor refuſes, "write for her; on ſuch a day, ſuch an one, the "daughter of ſuch an one, refuſed, before us, ſuch "an one her huſband; and they ſeal, and give it "to her: and this is the body, or ſubſtance of a "bill of refuſal——in ſuch a week, on ſuch a day "of the month, in ſuch a year, ſuch an one, the "daughter of ſuch an one, refuſed before us, and "ſaid, that my mother, or my brother, forced "me, and married me, or eſpouſed me, and I, "a minor, to ſuch an one, the ſon of ſuch an one; "and now I reveal my mind before you, that I "do not like him, and I will not abide with him:

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[r] Bereſhit Rabba, §. 3. fol. 2. 3. & §. 4. fol. 4. 1.

[s] Ib. §. 18. fol. 15. 3.

[t] Antiq. l. 15. c. 11. & 18. 7.

[u] Bereſhit Rabba, §. 17. fol. 14. 4.

[w] Miſn. Ediot, c. 2. §. 3.

[x] Maimon. Hilch. Geruſhim, c. 11. §. 1, 8, 9, 11.

"and we have ſearched ſuch an one; and this is "manifeſt to us, that ſhe is yet a minor, and we "have written, and ſealed, and have given this to "her, for her juſtification, and a clear proof.

"ſuch an one, the ſon of ſuch an one, witneſs.

"ſuch an one, the ſon of ſuch an one, witneſs." and ſuch a writing was called, גט מיאון, *a bill of refuſal*, and ſometimes שטרי מיאונין, *letters of refuſal*[y]; but a bill of divorcement given by a married woman to her huſband, I have not met with. *Juſtin Martyr* ſpeaks[z] of a Chriſtian woman that, ρεπυδιον δυσα, *gave a bill of divorce* to her huſband: ſuch things, therefore, have been done, and might be done in Chriſt's time, to which he refers; and concerning which he ſays, that if a woman do ſo, *and be married to another, ſhe committeth adultery*; with the man ſhe marries, and againſt, and to the injury of her former huſband, unjuſtly left by her.

Ver. 13. *And they brought young children to him*, &c.] The parents, or friends, or nurſes of the children in thoſe parts, having heard of the fame of Jeſus; and having entertained an high opinion of him, as a great prophet, and a holy, good man, brought their children in their arms, or hands, *that he ſhould touch them*; as he did when he healed diſeaſed perſons, as theſe might be, tho' not expreſſed: *and* his *diſciples rebuked thoſe that brought* them; ſee the note on *Matt.* xix. 13.

Ver. 14. *But when Jeſus ſaw* it, &c.] Obſerved that his diſciples reproved thoſe that brought their children to him *he was much diſpleaſed*; with his diſciples, who took too much upon them; for they ought firſt to have known their maſter's will; whether it was his pleaſure to grant the favour deſired for theſe children, and not to have forbid them of themſelves: *and ſaid unto them*; the diſciples, as the *Perſic* verſion reads: *ſuffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of ſuch is the kingdom of God*; or *of them who* are, איך הלין, *as theſe*, as the *Syriac* verſion renders the words; or, as the *Arabic*, who *are like to theſe*; and the *Perſic*, who are *like to theſe little children*; in innocence and humility; ſee the note on *Matt.* xix. 14.

Ver. 15. *Verily I ſay unto you*, &c.] A form of ſpeech uſed when our Lord was about to aſſeverate a thing, and aſſert ſomething of moment and importance, and which he would have attended to. *Whoſoever ſhall not receive the kingdom of God*; the Goſpel, and the myſteries of it: *as a little child*; laying aſide all pride and prejudice, attending thereunto with humility and meekneſs: *he ſhall not enter therein*; he ſhall attain to no true ſpiritual knowledge of the Goſpel; nor ſhould he be admitted into a Goſpel church-ſtate, and to the ordinances of it.

Ver. 16. *And he took them up in his arms*, &c.] *Upon his arms*, the *Syriac* verſion ſays; *he put them into his boſom*, according to the *Ethiopic*; and the *Perſic* renders it, *he took them into his boſom*: all which expreſſes great tenderneſs towards them, and affection for them: *put his hands upon them, and bleſſed them.* The *Ethiopic* verſion tranſpoſes theſe clauſes, and puts bleſſing firſt, contrary to the natural order of the words, and things; for he firſt put his hands on the children, according to the cuſtom of the *Jews*, and then prayed over them, and wiſhed all happineſs and proſperity to them; ſee the note on *Matt.* xix. 15.

Ver. 17. *And when he was gone forth into the way*, &c.] For when he had bleſſed the children he departed from the coaſts of *Judæa*, on the further ſide of *Jordan*, and ſteered his courſe towards *Jeruſalem*, ver. 32. and as he was on the road thitherwards, *there came one running*; a young man, a ruler among the *Jews*, and very rich, a perſon of great dignity, and large ſubſtance; he hearing that Chriſt was going from thoſe parts, ran in great haſte to him, to have ſome converſation with him, before he was entirely gone; *and kneeled to him*; as a token of great reſpect and civility: ſome verſions, as the *Perſic* and *Ethiopic*, render it, *and worſhipped him*; which muſt be underſtood not in a religious, but in a civil way: the words might be literally rendered, *and kneeled him*; and Dr. *Lightfoot* ſuſpects, that more is meant than bending his knees to Chriſt; that he alſo might take hold of the knees of Chriſt, and kiſs them, as was uſual with the *Jewiſh Rabbins*, and which he illuſtrates by ſeveral inſtances: *and aſked him, good maſter, what ſhall I do that I may inherit eternal life?* This man, though a young man, and alſo a rich man, was thoughtful of the world to come, and the life of it: he believed there was an eternal life after this ſtate of things, and ſo was no *Sadducee*; but he had wrong notions about the way and manner of attaining it: he thought it was to be had by the works of the law, which ſhows him to be a *Phariſee*; whereas eternal life is the gift of God, thro' the Meſſiah, the perſon he now applied to, and who had the words of eternal life; and to a more proper perſon he could not have put the queſtion, he being himſelf the way, the truth, and the life, or the true way to eternal life: and had he attended to his own words, which ſuggeſt, that eternal life is an inheritance, he might have learned, that it is not to be acquired by the induſtry and works of men; but, that it is the bequeſt of our heavenly father to his children, and comes by will, by promiſe, and as a free gift; ſo that it is not of the law; nor are they that are of the law heirs of it, *Rom.* iv. 14. *Gal.* iii. 18. ſee the note on *Matt.* xix. 16.

Ver. 18. *And Jeſus ſaid unto him*, &c.] The ſame as in *Matt.* xix. 17. ſee the note there. *Why calleſt thou me good?* This is ſaid, not as denying that he was good, or as being angry with him for calling him ſo, but in order to lead this young man to a true knowledge of him, and his goodneſs, and even of his proper deity: there is *none good, but one*, that is, *God*; ſome render it, *but one God*, as the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, and *Arabic* verſions; and ſo the words are a proof of the unity of the divine being, and agree with *Deut.* vi. 4. but are not to be underſtood to the excluſion of the Son and Spirit, who, with the Father, are the one God: nor do theſe words at all militate againſt the deity of Chriſt, or prove that he is not God, as the *Jew* objects[a]; ſeeing this is not to be underſtood of the perſon of the Father, in oppoſition to the Son and Spirit, who are equally good: nor does Chriſt, in theſe words, deny himſelf to be God, but rather tacitly ſuggeſts it; ſince he is good in the ſame ſenſe in which God is good: in *Matthew* 'tis added, *but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments:* this Chriſt ſaid not as his ſenſe, that the way to eternal life lies in keeping the commandments of the law; but he ſpeaks in the language of the *Phariſees*, and of this man; and his view is, to bring him to a ſenſe of the impoſſibility of obtaining eternal life by theſe things, as the ſequel ſhows: wherefore the above *Jew*[b] has no reaſon to confront the followers of Jeſus with this paſſage, as if it was a conceſſion of his, that it is impoſſible any ſhould be ſaved without keeping the commands of the law of *Moſes*.

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[y] Miſn. Bava Metzia, c. 1. §. 8.

[z] Apolog. 1. p. 42. Vid. Euſeb. Eccl. Hiſt. l. 4. c. 17.

[a] R. Iſaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 19. p. 408.

[b] Ib.

Ver. 19. *Thou knoweſt the commandments*, &c.] Which God gave to *Moſes* on mount *Sinai*; theſe the *Jews* taught their children; ſo that this young man might reaſonably be thought to know what, and how many they were, tho' he was ignorant of the extent and ſpirituality of them: *do not commit adultery, do not kill, do not ſteal, do not bear falſe witneſs, defraud not, honour thy father and mother.* In which may be obſerved, that the ſtrict order in which the commandments ſtood is not kept; the ſeventh commandment, *thou ſhalt not commit adultery*, is ſet before the ſixth, *thou ſhalt not kill*; tho' the *Arabic* verſion places them in their order; and the fifth command, *honour thy father and thy mother*, is placed laſt of all: but a *Jew* has no reaſon to object to this, when it is a rule with them, that אין מוקדם ומאוחר בתורה[c], *there is no firſt nor laſt in the law*; that is, order is not ſtrictly attended to; but ſometimes, that which is firſt is mentioned laſt, and the laſt firſt. There is one precept, *defraud not*, wrong no man of his property, either by force or fraud, which none of the other Evangeliſts have. Dr. *Hammond*, and others, think, that it is an explanation of the tenth command, *thou ſhalt not covet*; ſignifying, that a man ſhould be ſo ſatisfied with his own condition, as not to deſire another's goods, or, by any means, ſeek to leſſen them to enlarge his own. A certain *Jew*[d] objects againſt our Lord Jeſus, that he did not mention the other precepts in *Exod.* xx. and *Deut.* v. by which he ſeems to mean the precepts of the firſt table, which reſpect the unity of God, and his worſhip, which are of greater moment: to which may be replied, that our Lord does ſuggeſt the unity of the divine being, and his eſſential, infinite, and independent goodneſs, which are the ground and foundation of his fear and worſhip in the preceding verſe; and beſides, as Biſhop *Kidder* obſerves[e], nothing is more common than to put ſome precepts for the whole; ſee *Mic.* vi. 8. yea, that Jeſus may be juſtified from the Old Teſtament in this method, as from *Pſ.* xv. 1. where a queſtion, very like this of the young man, is put; and yet, in anſwer to it we find nothing mentioned but obedience to the ſecond table: to which reply of the learned prelate, may be added, that Chriſt inſtances in the commandments of the ſecond table, as being more known, and better underſtood by this young man; *thou knoweſt the commandments*; that is, the following ones he mentions: and beſides the argument runs ſtrong from the leſſer to the greater, which is implied, that if the commands of the ſecond table, which reſpect the neighbour, are neceſſary to be obſerved, than much more thoſe which concern God himſelf; and if men fall ſhort in keeping the leſſer commands, it can hardly be thought they ſhould be perfect in the obſervance of greater ones; and ſo conſequently, and which is our Lord's drift, eternal life is never to be obtained by the works of the law.

Ver. 20. *And he anſwered and ſaid unto him*, &c.] With a great deal of pertneſs, *maſter, all theſe have I obſerved from my youth*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xix. 20. In a certain copy, *Beza* ſays, 'tis added, as there, *what lack I yet?* and ſo in one of *Stephens*'s copies.

Ver. 21. *Then Jeſus beholding him, loved him*, &c.] Not as God, with that ſpecial love, with which he loves his people, who were given him by the father, are redeemed by his blood, whom he calls by his grace, juſtifies by his righteouſneſs, forgives their iniquities, and, at laſt, glorifies: but as man, he had an human affection for him; ſo far as there was any appearance of moral good in him, it was agreeable to him, who loves righteouſneſs, and hates iniquity: and though the young man betrayed much vanity, pride, and conceit, he did not uſe him roughly, but kindly, and tenderly; he beheld him, he looked wiſhly upon him, when he ſaid the above words; which look intimated, that he could not believe he had perfectly, and completely kept all the commandments; however, he did not chuſe to reproach him with a lye, and charge him with pride and arrogance, but gave him good words, and ſpoke friendly to him; and, as far as he could, commended him for his diligence in obſerving the commands: in this ſenſe the word is obſerved to be uſed by the *Septuagint* interpreters, as when it is ſaid of *Ahab*, 2 *Chron.* xviii. 2. that he *perſuaded him (Jehoſhaphat)*, they render it, ηγαπα, *he loved him to go up to Ramoth Gilead*: he gave him good words, he ſpake friendly to him, and by fair ſpeeches prevailed upon him: and ſo when it is ſaid of the *Iſraelites*, *Pſ.* lxxviii. 36. *they did flatter him*, (God) they render it, ηγαπησαν, *they loved him with their mouth*; ſpoke very well to him, and of him, praiſed him, and his works, and in this way expreſſed affection to him, tho' it was only with their mouths. Moreover, Chriſt might not only ſpeak kindly to this young man, but he might make uſe of ſome external geſture; which ſhowed an human affection to him, and reſpect for him. Dr. *Lightfoot* conjectures it might be by kiſſing his head, which might be conveniently done, as he was now on his knees; and ſince this was frequently uſed by the *Jewiſh* doctors, as an expreſſion of reſpect, of which he gives various inſtances; and more might be added, eſpecially out of the book of *Zohar*, where we often read of one *Rabbi* kiſſing the head of another, or of his pupil. But the ſenſe of this phraſe, which pleaſes me beſt of all, is what may be collected from the uſe of it among the *ſeventy* interpreters, who often render the *Hebrew* רחם, which ſignifies to *have compaſſion*, or *ſhew pity*, by the word here uſed: ſo *Prov.* xxviii. 13. *whoſo confeſſeth and forſaketh, ſhall have mercy*, they interpret, αγαπηθησεται, *ſhall be loved*; and *Hoſ.* ii. 23. *I will have mercy on her that had not obtained mercy*, they render αγαπησω, *I will love her that was not beloved*; once more, *Zech.* x. 6. *I will bring them again to place them, for I have mercy upon them*, they tranſlate οτι ηγαπησα αυτους, *becauſe I have loved them*; ſee alſo *Iſ.* lx. 10. and then, according to this uſe of the word, the ſenſe is, that Jeſus looked upon him when he expreſſed himſelf in ſuch a pert manner, and had a compaſſionate concern for him; he pitied him for his ignorance of the law, in its ſpirituality and large extent; for his pride and vanity, his conceit of, and glorying in himſelf: wherefore, in order to mortify him, and abate theſe ſwelling thoughts of himſelf; *he ſaid unto him, one thing thou lackeſt*; before which laſt clauſe the *Ethiopic* verſion puts this, *if thou wilt be perfect*, out of *Matt.* xix. 21. ſee the note there: and the *Coptic* verſion, and two of *Stephens*'s copies read it before the following, *go thy way, ſell whatſoever thou haſt, and give to the poor*,

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[c] T. Bab. Peſachim, fol. 6. 2.

[d] R. Jacob Aben Amram, Porta Verit. num. 1026. Apud Kidder's Demonſtr. of the Meſſiah, par. 3. p. 50.

[e] Demonſtrat. ib. p. 50, 51.

*and thou ſhalt have treaſure in heaven*; *and come, take up the croſs, and follow me.* This young man's reigning ſin ſeems to have been an over-weaning affection for the things of this world; his riches were his idol, on which his heart was ſet, and in which he truſted: wherefore he was ſo far from keeping all the commandments, that he had not kept the firſt; *thou ſhalt have no other gods before me*: there was more than one thing wanting in him, but Chriſt takes notice of this as the firſt; and there was no need to mention any other, this touched him ſenſibly, and fully tried, and ſufficiently expoſed the vanity of his boaſted perfection. That clauſe, *take up the croſs*, is omitted in the *Vulgate Latin* verſion, as it is not mentioned by *Matthew*. The *Ethiopic* verſion reads it, *the croſs of thy death*, and places it before, *come and follow me*; as do alſo the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions; but the *Arabic* reads it laſt of all; ſee the note on *Matt.* xix. 21.

Ver. 22. *And he was ſad at that ſaying*, &c.] That he lacked one thing, and eſpecially that he ſhould be bid to ſell all that he had, and give it away; and what might add to his ſadneſs is, that he muſt take up the croſs of reproach, affliction, perſecution, and death; his countenance fell upon this, *and went away grieved*: finding that he muſt part with two things his heart was ſet upon, his idol of ſelf-righteouſneſs, and his mammon of unrighteouſneſs; the bladder of his pride was pricked, and his vanity and ſelf-conceit were expoſed; and he was called upon to part with his ſubſtance; all which were ſadly mortifying, and exceedingly diſagreeable to him: *for he had great poſſeſſions*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xix. 22.

Ver. 23. *And Jeſus looked round about*, &c.] To ſee what effect the diſcourſe he had with the young man, and the conſequence of it, had upon his diſciples; as alſo to raiſe their attention to what he was about to ſay: *and ſaith unto his diſciples, how hardly ſhall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God?* the Goſpel-diſpenſation, by embracing the doctrines, and ſubmitting to the ordinances of it; ſee the note on *Matt.* xix. 23.

Ver. 24. *And the diſciples were aſtoniſhed at his words*, &c.] For they expected, in a little while, that the kingdom of the Meſſiah would be ſet up in great worldly pomp and grandeur; and that all the rich men of the nation would come into it, become his ſubjects, and join to ſupport the glory and ſplendor of it: *but Jeſus anſwereth again, and ſaith unto them, children*: it was common with the *Jews* to call the diſciples, or ſcholars of the wiſe men, *children*; hence that ſaying of theirs [f], התלמידים קרוים בנים, *the diſciples are called children*, which they prove from 2 *Kings* ii. 3. *Iſ.* viii. 18. *How hard is it for them that truſt in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!* This he ſaid partly to confirm what he had before ſaid, at which his diſciples were aſtoniſhed; and partly to explain it, as that he was to be underſtood of ſuch that truſted in their riches, ſet their hearts upon them, and placed their hope and happineſs in them; and the great difficulty, or rather impoſſibility of ſuch, at leaſt continuing ſo, entering into the kingdom of God, is ſtill more ſtrongly expreſſed in the following words.

Ver. 25. *It is eaſier for a camel*, &c.] See the note on *Matt.* xix. 24.

Ver. 26. *And they were aſtoniſhed out of meaſure*, &c.] They were ſtill more amazed, their ſurprize encreaſed exceedingly upon our Lord's uſing the above compariſon; which, in their apprehenſion, ſhewed, that it was utterly impoſſible for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God; and they expreſſed their aſtoniſhment, *ſaying, among themſelves, who then can be ſaved?* in the Meſſiah's kingdom, if rich men are not? ſee the note on *Matt.* xix. 25. The *Perſic* verſion renders it, *how can this man be ſaved?* as if the words had a particular reſpect to the young man, that had great poſſeſſions, and was gone away ſorrowful.

Ver. 27. *And Jeſus looking upon them*, &c.] And by their countenances ſaw the ſurprize and anxiety of mind they were in, as well as by his omniſcience, knew their private reaſonings among themſelves: *ſaith, with men it is impoſſible, but not with God; for with God all things are poſſible*; even to reduce a camel to ſo ſmall a ſize, as to go thro' the eye of a needle; and to work upon a rich man's heart, ſo as to take him off of his truſt and confidence in his worldly riches, and bring him to a compliance with his will, and into his kingdom; and alſo to protect, and ſave his poor and mean followers, notwithſtanding all the difficulties, dangers, and oppoſitions they meet with; ſee the note on *Matt.* xix. 26.

Ver. 28. *Then Peter began to ſay unto him*, &c.] Not only obſerving that Chriſt promiſed treaſure in heaven to the young man, provided he ſold all that he had, and gave it to the poor; but being, in ſome meaſure, freed from that ſurprize and aſtoniſhment, which had ſeized him, and his fellow-diſciples, at the repreſentation of the difficulty of a rich man's entering into the kingdom of God, by the laſt words; and taking heart from thence, began to take notice of the following caſe, as an inſtance and illuſtration of what Chriſt had ſaid; for that ſame power, which had cauſed them to quit all their worldly ſubſtance for Chriſt, tho' it was but ſmall, could alſo work a like effect upon the heart of a man ever ſo rich: *lo! we have left all, and have followed thee*: in *Matthew* 'tis added, *what ſhall we have therefore*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xix. 27.

Ver. 29. *And Jeſus anſwered and ſaid, verily I ſay unto you*, &c.] This Evangeliſt omits what *Matthew* relates; that whereas *Peter*, and his fellow-diſciples had followed Chriſt in the preſent time, hereafter, when he appeared in his glory, they ſhould ſit upon twelve thrones, and judge the twelve tribes of *Iſrael*; ſee *Matt.* xix. 28. and where 'tis added to the ſame ſenſe as here; *there is no man that hath left houſe, or brethren, or ſiſter, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my ſake, and the Goſpel's*; for the ſake of preaching, or profeſſing Chriſt, and his Goſpel. The word *wife* is left out in the *Vulgate Latin* verſion, perhaps becauſe it is not repeated in the following verſe; but all copies, and other verſions have it; ſee the note on *Matt.* xix. 29.

Ver. 30. *But he ſhall receive an hundred fold now in this time*, &c.] Not that he ſhould have an hundred houſes, brethren, &c. but that he ſhould enjoy that even in this preſent life, which was an hundred times better than any of the things mentioned; namely, *houſes, and brethren, and ſiſters, and mothers, and children, and lands*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xix. 29. 'tis added here, *with perſecutions*. The *Syriac* and *Ethiopic* verſions read in the ſingular, *with perſecution*; ſignifying that this muſt b expected amidſt the greateſt happineſs, and highe enjoyments of this life; tho' often even that whic the ſaints enjoy, whilſt they are, in the ſevere

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[f] Maimon. Hilch. Talmud Tora, c. 1. §. 2. Moſes Kotzenſis Mitzvot Tora, pr. affirm. 12. Vid. T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 19. Bereſhit Rabba, §. 42. fol. 36. 4. & Vajikra Rabba, §. 11. fol. 154. 4.

manner, perſecuted for Chriſt, is an hundred times better than, yea, infinitely above, all that they part with, or loſe for his ſake; and ſo is an ample compenſation for all: and yet this is not all they ſhall have; for it follows, *and in the world to come eternal life*: ſo that they will be doubly recompenſed; once in this life, and again in the other world: in the *Targum* on *Cant.* viii. 7. is a paſſage ſomewhat like this, where the Lord of the world is repreſented ſaying; “if a man will give all the ſubſtance “of his houſe to obtain wiſdom in the captivity, “I will return unto him, כפול לעלמא דאתי, “*double in the world to come.*”

Ver. 31. *But many that are firſt ſhall be laſt*, &c.] See the note on *Matt.* xix. 30.

Ver. 32. *And they were in the way*, &c.] Upon the road, having left the coaſts of *Judæa* on the farther ſide of *Jordan*: *going up to Jeruſalem*; to the paſſover there, which was to be in a ſhort time, and where Chriſt was to ſuffer and die; for this was the laſt journey he took, and the laſt paſſover he was to eat there: *and Jeſus went before them*; as their fore-runner, their guide and leader, with unconcernedneſs and intrepidity; though he knew what would befal him, and what deſigns were forming againſt him: and this he did to inſpire his diſciples with courage, and to leave them an example that they ſhould tread in his ſteps: *and they were amazed*; at his readineſs to go up to *Jeruſalem*, and the chearful ſpirit he diſcovered, when he had ſo many, and ſuch powerful enemies at that place, in going to which he expoſed himſelf to the greateſt dangers. *And as they followed*; for they did not chuſe to leave him, but were determined to continue with him at all events, tho' *they were afraid*; what would be the conſequence of it to themſelves, as well as to him; for they being his followers, could not expect any other than ill uſage from his enemies. *And he took again the twelve*; the diſciples, as he had done before, ch. viii. 31. *and began to tell them what things ſhould happen unto him*; being what were determined by God, agreed unto by himſelf, and foretold in the ſcriptures; for theſe were not caſual and contingent events.

Ver. 33. Saying, *behold we go up to Jeruſalem*, &c.] They were now upon the road thither. *And the ſon of man*; meaning himſelf, *ſhall be delivered unto the chief-prieſts, and unto the Scribes*; by the determinate counſel, and fore-knowledge of God, and by the means of a treacherous diſciple of his, *Judas*. The *Vulgate Latin* verſion adds, *and to the elders*; but this is not in any of the copies, nor in other verſions: *and they ſhall condemn him to death*; as they did in the palace of the high-prieſt, *nemine contradicente*; ſee ch. xiv. 64. *and ſhall deliver him to the Gentiles*; the *Romans*, to *Pontius Pilate*, the *Roman* governor; either becauſe they had not then power to put him to death themſelves, or becauſe they were deſirous he ſhould die the death of the croſs, a *Roman* puniſhment.

Ver. 34. *And they ſhall mock him, and ſhall ſcourge him*, &c.] The *Gentiles*, as the *Roman* ſoldiers did; the one at the connivance, and the other by the order of their governor: *and ſhall ſpit upon him*; on his face, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions render it, and as they did; ſee ch. xv. 19. This clauſe is placed by the *Vulgate Latin*, *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, between the two former; though, according to the order in which theſe things were executed, he was firſt ſcourged, then mocked, and then ſpit upon: all which expreſs both the cruel and indecent uſage he was to meet with: *and ſhall kill him, and the third day he ſhall riſe again*. The *Perſic* verſion between theſe two clauſes read, *and ſhall put him in a grave*; which is not in any copy of this text, nor in any other verſion; nor indeed was this done by the *Gentiles*, but by *Joſeph* of *Arimathea*.

Ver. 35. *And James, and John, the ſons of Zebedee, came unto him*, &c.] Along with their mother, who was their mouth, and ſpoke for them, and they by her: *ſaying, maſter, we would that thou ſhouldſt do for us whatſoever we ſhall deſire*: that is, we earneſtly deſire, that whereas we have a favour to aſk of thee, that thou wouldſt not deny us it, be it what it will; ſee the note on *Matt.* xx. 20.

Ver. 36. *And he ſaid unto them*, &c.] And alſo to their mother, and to them by her, what *would ye that I ſhould do for you?* Chriſt inſiſts upon their telling him the particular thing they wanted to have done for them, before he would give them any promiſe, tho' he knew very well what it was they were deſirous of.

Ver. 37. *They ſaid unto him*, &c.] By their mother, or ſeconding her motion: *grant unto us that we may ſit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory*; or glorious kingdom, which they expected would be quickly ſet up; and which they might conclude from his having lately promiſed to all the twelve, that when he ſhould ſit on his throne, they ſhould ſit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of *Iſrael*; and from his having juſt now mentioned his riſing from the dead, which they might underſtand of ſome revival, or breaking forth of this glorious ſtate; ſee the note on *Matt.* xx. 21.

Ver. 38. *But Jeſus ſaid unto them*, &c.] Not by granting them what they deſired, but by obſerving their ignorance to them; *ye know not what ye aſk*: for ſometimes good men are ignorant petitioners at the throne of grace; they are under the influence of their own ſpirits, and not the Spirit of God; they are prompted to aſk things from a ſelfiſh principle, and not with a view to the glory of God, and their own ſpiritual welfare, and that of others: and indeed, the beſt of ſaints know not what they ſhould pray for as they ought; and always ſtand in need of the help, aſſiſtance, and interceſſion of the Spirit of God; who is a Spirit of grace and ſupplication, and ſearches the deep things of God, and knows his mind and will, and what is ſuitable and convenient for his people; and whenever they pray without him, there is much darkneſs and ignorance in them, and in their petitions. In particular, theſe diſciples knew not what they were aſking for; they had no true notion of Chriſt's kingdom and glory, they were aſking the chief places in; they were dreaming of worldly glory and grandeur, in which they imagined the kingdom of the Meſſiah would quickly appear: whereas his kingdom, in the preſent ſtate of things, is not of this world, but of a ſpiritual nature; namely, the Goſpel-diſpenſation, which lies in the miniſtration of his word and ordinances, and in the diſtribution of his gifts and grace; and his kingdom and glory in the world to come, are things which eye has not ſeen, nor ear heard: they talked of things which would never be, either in Chriſt's kingdom, in earth, or in heaven; fancying there would be poſts of honour and profit, which ſome would be advanced to in it, ſignified by ſitting at his right hand and left; whereas in the Goſpel church-ſtate, the apoſtles, governors, and officers of the church were alike, and had no ſuperiority over one another, but were all brethren, having one maſter, Chriſt; and the members of the churches are of the ſame body, and members one of another; and in the ultimate glory, there will be no degrees, but all the ſaints will ſhare the ſame happineſs: *can ye drink of the cup that I drink of, and be baptized with the baptiſm that I am baptized with?* Which Chriſt ſpeaks of in the preſent time, partly becauſe his ſorrows and ſufferings were already begun: he had already been drinking of the cup of ſorrows, being a man of ſorrows and acquainted with griefs, all his days; and he was wading in the waters of affliction, though as yet they were not come into his ſoul, and he as it were immerſed in them; he was not yet baptized with the bloody baptiſm he came into this world for, and he was deſirous of, *Luke* xii. 50. and partly becauſe of the certainty of theſe things, the cup was not to paſs from him, and the baptiſm of his ſufferings was to be ſurely accompliſhed; ſee the note on *Matt*. xx. 22.

Ver. 39. *And they ſaid unto him, we can*, &c.] That is, drink of Chriſt's cup, and be baptized with his baptiſm, which is another inſtance of their ignorance; for as they knew not the glorious ſtate of things, and the nature of it, they deſired places in, ſo they were unacquainted with themſelves; they were ignorant of their own weakneſs, as well as of the greatneſs of the ſufferings Chriſt ſhould endure, or even they ſhould be called unto: had they had a juſt notion of either, they would not have expreſſed themſelves in this manner, without any mention of the grace of God, or any dependance on the ſtrength of Chriſt; ſee the note on *Matt*. xx. 22. *And Jeſus ſaid unto them, ye ſhall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of, and with the baptiſm that I am baptized withal, ſhall ye be baptized*; meaning, not that they ſhould undergo the ſame ſufferings he did, and much leſs for the ſame end and purpoſe: he trod the wine-preſs alone, and bore the whole puniſhment, due to the ſins of his people, himſelf; and of them, there were none with him, to take a part: but that they ſhould endure ſufferings, in ſome ſort like to his, for his ſake, as they both afterwards did; ſee the note on *Matt*. xx. 23.

Ver. 40. *But to ſit on my right hand and on my left, is not mine to give*, &c.] There being no ſuch places in his kingdom, in the ſenſe they petitioned; and as for the glories of the heavenly ſtate, or eternal life, the gift of theſe was not to be ſettled now, it being done already: and though he had a power to give, yet only to them, who were given him of his Father, and who were ordained to ſuch happineſs, as it follows: *but* it ſhall be given *to them for whom it is prepared*; that is, of his Father, as is expreſſed in *Matt*. xx. 23. which is not to be underſtood as excluding theſe two perſons, but as including all others with them, for whom the kingdom was prepared, before the foundation of the world: the *Ethiopic* verſion therefore wrongly renders the words, *but to ſit on my right hand and on my left, I do not give to you, it is prepared for others:* the *Jew* [g] very badly concludes from hence againſt the deity of Chriſt, and his unity with the Father, he not having power to do this; whereas Chriſt does not ſay he had no power to give this honour, but only deſcribes the perſons to whom he ſhould give it; and theſe being perſons, for whom it is prepared by his Father, inſtead of deſtroying, proves their unity.

Ver. 41. *And when the ten heard it*, &c.] The requeſt made by the ſons of *Zebedee*, or their mother for them: *they began to be much diſpleaſed with James and John*; *Matthew* ſays, *they were moved with indignation againſt* them; they were filled with wrath, and were very angry with them; which they ſhewed in their countenances, and by their behaviour towards them, as well as by words: the *Syriac* and *Arabic* verſions render it, *they began to murmur againſt* them; they highly reſented it, and were ready to break out into an open quarrel upon it; ſee the note on *Matt*. xx. 24.

Ver. 42. *But Jeſus called them to him*, &c.] Who were at ſome little diſtance from him, though ſo nigh, that he could diſcern the heat and paſſion they were in, and knowing that they had the ſame ambitious views with the two brethren: *and ſaith unto them*; to check their pride and vanity, and reprove them for their ambitious deſires of ſuperiority and pre-eminence over one another; by ſhewing them, that this was a part which the Heathens, that knew not God, acted, and therefore was very unbecoming them: *you know that they which are accounted*, or *ſeem to*, or rather *do*, *rule over the Gentiles*; or are reckoned worthy of government, who are, חשובים, men of honour, reputation, and eſteem; who are either by birth, or merit, thought to be deſerving of high places: theſe *exerciſe lordſhip over them*; rule over them, in a lordly, tyrannical, and arbitrary way: *and their great ones*; their nobles and lords under them, *exerciſe authority over them*; the *Gentiles*; by a delegated power, from thoſe who have the ſupreme rule; ſee the note on *Matt*. xx. 25.

Ver. 43. *But ſo ſhall it not be among you*, &c.] Or *ſo let it not be*, as in many copies; or, as the *Perſic* verſion renders it, *it ought not to be ſo among you*; ſuch a lordly ſpirit does not become you; this is heatheniſh: *but whoſoever will be great among you, ſhall be*, as in *Matthew*, *let him be*, *your miniſter*. This was juſt the reverſe of what the two diſciples were ſeeking for; they were indeed for being miniſters, but then they were for being prime miniſters of ſtate; and would have had all the reſt ſubject to them, and attendants on them, to be ſent out and employed as they ſhould think fit: whereas the only way to preferment and greatneſs in Chriſt's kingdom, or in the Goſpel church-ſtate, is to labour in the work of the miniſtry, more abundantly than others; to take great pains, and endure great hardſhips, in order to bring great glory to God, and do great good to the ſouls of men; ſee the note on *Matt*. xx. 26.

Ver. 44. *And whoſoever of you will be the chiefeſt*, &c.] Is deſirous of the higheſt place, and the greateſt honour, *ſhall be ſervant of all:* for the miniſters of the Goſpel, are not only the ſervants of Chriſt Jeſus, but alſo of the churches for his ſake; and in ſerving them, they ſerve Chriſt: not that they are to be the ſervants of men, and to take their inſtructions from them, and act according to rules preſcribed by them; or ſeek to pleaſe men, for then they would not be the ſervants of Chriſt: but they become ſervants to all, that they may win ſouls to Chriſt, and increaſe his churches, and enlarge his intereſt; and ſuch as are moſt uſeful this way, are the chiefeſt in the Goſpel church-ſtate; they are honoured by Chriſt, and eſteemed by his people; ſee the note on *Matt*. xx. 27.

Ver. 45. *For even the Son of man*, &c.] That is, Chriſt himſelf; a name, by which he frequently goes, both in the Old and New Teſtament: to the arguments before produced, Chriſt adds his own example, to teach his diſciples humility, and lowlineſs of mind, and to check their ambitious views and deſires: *came not to be miniſtred unto:* not but that he was miniſtred unto, even by the angels of

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[g] R. Iſaac, Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 20. p. 409.

God; who miniſtred to him in the wilderneſs, after he had been tempted by ſatan; and he was alſo miniſtred unto by ſome women, out of their ſubſtance; but theſe ſhew the low eſtate he was in, to ſtand in need of ſuch miniſtrations: here the ſenſe is, that he did not appear as an earthly prince, with a fine equipage, a large retinue and attendance, *but to miniſter*; to be a ſervant, as he is in his mediatorial office and capacity: he was ſent, and came as the ſervant of the Lord; and he miniſtred in his prophetic office, the Goſpel unto men; and went about in the form of a ſervant, doing good, miniſtring medicine both to the ſouls and bodies of men: but the great work he came about, was the work of man's redemption; which he willingly and chearfully undertook, diligently and faithfully proſecuted, and has compleatly finiſhed; to which reſpect is had in the next clauſe: *and to give his life a ranſom for many*; even for all the elect of God, to redeem them from ſin, ſatan, and the law; and ſecure them from the wrath of God, and eternal death; and this he has done, by laying down his life as the ranſom price for them; ſee the note on *Matt.* xx. 28.

Ver. 46. *And they came to Jericho*, &c.] Chriſt and his diſciples, from the coaſts of *Judæa*, beyond *Jordan*, in their way to *Jeruſalem*; where Chriſt met with *Zaccheus* and converted him, and after ſome ſhort ſtay at his houſe, departed thence: *and as he went out of Jericho with his diſciples, and a great number of people*; which followed him out of that city, to go with him to *Jeruſalem*, being but ten miles off: *blind Bartimeus the ſon of Timeus, ſat by the high-way ſide begging*; who was one of the two blind men, *Matthew* makes mention of, in ch. xx. 30. ſee the note there.

Ver. 47. *And when he heard that it was Jeſus of Nazareth*, &c.] *That paſſed by*, as reads the *Perſic* verſion; which he might learn, by enquiring the meaning of ſuch a multitude of people, and the noiſe; or he might hear his name frequently mentioned, and it ſaid, that he was coming, or paſſing by: *he began to cry out*; aloud, and with great vehemency, and often repeating it: *and ſay, Jeſus thou ſon of David, have mercy on me:* he did not call him *Jeſus* of *Nazareth*, as the common people did, but Jeſus the ſon of *David*, a title of the Meſſiah; nor did he aſk for money, but for mercy; ſee the note on *Matt.* xx. 30.

Ver. 48. *And many charged him that he ſhould hold his peace*, &c.] And be ſilent, and not call him the ſon of *David*, at leaſt; nor aſk any thing of him: *but he cried the more a great deal*; he lifted up his voice more loudly, and repeated the ſame words quicker and oftener, and with greater vehemency and importunity: *thou ſon of David, have mercy on me*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xx. 31.

Ver. 49. *And Jeſus ſtood ſtill*, &c.] Hearing his voice, and knowing what charges and reproofs were given him to be ſilent: *and commanded him to be called*; and led and brought unto him: this order was given, either to his diſciples, or to ſome of the multitude, probably the latter: *and they call the blind man, ſaying unto him, be of good comfort, riſe, he calleth thee*; or *becauſe he calleth thee*, as the *Arabic* verſion renders it; ſuggeſting, that ſome hopes might be conceived from thence, that ſomething would be done in his favour. The *Perſic* verſion renders it, *our maſter calleth thee*; ſo that that interpreter thought, that the diſciples were the perſons that were ordered to call, and did call the blind man: the word *riſe*, is left out in the *Perſic* and *Ethiopic* verſions. It may be obſerved from hence, that ſuch whom Chriſt effectually calls by his grace, of which this inſtance is emblematical, have reaſon to be of good comfort; or that effectual vocation is a ground of comfort: called ones may take comfort from it, and be aſſured that they are loved by God; ſince it is a fruit, effect, and evidence, of God's everlaſting love to them; and that they are the choſen of God, for, whom he did predeſtinate, he calls; and that they are Chriſt's, and are redeemed by him, ſeeing he has called them by name: and they may expect all good things from him; ſeeing they are called according to grace, given them in him before the world began; and are called to the participation of the bleſſings of grace; and it is affirmed that all things work together for their good: wherefore they may live in the faith of eternal glory and happineſs; ſince they that are called, are juſtified, and ſhall be glorified.

Ver. 50. *And he caſting away his garment*, &c.] His upper garment, and which no doubt was little worth; though this he did, that he might make the quicker diſpatch to Chriſt: *roſe*; from off the bank, or ground, whereon he ſat, in an inſtant; and *ſprung up*, as the *Vulgate Latin*, and *Beza*'s ancient copy read, with great nimbleneſs, and in haſte: *and came to Jeſus*; being led by the perſons, that were ſent to call him. It may be obſerved from hence, that ſuch who are effectually called by the grace of Chriſt, of which this man was an emblem, hate the garment ſpotted with the fleſh; and put off the old man, as to the former converſation, being called by an holy God, with an holy calling, to holineſs in heart and life; and that by the Goſpel, which teaches to deny ſin, and live a holy converſation: and theſe alſo caſt away the garment of their own righteouſneſs, it being as fig-leaves, a ſpider's web, filthy rags, and a beggarly robe, as this man's was; and come nakedly to Chriſt, for righteouſneſs, and renounce their own in point of juſtification, that being an hindrance to their coming to him for his. The Goſpel reveals a better righteouſneſs to them than their own, more ſuitable to them, who are called from the dunghill, to ſit among princes, and to inherit the throne of glory; and then ſuch riſe in the ſtrength of grace, and come forth to Chriſt, for righteouſneſs, peace, pardon, life, and ſalvation.

Ver. 51. *And Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto him*, &c.] Being come to him, and ſtanding before him: *what wilt thou that I ſhould do unto thee?* What means this vehement cry? what is it thou deſigneſt by mercy? is it money thou aſkeſt for, to relieve thy wants? or is it that thy ſight may be reſtored? *The blind man ſaid unto him, Lord*; *Rabboni*, or, as the *Syriac* verſion reads it, *Rabbi*; thou great maſter in *Iſrael*, and Lord of the whole world, my requeſt to thee, and which thou art able to effect, is, *that I might receive my ſight*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xx. 33.

Ver. 52. *And Jeſus ſaid unto him, go thy way*, &c.] The *Syriac* verſion reads it, חזא, *ſee*; receive thy ſight, be it unto thee as thou doſt deſire; and which is the ſenſe of, *go thy way*; to thine own houſe, or place of abode; and about thy buſineſs, thy requeſt is granted: *thy faith hath made thee whole*; or *ſaved thee*; and which reſpected not only the power of Chriſt in reſtoring his ſight, but his faith in Jeſus as the Meſſiah, the ſon of *David*: ſo that by Chriſt, the object of his faith, he was ſaved, both in ſoul and body; and had his ſpiritual ſight, before he had his bodily ſight, and both from Chriſt: *and immediately he received his ſight*; or ſaw again as well as ever he did, or as other men;

*and followed Jeſus in the way*; that is, to *Jeruſalem*. The *Vulgate Latin*, *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, read *him*, inſtead of *Jeſus*; but the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions, read neither. This man was an emblem of the people of God, before, at, and after converſion: before converſion; for, as he was blind, ſo are they; they are without any ſpiritual ſight and diſcerning of God, as in Chriſt, as the God of all grace, as their covenant God and Father; and of themſelves, being without any true ſight of ſin, or ſenſe of their ſtate and condition; and of Chriſt, and of the way of peace, life, and ſalvation by him, ſeeing no beauty in him, nor any need they ſtand in of him; and of the Spirit, of his perſon, grace, and operations, of the things of the Spirit, which they know not, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned: at converſion; when they receive their ſight from Chriſt, as he did, are made light in the Lord, and become the children of the day; when the eyes of their underſtandings are enlightened, to ſee their ſad and ruinous ſtate, the pollution of their hearts, the ſinfulneſs of their thoughts, as well as of their actions; the imperfection and inſufficiency of their righteouſneſs, to juſtify them before God; the lovelineſs of Chriſt, the fulneſs of his grace, and righteouſneſs; the ſuitableneſs, ability, and willingneſs of him, as a Saviour; and that ſalvation by him, is all of free-grace; and that eternal glory and happineſs, is ſecured by him, for them. All which light they have, not from themſelves, nor from any mere creature, but from Chriſt; and which they receive as a benefit and favour; they have it as a gift, and in a way of receiving; and that at once, ſuddenly, and immediately: and after converſion; for, as this man, when he had received his ſight from Chriſt, followed him in the way; ſo the people of God, being enlightened by Chriſt, follow him as their leader and commander, as the captain of their ſalvation, as the ſhepherd of the flock, as their guide and forerunner, as their pattern and exemplar, and as the light of the world: him they follow and imitate, in the duties of morality, in the way of publick inſtituted worſhip, and in Goſpel ordinances; as baptiſm, and the Lord's ſupper: and to follow him in the way of duty, is ſafe, honourable, pleaſant, comfortable, and profitable; it iſſues in good here, and in happineſs hereafter.

## CHAP. XI.

Ver. 1. AND *when they came nigh to Jeruſalem*, &c.] The *Syriac* and *Ethiopic* verſions read, *when he came nigh*; that is, *Jeſus*; though not without his diſciples, nor the multitude: *unto Bethphage and Bethany*; two places ſo called, near *Jeruſalem*: *Bethphage* began where *Bethany* ended, and reached to the city itſelf. The *Vulgate Latin* only makes mention of *Bethany*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxi. 1. *At the mount of Olives*; near which, the above places were: *he ſendeth forth two of his diſciples*; perhaps *Peter* and *John*.

Ver. 2. *And ſaith unto them, go your way into the village*, &c.] Either of *Bethany* or of *Nob*. The *Ethiopic* verſion renders it *the city*, and ſo reads a copy of *Stephens*'s: ſome have thought the city of *Jeruſalem* is intended, but without any reaſon; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxi. 2. *over-againſt you*. The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read, *over-againſt us*: the ſenſe is the ſame; for Chriſt and his diſciples were together: this ſuits with either of the above-mentioned places: *and as ſoon as ye be entered into it*; are come to the town's end, and to one of the firſt houſes in it, *ye ſhall find a colt tied*: *Matthew* ſays, *an aſs tied, and a colt with her*; both no doubt true: *whereon never man ſat*; which had never been backed and broke, and which makes it the more wonderful, that Chriſt ſhould chuſe to ride upon it, and that that ſhould quietly carry him: *looſe him, and bring him*; that is, away to me.

Ver. 3. *And if any man ſay unto you*, &c.] As very likely they would, and it would be ſtrange if they ſhould not ſay ſomething to them, eſpecially the owners of it: *why do ye this?* Why do ye untie the aſs, and attempt to carry it away, when it is none of your own, and it belongs to another man? *Say ye that the Lord hath need of him*; our Lord and yours, the Lord of heaven and earth, and all things in it; it looks as if this title, *the Lord*, was what Jeſus was well known by; ſee *John* xi. 28. unleſs it can be thought, that the owners of the colt were ſuch, that believed in Chriſt, as is not improbable; and ſo would at once underſtand by the language who it was for, and let it go: *and ſtraightway he will ſend him hither*; as ſoon as ever he hears that the Lord, by whom he would preſently underſtand Jeſus wanted him for his preſent purpoſe; he'll ſend him with all readineſs and chearfulneſs, without the leaſt heſitation, or making any diſpute about it.

Ver. 4. *And they went their way*, &c.] The two diſciples went to the village, where Chriſt ſent them, without objecting any difficulties that might preſent, in the execution of theſe orders: *and found the colt tied by the door without*; in the ſtreet, faſtened to the door of the owner's houſe, at the town's end: *in a place where two ways met*; to go into, and out of the village; at the corner houſe, where two ways met; ſo that the place was very publick, and ſuch an affair could not be tranſacted, without being ſeen: *and they looſe him*; as ſoon as ever they came to the place, they immediately began to untie the colt, and were going away with him.

Ver. 5. *And certain of them that ſtood there*, &c.] The *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *who walked there*; who were either ſtanding hard by, or walking about the place, being inhabitants of it; and either the owners of the colt, or their ſervants, or both: *ſaid unto them, what do ye looſing the colt?* What do ye mean by it? do you intend to take the colt away? what buſineſs have you with it? what right have you to do ſo? and what's your end in it? or reaſon for it?

Ver. 6. *And they ſaid unto them*, &c.] The very expreſs words, *even as Jeſus had commanded*: not that theſe were the words they ſaid, but *the Lord hath need of him*: upon which they ſaid no more, were ſatisfied and contented, that they ſhould untie the colt, and take it with them: *and they let them go*; and the colt with them, very freely; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxi. 6.

Ver. 7. *And they brought the colt to Jeſus*, &c.] Where he was, *and caſt their garments on him*; their cloaths to be inſtead of a ſaddle, for Chriſt to ſit upon: *and he ſat upon him*; or *Jeſus rode on him*, as the *Syriac* verſion renders it. The *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *they made him to mount him*; that is, the diſciples aſſiſted him in getting upon it, and having mounted it, he ſat on it without any trouble, though it had never been backed before, and rode on his way to *Jeruſalem*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxi. 7.

Ver. 8. *And many ſpread their garments in the way*, &c.] Inſtead of carpets to ride on, and in honour to him as a king: *and others cut down branches off the trees, and ſtrawed them in the way*; in token of joy, as at the feaſt of tabernacles; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxi. 8.

Ver. 9. *And they that went before, and they that followed*, &c.] They that came from *Jeruſalem* to meet him, and they that followed him from *Jericho*, and other parts; which two bodies, the one went before him, and the other followed after him: and *cried, ſaying, Hoſanna, bleſſed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxi. 9.

Ver. 10. *Bleſſed be the kingdom of our father David*, &c.] It was more uſual with the *Jews* to call *Abraham* their father; but, becauſe the Meſſiah was *David*'s ſon, therefore, with reſpect to him, they here call him their father: and their meaning is, let the kingdom promiſed to our father *David*, and to his ſeed for ever, *that cometh in the name of the Lord*; which is now coming, and appears in the auſpicious reign and government of his Son, the Meſſiah, who is cloathed with majeſty and authority; be proſperous and ſucceſsful, and be eſtabliſhed, and endure for ever; to the glory and happineſs of him as king, and of all the ſubjects of it. Unleſs the words ſhould be rendered, as by their ſituation they may be, thus, *bleſſed be the kingdom that cometh in the name of the Lord, of our father David*; and the ſenſe be, let the kingdom of the Meſſiah, which is now come, and is ſet up in his name, who, as God, is *David*'s Lord, greatly flouriſh, and long continue; may its king be bleſſed, and all its ſubjects happy. The *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions, leave out the clauſe, *in the name of the Lord*; it is alſo left out in *Beza*'s ancient copy, and in another; but the *Ethiopic* verſion retains it, reading it *in the name of God*. 'Tis added, *Hoſanna in the higheſt*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxi. 9.

Ver. 11. *And Jeſus entered into Jeruſalem*, &c.] In this publick manner, riding upon an aſs, with the multitude attending him, ſome going before, and others after, crying *Hoſanna* to him: *and into the temple*; which he rode up directly to; the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, leave out the copulative *and*; his great concern being there; and having diſmounted, and diſmiſſed the colt, and ſent it by proper perſons to the owner of it, he went into the temple, into the court of the *Gentiles*; where he found and overturned the tables of the money-changers, and the ſeats of them that ſold doves, and healed the lame and the blind: *and when he had looked round about upon all things*; that is, in the temple, as the Lord and proprietor of it; and made a thorough viſitation of it, and ſearch into it, and corrected what was amiſs in it: *and now the even-tide was come, he went out unto Bethany with the twelve*; having ſpent great part of the day in reforming abuſes in the temple, in healing diſeaſes, and diſputing with the chief prieſts and *Scribes*: the evening being come, he did not think fit, for ſome reaſons, to ſtay in the city; but went out to *Bethany*, which was near two miles off, and lodged there; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxi. 17.

Ver. 12. *And on the morrow*, &c.] The next day early in the morning, *when they were come from Bethany*; Chriſt, and his twelve diſciples. The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read, *when he came out of Bethany*; though not alone, but with the twelve diſciples; who went with him there, and returned with him, as appears from ver. 14. as he and they came out of that place betimes in the morning, having eat nothing, before they came from thence, *he was hungry*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxi. 18.

Ver. 13. *And ſeeing a fig-tree afar off*, &c.] By the way-ſide, at ſome diſtance from him: *having leaves*; very large and ſpreading, which made a great ſhow, as if there might be fruit on it: *he came*; unto it; either he went out of his way to it, or having ſeen it before him a good way off, at length came up to it: *if haply he might find any thing thereon*; that is, any fruit; for he ſaw at a diſtance, there were leaves upon it; and which was the more remarkable, ſince it was the time of the fig-tree juſt putting forth its tender branches, leaves, and fruit: *and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves*; no fruit at all upon it, contrary to his expectation as man, and the promiſing appearance the tree made: *for the time of figs was not* yet; or, *for it was not the time of figs*; for the word *yet*, is not in the text: and the words ſeem rather to be a reaſon, why Chriſt ſhould not have expected fruit on it, than that he ſhould: but the ſenſe is, either becauſe the time of gathering figs was not come; and ſince therefore they were not gathered, he might the rather hope to find ſome on it; or becauſe it was not a kind ſeaſon for figs, a good fig year; and this tree appearing in ſuch a flouriſhing condition, might raiſe his expectation of finding fruit, yet he found none but leaves only; becauſe it was ſo bad a ſeaſon for figs, that even the moſt promiſing trees had none upon them: or this tree being of an uncommon ſort, though Chriſt expected to find no fruit on other trees, becauſe the time of common figs was not come, yet he might hope to find ſome on this. Some criticks neglecting the accents, render the words, *where he was, it was the ſeaſon of figs*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxi. 19.

Ver. 14. *And Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto it*, &c.] The fig-tree; a *Jewiſh* way of ſpeaking, often uſed when nothing before is ſaid; the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions, leave out the word *anſwered*, as they do alſo the word *Jeſus*; and which is likewiſe omitted by the *Vulgate Latin*, though the other is retained: *no man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever*; which is all one, as if he had ſaid, as the other Evangeliſt does, let no fruit grow on thee; for where no fruit is, none can be had, or eaten of. This tree may not only be an emblem of the *Jewiſh* people, who made a great ſhow of religion, and enjoyed a great many privileges; and from whom, ſpeaking after the manner of men, the fruits of good works, righteouſneſs, and holineſs, might have been hoped and looked for; when inſtead thereof, there was nothing but talk about them, and an obſervance of ſome inſignificant rites and traditions of the *elders*; on which account, utter ruin and deſtruction enſued; but alſo of any outward profeſſor of religion, who enjoying the means of grace, and making great pretenſions to devotion and piety, it might be expected that he ſhould do good works, well pleaſing to God, and bring forth fruit to the glory of his name: whereas he only talks of good works, but does none; at leaſt, no fruits of grace and righteouſneſs, are to be found on him; and at the laſt day, he'll be caſt as dry wood, as a withered branch, into everlaſting burnings, being fit fuel for them. *And his diſciples heard it*; *this ſaying*, as the *Perſic* verſion adds, and took notice of it, being in company with him.

Ver. 15. *And they came to Jeruſalem*, &c.] The *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *he came*; that is, Chriſt; but not alone, for his diſciples were with him: *Beza* ſays, that one exemplar he had met with, adds *again*, and ſo one of *Stephens*'s copies; for they had been there the day before: *and Jeſus went into the temple*; the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions add, *of God*; into the court of the *Gentiles*, as he did the preceding day: *and began to caſt out them that bought and ſold in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the ſeats of them that ſold doves*; which was done, as *Matthew* relates, the ſame day that he made his publick entry into *Jeruſalem*: wherefore it is highly probable, that upon Chriſt's leaving the city, they returned *again*, and were the next morning ſitting and trafficking in the temple as before; and were drove out again by Chriſt, who, upon his return, found them there. They *that bought and ſold in the temple*, were thoſe that bought and ſold lambs for the paſſover, which was now at hand; and the ſheep and oxen for the *Chagiga*, or feaſt the day following; as well as doves hereafter mentioned, for lying-in women, and ſuch as had fluxes: and that part of the temple where this traffick was carried on, was in a large ſpace within the area of the temple, where ſhops were built for that purpoſe: and by *the money-changers*, whoſe *tables* are ſaid to be *overthrown*, are meant, ſuch as ſat at tables to receive the half ſhekel; who changed thoſe that brought whole ſhekels, or foreign money; and who had ſo much for changing, which was called *Kolbon*; from whence they had the name of *Collybiſtæ*, in the text: and *doves*, as before obſerved, were the offering of the poorer ſort of women after lying-in, at the time of their purification, and of profluvious perſons; of which many came from all parts, at the time of the paſſover: upon which account, there was a great demand for theſe creatures; and many ſat upon ſeats to ſell them, which Chriſt overturned; ſee the note on *Matt*. xxi. 12.

Ver. 16. *And would not ſuffer that any man*, &c.] He was more ſtrict and ſevere than the day before; and gave orders, that they ſhould be ſo far from being allowed to ſit and trade in that ſacred place, that no man *ſhould carry any veſſel through the temple*; ſhould make a thoroughfare of it, by carrying through to any other place, any veſſel that was for common uſe, or any ſort of burden whatever: and this they could not well find fault with, nor complain of, ſince it was agreeable to one of their own canons; for they ſay[b], "a man may not go into the mountain of the houſe, with his ſtaff (in his hands;) nor with ſhoes (on his feet;) nor with his girdle, and his money in it; nor with a bag thrown over his ſhoulders; nor with duſt upon his feet; nor might he make it, קפנדריא, *a thoroughfare*, and much leſs ſpit in it."

Ver. 17. *And he taught, ſaying unto them, is it not written*, &c.] In *Iſa*. lvi. 7. *My houſe ſhall be called of all nations, the houſe of prayer?* For not only the *Jews* went up to the temple to pray, ſee *Luke* xviii. 10. but the *Gentiles* alſo, who became of the *Jewiſh* religion, and had a court built for that purpoſe; and ſo the whole temple, from hence, was called an houſe of prayer: and the meaning is, not only that it ſhould be called ſo by the *Gentiles*, but that it ſhould be ſo to them, and made uſe of by them as ſuch. *Jarchi*'s note on the clauſe in *Iſa*. lvi. 7. is, "not for *Iſrael* only, but alſo for the proſelytes." *But ye have made it a den of thieves*; for no other, in our Lord's eſteem, were the buyers and ſellers of ſheep, oxen, and doves, and the money-changers, and the prieſts that encouraged them, and had a profit out of them: now theſe had their ſeats, ſhops, and tables, within the mountain of the houſe; and even in that part of it, which was aſſigned to the *Gentiles*, the nations of the world, who became proſelytes, and came up to *Jeruſalem* to worſhip there at certain times; ſee the note on *Matt*. xxi. 13.

Ver. 18. *And the Scribes and chief prieſts heard it*, &c.] The reproof he gave to the money-changers, and buyers, and ſellers in the temple; and his ſtrict prohibition that none ſhould carry any veſſels through it; and the argument he uſed from the prophecy of *Iſaiah*, and the ſharp rebuke he gave for the profanation of the holy place: *and ſought how they might deſtroy him*: they took counſel together to take away his life, for they hated reformation: *for they feared him*; leſt he ſhould go on to make great changes and alterations among them, which would affect their credit and character, and their gains alſo, and draw the people after him: *becauſe all the people were aſtoniſhed at his doctrine*; both as to the matter of it, which were ſuch words as never man ſpake; and as to the manner of it, being with ſuch majeſty, power, and authority, as the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* taught not with; and alſo at the miracles, by which it was confirmed, as well as at the reformation and diſcipline he was introducing; which was done with ſuch an air of ſovereignty and power, as was amazing.

Ver. 19. *And when even was come, he went out of the city*, &c.] Of *Jeruſalem*, as he did the evening before, and for the ſame reaſons: probably he went to *Bethany*, where he had lodged the laſt night, with *Lazarus*, *Martha*, and *Mary*; or to the mount of *Olives*, where he ſometimes ſpent the night in prayer: the *Syriac* verſion renders it, *they went out*; for Chriſt took his diſciples with him, as is evident from the following verſe.

Ver. 20. *And in the morning as they paſſed by*, &c.] The fig-tree; when they returned the next morning from *Bethany*, or the mount of *Olives*, or the place wherever it was, they had been that night: *they ſaw the fig-tree dried up from the roots*; they did not ſee it immediately wither as it did, nor could they ſee it, as they went from *Jeruſalem* to this place, becauſe it was then in the evening; but in the morning as they came along, they obſerved it; not only that the tender branches and boughs of it, but the trunk and body of the tree, and even the roots of it, were all dried up; ſo that it was entirely dead, and there was no room ever to expect it would revive, and bear any more fruit.

Ver. 21. *And Peter calling to remembrance*, &c.] Not ſo much the tree, and its ſpreading leaves, and the greatneſs of it, and the flouriſhing condition it was in, the other day, as the imprecation of Chriſt upon it: *ſaith unto him, Maſter, behold the fig-tree which thou curſedſt, is withered away*; which he obſerved, as matter of aſtoniſhment, and as an inſtance of Chriſt's ſurprizing power and authority; ſee the note on *Matt*. xxi. 20.

Ver. 22. *And Jeſus anſwering, ſaith unto them*, &c.] To all the diſciples; for what *Peter* ſaid, he ſaid in the name of them all; and according to *Matthew*, the diſciples ſaid, *how ſoon is the fig-tree withered away?* To which this is an anſwer; though the *Arabic* verſion renders it, *to him*; as if the words were directed particularly to *Peter*: *hav fait*

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[b] Miſn. Beracot, c. 9. §. 5. Vid. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 62. 2. & Yebamot, fol. 6. 2. & Midraſh Kohelet, fol. 70. 3. & Ma
mon. Hilch. Beth Habbechira, c. 7. §. 1, 2, 3.

*faith in God*; or *the faith of God*, ſo the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions; that is, exerciſe, and make uſe of that faith which has God for its author, which is the work of God, and of his operation, a free-grace gift of his; and which has God for its object; and is ſupported by his power, and encouraged by his goodneſs, truth, and faithfulneſs: and ſo the *Arabic* verſion renders it, *believe in God*; not only that ſuch things may be done, as the drying up a fig-tree, but thoſe that are much greater.

Ver. 23. *For verily I ſay unto you, that whoſoever ſhall ſay unto this mountain,* &c.] The mount of *Olives*, at, or near which they now were, *be thou removed, and be thou caſt into the ſea*; that is, of *Galilee*, which was neareſt, and yet many miles off: *and ſhall not doubt in his heart, but ſhall believe that thoſe things which he ſaith ſhall come to paſs*; not only as to removing a mountain, and caſting it into the ſea, but any thing equally difficult; *he ſhall have whatſoever he ſaith:* whatever he commands ſhall be done; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxi. 21.

Ver. 24. *Therefore I ſay unto you,* &c.] For encouragement in prayer more particularly, without which nothing ſhould be attempted, and eſpecially which is above the power of nature, and is of a miraculous kind: *whatſoever things ye deſire when ye pray*; that is, according to the revealed will of God, is for the confirmation of his Goſpel, and for the glory of his name: *believe that ye receive* them, *and ye ſhall have* them; the petitions that are deſired, and the things aſked in them: that is, be as much aſſured of having them, as if you had already received them, and you ſhall have them; for the ſenſe can never be, that they ſhould believe they received them before they had them; this would be a contradiction in terms; and *Beza*'s ancient copy, and one of *Stephens*'s copies read it, *believe that ye ſhall receive*, as in *Matt.* xxi. 22. and ſo the *Vulgate Latin* verſion; with which agree the *Arabic* and *Ethiopic* verſions, which render it, *believe that ye ſhall enjoy*, or *obtain*; and the *Syriac* verſion, *believe that ye are about to receive*; and great faith it is ſo to believe; and this is the prayer of faith; ſee 1 *John* v. 14, 15.

Ver. 25. *And when ye ſtand praying*, &c.] Are about to engage in that work, or are engaged in it, performing it in ſuch a poſture; for ſtanding was an uſual poſture in praying; ſee the note on *Matt.* vi. 5. *forgive, if ye have ought againſt any, that your father alſo in heaven may forgive you your treſpaſſes.* The ſenſe is, that if, while a man is praying, it comes into his mind that ſuch an one has committed a treſpaſs againſt him, has done him an injury, of which he has juſt reaſon to complain; but inſtead of complaining of it before God, and calling upon him to avenge his cauſe, he ſhould immediately in his heart, and from his heart, forgive him, even tho' he is not preſent to acknowledge his ſin, and aſk his pardon; and ſuch an one may expect forgiveneſs of God, and a manifeſtation of it to his ſoul; which is one of the things he is conſtantly praying for, as his daily caſe makes it neceſſary: not that it is to be underſtood as tho' his forgiving the perſon that has offended him, is the cauſe, or condition, of his receiving remiſſion of ſin at the hand of God; for then it would not be thro' the blood of Chriſt, and according to the riches of his grace; but this points at a temper and diſpoſition of mind well-pleaſing to God, and deſcribes perſons who may expect this favour from him; ſee the note on *Matt.* vi. 14.

Ver. 26. *But if ye do not forgive*, &c.] Freely and fully, ſuch as have treſpaſſed againſt you, remit the debts they owe, and paſs by the offences and injuries done you, and put up with every affront and indignity: *neither will your heavenly father forgive your treſpaſſes*; that is, ſuch perſons don't appear to have any true, or right notions of forgiveneſs; nor is there any evidence that their hearts are duly affected, or truly impreſſed with a ſenſe of it; nor can they, upon their own principles and conduct, expect it: not but that to whomſoever God ſtands in the relation of a father, and they are his children by adopting grace; theſe he pities and pardons, for Chriſt's ſake; the ſame covenant which contains the bleſſing of adoption, provides for pardoning mercy, and a non-remembrance of ſin; the ſame perſons that are predeſtinated to the adoption of children by Chriſt, and whom he has redeemed, that they might receive it, have the forgiveneſs of their ſins, according to the riches of God's grace; for redemption and forgiveneſs of ſins go together; and as many as are the children of God by faith in Chriſt, by the ſame faith receive the remiſſion of ſins; and without a view of pardon thro' the blood of Chriſt, a child of God can't draw nigh to its heavenly father, with that boldneſs, and chearfulneſs, and filial fear it ſhould; but there is forgiveneſs with him, that he may be feared; to whomſoever God ſtands in the relation of a Covenant-God and Father, to them he manifeſts himſelf as a God pardoning iniquity, tranſgreſſion, and ſin: unleſs the word *Father* here is not to be taken for ſuch a ſpecial relation of grace, but only as expreſſive of him as the God of nature and providence, who has made, and takes care of all his creatures; in which ſenſe he is the Father of all; as it is ſaid, *have we not all one father? hath not one God created us? Mal.* ii. 10. and ſo *our heavenly father*, or *our father which is in heaven*, may be ſo called only from the place where he dwells; and not from the grace he beſtows on men, making them partakers of his heavenly gifts and calling, and bleſſing them in heavenly places, or things in Chriſt Jeſus: in the former view of him it will not neceſſarily follow, that he does forgive ſin, whereas under the latter conſideration of him it will; for forgiveneſs is one of the heavenly gifts and things which he bleſſes his children with; ſee the note on *Matt.* vi. 15.

Ver. 27. *And they come again to Jeruſalem*, &c.] The *Perſic* and *Ethiopic* verſions read, *he came*, which muſt be underſtood with his diſciples; for they never parted from him till he was apprehended in the garden. *Luke* ſays, ch. xx. 1. that it was *on one of thoſe days*; and the *Perſic* verſion here reads, *on another day:* it was the day after the curſing of the fig-tree, and two days after his publick entrance into *Jeruſalem*: *and as he was walking in the temple*; not alone, but his diſciples with him, and a multitude of people, whom he was teaching and preaching the Goſpel to, as he walked to and fro; and whilſt he was there employed, *there come to him the chief-prieſts, and the Scribes, and the elders*; the *Jewiſh Sanhedrim*; for of theſe, that great council of the nation conſiſted; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxi. 23.

Ver. 28. *And ſay unto him, by what authority doſt thou do theſe things?* &c.] Enter into the temple, as if he was Lord of it; and correct in ſuch a magiſterial way every thing he thought an abuſe in it; do the miracles he did, as healing the lame, and blind; and take upon him to inſtruct the people,

ple, a work he was now engaged in: *and who gave thee this authority to do theſe things?* ſee the note on *Matt.* xxi. 23.

Ver. 29. *And Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto them,* &c.] Being not in the leaſt intimidated by ſuch a body of men: *I will alſo aſk of you one queſtion*; or *one word*, or *one thing*; λογος, here anſwers to the *Hebrew* word דבר, which ſignifies both *word* and *thing*: *and anſwer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do theſe things*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxi. 24.

Ver. 30. *The baptiſm of John,* &c.] The doctrine of which he was the firſt preacher, and the ordinance of which he was the firſt adminiſtrator: *was it from heaven, or of men?* was it of divine, or of human inſtitution? *anſwer me*; directly and plainly, without any ſhuffling, or evaſion: 'tis a fair queſtion, and may be anſwered; and the anſwer to it our Lord ſuggeſts would naturally lead to a proper one to their queſtion; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxi. 25.

Ver. 31. *And they reaſoned with themſelves, ſaying,* &c.] Privately; perhaps, they withdrew at a little diſtance for a ſhort time, and conſulted among themſelves what anſwer to return; and the amount of their reaſonings were this; *if we ſhall ſay from heaven, he will ſay, why then did ye not believe him?* that is, ſhould they ſay that *John* had a divine commiſſion for what he ſaid and did, they were aware that Chriſt would reply, why did not ye give credit to him? and had you done ſo, ſeeing he teſtified of me, you would have had no occaſion to have put the above queſtion; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxi. 25.

Ver. 32. *But if we ſhall ſay, of men,* &c.] That *John*'s baptiſm was an human invention, and he had no authority from God to preach and adminiſter it, *they feared the people*; leſt being enraged thereby they ſhould, at once, riſe up, and deſtroy them: *for all men counted John that he was a prophet indeed*; a real prophet, one truly ſent from God, and had his commiſſion and credentials from him: this was the general ſentiment of the people; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxi. 26.

Ver. 33. *And they anſwered and ſaid unto Jeſus,* &c.] Being reduced by this dilemma to the greateſt ſtreight and difficulty; *we cannot tell*: they could, if they would, but they did not care to tell; they knew if they did, they ſhould expoſe themſelves, one way or another: *and Jeſus anſwering, ſaith unto them, neither do I tell you by what authority I do theſe things*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxi. 27.

## CHAP. XII.

Ver. 1. AND *he began to ſpeak unto them by parables,* &c.] As of the two ſons the father bid go to work in the vineyard; and of the planting of a vineyard, and letting it out to huſbandmen, as here; tho' the latter is only related by this Evangeliſt, yet both are by *Matthew*. This was not the firſt time of his ſpeaking by parables to the people, though it might be the firſt time he ſpake in this way to the chief-prieſts and elders, and who are particularly deſigned in them. *A certain man planted a vineyard.* The *Perſic* verſion adds, *with many trees*; that is, with vines, tho' ſometimes other trees, as fig-trees, were planted in vineyards; ſee *Luke* xiii. 6. This man is, by the Evangeliſt *Matthew*, called an *houſholder*; by whom is meant God the Father, as diſtinguiſhed from his Son, he is afterward ſaid to ſend: and by the *vineyard*, planted by him, is meant the vineyard of the Lord of hoſts, the men of *Iſrael*, *Iſ.* v. 1, 7. *and ſet an hedge about it*, or *wall*, as the *Perſic* verſion renders it; meaning either the law, not the *Jews* oral law, or the traditions of the elders, which were not of God's ſetting, but the ceremonial and moral law; or the wall of protection by divine power, which was ſet around the *Jewiſh* nation, eſpecially when they went up to their ſolemn feaſts. *And digged a place for the wine-fat.* The *Syriac* and *Arabic* verſions add, *in it*; and the *Perſic* verſion, *in the vineyard*; for this was made in the vineyard, where they trod and ſqueezed the grapes when gathered; and may deſign the altar in the houſe of the Lord, where the libations, or drink-offerings, were poured out; *and built a tower.* The *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions add, *in it*; for this alſo was built in the vineyard, and may intend either the city of *Jeruſalem*; or the temple in it, the watch-houſe where the prieſts watched, and did their ſervice, day and night. *And let it out to huſbandmen*; or *workmen*, as the *Arabic* verſion renders it, who wrought in it, and took care of the vines. The *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *and ſet over it a worker and keeper of the vineyard*; by whom are meant the prieſts and levites, to whom were committed the care of the people, with reſpect to religious things: *and went into a far country*; left the people of the *Jews* to theſe huſbandmen, or rulers, whether civil or eccleſiaſtical, but chiefly the latter, to be inſtructed and directed by them, according to the laws and rules given them by the Lord; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxi. 33.

Ver. 2. *And at the ſeaſon he ſent unto the huſbandman a ſervant,* &c.] The Evangeliſt *Matthew* ſays, *when the time of the fruit drew near*; and ſo the *Perſic* verſion here reads. The *Syriac* and *Ethiopic* verſions read, *in its own time, or ſeaſon*, which was the fourth year from the planting of it; and then it was holy to the Lord; and might not be eaten until the fifth year, *Lev.* xix. 23, 24, 25. According to the *Jewiſh* canons[1], a vineyard of the fourth year was marked with clods of earth, to ſhow it was not to be eaten of; and the fruit of it was brought up to *Jeruſalem*, from every place that was but a day's journey from thence, there to be eat, or redeemed. Now by *the ſervant* are intended the prophets of the Old Teſtament, who were ſent to the *Jews* to call upon them to bring forth fruits of righteouſneſs; for not a ſingle perſon, but a ſett of men are here deſigned; and the Evangeliſt *Matthew* expreſſes it in the plural number, *ſervants: that he might receive from the huſbandmen the fruit of the vineyard*; by the hands of his ſervants; for in *Matthew* it is, *that they might receive*, &c. ſuch as righteouſneſs and judgment, truth and holineſs, ſo as to give an account of them, which might have been expected from a people under ſuch advantages, *Iſ.* v. 7. ſee the note on *Matt.* xxi. 34.

Ver. 3. *And they caught* him, *&c.*] This clauſe is left out in the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions, tho' it ſeems proper to be retained; and denotes the rudeneſs and violence with which the prophets of the Lord were uſed by the *Jewiſh* nation: *and beat him*; either with their fiſts, or with rods, and ſcourges, till the ſkin was flead off: *and ſent* him *away empty*;

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[1] Miſn. Maaſer Sheni, c. 5. §. 1, 2

without any fruit to carry with him, or give an account of, to the owner of the vineyard.

Ver. 4. *And again he ſent unto them another ſervant*, &c.] Another ſett of good men, to inſtruct, adviſe, and counſel them, and exhort them to their duty; ſuch as were *Iſaiah*, *Zechariah*, and others: *and at him they caſt ſtones, and wounded* him *in the head*; for ſome of theſe were ſtoned, as well as ſawn aſunder, and ſlain with the ſword; though, it ſeems, that this ſervant, or this ſett of men, were not ſtoned to death, becauſe he was afterwards ſaid to be ſent away: nor could the ſtoning be what was done by the order of the *Sanhedrim*, which was done by letting an heavy ſtone fall upon the heart[k]; but this was done by all the people, by the outragious zealots, in the manner *Stephen* was ſtoned. Dr. *Lightfoot* thinks, the uſual ſenſe of the *Greek* word may be retained; which ſignifies *to reduce*, or *gather into a certain ſum:* and ſo as this ſervant was ſent to reckon with theſe huſbandmen, and take an account from them of the fruit of the vineyard, one caſt a ſtone at him, ſaying, there's fruit for you; and a ſecond caſt another ſtone, ſaying the ſame thing; and ſo they went on one after another, till at laſt they ſaid, in a deriding way, now the ſum is made up with you: *and ſent* him *away ſhamefully handled*; with great ignominy and reproach.

Ver. 5. *And again he ſent another*, &c.] That is, another ſervant, or ſett of men; it may be in the times of the *Maccabees*, who were uſed in a very inhuman manner; ſee *Heb.* xi. 37, 38. *and him they killed*; either with the ſword, or by inflicting ſome capital puniſhment, as ſtoning, ſtrangling, *&c. and many others*; that is, either the owner of the vineyard ſent many other ſervants, or the huſbandmen ill uſed many others that were ſent to them: *beating ſome*; with their hands, or with ſcourges; *and killing ſome*; in one or other of the above ways.

Ver. 6. *Having yet therefore one ſon, his wellbeloved*, &c.] The Meſſiah, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who is the one, and only Son of God his Father, his only-begotten Son, for he has no other Son in the ſame way of filiation; and who is his dear Son, the Son of his love, who was loved by him before the foundation of the world; and whom he declared to be his beloved Son, both at his baptiſm, and at his transfiguration upon the mount, by a voice from heaven: this Son he having with him, in his boſom, as one brought up with him, and rejoicing before him, *he ſent him alſo laſt unto them*; after all the prophets had been with them, when the laſt days were come, the end of the *Jewiſh* ſtate, civil and eccleſiaſtical; ſee *Heb.* i. 1. *ſaying, they will reverence my Son.* The *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions read, *perhaps they will reverence my Son*, as in *Luke* xx. 13. ſee the note on *Matt.* xxi. 37.

Ver. 7. *But thoſe huſbandmen ſaid among themſelves*, &c.] This, in the *Perſic* verſion, is introduced thus, *when the vine-dreſſers ſaw the Son of the Lord of the vineyard*; agreeable to *Matt.* xxi. 38. The *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *and the ſervants ſaid*; not the ſervants that had been ſent, but the workmen in the vineyard: *this is the heir*; that is, *of the vineyard*, as the *Perſic* verſion expreſſes it: they knew him by the propheſies of the Old Teſtament which had deſcribed him, and by the miracles which were wrought by him; and they could not deny but that the vineyard of the houſe of *Judah* belonged to him, and he was right heir to the throne of *Iſrael*; tho' they refuſed to embrace him, confeſs him, and declare for him: but, on the other hand, ſaid, *come, let us kill him, and the inheritance ſhall be ours*; that is, *the vineyard*, as the *Perſic* verſion again reads. The prieſts, *Scribes*, and elders of the people conſulted together to take away his life, with this view; that they might continue in the quiet poſſeſſion of their nation, temple, and worſhip, in the office they bore, and in the privileges they partook of; and that the *Romans* might not come, and take away their place and nation, *John* xi. 47, 48. ſee the note on *Matt.* xxi. 38.

Ver. 8. *And they took him, and killed him, and caſt him out of the vineyard.*] They ſent their officers and ſervants, and apprehended him in the garden; they delivered him to the *Gentiles*, who were without the vineyard, and by whom, at their inſtigation, he was put to death, even to the death of the croſs. The *Ethiopic* verſion reads it in the ſame order as in *Matthew*; *they caſt him out of the vineyard, and killed him*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxi. 39.

Ver. 9. *What ſhall therefore the Lord of the vineyard do?* &c.] The *Arabic* and *Ethiopic* verſions add, *to them*; that is, to the huſbandmen, as is expreſſed in *Matt.* xxi. 40. ſee the note there: *he will come and deſtroy the huſbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto others.* As the former clauſe contains a queſtion put by Chriſt upon his having finiſhed the parable, this is an anſwer to it, given by the chief-prieſts, *Scribes*, and elders, in whoſe preſence, and for whoſe ſake it was delivered; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxi. 41.

Ver. 10. *And have ye not read this ſcripture?* &c.] In *Pſ.* cxviii. 22, 23. theſe are the words of Chriſt, directed to the above perſons, who were, many of them, teachers of the people, and therefore ought to have read the ſcriptures, and have taken notice of, and conſidered more eſpecially ſuch as reſpected the Meſſiah, as this paſſage did, and was very appoſite to the caſe in the parable Chriſt had reſpect unto: *the ſtone which the builders rejected, is become the head of the corner:* by *the ſtone* is meant the ſame with the ſon and heir in the parable, even himſelf, the true *Meſſiah*; and by *the builders*, the chief-prieſts, *Scribes*, and elders, the ſame with the huſbandmen, whoſe rejection of the ſtone, or of the Meſſiah, is ſignified by their ſeizing him, caſting him out of the vineyard, and killing him; and yet notwithſtanding all this, according to this ſcripture, he was to be, and now is become, the head of the corner, exalted above angels and men, at the right hand of God; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxi. 42.

Ver. 11. *This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.*] That is, the exaltation of the Meſſiah, after he had been ſo ill treated, and at laſt put to death by the *Jews*. Theſe words are a continuation of the paſſage cited out of the cxviiith pſalm.

Ver. 12. *They ſought to lay hold on him*, &c.] That is, the chief-prieſts, *Scribes*, and elders, after they had heard the parables he ſpake to them, were greatly irritated, and provoked, and had a good will to have ſeized him, and carried him away, and have had him before their court, and condemn him: *but feared the people*; leſt they ſhould riſe up in his defence, and fall on them; for many of them liked, and were attached to his miniſtery; and others had received favours of one kind or another from him thro' his miracles: *for they knew that he had ſpoken the parable againſt them*; and that they were the huſbandmen deſigned, who had not brought the fruit of the vineyard to their Lord, but had ill treated his ſervants, and would his ſon. *And they left him*; in the temple, not daring to do any thing to him: *and went their way*; to their council-chamber, perhaps to conſult what meaſures to take, and how to deſtroy him.

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[k] Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 6. §. 4.

Ver. 13. *And they ſend unto him*, &c.] That is, the chief-prieſts, *Scribes*, and elders, who had been with Jeſus in the temple, and were ſilenced by his reaſonings, and provoked by his parables; and therefore left him, and went together to conſult what methods they ſhould take to get him into their hands, and be revenged on him; the reſult of which was, they ſend to him *certain of the Phariſees*. The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read *Scribes*, who were the more ſkilful and learned part of that body of men, and ſcrupled paying tribute to *Cæſar*, he being an Heathen prince, and they the Lord's free people: *and of the Herodians*; who were, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read, *of the houſhold of Herod*; his ſervants and courtiers, and conſequently in the intereſt of *Cæſar*, under whom *Herod* held his government, and muſt be for paying tribute to him: theſe two parties, of ſuch different ſentiments, they ſent to him, *to catch him in his words*; or *in word*, or diſcourſe; either with their word, the queſtion they ſhould put to him, or with his word, the anſwer he ſhould return: and ſo the *Ethiopic* verſion ſupplies it, reading it, *with his own word*; they thought they ſhould unavoidably catch him, one way or other; juſt as a prey is hunted, and taken in a net or ſnare, as the word uſed ſignifies: for if he declared againſt giving tribute to *Cæſar*, the *Herodians* would have whereof to accuſe him, and the *Phariſees* would be witneſſes againſt him; and if he ſhould be for it, the latter would expoſe him among the people, as an enemy to their civil liberties, and one that was for ſubjecting them to the *Roman* yoke, and conſequently could not be the Meſſiah and deliverer they expected; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxii. 16.

Ver. 14. *And when they were come*, &c.] Unto Jeſus in the temple: *they ſaid unto him, maſter*; they ſaluted him in like manner, as they did their doctors and *Rabbins*, calling him *Rabbi*, tho' they were not his diſciples; but one part of them were the diſciples of the *Phariſees*, and the other had *Herod* for their maſter: *we know that thou art true*; an honeſt, ſincere, and upright man, *and careſt for no man, for thou regardeſt not the perſon of men*; no, not *Cæſar* himſelf; *but teacheſt the way of God in truth*; inſtructeſt men in the word, will, and worſhip of God, with all integrity and faithfulneſs; anſwer therefore this queſtion, *is it lawful to give tribute to Cæſar or not?* The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read, *head-money*; and ſo it is read in *Beza*'s moſt ancient copy; a tax that was levied on the heads of families, or on every particular head in a family; ſee the notes on *Matt.* xxii. 16, 17.

Ver. 15. *Shall we give, or not give?* &c.] They not only aſk whether it was lawful, but whether alſo it was adviſeable to do it, that they might not only accuſe him of his principles, but charge him with perſuading, or diſſuading in this caſe. Theſe words are left out in the *Vulgate Latin*, *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions: *but he knowing their hypocriſy*; expreſſed in their flattering titles and characters of him, and which lay hid in their ſecret deſigns againſt him; which being thoroughly known to him, *ſaid unto them, why tempt ye me? bring me a penny, that I may ſee it*; what it is, that is required for tribute; ſee the notes on *Matt.* xxii. 18, 19.

Ver. 16. *And they brought it*, &c.] The penny, which was a *Roman* one, and worth ſeven-pence half-penny of our money: *and he ſaith unto them, whoſe is this image, and ſuperſcription?* for it had the head of an emperor upon it, very likely the image of the then reigning emperor *Tiberius*, and a ſuperſcription on it, expreſſing his name, and perhaps a motto along with it: *and they ſaid unto him, Cæſar's*; one of the *Roman* emperors, *Auguſtus*, or *Tiberius*; moſt probably the latter; ſee the notes on *Matt.* xxii. 20, 21.

Ver. 17. *And Jeſus anſwering ſaid unto them*, &c.] Very wiſely and pertinently, *render to Cæſar the things that are Cæſar's*; or *to the king, which are the king's*, as the *Arabic* and *Ethiopic* verſions render it: *and to God the things that are God's*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxii. 21. *and they marvelled at him*; at his wiſdom and prudence in returning ſuch an anſwer, which cut off all occaſion againſt him.

Ver. 18. *Then came unto him the Sadducees*, &c.] The ſame day, immediately after he had ſilenced the *Phariſees* and *Herodians*: theſe were a ſett of men diſtinct from the former, in ſome of their ſentiments, eſpecially in their religious ones, and particularly in the following: *which ſay there is no reſurrection*; of the dead, in a literal ſenſe, either general or particular; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxii. 23. *and they aſked him, ſaying*; as in the next verſe.

Ver. 19. *Maſter, Moſes wrote unto us*, &c.] Has left in writing for us the following precept to obſerve; for they acknowledged the writings of *Moſes*, and indeed all the ſcriptures of the Old Teſtament; adhering to the literal ſenſe of them, and rejecting the traditional interpretation of them by the *Rabbins*: *if a man's brother die, and leave no children, that his brother ſhould take his wife, and raiſe up ſeed unto his brother*; which is the ſenſe of the law in *Deut.* xxv. 5. ſee the note on *Matt.* xxii. 24.

Ver. 20. *Now there were ſeven brethren*, &c.] In a certain family, at a certain place; perhaps at *Jeruſalem*, who were brethren by the father's ſide; for ſuch only were reckoned ſo, and ſuch only did this law oblige: *and the firſt took a wife, and dying left no ſeed*; no child: hence it's clear that the ancient *Jews* uſed the word *ſeed*, of a ſingle perſon, as theſe *Sadducees* did; though modern ones deny ſuch an uſe of it in our preſent controverſies with them about the ſenſe of *Gen.* iii. 15. and xxii. 18. ſee the note on *Matt.* xxii. 25.

Ver. 21. *The ſecond took her*, &c.] To wife, married her, as the next eldeſt brother, by the above law was obliged to: and ſo the *Jewiſh*[l] canon upon it runs thus; "the command is, בגדול, *for* "*the eldeſt* to marry his brother's wife: if he will "not, they go to all the brethren; if they will "not, they return to the eldeſt, and ſay, the com"mand is upon thee, either pluck off the ſhoe, "or marry." *Maimonides*[m] relates it in this manner; "if a man dies, and leaves many brethren, "the command is upon the eldeſt to marry, or "pull off the ſhoe; as it is ſaid, *Deut.* xxv. 6. "*and it ſhall be the firſt-born which ſhe beareth.* "From tradition 'tis learned, that it does not ſpeak "but of the firſt-born among the brethren; and "it is all one as if it was ſaid, the eldeſt of the "brethren ſhall ſucceed in the name of his brother "that is dead; and this is what is ſaid, *which ſhe* "*beareth*: the ſenſe is, which the mother has born, "and not which the brother's wife beareth; if the

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[l] Miſn. Yebamot, c. 4. §. 5. & T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 39. 1. Jarchium in Deut. xxv. 6.

[m] Hilch. Yebum Uchalitza, c. 2. §. 6, 7. Vid.

“ eldeſt will not marry her, they go round to all the brethren; and if they will not, they return to the eldeſt, and ſay, upon thee is the command, either pluck off the ſhoe, or marry; and they don't compel him to marry, but they compel him to pluck off the ſhoe;” *i. e.* in caſe he will not marry. *And died, neither left he any ſeed, and the third likewiſe*; married her, and died without iſſue, as the ſecond did. The *Perſic* verſion adds, *and the fourth, and fifth*; for ſo they all did to the ſeventh.

Ver. 22. *And the ſeventh had her, and left no ſeed,* &c.] All the ſeven brethren married her, one after another, and neither of them had any children by her: *and laſt of all the woman died alſo*; after all the ſeven brethren, to whom ſhe had been married.

Ver. 23. *In the reſurrection therefore, when they ſhall riſe,* &c.] This laſt clauſe, *when they ſhall riſe*, is omitted in two copies of *Beza*'s, and in the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, becauſe, perhaps, it might be thought ſuperfluous; but this is agreeable to the way of ſpeaking and writing with the *Jews*: ſo in the *Targum* on *Zech.* iii. 7. באחיות מיתיא אחינך, *in the quickening of the dead I will quicken thee*; or, in the reſurrection of the dead I will raiſe thee. The queſtion put on ſuppoſition of a reſurrection, and that theſe ſeven brethren, and the wife they all had ſhould riſe, then is, *whoſe wife ſhall ſhe be of them?* of the ſeven brethren; *for the ſeven had her to wife.* She was, according to law, the lawful wife of all ſeven; what particular and ſpecial claim could one have to her above the reſt? ſee the note on *Matt.* xxii. 28.

Ver. 24. *And Jeſus anſwering ſaid unto them,* &c.] Which they thought he was not able to do, but would have been ſilenced at once by them, as many of their antagoniſts had been: *do ye not therefore err, becauſe ye know not the ſcriptures, neither the power of God?* what is expreſſed in *Matthew* affirmatively, is here put by way of interrogation, which, with the *Jews*, was a more vehement way of affirming; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxii. 29.

Ver. 25. *For when they ſhall riſe from the dead,* &c.] Theſe ſeven brethren, and the woman; and ſo any, and every other: *they neither marry, nor are given in marriage*; there will be no ſuch natural relation ſubſiſting, nor any need of any: *but are as the angels which are in heaven*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxii. 30.

Ver. 26. *And as touching the dead, that they riſe,* &c.] For the proof of the doctrine of the reſurrection of the dead, *have ye not read in the book of Moſes*; that is, in the law of *Moſes*; for though it was divided into five parts, it was but one book; juſt as the *pſalms* are called the book of *pſalms*, *Acts* i. 20. and the prophets, the book of the prophets, *Acts* vii. 42. The book of *Exodus* is particularly intended; for the paſſage referr'd to is in *Exod.* iii. 6. *how in the buſh God ſpake unto him*, or *out of the buſh*, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read; *ſaying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Iſaac, and the God of Jacob?* ſee the notes on *Matt.* xxii. 31, 32.

Ver. 27. *He is not the God of the dead,* &c.] This is our Lord's reaſoning upon the paſſage; ſhewing from hence, that ſince God is the God of theſe perſons, they muſt be now alive in their ſouls, for God is not the God of the dead; and that their bodies muſt riſe again, or he will not be the God of their whole perſons; *but the God of the living*: the word *God*, in this clauſe, is omitted in the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, and *Arabic* verſions, but retained in the *Perſic* and *Ethiopic* verſions; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxii. 32. *ye therefore do greatly err*; ſignifying, that it was not a ſlight miſtake, an error of ſmall importance, but a very great one; inaſmuch as it was contrary to the ſcriptures, and derogated from the power of God, and deſtroyed that covenant-intereſt, which God has in his people, and particularly in the principal men of their nation, who were the fathers and founders of them.

Ver. 28. *And one of the Scribes came,* &c.] *Matthew* calls him a lawyer, an interpreter of the law, as a *Scribe* was: *and having heard them reaſoning together*; being preſent at the diſpute between Chriſt and the *Sadducees*, which he diligently attended to: *and perceiving that he had anſwered them well*; in a moſt beautiful manner. The *Jews* have adopted the very *Greek* word here uſed, and make uſe of it in the ſame ſenſe as אמר ליה קאלום [n], *he anſwered him well*; or, as the *Gloſs* upon it, *praiſeworthily*; in a manner deſerving praiſe; and is the ſame with שפיר קאמרת [o], *thou haſt ſaid well*, or beautifully; and ſo the anſwer here was with great ſolidity, and judgment, and ſtrength of argument, to their utter confuſion and ſilence; whereby he underſtood he had conſiderable knowledge in the law, and yet was willing to try if he could not puzzle him with a queſtion relating to it: *aſked him, which is the firſt commandment of all?* of all the commandments in the law, moral and ceremonial.

Ver. 29. *Jeſus anſwered him, the firſt of all the commandments is,* &c.] Chriſt replied at once, without taking any time to conſider of it, that the chief and principal of all the commands of the law, and what is of the greateſt importance is, *hear, O Iſrael, the Lord our God is one Lord.* The *Vulgate Latin*, and *Arabic* verſions read, *one God*; but the *Syriac*, and *Ethiopic* render it, *one Lord*; and that rightly, agreeable to the *Greek* text, and to *Deut.* vi. 4. from whence this is taken. This paſſage of ſcripture, to the end of the *ninth* verſe, is the firſt of the ſections which were put into their phylacteries; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiii. 5. and was repeated twice every day, morning and evening; which is by the *Jews* called from the firſt word קריאת שמע, *the reading of the Shema*: concerning the exact time of the reciting of this, morning and evening, and of the poſture in which they do it, reclining in the evening, and ſtanding in the morning, and of the prayers before and after it, various rules are given in their *Miſna* [p], or oral law; it is a precept of great eſteem and veneration with them, and attended to with much ſolemnity. The account *Maimonides* [q] gives of it is this: “twice every day they read *Keriath Shema* (*i. e. hear O Iſrael*, &c.) in the evening and in the morning, as it is ſaid, *Deut.* vi. 7. *When thou lieſt down, and when thou riſeſt up*; in the hour it is the cuſtom of men to lie down, and this is night; and in the hour it is the cuſtom of men to ſtand, and this is day: and what does he read? three ſections; and they are theſe, *hear*, &c. *Deut.* vi. 4. *and it ſhall come to paſs if ye ſhall hearken*, &c. *Deut.* xi. 13. *and Moſes ſaid*, &c. *Exod.* xiii. 3. and they read the ſection, *hear O Iſrael* firſt, becauſe there is in it the unity of God, and the love of him and his doctrine; for it is, העקר הגדול, *the great root*, or *foundation*, on which all hangs or depends.” And it is obſervable, that the laſt letter of the word *hear*, and the laſt of the word *one*, are both written in very large characters in the *Hebrew* Bible, to denote the greatneſs of the command, and to cauſe attention to it. The *Jews* ſeek for myſteries in theſe letters, and think the unuſual ſize of them, points at ſome very great things: they obſerve, that the firſt of theſe letters is numerically *ſeventy*, and directs to the ſeventy names of the law, and the ſeventy ways in which it may be interpreted, and the ſeventy nations of the world, from whom the *Iſraelites* are diſtinguiſhed, by their belief of the one God; and that the latter ſtands for the number *four*, and ſhews that the Lord is the one God, in heaven and in earth, in all the world, and in the four parts of it; and that both theſe letters put together, make a word, which ſignifies *a witneſs*; ſhewing that this paſſage is a glorious teſtimony of the unity of God, and that the *Iſraelites* are witneſſes of it, by believing and profeſſing it; and that ſhould they depart from the faith of it, God would be a witneſs againſt them: and now, though there is no ſolid foundation for ſuch interpretations, yet this ſhows what an opinion they had of the greatneſs of this command; to which may be added, they aſk [s], "why does, "*hear O Iſrael*, &c. go before that paſſage in *Deut.* "xi. 13. *And it ſhall come to paſs, if ye ſhall hearken* "*diligently unto my commandments*, &c. but becauſe "a man muſt take upon him, firſt the yoke of the "kingdom of heaven, and after that he muſt take "upon him the yoke of the commandments." The ſenſe is, that he muſt firſt make a confeſſion of his faith in God, which is contained in *Deut.* vi. 4. and then he muſt obey his commands; ſo that they plainly conſidered this, as the firſt and greateſt of all. Theſe words are frequent in the mouths of the modern *Jews*, in proof of the unity of God, and againſt a plurality in the deity; but the ancient ones, not only conſider them as a good and ſufficient proof, that there is but one God, but as expreſſive of a trinity in the Godhead: with a view to this text they obſerve [t], that "*Jehovah*, *our God*, "*Jehovah*; theſe are, תלת דרגין, *three degrees* (or "perſons) with reſpect to this ſublime myſtery, *in* "*the beginning*, *God*, or *Elohim*, *created*, &c." And again [u], "there is an unity which is called "*Jehovah* the firſt, our God, *Jehovah*; behold! "they are all one, and therefore called one: lo! "theſe three names are as one; and although "we call them one, and they are one; but by "the revelation of the Holy Ghoſt it is made "known, and they are by the ſight of the eye to "be known, that *theſe three are one* (ſee 1 John v. 7.) "and this is the myſtery of the voice that is heard; "the voice is one; and there are three things, fire, "and wind, and water, and they are all one, in "the myſtery of the voice, and they are not but "one: ſo here, *Jehovah*, our God, Jehovah, "theſe, תלתא גוונין, *three modes*, *forms*, or *things*, "are one." Once more they [w] ſay, "there are "two, and one is joined to them, and they are "three; and when they are three, they are one: "theſe are the two names of *hear O Iſrael*, which "are *Jehovah*, *Jehovah*, and *Elohenu*, or our "God, is joined unto them; and it is the ſeal of "the ring of truth." To which I ſhall ſubjoin one paſſage more, where *R. Eliezer* is aſking his father *R. Simeon ben Jochai*, why *Jehovah* is ſometimes called *Elohim*, he replies [x], among other things; "come ſee, there are, ג דרגין, *three degrees*, (or "perſons) and every degree is by itſelf; although "they are all one, and bound together in one, and "one is not ſeparated from another." To believe this, is the firſt and chief commandment in the law, and is the principal article of the chriſtian faith; namely, to believe that there is one God, and that there are three perſons, Father, Son, and Spirit, in the Godhead.

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[n] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 108. 1.

[o] Zohar in Lev. fol. 2. 3. & 15. 1.

[p] Beracot, c. 1. §. 1, 2, 3, 4.

[q] Hilch. Keriat Shema, c. 1. §. 1, 2.

Ver. 30. *And thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God*, &c.] Which is to be underſtood of the one God, Father, Son, and Spirit; for all the three divine perſons are to be equally loved, being poſſeſſed of the ſame perfections and excellencies, and having done the ſame works, and having beſtowed like benefits and favours upon men: and though there is now no principle of love to God in men; but, on the contrary, men are enemies to God in their minds, which appears by their wicked works; yet this commandment is ſtill in force, and the obligation to it is the ſame; the fall of man, the corruption of nature, and the impotency, and even averſion in man to obſerve this command, do not make it null and void: and in regeneration, when God puts his laws into the heart, and writes them in the mind; love is produced in ſuch perſons, to God the Father, who has begotten them again, according to his abundant mercy; and to Chriſt, who has ſaved them from their ſins; and to the bleſſed Spirit, who has quickened and comforted them: and this love is in ſome meaſure exerciſed as it ſhould be, and as here directed to, *with all thy heart, and with all thy ſoul, and with all thy mind*; that is, with all the powers and faculties of the ſoul; or with the affections, as under the influence and guidance of the more noble faculties of the ſoul, the mind, the underſtanding, judgment, and will: it is added here, which is not in *Matthew*, and *with all thy ſtrength*; which anſwers to the phraſe in *Deut.* vi. 5. *with all thy might*; that is, with the greateſt vehemency of affection, in the ſtrongeſt expreſſions of it, and with all the ſtrength of grace a man has. This paſſage follows the former in *Deut.* vi. 5. and is what is only cited in *Matt.* xxii. 37. ſee the note there.

Ver. 31. *And the ſecond is like*, &c.] *Unto it*, as in *Matt.* xxii. 39. and ſo it is read here in two ancient copies of *Beza*'s, and in the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions; namely *this*, *thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thyſelf*. This commandment ſtands in *Lev.* xix. 18. and reſpects not an *Iſraelite* only, or one of the ſame religion with a man's ſelf, or his intimate friend and acquaintance, or one that lives in the ſame neighbourhood; but any man whatever, to whom affection ſhould be ſhown, and good ſhould be done to him, and for him, as a man would have done to and for himſelf; as much as lies in his power, both in things temporal and ſpiritual; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxii. 39. *There is none other commandment greater than theſe*; in the whole law, moral or ceremonial; not the ſabbath, nor circumciſion, nor the phylacteries, nor the fringes on the borders of the garments, nor any other.

Ver. 32. *And the Scribe ſaid unto him*, &c.] This reply of the *Scribe*, is not related by *Matthew*; *well*, *Maſter*, *thou haſt ſaid the truth*; what tho haſt ſaid is truth, and thou haſt expreſſed it in moſt beautiful manner: the *Scribe* was charme with his anſwer, and could not forbear ſpeaking i commendation of it, and even before the multitud and thoſe of his own ſect: this was a rare and u common inſtance; it was not uſual with the *Scrib*

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[s] Miſn. Beracot, c. 2. §. 2.

[t] Zohar in Gen. fol. 1. 3.

[u] Ib. in Exod. fol. 18. 3.

[w] Ib. in Num. fol. 67. 3.

[x] Ib. in Lev. fol. 27. 2.

[r] Baal Hatturim, in Deut. vi. 4.

and *Phariſees*, whatever convictions they were laid under, either by the miracles or diſcourſes of Chriſt, to own any thing, or make any conceſſions in his favour, or ſpeak in his praiſe; but this man not only commends him, but gives reaſons for it, and confirms the doctrine he taught in his own words; *for there is one God, and there is none other but he.* The *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, leave out the word *God*; but it is in the *Greek* copies, and rightly retained in other verſions: for the ſenſe is, that there is one God, and but one; and which is perfectly agreeable to the chriſtian doctrine, of a Trinity of perſons in the Godhead; for though the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God, yet there are not three Gods, but one God. Nor are we to imagine, that this man ſaid or thought any thing to the contrary, or had it in his mind to oppoſe the doctrine of the Trinity; which, though more clearly revealed in the New Teſtament, was not unknown to the ancient *Jews*, and might be learned from the writings of the Old Teſtament: but this he ſaid, in oppoſition to the many idols, and fictitious deities of the *Gentiles*; and if he ſpake in the *Hebrew* language, as it is probable he did, there muſt be a beautiful *paranomaſia* in his words; *for there is*, אחד, *Achad*, *one God*; *and there is none*, אחר, *Achar*, *other but he*: and it is obſerved by a *Jewiſh* writer [y], that the reaſon why the laſt letter of, אחד, *one*, is greater than the reſt, as before obſerved, in ver. 29. is, that there might be no miſtake of ד for ר, which are much alike; and if miſtook, the word would ſignify *another*, and not *one*: but this is done, leſt a man ſhould miſtake, and worſhip *another*, and not the *one* God.

Ver. 33. *And to love him with all the heart*, &c.] That is, the one God, with a ſincere hearty love and affection; *and with all the underſtanding*; of his being, perfections, and works, which will ſerve to draw the affections to him: this clauſe anſwers to that, *with all thy mind*, in ver. 30. *and with all the ſoul*; with all the powers and faculties of it: *and with all the ſtrength*; a man has, or is given him; with all the vehemency and fervency of ſoul he is maſter of: *and to love his neighbour as himſelf*; which are the two great commandments of the law: *is more than all whole-burnt-offerings and ſacrifices*; that is, more excellent in their nature, more acceptable to God, and more uſeful among men, than all the rituals of the ceremonial law, than any ſacrifice whatever: for the two words here uſed, *burnt-offerings and ſacrifices*, include all offerings; as thoſe which were wholly conſumed upon the altar, and thoſe of which part was given to the prieſts; and all ſin-offerings, meat-offerings, and peace-offerings, and whatever elſe. This man had now at leaſt a different ſenſe of things, from the reſt of his brethren; who placed religion, chiefly in the obſervance of the rituals of the law, and the traditions of the elders; and neglected the duties of the moral law, reſpecting God and their neighbour; things which are to be preferred and attended to, before any ceremonial inſtitutions, and eſpecially the inventions of men. This entirely agrees with the ſenſe of the paſſage in *Hoſ.* vi. 6. *For I deſired mercy and not ſacrifice*; that is, willed and required, that men ſhould ſhew mercy to one another; or that every one ſhould love his neighbour as himſelf, and attend to this, rather than to the offering of any ceremonial ſacrifice; this being more delightful and well-pleaſing to God, than that; *and the knowledge of God*; of his unity, perfections, and glory *more than burnt-offerings*; which were entirely devoted to him: and it alſo agrees with the ancient ſentiments of the people of God; ſo *Samuel* ſays to *Saul*, *Hath the Lord* as great *delight in burnt-offerings and ſacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? behold, to obey* is *better than ſacrifice*, and *to hearken, than the fat of rams*, 1 *Sam.* xv. 22. And yet it may be obſerved, that there is ſome likeneſs between theſe things, burnt-offerings and ſacrifices, and the love of God and love to our neighbour; though the latter, are greatly preferable to the former; true love to God, being no other than the offering up of the ſoul, as a whole burnt-offering to God, in the flames of love to him; and love to the neighbour, or doing good and communicating to him, is a ſacrifice well pleaſing to God.

Ver. 34. *And when Jeſus ſaw that he anſwered diſcreetly*, &c.] Wiſely and prudently, as a man of ſenſe and underſtanding; by taking in the ſeveral parts of our Lord's anſwer very diſtinctly, and reaſoning upon them, and confirming them: *he ſaid unto him, thou art not far from the kingdom of God*; not meaning from heaven, and eternal happineſs; for right and diſtinct notions of the above commandments, and even the performance of them by a ſinful and imperfect creature, can neither give a man a title to, or bring him near, or introduce him into the heavenly glory, which is a pure gift of God's grace: but our Lord's ſenſe is, that he was not far off from the Goſpel-diſpenſation, and was in a fair way of entering into it; his ſentiments were very near to ſuch, who became followers of Chriſt, and embraced the doctrines, and ſubmitted to the ordinances of the Goſpel-ſtate; ſince he preferred thoſe things, which related to the knowledge of the being and perfections of God, to the love and worſhip of God, and to the good of his neighbour, before the ceremonies of the law; which were quickly to be aboliſhed, and make way for the ſetting up of the kingdom of God, or of the Meſſiah, in a more glorious and viſible manner. Indeed there are ſome perſons, who ſeem not far off from the kingdom of God, in the other ſenſe of the phraſe, as it may reſpect eternal glory and happineſs, who will never enter into it: there are ſome that ſeem very devout and religious; hear the word, attend on all ordinances, join themſelves with a church, ſubmit to baptiſm, and ſit down at the Lord's table, and live a moral life and converſation, and yet are deſtitute of the grace of God; yea, there are ſome who have clear notions of the Goſpel, and make a bright profeſſion of it, and yet have no experience of the power of it upon their hearts, and have not the oil of grace there; and even hold this profeſſion to the end, and yet come ſhort of the kingdom and glory of our Lord Jeſus: ſuch are almoſt chriſtians, but not altogether; virgins, but fooliſh ones; have lamps, but no oil; come as far as the door, but that is ſhut upon them. *And no man after that, durſt aſk him any queſtion*; in any captious manner, in order to enſnare him; finding they could get no advantage, or occaſion againſt him that way; he having ſilenced the *Herodians*, *Sadducees*, *Scribes*, and *Phariſees*.

Ver. 35. *And Jeſus anſwered and ſaid*, &c.] To the *Phariſees* that were gathered together about him; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxii. 41. *While he taught in the temple*; whilſt he was in the temple, and as he was teaching the people there; among other things in his doctrine, he put this queſtion, *how ſay the Scribes*,

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[y] Baal Hatturim, ib.

*Scribes, that Chriſt is the Son of David?* Not that Chriſt meant to deny, or invalidate the truth of this; for the Meſſiah was certainly to be the ſon of *David*, and was; but he wanted to know, inaſmuch as they commonly ſaid, and inſtructed the people to believe, and it was in general believed by them, that he was *David*'s ſon, how they could reconcile this to his being the Lord of *David*; or how they could give out, that he was only and merely the ſon of *David*, when he was *David*'s Lord. *Matthew* relates the matter thus; that Chriſt firſt put theſe queſtions to them, what they thought of the Meſſiah, and whoſe ſon he was; and that they immediately replied, he was the ſon of *David*: wherefore this queſtion ſeems to be put upon that, with another along with it, *how then doth David in ſpirit call him Lord?* ſee the notes on *Matt.* xxii. 42, 43.

Ver. 36. *For David himſelf ſaid by the Holy Ghoſt,* &c.] In *Pſal.* cx. 1. being inſpired by the Spirit of God: *the Lord ſaid to my Lord, ſit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footſtool.* This is a proof, that *David* did call Chriſt his Lord; and that he called him ſo in ſpirit; ſince theſe words were delivered by him under the inſpiration of the Holy Spirit: that the pſalm was wrote by *David*, the title ſhews; and that he ſpake it as he was influenced by the Holy Ghoſt, our Lord declares: the paſſage relates to what God the Father ſaid to Chriſt, when being riſen from the dead, he aſcended on high, and entered into the moſt holy place; he bid him ſit down at his right hand, as having done the work of man's ſalvation, he was ſent about, to full ſatisfaction; and as a mark of affection to him, and honour conferred upon him in the human nature; where he ſhould continue, till all his enemies, *Jews*, *Pagans*, *Papiſts*, and *Mahometans*, as well as ſatan, and all his principalities and powers, were ſo ſubdued under him, as to be as a footſtool to his throne: and when *David* prophetically ſpeaks of this, he calls the Meſſiah his Lord; ſaying, the *Lord ſaid to my Lord*; on which account the prophecy is cited; who was ſo, as he is God, and his Creator and Redeemer. That this prophecy is a prophecy of the Meſſiah, and is applicable to no other but he; and is therefore pertinently cited, and applied to him here, ſee the note on *Matt.* xxii. 44.

Ver. 37. *David therefore himſelf, calleth him Lord,* &c.] *David*, whoſe ſon you ſay the *Meſſiah* is, ſpeaks of him as one ſuperior to himſelf; as Lord, and as his Lord: *whence is he then his ſon?* from what paſſage of ſcripture does it appear, that he is his ſon? and how can theſe two different characters of him, be made to agree in him? Our Lord meant by this, to obſerve to them, that the Meſſiah was God, as well as man; that he was not merely the ſon of *David*, as was commonly received, or a mere man, but that he had a ſuperior nature, in which he was *David*'s Lord, and even Lord of all. This is a *Talmudic* way of ſpeaking, frequently uſed when a proof from ſcripture, or reaſon, is demanded to ſupport any opinion or article of faith; as, מניין האי סברא, *from whence is this opinion*[z]? what proof is there of it? And again it is ſaid[a], מניין לתחיית המתים, *from whence* is the proof of the reſurrection of the dead out of the law? It is ſaid, *Exod.* vi. 4. *and I have alſo eſtabliſhed,* &c. Sometimes it is expreſſed thus[b], מנא ידעינן, *from whence do we know that it is ſo?* And ſometimes the word is doubled[c]; ſays *R. Simeon ben Lekiſh*, there is an intimation out of the law, concerning that which is torn, מניין מניין, *from whence, from whence? Exod.* xxii. 31. *Neither ſhall ye eat any fleſh that is torn,* &c. But the *Scribes* produced neither ſcripture nor reaſon to ſupport their aſſertion, though it was true; becauſe they could not reconcile it with the paſſage cited by Chriſt. *And the common people*; or the *whole multitude*, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions render it; or a *great multitude*, as the *Vulgate Latin*, and *Arabic* verſions; or *all the people*, as the *Ethiopic*; all but the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, the populace in general, *heard him gladly*; with great pleaſure and ſatiſfaction, obſerving that his doctrine was ſuperior to that of any of the ſects among them; particularly his reaſoning about the Meſſiah, was liſtened to with great attention, and who, no doubt, could gladly have heard how theſe things could be reconciled; but we read not that any anſwer was returned to our Lord's queries, either by himſelf or any other.

Ver. 38. *And he ſaid unto them in his doctrine,* &c.] As he was preaching, not to the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, but to the multitude, and to his diſciples particularly; and to them in the audience of the people, as appears from *Matt.* xxiii. 1. and *Luke* xx. 45. *Beware of the Scribes*; for though he had juſt ſpoken favourably of one of them, this was but a ſingle man, and a ſingular inſtance; the body of that ſett of men, were very bad in their principles and practices, and therefore to be avoided, and that for the reaſons following: *which love to go in long cloathing*; the *Perſic* verſion renders it, *who affect to walk in coats and garments conſpicuous, and in long robes*; ſuch as were very particular, and different from others, and out of the common way of apparel; and ſo were obſervable and taken notice of by others: very likely it may have reference to the uncommon length of their fringes on the borders of their outward garment, which they enlarged beyond others; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiii. 5. *and* love *ſalutations in the market-places*; or *ſtreets*, as the *Syriac* and *Arabic* verſions render it, in any publick places, where there was a reſort of men, and they were taken notice of, with reſpect, in a publick manner. The *Syriac* and *Perſic* ſupply the word *love*, as we do from *Matt.* xxiii. 6, 7. ſee the note there.

Ver. 39. *And the chief ſeats in the ſynagogues,* &c.] Where the rulers of the ſynagogue, and the elders of the people ſat; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiii. 6. *And the uppermoſt rooms at feaſts*; or the firſt and chief places where they ſat, or rather lay along at publick entertainments; ſee the note as before.

Ver. 40. *Which devour widows houſes,* &c.] See the note on *Matt.* xxiii. 14.

Ver. 41. *And Jeſus ſat overagainſt the treaſury,* &c.] The *Arabic* verſion reads, *at the door of the treaſury*; the place where the cheſts ſtood, into which money was put for various uſes: there were thirteen cheſts in the temple[d]; ſix of them were, לנדבה, for voluntary oblations, or free-will offerings; for what remained of the ſin-offering, and of the treſpaſs-offering, and of the turtles; for thoſe that had fluxes, and for lying-in women; and of the ſacrifices of the *Nazarite*, and of the treſpaſs-offering for the leper; and the laſt was for a free-will offering in general; and into one of theſe cheſts, or all of them, was the money caſt, afterwards ſpoken of. The *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *over-*

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[z] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 54. 2.

[a] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 90. 2.

[b] T. Bab. Nazir, fol. 5. 1.

[c] T. Bab. Cholin, fol. 42. 1.

[d] Miſn. Shekalim, c. 6. §. 5. & Maimon. & Bartenora in ib. & Moſes Kotſenſis, Mitzvot Tora, pr. affirm. 44. & Maimon. Hilch. Shekalim, c. 2. §. 2, 3.

*overagainſt the alms-cheſt*; but this contribution in the temple, was not for the maintenance of the poor, but for the ſupply of ſacrifices, and other things, as now mentioned. *Jeſus* having done preaching, and the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* having left him, and the multitude being diſmiſſed, he ſat down, being weary, and reſted himſelf in this place: *and beheld*; with pleaſure, *how the people*, of all ſorts, rich and poor, *caſt money into the treaſury*; into one or other of the above cheſts: the word rendered *money*, ſignifies *braſs*, which the *Jews* call, מעות; for they had ſhekels of braſs, as well as ſilver; and brazen pence, as well as ſilver pence [e]; and alſo *Pruta's*, or mites of braſs [f]; and ſuch, the poor woman caſt in: *and many that were rich caſt in much*: they gave very liberally and largely, as they were poſſeſſed with much worldly ſubſtance; for though religion was at a low ebb with them, yet they took care to ſupport the external and ritual part of it.

Ver. 42. *And there came a certain poor widow*, &c.] Among the many that came to offer their gifts freely, there came one that was particularly taken notice of by Chriſt; and ſhe was a *widow*, had no huſband to provide for her, and was a *poor* one; had no ſubſtance left her by her huſband to ſupport her with; very likely ſhe was an inhabitant of *Jeruſalem*: *and ſhe threw in two mites, which make a farthing*; a *quadrant*, which was the fourth part of the *Roman* aſſis, or farthing; which ſeems to be much the ſame with the τεταρτημοριον of the *Greeks*, which is ſaid [g] to be, "the fourth part of "an obolus (the leaſt *Athenian* coin) that is, two "braſs pieces." Theſe mites ſeem to be the ſame with the *Pruta's*, the *Jews* often ſpeak of; who ſay [h], that a *Pruta* is the eighth part of an *Italian* farthing; though ſome make it to be the ſixth: hence the *Syriac* verſion here renders it, *two menin, that is, eighths*; and the *Jeruſalem Talmud* expreſsly ſays [i], that, שני פרוטות קרדינטס, *two Pruta's make a Quadrant*, the very word here uſed: and that the *Jews* took the free-will offerings of the poor as well as the rich, though ever ſo little, is clear from this canon of theirs [k]; "a poor man "that gives a *Pruta*, or mite, into the alms-diſh, "or a *Pruta* into the poor's cheſt, they take it of "him; but if he does not give, they don't oblige "him to give." Nor were they obliged to caſt into the treaſury; but if they did, they received it, be it leſs or more: and indeed, the rich might throw in as little as they pleaſed: as for inſtance; into the cheſt for gold, they might throw in as little as the weight of a barley-corn of gold; and into the cheſt for frankincenſe, as little as the weight of a barley-corn of frankincenſe [l]. The *Perſic* verſion here, different from all others, inſtead of *two mites*, renders it, *two bottoms of thread*, or *yarn*.

Ver. 43. *And he called unto him his diſciples*, &c.] Who were at ſome little diſtance from him, he having finiſhed his diſcourſes: *and ſaith unto them, verily I ſay unto you*; a way of ſpeaking he often uſed, when he was about to deliver ſomething of importance, and not ſo eaſy of belief, and which required attention, and what he ſolemnly affirmed: *that this poor widow*, pointing to her, *hath caſt more in, than all they which have caſt into the treaſury*: not that ſhe had caſt in more, or ſo much as any one of them as to value and ſubſtance, much leſs more than them all put together; but that ſhe had caſt in more in proportion to what ſhe had, than they had in proportion to their ſubſtance; and that her's, though very ſmall in itſelf, and might be contemptible to others, yet it was more in the account of God and Chriſt, and more highly valued and eſteemed of by them, than all that the rich men put in: ſince what ſhe gave, ſhe gave in faith, and from a principle of love, and with a view to the glory of God; when theirs was given only in hypocriſy, to make an outward ſhow, and to be ſeen of men.

Ver. 44. *For all they did caſt in of their abundance*, &c.] Or *ſuperabundance*, as the *Arabic* verſion renders it; or *ſuperfluity*, as the *Ethiopic*: they abounded in the things of the world, of which they gave only a part; and though they might give much, yet they could eaſily ſpare it, and had enough remaining: *but ſhe, of her want*; or *penury*, as in *Luke* xxi. 4. ſee 2 *Cor*. viii. 2. *did caſt in all that ſhe had, even all her living*; her whole ſubſtance, all that ſhe had in the world; what was to have bought her food, for that day; ſhe left herſelf nothing, but gave away all, and truſted to providence for immediate ſupply.

## CHAP. XIII.

Ver. 1. AND *as he went out of the temple*, &c.] The *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *as they went out*; Chriſt and his diſciples: for when Chriſt went out of the temple, the diſciples went out with him; or at leaſt very quickly followed him, and came to him, as appears from what follows; tho' the true reading is, *as he went out*: and the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions are more expreſs, and read, *as Jeſus went out*; for having done all he intended to do there, he left it, never more to return to it: *one of his diſciples*; it may be *Peter*, who was generally pretty forward, and commonly the mouth of the reſt, as this diſciple was, whoever he was: the *Perſic* verſion reads, *the diſciples*; and *Matthew* and *Luke* repreſent them in general, as obſerving to Chriſt, the beauty and grandeur of the temple, as this diſciple did: who *ſaith unto him, Maſter, ſee what manner of ſtones and what buildings are here*. The temple, as repaired by *Herod*, was a very beautiful building, according to the account the *Jews* give of it, and its ſtones were of a very great magnitude; ſee the note on *Matt*. xxiv. 1.

Ver. 2. *And Jeſus anſwering ſaid unto him*, &c.] The *Perſic* verſion reads, *unto them*; and ſo *Beza*'s moſt ancient copy; but as that queſtion is put by one, the reply is made to him: *ſeeſt thou theſe great buildings?* how beautiful and ſtrong they are. The *Vulgate Latin* and *Ethiopic* verſions, add the word *all*; and the ſenſe is, doſt thou take a ſurvey of all theſe buildings, and of the whole of this ſtately edifice? and doſt thou not admire the ſtrength and grandeur of them? and doſt thou not think they will be of long duration, and that the demolition of them is ſcarcely poſſible? *There ſhall not be left one ſtone upon another*. The *Syriac* and *Arabic* verſions add, *here*; as in *Matt*. xxiv. 2. and ſo it is read in four of *Beza*'s copies, and in others: *that ſhall not be thrown down*; ſee the note on *Matt*. xxiv. 2.

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[e] Miſn. Maaſer Sheni, c. 2. §. 8, 9. & Ediot, c. 1. §. 9, 10. [f] Vid. Hottinger. de Nummis Heb. p. 118. [g] Harpocr- an. Lexic. p. 281. [h] Miſn. Kidduſhin, c. 1. §. 1. T. Hieroſ. Kidduſhin, fol. 58. 4. T. Bab. Kidduſhin, fol. 12. 1. Bava Metzia, fol. 44. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Shekalim, c. 1. §. 3. [i] Kidduſhin, fol. 58. 4. [k] Maimon. Hilch. Mattnot Anayim, 9. §. 19. [l] Maimon. & Bartenora in Miſn. Shekalim, c. 6. §. 6.

Ver. 3. *And as he ſat upon the mount of Olives,* &c.] On the eaſt of *Jeruſalem*: *overagainſt the temple*; where he could have a full view of it; the eaſtern wall of the temple being lower than the reſt; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 3. *Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, aſked him privately*; apart from the reſt of the diſciples, they being, eſpecially the firſt three, his favourites, and very familiar with him.

Ver. 4. *Tell us when ſhall theſe things be?* &c.] When the temple will be deſtroyed, and theſe fine buildings ſhall be demoliſhed, and not one of theſe large ſtones ſhall be left upon another: *and what* ſhall be *the ſign when all theſe things ſhall be fulfilled?* And what is the ſign of his coming, and of the end of the world, as *Matthew* relates; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 3.

Ver. 5. *And Jeſus anſwering them,* &c.] His four diſciples, *Peter, John, James,* and *Andrew*: *began to ſay*; or *ſaid*, a way of ſpeaking frequent with this Evangeliſt: *take heed leſt any man deceive you*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 4.

Ver. 6. *For many ſhall come in my name,* &c.] Taking upon them the name of the *Meſſiah*: *ſaying, I am* Chriſt; the word *Chriſt*, is rightly ſupplied from *Matt.* xxiv. 5. otherwiſe in the original it is only, *I am*; which the *Perſic* verſion doubles, reading it, *I am indeed, I am*; he that was promiſed and expected, the true Meſſiah; he that was to come: *and ſhall deceive many*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 5.

Ver. 7. *And when ye ſhall hear of wars, and rumours of wars,* &c.] Among the *Jews* themſelves, and with the *Romans*: *be not troubled*; keep your place, abide by your work, go on preaching the Goſpel, without diſtreſſing yourſelves about the event of things: *for* ſuch things *muſt needs be*; being decreed by God, foretold by Chriſt, and made neceſſary by the ſins of the people: *but the end* ſhall *not* be *yet*; of the temple, of *Jeruſalem*, and of the *Jewiſh* ſtate and nation; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 6.

Ver. 8. *For nation ſhall riſe againſt nation,* &c.] The nations of the world one againſt another, and the *Romans* againſt the *Jews*, and the *Jews* againſt them: *and kingdom againſt kingdom*; which is a ſynonymous phraſe with the former, and what the *Jews* call, מלות שונות, *different words*, expreſſing the ſame thing, often uſed in their commentaries: *and there ſhall be earthquakes in* divers *places*; of the world: *and there ſhall be famines*; eſpecially in *Judæa*, as in the times of *Claudius Cæſar*, and at the ſiege of *Jeruſalem*: *and troubles*; publick ones of various ſorts, as tumults, ſeditions, murders, *&c.* This word is omitted in the *Vulgate Latin*, and *Ethiopic* verſions. *Theſe are the beginnings of ſorrows*; as of a woman with child, as the word ſignifies; whoſe pains before, though they are the beginnings and pledges of what ſhall come after, are not to be compared with thoſe that immediately precede, and attend the birth of the child: and ſo all thoſe troubles, which ſhould be ſome time before the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, would be but ſmall, but light afflictions, the beginning of ſorrows, in compariſon of what ſhould immediately go before, and attend that deſolation; ſee the notes on *Matt.* xxiv. 7, 8.

Ver. 9. *But take heed to yourſelves,* &c.] This does not ſo much regard their doctrine and converſation, they were to take heed to; in which ſenſe this phraſe is ſometimes uſed; but the ſecurity of their perſons and lives; and the advice is, to take care of themſelves, as much as in them lay, how they came into the hands of the perſecuting *Jews*, and expoſed themſelves to danger, when at any time it could be avoided: *for they ſhall deliver you up to councils*; their greater and leſſer *Sanhedrim*; the one conſiſting of ſeventy-one perſons, the other of twenty-three, and the leaſt of three only; and before the greater of theſe, *Peter* and *John* were brought, quickly after the aſcenſion of Chriſt: *and in the ſynagogues ye ſhall be beaten*; with forty ſtripes ſave one, as the apoſtle *Paul* was; five times: *and ye ſhall be brought before rulers*; governors of *Roman* provinces, as the ſame apoſtle was; before *Gallio*; *Feſtus*, and *Felix*: *and kings for my ſake*; for the ſake of profeſſing Chriſt, and preaching his Goſpel; as ſome of the apoſtles were; before *Herod*; *Agrippa*; *Nero*, *Domitian*, and others: *for a teſtimony againſt them*; both againſt the rulers and kings before whom they ſhould be brought, and bear a teſtimony for Chriſt, and againſt the *Jews*, who ſhould bring them thither; ſee the notes on *Matt.* x. 17, 18.

Ver. 10. *And the Goſpel muſt firſt be publiſhed among all nations.*] The *Syriac* verſion reads, *my Goſpel*; the Goſpel which Chriſt was the author, ſubject, and preacher of; this *muſt be publiſhed.* There was a neceſſity of the promulgation of it by the will of God, the command and commiſſion of Chriſt; and for the gathering in of the *Jews*, that were the elect of God, *among all nations* of the world, eſpecially in the *Roman* Empire; and that *firſt*, or before the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 14.

Ver. 11. *But when they ſhall lead* you, *and deliver you up,* &c.] Lead to councils and courts of judicature, and deliver up to kings and rulers, to the civil magiſtrate, to be puniſhed by the ſecular arm: *take no thought before hand*; be not previouſly anxious, and carefully ſollicitous, in a diſtreſſing way: *what ye ſhall ſpeak*; to kings and rulers, by way of apology for yourſelves, and your own innocence, and in defence of the Goſpel: *neither do ye premeditate*; or *meditate*, as the generality of copies read: *Beza* ſays in one copy it is read, *premeditate*; and ſo in one of *Stephens*'s, as we render it: this clauſe is omitted in the *Vulgate Latin*, *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions: *but whatſoever ſhall be given you in that hour*; whatever ſhall be immediately ſuggeſted to your thoughts, be put into your minds, and laid upon your hearts: *that ſpeak ye*; freely and boldly, without the fear of men: *for it is not ye that ſpeak, but the Holy Ghoſt*: not but that they did ſpeak, but they were not the principal authors, either of the matter they ſpoke, or of the words and language in which they ſpoke; they were only the inſtruments of the Holy Ghoſt; they ſpoke as they were moved by him: hence their wiſdom and eloquence in their ſelf-defence, were amazing, and their arguments ſtrong and unanſwerable; ſee the notes on *Matt.* x. 19, 20.

Ver. 12. *Now the brother ſhall betray the brothe to death,* &c.] Signifying, that ſuch ſhould be th rage of men, particularly the *Jews*, againſt Chri and his Goſpel, that thoſe that were in the neare relation, were of the ſame fleſh and blood, chi dren of the ſame parents, ſhould betray and deliv up each other into the hands of the civil magiſtrat in order to be put to death: *and the Father, Son, and children ſhall riſe up againſt their paren and ſhall cauſe them to be put to death*; things u natural and ſhocking; ſee the note on *Matt.* x. 2

Ver. 13. *And ye ſhall be hated of all men,* &c Not only of your friends and relations, of yo countrymen the *Jews*; but of all men, the gene lity of men, in all nations of the world, wherever they came: *for my name ſake*; for the ſake of Chriſt and his Goſpel, they profeſſed and preached: *but he that ſhall endure*; reproaches, afflictions, and perſecutions, patiently; or perſevere in the faith of Chriſt, in the profeſſion of his name, and in preaching his Goſpel: *to the end*; of ſuch troubles, and of life: *the ſame ſhall be ſaved*; if not with a temporal, yet with an everlaſting ſalvation; ſee the notes on *Matt*. x. 22. and xxiv. 13.

Ver. 14. *But when ye ſhall ſee the abomination of deſolation*, &c.] The *Roman* army encompaſſing *Jeruſalem*, which was an abomination to the *Jews*; and an *impure ſign* of their deſtruction, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions render it; and a deſolating one to their nation, city, and temple: *ſpoken of by Daniel the prophet*, in *Dan*. ix. 27. This clauſe is omitted in the *Vulgate Latin*, and was not found by *Beza*, in two of his copies, and is thought to be tranſcribed from *Matthew*: *ſtanding where it ought not*; round about the city, in the midſt of it, and even in the temple: in one of *Beza*'s exemplars 'tis added, *in the holy place*, as in *Matthew*; and ſo 'tis read in the *Ethiopic* verſion: *let him that readeth underſtand*; either the paſſage in *Daniel*, or the citation of it by the Evangeliſt, when he ſhall ſee this come to paſs: this ſeems to be rather the words of the Evangeliſt, than of Chriſt; ſince this was not written (and ſo not to be read) but ſpoken by Chriſt; and ſince his uſual phraſe was, *he that hath ears, let him hear*: though indeed the ſame exhortation is in *Matthew*, and may be underſtood of Chriſt, as it may refer to the written prophecy in *Daniel*, and indeed to the Goſpel, which might be read before this event came to paſs; ſee the note on *Matt*. xxiv. 15. *Then let them that be in Judæa, flee to the mountains*; they that are in *Jeruſalem*, or in any of the cities and towns of *Judæa*, let them make their eſcape, as ſoon as poſſible, to the mountainous parts of the country; where they may be more ſafe from the devaſtations of the *Roman* army; ſee the note on *Matt*. xxiv. 16.

Ver. 15. *And let him that is on the houſe top*, &c.] On the battlements of the houſe, either for diverſion or devotion: *not go down into the houſe*; in the inner way by the ſtairs, or ladder within doors: *neither enter therein*; being come down from the top of the houſe, by ſtairs, or a ladder without, which was uſual: *to take any thing out of his houſe*; to take care of his goods, or take any thing along with him, that might be uſeful in his flight, and journey, and ſtay abroad; ſee the note on *Matt*. xxiv. 17.

Ver. 16. *And let him that is in the field*, &c.] At work, in any ſort of buſineſs there, *not turn back again*: either to his own houſe, or rather to that part of the field where he laid down his cloaths: *for to take up his garment*; but let him flee without it, or otherwiſe he would be in great danger; ſee the note on *Matt*. xxiv. 18.

Ver. 17. *But wo to them that are with child*, &c.] Who becauſe of their burdens, would be very unfit for, and very uncapable of fleeing with any haſte; and therefore very liable to fall into the hands of the enemy, and become their prey: *and to them that give ſuck in thoſe days*; who could not bear to leave their children behind, and yet would not be able to carry them with them; at leaſt not without great trouble, and which would much retard their flight, and endanger their being taken by the enemy; ſee the note on *Matt*. xxiv. 19.

Ver. 18. *And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter*.] When days are ſhort, roads bad, the weather inclement; and when to lodge in mountains, is very incommodious, and uncomfortable. The *Perſic* verſion adds, *neither on the ſabbath-day*; as in *Matt*. xxiv. 20. ſee the note there.

Ver. 19. *For in thoſe days ſhall be affliction*, &c.] What with the cloſe ſiege of the *Romans*; the fury of the zealots, and ſeditious; the rage of different parties among the *Jews* themſelves; the ravage of the ſword, both within and without, together with dreadful plagues and famines: *ſuch as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created, unto this time, neither ſhall be*; of which there never was the like in any age, and cannot be paralleled in any hiſtory, ſince the beginning of time, or the world was made, or any thing in it, down to that period; nor ever will the like, befal any one particular nation under the heavens, to the end of the world; ſee the note on *Matt*. xxiv. 21.

Ver. 20. *And except that the Lord had ſhortened thoſe days*, &c.] Had determined that thoſe days of affliction ſhould be but few, and not laſt long; that the ſiege ſhould not be longer continued, and the devaſtations within and without be prolonged: *no fleſh ſhould be ſaved*; there would not have been a *Jew* left; that nation and race of men muſt have been utterly deſtroyed from off the face of the earth: *but for the elects ſake, whom he hath choſen*; in Chriſt, unto eternal ſalvation; who were either then upon the ſpot, called or uncalled, or that were to ſpring from them in ſucceeding times: *he hath ſhortened the days*; he hath determined they ſhall be but few, that a remnant might be ſaved, and among them his elect; or from whom ſhould deſcend, ſuch as he had choſen, and who ſhould be ſaved with an everlaſting ſalvation: for though the people in general have been given up to blindneſs and unbelief, yet they are preſerved as a diſtinct people in the world; and in the latter day will be called and converted, and all *Iſrael* ſhall be ſaved: and therefore it was the will of God to ſhorten thoſe days of affliction, that they might not be entirely cut off, but that a number might be left, as a ſtock for future ages; ſee the note on *Matt*. xxiv. 22.

Ver. 21. *And then if any ſhall ſay unto you*, &c.] During thoſe days of tribulation and affliction, or when ſhortened and at an end: *lo, here is Chriſt, or lo*, he is *there*; the Meſſiah has appeared in ſuch or in ſuch a place, to deliver you from your national diſtreſſes and calamities, and from the *Roman* yoke and bondage: *believe* him *not*; give no credit to ſuch a report, for the reaſon following; ſee the note on *Matt*. xxiv. 23.

Ver. 22. *For falſe Chriſts, and falſe prophets ſhall riſe*, &c.] As there did, both before and after the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*: *and ſhall ſhew ſigns and wonders*; as they pretended to do, and did, at leaſt to the appearance of people: *to ſeduce, if it were poſſible, even the elect*; who were choſen in Chriſt, unto eternal life; in conſequence of which, they truly believed in him, and were conſtant followers of him; but this was not poſſible: though ſuch was the force of their deception, that there was apparent danger of it, were it not for the power and grace of God; ſee the note on *Matt*. xxiv. 24.

Ver. 23. *But take ye heed*, &c.] The *Perſic* verſion adds, *of them*; of the falſe Chriſts, and falſe prophets: for tho' the purpoſes of God, concerning the ſalvation of his elect, are infruſtrable; his promiſes are yea and amen; his grace is efficacious and irreſiſtible, and his power uncontroulable; and the ſalvation of his choſen ones certain; yet it becomes them to be on their guard againſt every deception, and temptation, and to make uſe of all means for their perſeverance: *behold, I have foretold you all things*; relating to the deſtruction of the temple, city, and nation of the *Jews*; the ſigns that would go before it, as the diſciples had deſired; the miſeries and calamities that would attend it, and the danger they would be expoſed to thro' falſe Chriſts, and falſe prophets; and therefore would be inexcuſable, if they did not obſerve the caution he now gave them: and moreover, when all theſe ſhould be accompliſhed, they would remember that he had told them of them before-hand; which would be a proof of his omniſcience, and ſo an eſtabliſhment of them in the truth of him, as the Meſſiah; ſee the note on *Matt*. xxiv. 25.

Ver. 24. *But in thoſe days after that tribulation*, &c.] That is, after the deſtruction of the city and temple of *Jeruſalem*, and the miſeries and calamities attending it, in the times immediately following it; ſee *Matt*. xxiv. 29. *the ſun ſhall be darkened*: ſo the *ſhekinah*, or glory of the divine majeſty was withdrawn, and all the ſymbols of the divine preſence were gone, when the temple was deſtroyed: *and the moon ſhall not give her light*; the ceremonial law, which tho' aboliſhed by the death of Chriſt, was obſerved by the *Jews* as long as the temple ſtood; but now ceaſed, particularly that principal branch of it, the daily ſacrifice; ſee the note on *Matt*. xxiv. 29.

Ver. 25. *And the ſtars of heaven ſhall fall*, &c.] The *Jewiſh* Rabbins and Doctors, who fell off from the written word, and compiled their *Miſna*, or oral law, their book of traditions, and ſet it up above the bible, the foundation of which was laid immediately upon their diſperſion. *And the powers that are in heaven ſhall be ſhaken*; the ordinances of the legal diſpenſation, which were ſhaken before, but now ſo ſhaken as to be removed; compare *Hagg*. ii. 6. with *Heb*. xii. 26, 27. ſee the note on *Matt*. xxiv. 29.

Ver. 26. *And then ſhall they ſee the Son of man*, &c.] Not in perſon, but in the power of his wrath and vengeance; of which the *Jews* then had a convincing evidence, and full proof; and even of his being come in the fleſh, as if they had ſeen him in perſon: this ſhows, that the ſign of the Son of man, in *Matt*. xxiv. 30. is the ſame with the Son of man: *coming in the clouds with great power and glory*; not to judgment, but having taken vengeance on the *Jewiſh* nation, to ſet up his kingdom and glory in the *Gentile* world; ſee the note on *Matt*. xxiv. 30.

Ver. 27. *And then he ſhall ſend his angels*, &c.] The miniſters of the Goſpel to preach it, and plant more churches among the *Gentiles*, ſince that at *Jeruſalem* was entirely broken up: *and ſhall gather together his elect*; that is, he the Son of man, or Chriſt, ſhall gather them by the miniſtry of his ſervants; or *they ſhall gather* them, as the *Ethiopic* verſion reads; and as *Beza* ſays it is read in a certain copy: theſe miniſters ſhall be the means of gathering ſuch whom God has choſen from all eternity, to obtain ſalvation by Chriſt, out of the world, and unto Chriſt, and into a Goſpel church-ſtate: even *from the uttermoſt part of the earth, to the uttermoſt part of the heaven*; be they where they will, on earth, and under the whole heavens; ſee the note on *Matt*. xxiv. 31.

Ver. 28. *Now learn a parable of the fig-tree*, &c.] Our Lord was now upon the mount of *Olives*, in one part of which fig-trees grew in great plenty, and one, or more, might be near, and in view; and it was the time of year, the paſſover being at hand, for its putting forth: *when her branch is yet tender*; and ſoft and opening, thro' the ſap now in motion: *and putteth forth leaves*; from the branches: *ye know that ſummer is near*; from ſuch an appearance on the fig-tree; ſee the note on *Matt*. xxiv. 32.

Ver. 29. *So ye in like manner*, &c.] This is an accommodation of the parable to the preſent caſe: *when ye ſhall ſee theſe things come to paſs*; the ſigns preceding the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, and eſpecially the abomination of deſolation, or the *Roman* army ſurrounding it: *know that it*, or *he*, *is nigh, even at the doors*; either that the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem* is near; or that the ſon of man is juſt ready to come to take vengeance on it; or, as *Luke* ſays, ch. xxi. 31. the kingdom of God is nigh at hand; or a more glorious diſplay of the kingly power of Chriſt, in the deſtruction of his enemies, and a greater ſpread of his Goſpel in the *Gentile* world; ſee the note on *Matt*. xxiv. 33.

Ver. 30. *Verily I ſay unto you, that this generation ſhall not paſs*, &c.] Not the generation of men in general, or *Jews* in particular, nor of Chriſtians; but that preſent generation of men, they ſhould not all go off the ſtage of life, *till all theſe things be done*; which were now predicted by Chriſt, concerning the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, the ſigns of it, and what ſhould immediately follow upon it; ſee the note on *Matt*. xxiv. 34.

Ver. 31. *Heaven and earth ſhall paſs away*, &c.] Which may be underſtood either affirmatively, as what will be at the ſecond coming of Chriſt; or comparatively, rather than any thing ſaid by Chriſt ſhould; and ſo ſhows the certainty and irreverſibleneſs of his predictions, as it follows: *but my words ſhall not paſs away*; which is true of all the words of Chriſt he ever ſpake, and here particularly relates to thoſe he had juſt delivered, concerning the calamities that ſhould come upon the *Jewiſh* nation; ſee the note on *Matt*. xxiv. 35.

Ver. 32. *But of that day, and of* that *hour*, &c.] Of *Jeruſalem*'s deſtruction; for of nothing elſe had Chriſt been ſpeaking; and, it's plain, the words are anaphorical, and relate to what goes before: *knoweth no man*; nay, they that lived to ſee it, and have ſpoken of it, are not agreed about the particular day, when it was; much leſs did they know it before hand, or could ſpeak of it, and make it known to others: *no, not the angels which are in heaven*; who are acquainted with many of the divine ſecrets, and have been employed in the imparting them to others, and in the executing divine purpoſes: *neither the Son*; Chriſt, as the Son of man; tho' he did know it as the Son of God, who knows all things, and ſo this; but as the Son of man, and from his human nature he had no knowledge of any thing future: what knowledge he had of future things in his humanity, he had from his deity; nor, as man, had he any commiſſion to make known, nor did he make known the day of God's vengeance on the *Jews*: *but the Father*; who has the times and ſeaſons in his own power, for the executing of any particular judgment on a nation, or the general one; ſee the note on *Matt*. xxiv. 36.

Ver. 33. *Take ye heed, watch and pray*, &c.] This ſeems to be the principal reaſon why the day and hour of *Jeruſalem*'s deſtruction, tho' known by the Father, were not made known to any man, neither to the angels, nor by them; nor to the Son of man in the days of his fleſh, nor by him when on earth; that his people might be upon their guard, againſt falſe Chriſts, and prophets, and their deception; and watch unto prayer, and in it, leſt they fell into temptation, and that day ſhould come upon them unawares: *for ye know not when the time is*; the exact and preciſe time: for tho' the people of God had notice of it, and were ſenſible it was at hand, and did make their eſcape out of *Jeruſalem*; yet they knew not the exact time, but that it might be ſooner or later; and the unbelieving *Jews* were blinded, and in the dark about it to the very laſt; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 42.

Ver. 34. For the Son of man is *as a man taking a far journey*, &c.] Or this caſe of the Son of man's coming to take vengeance on the *Jewiſh* nation, is like a man that takes a journey into a far country. This puts me in mind of a queſtion aſked[m] by the *Jews*; "what is דרך רחוקה, *a far journey?* from *Modiim*, and without." Now *Modiim*, according to the *Gemara*[n], and commentators[o] on this paſſage, was a place fifteen miles from *Jeruſalem*; ſo that, according to them, fifteen miles were reckoned a far journey[p]. *Who left his houſe*; and his goods in it, to the care and management of others during his abſence: *and gave authority to his ſervants*; to govern his houſe, and exerciſe power one over another, according to their different ſtations: *and to every man his work*; which he was to do, while he was gone, and to give him an account of when he returned: *and commanded the porter to watch*; his houſe, and take care that it was not broke open by thieves, and plundered of the ſubſtance that was in it. So Chriſt, when he aſcended on high, went to heaven, the land afar off; left his houſe, his church, particularly in *Judæa*, and at *Jeruſalem*, to the care of his apoſtles, and gave authority to govern it, according to the laws, rules, and directions preſcribed by him; and aſſigned every man his particular work, for which he gave him proper gifts and abilities; and ordered the porter to be on his watch, not *Peter* only, but all the apoſtles and miniſters, whoſe buſineſs it is to watch over themſelves, and the ſouls of men committed to their care.

Ver. 35. *Watch ye therefore*, &c.] Againſt falſe Chriſts, and falſe prophets, over yourſelves, and the whole church; for the words are particularly addreſſed to the diſciples of Chriſt: *for ye know not when the maſter of the houſe cometh*; when Chriſt, of whom the whole family in heaven, and in earth, is named, who is a Son in his own houſe, is an high-prieſt over the houſe of God, and Lord of his church and people, whom he has bought with his blood, and provides for with his grace, and by his Spirit, when he will come to break up houſekeeping with the *Jews*, and bring his wrath upon them to the uttermoſt: whether *at even, or at midnight, or at the cock crowing, or in the morning*. This is agreeable to the diviſion of the night among the *Jews*, who ſpeak of the firſt watch, the middle of the night, the cock crowing, and morning, as diſtinct from each other. The three firſt of theſe we have in one paſſage[q]: "every day they remove the aſhes from the altar, בקריאת הגבר, *at cock crowing*, or near it, either before, or after it; and on the day of atonement, מחצות, *at midnight*; and on the feaſt days, *at the firſt watch*;" the ſame with the evening here: and elſewhere the morning and cock crowing are diſtinguiſhed[r]; "for a faſt of the congregation, how long may a man eat and drink? until the pillar of the morning aſcends, (or until it is morning) the words of *R. Eliezer ben Jacob*; *R. Simeon* ſays, until cock crowing." And ſo the phraſe, from cock crowing till morning, is uſed by them[s]. The *Romans* alſo divided the night in like manner, into evening, the dead of the night, or midnight, cock crowing, and the morning[t]. The alluſion ſeems to be to the time of the preſident of the temple's coming into it, who had the management of the affairs of it, and of appointing to each prieſt his work: 'tis ſaid[u], "whoever would remove the aſhes from the altar, roſe up early, and waſhed himſelf before the preſident came; but in what hour does the preſident come? not at all times alike: ſometimes he comes, מקריאת הגבר, *at cock crowing*, or near it, before it, or after it; and the preſident comes and knocks for them, and they open to him; and he ſays unto them, whoſoever has waſhed himſelf, let him come and caſt lots: they caſt lots, and he is worthy whom he counts worthy." Such who underſtand theſe words of Chriſt's coming by death, or at judgment, apply theſe ſeaſons to the ſeveral ages of men, as childhood, youth, manhood, and old age.

Ver. 36. *Leſt coming ſuddenly*, &c.] Unthought of, and unexpected, at an unawares: *he find you ſleeping*; inactive in the exerciſe of grace, and negligent in the performance of duty; unprepared for his coming, and unfit for ſervice.

Ver. 37. *And what I ſay unto you*, &c.] The four diſciples, *Peter*, *James*, *John*, and *Andrew*, who came privately to him, and put to him the queſtions, which occaſioned this long diſcourſe; ſee ver. 3, 4. *I ſay unto all*. The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read, *you all*; meaning all the reſt of his apoſtles, and all his diſciples and followers in *Jeruſalem*, and in all *Judæa*; who were all concerned in theſe things, and whom it became to *watch*, and be upon their guard, and caſt off all ſloth and negligence; ſince they knew not how ſoon the Son of man would come, and all theſe evil things would be brought upon the *Jewiſh* nation, city, and temple: and the ſame exhortation is ſuitable to ſaints in all ages, times, and places, on account of the various ſnares, temptations, and evils, that they are liable to, the ſuddenneſs of death, and the uncertainty of the ſecond coming of Chriſt.

# CHAP. XIV.

Ver. 1. *AFTER two days was* the feaſt of *the paſſover*, &c.] That is, two days after Chriſt had delivered the foregoing diſcourſe concerning the deſtruction of the temple at *Jeruſalem*, was the feaſt of the *paſſover*; which was kept in commemoration of God's paſſing over the houſes of the *Iſraelites*, when he deſtroyed the firſt-born of *Egypt*, and made way for the deliverance of the children of *Iſrael* from thence; and which was kept by eating the paſſover-lamb; and which, properly ſpeaking, is the feaſt of the paſſover: *and of unleavened bread*; which was the ſame feaſt with the other, called ſo from the unleavened bread which was then eaten; tho' with this difference, the paſſover-lamb was only eaten on the firſt night, but unleavened bread was eat for ſeven days together. The *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions render it, *the paſſover of unleavened bread*, leaving out the copulative *and*. *And the chief-prieſts and Scribes ſought how they might take him by craft*; that is, Jeſus, *and put him to death*: for which purpoſe they aſſembled together in *Caiaphas* the high-prieſt's palace, and there took counſel together how to accompliſh it; ſee *Matt.* xxvi. 2, 3, 4.

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[m] Miſn. Peſachim, c. 9. §. 2.

[n] T. Bab. Peſachim, fol. 93. 2.

[o] Maimon. & Bartenora in Miſn. ib.

[p] Maimon. Hilch. Korban Peſach. c. 5. §. 8.

[q] Miſn. Yoma, c. 1. §. 8. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 20. 2. & Zebachim, fol. 86. 2.

[r] T. Bab. Peſachim, fol. 2. 2. & Taanith, fol. 12. 1.

[s] T. Bab. Zebachim, fol. 20. 2.

[t] Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 4. c. 20.

[u] Miſn. Tamid. c. 1, §. 2.

Ver. 2. *But they ſaid not on the feaſt* day, *&c.*] The feaſt of the paſſover, and of unleavened bread, which was nigh at hand, and would be two days hence, when there would be a great concourſe of people from all parts to keep it; and therefore they did not chuſe to ſeize him, and put him to death at that time, *leſt there ſhould be an uproar of the people*; or among them, leſt they ſhould riſe in his favour, and reſcue him out of their hands; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 5.

Ver. 3. *And being in Bethany*, &c.] A place about two miles from *Jeruſalem*, whither he retired after he had took his leave of the temple, and had predicted its deſtruction; a place he often went to, and from, the laſt week of his life; having ſome dear friends, and familiar acquaintance there, as *Lazarus*, and his two ſiſters, *Martha* and *Mary*, and the perſon next mentioned: *in the houſe of Simon the leper*; ſo called becauſe he had been one, and to diſtinguiſh him from *Simon* the *Phariſee*, and *Simon Peter* the apoſtle, and others; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 6. *as he ſat at meat there came a woman*; generally thought to be *Mary Magdalene*, or *Mary* the ſiſter of *Lazarus*: *having an alabaſter box of ointment of ſpikenard*; or *pure nard*, unmixed and genuine; or *liquid nard*, which was drinkable, and ſo eaſy to be poured out; or *piſtic nard*, called ſo, either from *Piſta*, the name of a place from whence it was brought, or from *Piſtaca*, which, with the *Rabbins*, ſignifies *maſte*; of which, among other things, this ointment was made. Moreover, ointment of nard was made both of the leaves of nard, and called foliate nard, and of the ſpikes of it, and called, as here, ſpikenard. Now ointment made of nard was, as *Pliny* ſays [w], the principal among ointments. The *Syriac* is, by him, ſaid to be the beſt; this here is ſaid to be *very precious*, coſtly, and valuable: *and ſhe brake the box*. The *Syriac* and *Ethiopic* verſions render it, *ſhe opened it*; and the *Perſic* verſion, *ſhe opened the head*, or *top of the bottle*, or *vial*: *and poured it on his head*; on the head of Chriſt, as the ſame verſion expreſſes it; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 7.

Ver. 4. *And there were ſome that had indignation within themſelves*, &c.] The *Syriac* verſion reads, *ſome of the diſciples*; agreeable to *Matt.* xxvi. 8. particularly *Judas*, and others might be incenſed by his means: *and ſaid, why was this waſte of the ointment made?* ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 8.

Ver. 5. *For it might have been ſold for more than three hundred pence*, &c.] Which was to the value of our money nine pounds, ſeven ſhillings, and ſixpence: *and given to the poor*; which was thought to be a better way of expending it, than by pouring it on the head of Chriſt: *and they murmured againſt her*; that ſhe ſhould laviſh ſo much money away in ſuch an imprudent manner; they reproved her for it, expreſſed much reſentment at it, and were very angry with her upon the account of it; ſee the notes on *Matt.* xxvi. 8, 9.

Ver. 6. *And Jeſus ſaid, let her alone*, &c.] Jeſus knowing the ſecret indignation of ſome of his diſciples, and their private murmurings at the woman, and their continual teizings of her, becauſe of the expence of the ointment, ſaid *to them*, as the *Arabic* and *Ethiopic* verſions read; or *to the diſciples*, as the *Perſic*, let the woman alone, ceaſe to chide and reprove her for what ſhe has done; *why trouble ye her?* why do you grieve her, by charging her with imprudence and extravagance, as if ſhe had been guilty of a very great crime? ſhe is ſo far from it, that *ſhe hath wrought a good work on me*; ſhe has done me an honour; expreſſed faith in me, and ſhewn love to me, and ought to be commended, and not reproved; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 10.

Ver. 7. *For ye have the poor with you always*, &c.] See the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 11. *and whenſoever ye will ye may do them good*; by feeding them when hungry, cloathing them when naked, and ſupplying them with the neceſſaries of life: *but me ye have not always*; meaning, with reſpect to his bodily preſence, which, in a ſhort time, would be removed from them, and they would have no opportunity of ſhewing him any ſuch outward reſpect perſonally; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 11.

Ver. 8. *She hath done what ſhe could*, &c.] What ſhe had in her heart, and in the power of her hands to do; ſhe hath done according to her ability, and her good-will; and if ſhe had not done it now, ſhe could not have done it at all. *She is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying*; or, *as if it was to bury me*, as the *Syriac* verſion renders it. Chriſt ſignifies by this, that he ſhould ſhortly die, and that this woman came before-hand to anoint him, and, as it were, to perform the funeral rites before he was dead; it being revealed to her by the Spirit, that Jeſus would quickly die, and ſhe ſhould not be able to perform this good work when dead, and therefore came to do it before; or, at leaſt, ſhe was directed by the Spirit of God, becauſe ſhe would be prevented doing it afterwards; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 12.

Ver. 9. *Verily I ſay unto you*, &c.] And you may aſſure yourſelves of the truth of it: *whereſoever this Goſpel*, of the death and reſurrection of Chriſt, *ſhall be preached throughout the whole world*, as it ſhall be, this *alſo that ſhe hath done ſhall be ſpoken of for a memorial of her*; in remembrance of her, and her work, and in commendation of her faith, love, and duty; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 13.

Ver. 10. *And Judas Iſcariot, one of the twelve*, &c.] Apoſtles of Chriſt; who was the principal perſon that had indignation at the woman, and murmured againſt her, for the profuſion of the ointment: *went unto the chief-prieſts*; as ſoon as this affair was over, and Chriſt had defended the woman's conduct to his ſhame and ſilence: he immediately went out of the houſe, where they were, and ſet out from *Bethany* to *Jeruſalem*; and underſtanding the chief-prieſts were in conſultation together at *Caiaphas*'s houſe, how to apprehend Jeſus, and put him to death, went directly to them, unſent for, and unthought of by them: *to betray him unto them*; which ſatan had put into his heart, and what his avarice and revenge for the late action of the woman, and Chriſt's defence of it, prompted him to; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 14.

Ver. 11. *And when they heard it, they were glad*, &c.] That ſuch an opportunity offered, and from ſuch a quarter, by one of his own diſciples; ſo that it might be done more ſecretly and effectually, and with leſs blame to themſelves: *and promiſed to give him money*; any ſum he ſhould aſk; and what was agreed upon were thirty pieces, or ſhekels of ſilver; and ſo the *Ethiopic* verſion here, inſtead of *money*, reads, *thirty pieces of ſilver*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 15. *And he ſought how he might conveniently betray him*; after this promiſe, and upon this agreement: henceforward he ſought the moſt fitting opportunity, and the beſt ſeaſon of betraying his maſter into the hands of theſe men, when he was alone, and the multitude abſent, and there was no danger of a tumult, or a reſcue; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 16.

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[w] Nat. Hiſt. l. 12. c. 12.

Ver. 12. *And the firſt day of unleavened bread,* &c.] Being come, which was the fourteenth of *Niſan*: *when they killed the paſſover*; that is, *the Jews*, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions ſupply; for any *Iſraelite*, that was not a prieſt, might ſlay it: their canon runs thus [x]; "an *Iſraelite* kills (the paſſover) and a prieſt receives (the blood) and gives it to his neighbour, and his neighbour to his neighbour, and he receives (the baſon) full, and returns it empty; the prieſt that is near to the altar ſprinkles it, at one ſprinkling, over-againſt the bottom of it." Upon which the commentators [y] obſerve, that the ſlaying of the paſſover by ſtrangers; that is, ſuch as are not prieſts, is lawful. And ſo *Philo* the *Jew*, ſpeaking of the paſſover, ſays [z]; "at which time the common people do not bring their ſacrifices to the altar, and the prieſts ſlay; but by the command of the law, συμπαν το εθνος, *the whole nation*, does the work of a prieſt; every one particularly bringing the ſacrifices for himſelf, and then ſlaying them with his own hands." But then it was always killed in the court of the temple, and after the middle of the day; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 17. *his diſciples ſaid unto him, where wilt thou that we go and prepare, that thou mayſt eat the paſſover*; for it was now *Thurſday* morning, and the paſſover was to be ſlain after the middle of the day, between the two evenings, and eat in *Jeruſalem* at night; and they were now at *Bethany*, near two miles from the city; and it was uſual for ſervants to get ready the paſſover for their maſters; ſee the note, as above.

Ver. 13. *And he ſendeth forth two of his diſciples,* &c.] *Peter* and *John*, as appears from *Luke* xxii. 8. *and ſaith unto them, go ye into the city*; the city of *Jeruſalem*; for there only the paſſover might be eaten, *Deut.* xxvi. 2. *and there ſhall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water*; a ſervant of the maſter of the houſe that was ſent for water, to mix with the wine, at the paſſover: *follow him*; into the houſe to which he goes.

Ver. 14. *And whereſoever he ſhall go in,* &c.] Into whatſoever houſe he ſhall enter, go in after him: *and ſay ye to the good man of the houſe*; the owner, and maſter of it, who might be *Nicodemus*, or *Joſeph* of *Arimathea*, or ſome man of note and wealth in *Jeruſalem*, that might have ſome knowledge of Chriſt, and faith in him, tho' he did not openly profeſs him; ſince by only ſaying what follows, he would at once, as he did, direct them to a ſuitable and convenient room; *the maſter ſaith*. The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read, *our maſter ſaith*: he that is yours, and ours, our maſter Jeſus; tho' that is not expreſſed, yet it was underſtood by the maſter of the family; which confirms the above conjecture, that he was a ſecret diſciple of Chriſt. *Where is the gueſt-chamber*; the chamber provided for gueſts that might be expected at the paſſover: *where I ſhall eat the paſſover with my diſciples?* where it might be done conveniently, and in a proper and comfortable manner; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 18.

Ver. 15. *And he will ſhew you a large upper room,* &c.] A room in the higheſt part of the houſe, large enough for ſuch a company, for thirteen perſons, which was the number of Chriſt and his diſciples: *furniſhed and prepared*; with a table, and a ſufficient number of couches to ſit, or lie upon, and with all proper veſſels neceſſary on ſuch an occaſion: *there make ready for us*; the paſſover.

Ver. 16. *And his diſciples went forth,* &c.] The *two diſciples*, as the *Arabic* verſion has it, *Peter* and *John*, ſet out from *Bethany* to *Jeruſalem* directly: *and came into the city*; the city of *Jeruſalem*: *and found as he had ſaid unto them*; a man bearing a pitcher of water, whom they followed to the houſe he went into, and addreſſed the maſter of the houſe, as Jeſus had bid them; when he ſhewed them an upper room, very commodious and fit for the purpoſe, as Chriſt had ſaid; and which is a conſiderable proof of the preſcience of Chriſt: *and they made ready the paſſover*; they bought a lamb; they had it killed in the temple, according to rule; and they brought it to the houſe, where they were to ſup, and got it roaſted; and provided unleavened bread, and wine, and bitter herbs, and every thing that was proper for the feaſt; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 19.

Ver. 17. *And in the evening he cometh with the twelve,* &c.] In the afternoon, as it is very reaſonable to ſuppoſe, Chriſt ſet out from *Bethany* with the reſt of the twelve, with the other nine, and came to *Jeruſalem*; where they were joined by *Judas*, who had covenanted with the chief-prieſts to betray him, and by *Peter* and *John*, who had been ſent before to prepare the paſſover; and when it was night, when the ſecond evening had took place, he went with all twelve of them to the houſe, where the proviſion to eat the paſſover together was made for them; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 20.

Ver. 18. *And as they ſat and did eat,* &c.] Or *as they lay along*; for ſuch was their poſture at the eating of the paſſover; ſee the note as before: *Jeſus ſaid, verily I ſay unto you, one of you which eateth with me ſhall betray me*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 21.

Ver. 19. *And they began to be ſorrowful,* &c.] And were ſo, all but *Judas*, at this ſaying of Chriſt's: *and to ſay unto him, one by one*; even till it came to *Judas* himſelf, *is it I?* that ſhall betray thee; *and another ſaid, is it I?* This clauſe is wanting in the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, and in two of *Beza*'s copies; and indeed ſeems to be redundant, ſince the diſciples are ſaid before to expreſs themſelves in this manner, one by one; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 22.

Ver. 20. *And he anſwered and ſaid unto them,* &c.] In order to relieve their minds, and point out the particular perſon: *it is one of the twelve, that dippeth with me in the diſh*; juſt at that very inſtant; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 23.

Ver. 21. *The Son of man indeed goeth,* &c.] Out of this world by death, *as it is written*; both in the book of God's decrees, and in the ſcriptures of the Old Teſtament: *but wo to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed*; whoſe ſin will not be excuſed, nor leſſened by fulfilling the decrees of God, and by accompliſhing the prophecies of the bible: *good were it for that man if he had never been born*; ſo aggravating will be his crime, ſo dreadful his puniſhment; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 24.

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[x] *Miſn. Peſachim*, c. 5. §. 6.

[y] Jarchi, Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

[z] De vita Moſis, l. 3. p. 686.

Ver. 22. *And as they did eat,* &c.] The paſchal lamb, and the unleavened bread, juſt at the concluſion of that feaſt: *Jeſus took bread, and bleſſed, and brake it*; beginning and inſtituting a new feaſt, to be kept in after-times, in commemoration of his ſufferings and death, now near at hand; *and gave to them,* the diſciples, *and ſaid, take, eat:* the word *eat* is not in the *Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, Perſic,* and *Ethiopic* verſions, and is wanting in ſome copies: *this is my body*; a figure and repreſentation of it; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 26.

Ver. 23. *And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks,* &c.] Over it, and for it, by bleſſing it, and appropriating it to the preſent uſe and ſervice: *he gave it to them*; his diſciples, *and they all drank of it*; *Judas,* as well as the reſt, as he bid them do; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 27.

Ver. 24. *And he ſaid unto them,* &c.] Not after they had drank of it, but before, and as he gave it to them: *this is my blood of the New Teſtament which is ſhed for many*; in *Matthew* 'tis added, *for the remiſſion of ſins*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 28.

Ver. 25. *Verily I ſay unto you,* &c.] This ſeems to have been ſaid after the eating of the paſſover, according to *Luke* xxii. 18. but was, in reality, not till after the Lord's ſupper was ended, and the laſt cup was drank, which was wont to be drank at the paſſover: *I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine*; that is, wine, *until that day that I drink it new*; in a figurative and myſtical ſenſe; by which are meant the joys of heaven: *in the kingdom of God*; Father, Son, and Spirit, upon the general reſurrection of the dead, when the kingdom of the Mediator will be delivered up, and there will be no diſtinction of government; but God, Father, Son, and Spirit will be all in all, and ſhall reign in the ſaints, and they with them, to all eternity; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 29.

Ver. 26. *And when they had ſung an hymn,* &c.] The *Hallell,* uſed at the paſſover: *they went out into the mount of Olives*; Chriſt, and eleven of his diſciples; for *Judas* now ſeparated from them, and went to the chief-prieſts to acquaint them how things were, where Jeſus was going, and where they might apprehend him; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 30.

Ver. 27. *And Jeſus ſaith unto them,* &c.] As they were going to the mount of *Olives.* The *Perſic* verſion reads, *in this place*; meaning the mount of *Olives,* having got thither: *all ye ſhall be offended becauſe of me this night*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 31. *for it is written* in *Zech.* xiii. 7. *I will ſmite the ſhepherd, and the ſheep ſhall be ſcattered:* Chriſt is meant by the ſhepherd, and the apoſtles by the ſheep. The *Syriac* verſion reads, *his ſheep.*

Ver. 28. *But after that I am riſen,* &c.] From the dead, which, for their comfort, he aſſures them of; tho' they would be offended and diſcouraged at the ſeizing, and condemning, and crucifixion of him: *I will go before you into Galilee*; the place of their nativity, and where he had often converſed with them; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 32.

Ver. 29. *But Peter ſaid unto him,* &c.] Being greatly moved at what Chriſt had ſaid, that all of them would be offended with him that night, and run away from him, and be ſcattered from him, and one another: *altho' all ſhall be offended, yet will not I*; tho' all the reſt of the diſciples, the other ten, ſhould do as *Judas* had done, ſhould fall off from Chriſt, and either betray him, or deny him, or, at leaſt, turn their backs on him, yet he would do neither; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 33.

Ver. 30. *And Jeſus ſaith unto him, verily I ſay unto thee,* &c.] As confident as thou art of ſtanding by me, and abiding with me; *that this day,* which was then begun; for the *Jews* reckoned their days from evening, as in *Gen.* i. 5. *even in this night*; this night to be obſerved, this night of the paſſover, before it is paſt: *before the cock crow twice*; for there was a firſt and ſecond cock crowing, the one at midnight, and the other near break of day, and which laſt is properly the cock crowing: the word twice is left out in the *Ethiopic* verſion: *thou ſhalt deny me thrice*; as he did; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 34.

Ver. 31. *But he ſpake the more vehemently,* &c.] With a louder voice; with more ſpirit and eagerneſs; in a more peremptory and ſelf-confident way. *If I ſhould die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wiſe.* The *Syriac* verſion adds, *O my Lord*; my dear Lord, I will never deny thee upon any conſideration whatever; and the *Perſic* verſion, *O Lord*: *likewiſe alſo ſaid they all*; as he ſaid, ſo ſaid *all the diſciples,* as the *Syriac* verſion reads it; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 35.

Ver. 32. *And they came to a place which is named Gethſemane,* &c.] At the foot of the mount of *Olives,* where the olives, which grew in great plenty on the mount, were preſſed; and where our Lord began to be bruiſed for our ſins: *and he ſaith to his diſciples*; to eight of them: *ſit ye here while I ſhall pray*; at ſome diſtance from hence; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 36.

Ver. 33. *And he taketh with him Peter, and James, and John,* &c.] Who were witneſſes of his transfiguration on the mount, and now of his ſorrows in the garden: *and began to be ſore amazed*; to be in great conſternation and aſtoniſhment, at the ſight of all the ſins of his people coming upon him; at the black ſtorm of wrath, that was gathering thick over him; at the ſword of juſtice, which was brandiſhed againſt him; and at the curſes of the righteous law, which, like ſo many thunder-bolts of vengeance, were directed at him: no wonder it ſhould be added, *and to be very heavy*; both with ſin and ſorrow; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 37.

Ver. 34. *And ſaith unto them,* &c.] The above three diſciples; *my ſoul is exceeding ſorrowful unto death:* he was ſurrounded with ſorrow, and it preſſed him ſo hard, and cloſe, on every ſide, that he was juſt ready to die with it: *tarry ye here and watch:* in *Matthew* 'tis added, *with me*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 38.

Ver. 35. *And he went forward a little,* &c.] About a ſtone's caſt, *Luke* xxii. 41. *and fell on the ground, and prayed:* he fell on his face to the ground, which was a praying poſture. One of the *Jewiſh* canons concerning it, is this [a]: “ worſhipping, how is it “ done? after a man has lifted up his head, he “ bows it five times, he ſits upon the ground, and “ *falls upon his face,* ארצה, *to the ground,* and ſupplicates with whatſoever ſupplication he pleaſes: “ worſhipping, or bowing, is the ſtretching out of “ hands and feet, until a man is found caſt upon “ his face to the ground.” See the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 39. The ſupplication Chriſt made in this poſture was, *that if it were poſſible the hour might paſs from him*; the time fixed and agreed upon for his ſufferings and death; that is, that it might paſs without his enduring them, if there was any poſſibility of excuſing him, and of his peoples being ſaved without them; ſee the note, as before.

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[a] Maimon. Hilch. Tephilla, c. 5. §. 13.

Ver. 36. *And he ſaid, Abba, Father,* &c.] In the original text, the former of theſe is a *Syriac* word, and the latter a *Greek* one, explanative of the former, as in *Rom.* viii. 15. and *Gal.* iv. 6. or the repetition is made, to expreſs the vehemency of his affection, and his ſtrong confidence in God, as his Father, amidſt all his diſtreſs, as the *Syriac* verſion renders it, אבא אבי, *Abba, my Father*; or *my Father, my Father*; and ſo the *Ethiopic* verſion: *all things are poſſible unto thee*; ſo *Philo* the *Jew* [b], taking notice of *Iſaac*'s queſtion about the burnt-offering, and *Abraham*'s anſwer to it, repreſents the latter as adding, in confirmation of it, “all things “are poſſible to God, and which are both difficult “and impoſſible to be done by men;” ſuggeſting, that God could eaſily provide a lamb for a ſacrifice: and Chriſt here intimates, that every thing conſiſtent with his perfections, counſels, and covenant, were poſſible to be done by him; and how far what he prays for, was agreeable to theſe, he ſubmits to him, and to his ſovereign will: *take away this cup from me*; *nevertheleſs, not what I will, but what thou wilt*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 39.

Ver. 37. *And he cometh and findeth them ſleeping,* &c.] His three diſciples, *Peter*, *James*, and *John*: *and ſaith unto Peter*; particularly, he having ſo lately aſſerted with ſo much confidence, his love to Chriſt, and cloſe attachment to him: *Simon, ſleepeſt thou?* Chriſt calls him by the name he firſt went by, and not by that which he had given him, *Cephas*, or *Peter*; he not now having that firmneſs and conſtancy, though he boaſted of it, which anſwers to that name: *couldſt thou not watch one hour?* The *Arabic* and *Perſic* verſions add, *with me*; and ſo does the *Complutenſian* edition; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 40.

Ver. 38. *Watch ye and pray, leſt ye enter into temptation,* &c.] Of denying Chriſt, and falling off from him, which would quickly offer to them, when they ſhould ſee him apprehended, bound, and led away. *The Spirit truly is ready.* The *Perſic* verſion renders it, *my mind*; as if the Spirit or Soul of Chriſt was meant; whereas it is either to be underſtood of the evil ſpirit, ſatan, who was diſpoſed to attack them, and eſpecially *Peter*, whom he deſired to have, and ſift as wheat; or elſe the ſpirit of the diſciples, their renewed ſpirit, which was ready and diſpoſed for watching and praying, and willing to abide by Chriſt: *but the fleſh is weak*; they were but fleſh and blood, and ſo not a match of themſelves for ſo powerful an adverſary as ſatan, and therefore had need to watch and pray; or their *body*, as the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions render it, was weak, and ſubject to drowſineſs and ſleep; and eſpecially they were weak and feeble, and very unequal of themſelves for ſpiritual exerciſes, as they had fleſh, or a corrupt nature in them; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 41.

Ver. 39. *And again he went away,* &c.] To the ſame place, or at much ſuch a diſtance from them, as before: *and prayed and ſpake the ſame words*; or *word*, that is, the ſame matter; for λογος here, anſwers to דבר, which ſignifies a thing, or matter, as well as word: Chriſt prayed to the ſame effect, for matter and ſubſtance the ſame as before, though not in the ſame expreſs words, as is clear from *Matt.* xxvi. 39, 42.

Ver. 40. *And when he returned, he found them aſleep again,* &c.] Notwithſtanding the expoſtulation he had uſed with them, the exhortation he had given them, and the danger he had ſuggeſted to them: *for their eyes were heavy*; with ſleep and ſorrow: *neither wiſt they what to anſwer him*; partly through confuſion and ſhame, not knowing how to excuſe themſelves; and partly, through their being ſtupified with ſleep and grief.

Ver. 41. *And he cometh the third time,* &c.] After he had prayed a third time, to the ſame purport as before: *and ſaith unto them, ſleep on now, and take your reſt*; which words are ſpoken ironically: *it is enough*; or *the end is come*, as the *Syriac* and *Arabic* verſions render it, of watching and praying: *the hour is come, behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of ſinners*; both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, by one of his own diſciples; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 45.

Ver. 42. *Riſe up, let us go,* &c.] To meet the enemy and the danger; for there is no eſcaping: *lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand*; *Judas*, that he had hinted at ſupper ſhould betray him, was now about doing it; and was juſt now coming upon him, in order to deliver him into the hands of the *Jews*, and the *Roman* band of ſoldiers; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 46.

Ver. 43. *And immediately while he yet ſpake,* &c.] The above words: *cometh Judas one of the twelve*; apoſtles of Chriſt, and which was an aggravation of his wickedneſs: the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions add, *Iſcariot*; and ſo it is read in one of *Beza*'s copies. The *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *one of the ten*, very wrongly: *and with him a great multitude*; a band of men and officers, with many of the chief-prieſts and captains of the temple, and elders of the people, that mixed themſelves with the croud, to ſee how things would iſſue: *with ſwords and ſtaves*; which they intended to make uſe of, ſhould any reſiſtance be made in apprehending him, or any attempt to reſcue him: *from the chief prieſts, and the Scribes, and the elders*; from the *Jewiſh Sanhedrim*, which conſiſted of theſe; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 47.

Ver. 44. *And he that betrayed him, had given them a token,* &c.] A common ſign, in which they agreed; and ſo this ſame *Greek* word is uſed by the *Jews* [c]: “ſaid *R. Phinehas* in the name of *R.* “*Reuben*, did you ever ſee one man go out of the “north, and another from the ſouth, and meet “each other, except they made, סימנא, *a com-* “*mon ſign* between them.” Such an one the traitor gave his company; *ſaying, whomſoever I ſhall kiſs, the ſame is he*; *Jeſus* of *Nazareth*, who was to be delivered to them: *take him, and lead him away ſafely*; with care and caution, leſt he ſhould get out of their hands, and make his eſcape, as he had ſometimes done: the word *ſafely*, is omitted in the *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions. The *Vulgate Latin* renders it *cautiouſly*, and ſo does the *Syriac* verſion, which joins it to the words, *take him*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 48.

Ver. 45. *And as ſoon as he was come,* &c.] To the place where Jeſus was: *he goeth ſtraightway to him*; alone; as if he had nothing to do with the company behind, and as if he was his friend, and concerned for his ſafety: *and ſaith, Maſter, Maſter*; expreſſing great affection for him, and reſpect to him, by repeating this word. The *Ethiopic* verſion has it but once, and ſo two exemplars of *Beza*'s; and the *Vulgate Latin* reads, *hail, Maſter*, as in *Matt.* xxvi. 49. *and kiſſed him*; ſee the note there.

Ver. 46. *And they laid hands on him, and took him.*] After Chriſt had ſaid to *Judas*, *friend, wherefore art thou come?* as in *Matthew*; and alſo, *Judas*,

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[b] De Abrahamo, p. 374.

[c] Midras Samuel, §. 9. apud Buxtorf. Lex. Rab. p. 1519.

*das, betrayeſt thou the Son of man with a kiſs?* as in *Luke*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 50.

Ver. 47. *And one of them that ſtood by*, &c.] One of the diſciples that ſtood by Jeſus, as *Judas* was betraying him, and the ſoldiers were laying hold on him, *Peter* by name: *drew a ſword, and ſmote a ſervant of the high prieſt, and cut off his ear*; his right ear, the ſervant's name was *Malchus*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 51.

Ver. 48. *And Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto them*, &c.] To the chief prieſts, and captains of the temple, and the elders, that came with the band and officers, as appears from *Luke* xxii. 52. The *Perſic* verſion reads, *to the multitude: are ye come out as againſt a thief, with ſwords and with ſtaves, to take me?* ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 55.

Ver. 49. *I was daily with you in the temple*, &c.] That is, for ſeveral days paſt; ever ſince he made his publick entry into *Jeruſalem*: *teaching*; the people, in a publick manner: *and ye took me not*; did not attempt to lay hands on him, ſeize him, and carry him away; which he ſignifies might have been eaſily done; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 55. *But the ſcriptures muſt be fulfilled*; which ſpoke of the betraying him by *Judas*; and of their taking him in this private and ſecret manner; and of the flight of the diſciples from him, next mentioned; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 56.

Ver. 50. *And they all forſook him and fled.*] That is, his *diſciples*, as the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read; and who ſeem to have tranſcribed it from *Matthew*, and leſt it ſhould be thought, that the multitude whom Chriſt addreſſed, were intended.

Ver. 51. *And there followed him a certain young man*, &c.] Some think this was *John*, the beloved diſciple, and the youngeſt of the diſciples; others, that it was *James*, the brother of our Lord; but he does not ſeem to be any of the diſciples of Chriſt, ſince he is maniſeſtly diſtinguiſhed from them, who all forſook him and fled: ſome have thought, that he was a young man of the houſe, where Chriſt and his diſciples eat their paſſover; who had followed him to the garden, and ſtill followed him, to ſee what would be the iſſue of things: but it ſeems moſt likely, that he was one that lived in an houſe in *Gethſemane*, or in or near the garden; who being awaked out of ſleep with the noiſe of a band of ſoldiers, and others with them, leaped out of bed, and ran out in his ſhirt, and followed after them, to know what was the matter: *having a linen cloth caſt about his naked body*; which was either his ſhirt in which he lay, or one of the ſheets, which he took and wrapped himſelf in, not ſtaying to put on his cloaths: though the word *Sindon*, is uſed both by the *Targumiſts* [d] and *Talmudiſts* [e], for a linen garment; and ſometimes, even for the outer garment, to which the fringes were faſtened [f]; and he might take up this in haſte, and ſlip it on, without putting on any inner garment: the word *body*, is not in the text, and the phraſe επι γυμνȣ, may be rendered, *upon his nakedneſs*; and anſwers to, ערות, in *Gen.* ix. 23. and *Lev.* xx. 11, 17, 19, 20, 21. and the meaning be, he had only a piece of linen wrapped about his middle, to cover his nakedneſs; and in this garb ran out, to ſee what was doing: *and the young men laid hold on him*. The *Roman* ſoldiers, who were commonly ſo called; ſo *David*'s ſoldiers are called *young men*, that were with him, 1 *Sam.* xxi. 4, 5. theſe attempted to lay hold on this young man, taking him to be a diſciple of Chriſt, or one at leaſt affected to him, and did take hold of his linen cloth. The *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions, leave out the words, *the young men*. The deſign of *Mark* in relating this incident, is to ſhew the rage and fury of theſe men; who were for ſparing none that appeared to be, or were thought to be the followers of Chriſt; ſo that the preſervation of the diſciples, was entirely owing to the wonderful power of Chriſt.

Ver. 52. *And he left the linen cloth*, &c.] *In their hands*, ſo the *Perſic* verſion renders it; juſt as *Joſeph* left his garment in the hands of his miſtreſs, *Gen.* xxxix. 12. *and fled from them naked*; to the houſe from whence he came. The *Syriac*, *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, leave out the words *from them*.

Ver. 53. *And they led Jeſus away to the high-prieſt*, &c.] *Caiaphas*, as is added in the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions. This was done, after they had took Jeſus and bound him, and after they had had him to *Annas*, who ſent him bound to *Caiaphas*; ſee *John* xviii. 12, 13, 24. *and with him*, the high-prieſt *Caiaphas*, *were aſſembled all the chief prieſts, and the elders, and the Scribes*; even the whole *Sanhedrim*, who met at *Caiaphas*'s houſe, and were waiting there for Jeſus; whom *Judas* with his band of ſoldiers and others, were gone to ſecure, and bring before them; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 57.

Ver. 54. *And Peter followed him afar off*, &c.] And ſo did another diſciple, perhaps *John*; *John* xviii. 15. who having ſomewhat recovered themſelves from their fright, turned back, and followed Jeſus, and the company that led him away; keeping at ſome diſtance, that they might not be obſerved, and expoſed to danger; and proceeded till they came to *Jeruſalem*, and to the place where the *Sanhedrim* were convened; and the other diſciple went in along with Jeſus; and *Peter* afterwards, by his means, got in: *even into the palace of the high-prieſt*; being let in by her that kept the door, at the motion of the other diſciple: *and he ſat with the ſervants*; as if he was one of them, and had no concern with Jeſus: *and warmed himſelf at the fire*; or *light*, as the *Greek* word ſignifies, and anſwers to the *Hebrew* word, אור, by which both light and fire are expreſſed; of which, take an inſtance or two, in the room of many [g]: "a murderer that ſtrikes his neighbour with a ſtone, or with iron, and plunges him into water, or into האור, *fire*, ſo that he can't get out, and dies, is guilty." Again [h], "a book which, האור, *fire* takes hold upon on one ſide, he puts water on the other; and if it is quenched, it is quenched; if the *fire* takes hold on both ſides, he opens it, and reads in it; and if it is quenched, it is quenched: a cloak which *fire* takes hold upon on one ſide, he puts water on the other ſide; and if it is quenched, it is quenched; if the *fire* takes hold on it on both ſides, he takes it and wraps himſelf in it, and if it is quenched, it is quenched." So we read [i] of אור של גיהנם, *the fire of hell*; and *Ur* of the *Chaldees* has its name from the fire, that was worſhipped there, as a ſymbol of the ſun: and fire was the אור, or *light*, created on the firſt day, *Gen.* i. 3. ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 58.

Ver. 55. *And the chief prieſts and all the council*, &c.] Eſpecially the former, who were of all moſt buſy and active in this matter: *ſought for witneſs againſt*

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[d] Targum in Pſal. civ. 2. & Lam. ii. 20.

[e] T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 41. 1.

[f] Ib. fol. 40. 1.

[g] Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 9. §. 1.

[h] T. Hieroſ. Sabbat, fol. 15. 4. & T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 120. 1. Vid. Miſn. Avoda Zara, c 5. §. 12.

[i] T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 27. 1.

*againſt Jeſus to put him to death*; on which they were determined, right or wrong; in this they went contrary to one of their own canons, which runs thus [k]: "in pecuniary cauſes, they begin either for abſolution, or condemnation; but in capital cauſes, "they begin for abſolution, and do not begin for "condemnation." That is, they begun with ſuch evidences, as tended to acquit a man, and not with ſuch as ſerved to condemn him; whereas this court was only ſeeking for ſuch evidence to begin with, that they might condemn Jeſus to death: *and found none*; that would anſwer their purpoſe; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 59.

Ver. 56. *For many bare falſe witneſs againſt him,* &c.] The word *falſe*, is not expreſſed in the *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions; which only ſignify, that they bore witneſs againſt him, accuſed him of, and laid many things to his charge: *but their witneſs agreed not together*; which ſhewed it to be falſe, and ſo not to be admitted; for witneſſes were to be as one in their teſtimony, or not to be received: the rules concerning them with the *Jews*, are theſe [l]; "the tradition is, for ever let not their teſtimony "be joined together, unleſs they both ſee, כאחד, "*as one*: ſays *R. Joſhua ben Korcha*, even one after "another; and their teſtimony is not ratified in the "council, until they both witneſs *as one*." Tho' this is not ſo much the ſenſe of the paſſage here; it was not the falſhood of their teſtimony, which this council was unconcerned about, or the contradiction that was in it, which does not appear; but their teſtimonies were not, ισαι, *equal*, or anſwerable to the wiſhes of the council; they were not ſufficient to prove a capital crime upon him, in order to put him to death, which was what they wanted: they only reſpected ſome light and trivial matters, and did not amount to a charge of blaſphemy, or ſedition.

Ver. 57. *And there aroſe certain,* &c.] Two falſe witneſſes, as in *Matt.* xxvi. 60. who ſtood up in court; for witneſſes were obliged to ſtand, whilſt they gave in their teſtimony: "ſays *R. Bo*, in the "name of *R. Hona*, witneſſes ought, לעמוד, *to* "*ſtand*, whilſt they bear witneſs; as it is ſaid, "*Deut.* xix. 17. *Both the men ſhall ſtand* [m], &c." *And bare falſe witneſs againſt him, ſaying*; as follows.

Ver. 58. *We heard him ſay,* &c.] In a diſcourſe of his, recorded in *John* ii. 19. *I will deſtroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands*; which was a very falſe teſtimony; for Chriſt did not ſay he would deſtroy any temple at all, only put the *Jews* on doing it; much leſs did he point at, or deſign the temple of *Jeruſalem*, but his own body; nor did he uſe the diſtinction of a temple, made with and without hands; nor did he affirm that he would build another; only ſaid, he would raiſe up in three days, that which they ſhould deſtroy. By this teſtimony theſe witneſſes would ſuggeſt, that Chriſt had a deſign upon their temple to demoliſh it, and that he muſt be a ſorcerer, or a magician, to pretend to build a temple without hands in three days time; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 61.

Ver. 59. *But neither ſo did their witneſs agree together.*] Their witneſs did agree together, for they both witneſſed the ſame thing; but not ſo as to found upon it the charge of a capital crime againſt him; their witneſs was not ſo, ιση, *equal*, was not anſwerable to their deſires, nor ſufficient to convict him of a capital crime, for which they could condemn him to death, as before obſerved on ver. 56.

Ver. 60. *And the high prieſt ſtood up in the midſt,* &c.] Of the *Sanhedrim*, of which he was now preſident: he ſat at the head of them, and *Ab Beth Din*, or the father of the council, at his right hand; and the reſt of the council ſat before him, in a ſemicircular form, as the half of a round corn floor, ſo that the preſident and the father of the council, could ſee them [n]; for they were all before him, he being ſituated in the middle, right againſt them; ſo that when he ſtood up, he might be ſaid to ſtand in the midſt of them: *and aſked Jeſus, ſaying, anſwereſt thou nothing?* For he had made no reply to the ſeveral witneſſes, that came againſt him: *what is it which theſe witneſs againſt thee?* Is it true, or falſe? ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 62.

Ver. 61. *But he held his peace, and anſwered nothing,* &c.] Knowing it would be to no purpoſe, and ſignifying hereby, that the things alledged againſt him, were unworthy of an anſwer: *again the high-prieſt aſked him, and ſaid unto him, art thou the Chriſt, the Son of the Bleſſed?* The *Vulgate Latin* adds, *God*: in *Matthew* it is *God* only. This is one of the names and epithets of God, with the *Jews*; nothing is more common in their writings, than this abbreviature, הקבה; which is, הקדוש ברוך הוא, *the holy bleſſed he*; who is bleſſed in himſelf, and the fountain of all bleſſedneſs to his creatures, and who is bleſſed and praiſed by angels and ſaints; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 63.

Ver. 62. *And Jeſus ſaid, I am,* &c.] That is, the Son of God; in proof of which he adds, *and ye ſhall ſee the Son of man ſitting on the right-hand of power*; that is, of God, who is all power, the Lord God almighty: *and coming in the clouds of heaven*; either at the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, or at the laſt day, referring to the prophecy in *Dan.* vii. 13. ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 64.

Ver. 63. *Then the high prieſt rent his cloaths,* &c.] As was uſual upon hearing blaſphemy; which he now ſuppoſed the caſe, or at leaſt would have it ſo thought: *and ſaith, what need we any further witneſſes?* or trouble ourſelves to ſee for any more, or to hear and take the depoſitions of any others; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 65.

Ver. 64. *Ye have heard the blaſphemy,* &c.] The *manifeſt* blaſphemy, as the *Arabic* verſion renders it; and *out of his own mouth*, as the *Syriac* verſion adds, agreeable to *Luke* xxii. 71. *what think ye?* what ſentence is to be paſſed upon him? *And they all condemned him to be guilty of death*; excepting *Joſeph* of *Arimathea*, *Luke* xxiii. 51. ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 66.

Ver. 65. *And ſome began to ſpit on him,* &c.] The men that held him, *Luke* xxii. 63. fulfilling the prophecy in *Iſa.* l. 6. *and to cover his face*; with a vail, or linen cloth, to blindfold him, as a perſon unworthy to behold the light; or rather, in order to make ſport with him: *and to buffet him*; with their double fiſts; *and to ſay unto him, propheſy*. The *Arabic* verſion adds, *unto us, O Chriſt, who it is that hath buffeted thee now*; that gave thee the laſt blow? and to the ſame purpoſe the *Ethiopic*. The *Perſic* verſion adds, *and deliver thyſelf: and the ſervants did ſtrike him with the palms of their hands*. The *Syriac* verſion renders it, *on his cheeks*: they gave him ſlaps on the face. Theſe were the officers of the high-prieſt's, that uſed him in this indecent

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[k] Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 4. §. 1.

[l] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 30. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Eduth, c. 4. §. 1.

[m] T. Hieroſ. Sanhedrin, fol. 21. 3. & Yoma, fol. 43. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 21. §. 3.

[n] Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 4. §. 3. Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 1. §. 3.

cent manner. This clauſe is omitted in the *Ethiopic* verſion.

Ver. 66. *And as Peter was beneath in the palace,* &c.] Not at the lower and further end of the room, but in the lower part of it; that part in which Jeſus and the *Sanhedrim* were, being upon an advanced ground, with ſteps aſcending to it: *there cometh one of the maids of the high-prieſt*; the ſame that kept the door, and let him in. The *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *a daughter of the high-prieſt.*

Ver. 67. *And when ſhe ſaw Peter warming himſelf,* &c.] At the fire, which was in the midſt of the hall: *ſhe looked upon him*; very earneſtly, knowing him to be the ſame, ſhe had let in at the motion of one, that was known in the high-prieſt's family; and ſuſpecting him, by being a ſtranger, and by his looks: *and ſaid, and thou alſo waſt with Jeſus of Nazareth*; that is, one of his diſciples; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 69.

Ver. 68. *But he denied,* &c.] That he was with Jeſus, or a diſciple of his: *I know not*; *Jeſus of Nazareth: neither underſtand I what thou ſayeſt*; about him, and of being with him: the laſt phraſe, *neither underſtand I,* is omitted in the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions: *and he went out into the porch*; adjoining to the palace, to conſider what to do, being ſurprized and confounded at ſuch a challenge: *and the cock crew*; the firſt time, being about midnight; and yet he took no notice of it, nor remembered what Chriſt had but a few hours before ſaid to him; or if he did, he might hope he ſhould not meet with another attack, or he ſhould have more courage and ſtrength than to deny a ſecond time.

Ver. 69. *And a maid ſaw him again,* &c.] Either the ſame maid, ſo the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read, *that maid*; that ſelf-ſame maid, as before, or another, as in *Matt.* xxvi. 71. and ſo the *Arabic* verſion reads it here; but the *Ethiopic* as before, *a daughter*; that is, of the high-prieſt: *and began to ſay to them that ſtood by*; the fire, along with *Peter*, warming themſelves: *this is one of them*; this man is one of the diſciples and followers of *Jeſus* of *Nazareth*; he is of that ſect, he certainly belongs to them, and is come here only as a ſpie.

Ver. 70. *And he denied it again,* &c.] That he was one of the diſciples of Jeſus: *and a little after*; about an hour after, *Luke* xxii. 59. *they that ſtood by, ſaid again to Peter, ſurely thou art one of them*: one confidently affirmed that he was with Jeſus, and another challenged him with ſeeing him in the garden with him, *Luke* xxii. 59. *John* xviii. 26. and in general they were of opinion, that he muſt be one of that ſect, giving this as a reaſon, *for thou art a Galilean*: as they ſuppoſed Jeſus to be; and knowing that in *Galilee* he had chiefly preached, and wrought his miracles, and had there a large number of followers: *and thy ſpeech agreeth* thereto; he uſed words and phraſes peculiar to the *Galileans*, and pronounced as they did; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 73. This clauſe is omitted in the *Vulgate Latin*, and is wanting in *Beza*'s moſt ancient copy; but is in the other copies, and in all the *Eaſtern* verſions.

Ver. 71. *But he began to curſe and to ſwear,* &c.] To wiſh the moſt dreadful things upon himſelf, and to ſwear by the living God; ſaying, *I know not this man of whom ye ſpeak*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 74.

Ver. 72. *And the ſecond time the cock crew,* &c.] *Immediately*, as ſoon as he had ſo ſaid and ſwore, as the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read, and as it is read in one of *Beza*'s copies; which was about three of the clock in the morning, and is what is properly called the cock-crowing: *and Peter called to mind*; upon hearing the cock crow a ſecond time, *the word that Jeſus ſaid unto him, before the cock crow twice, thou ſhalt deny me thrice*: as he now had done twice, to the maid, or maids, and a third time to the ſervants that ſtood by the fire along with him: *and when he thought thereon*; on the words of Chriſt, and on his ſin in denying him, and on the aggravated circumſtances of it. The *Arabic* verſion renders it, *he turned himſelf to weep*: he turned away from the company, he threw himſelf out of it, and got out of doors as faſt as he could, and broke out into a violent fit of weeping. The *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Vulgate Latin* verſions, render it, *he began to weep*; this phraſe is omitted in the *Ethiopic* verſion: ſome chuſe to render it, *he looked upon him*; that is, on Chriſt: as Chriſt looked upon him; which produced true evangelical repentance in him, ſo *Peter* looked upon his dear Lord with concern, whom he had ſo ſhamefully denied; he looked upon him and mourned, he looked upon him with an eye of faith, and ſorrowed for his ſin after a godly ſort: but the true ſenſe of the word is, *he covered himſelf*; he caſt his garment over his head, he veiled himſelf as mourners did, who covered their heads, and their faces, and even their lips. So *Maimonides*[o]; "from "whence, ſays he, is uncovering the head, forbidden a mourner? For, lo! it is ſaid to *Ezekiel*, ch. xxiv. 17. *cover not* thy *lips* at all, for "the reſt of mourners are obliged to the covering "of the head; the linen cloth, or vail, with which "he covers his head, he covers with a part of it, "a little over his mouth; as it is ſaid, *Lev.* xiii. "45. *He ſhall put a covering upon his upper lip*: "and *Onkelos* paraphraſes it, יתעטף כאבלא, *as a "mourner he ſhall cover himſelf.*" And ſo it is ſaid of *Haman*[p], "that he went to his houſe, and mourned "for his daughter, ומתעטף על רישיה כאבלא, "*and put a covering on his head as a mourner*; for "his daughter, and for his reproach." And this it ſeems, was the cuſtom of the *Iſhmaelites*: hence that ſaying[q], "all veiling (in mourning) which is "not as the veiling of the *Iſhmaelites* (who cover "all the face) is no veiling." And thus *Peter*, through ſhame, and as a token of ſorrow and mourning for his ſin, threw his garment over him: and *he wept*; as *Matthew* ſays, *bitterly*; being fully convinced of his ſin, and heartily ſorry for it; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 75.

## CHAP. XV.

Ver. 1. AND *ſtraightway in the morning,* &c.] As ſoon as it was break of day, or day-light appeared: *the chief prieſts held a conſultation with the elders and Scribes*; who were the principal men in the *Sanhedrim*: *and the whole council*; which, on this extraordinary occaſion, was convened; the reſult of which was, to bind Jeſus, and deliver him up to the *Roman* governor, to be put to death by him, as a ſeditious perſon, and an enemy to *Cæſar*, and accordingly they did ſo: *and bound Jeſus,*

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[o] Hilch. Ebel, c. 5. §. 19.

[p] Targum in Eſther vi. 12. Vid. Targum in Mic. iii. 7.

[q] T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 24. 1.

*Jeſus, and carried him away, and delivered him to Pilate.* The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions add, *the governor*; ſee the notes on *Matt.* xxvii. 1, 2.

Ver. 2. *And Pilate aſked him, art thou the king of the Jews?* &c.] Which either he had heard before that it was ſaid by him, and his followers; or was what the *Jews* now ſuggeſted to him as his crime, for which they deſired ſentence of death might paſs upon him: *and he anſwering, ſaid unto him, thou ſayeſt it*; which is all one as if he had ſaid I am; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 25. for ſo he was in a ſenſe, in which he explained himſelf to *Pilate*'s ſatisfaction, *John* xviii. 36, 37. ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 11.

Ver. 3. *And the chief-prieſts accuſed him of many things,* &c.]. As that he was a magician, and a blaſphemer, and gave out that he was the Son of God; and that he made himſelf a king, and even forbad the people to give tribute to *Cæſar*, and moved diſcord, ſedition, and rebellion throughout the land; *but he anſwered nothing*. This clauſe is wanting in the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions; but is in the *Greek* text of the *Complutenſian* edition, and in the *Ethiopic* verſion, and agrees with *Matt.* xxvii. 12. ſee the note there.

Ver. 4. *And Pilate aſked him again,* &c.] In the preſence of the chief-prieſts, who laid ſo many things to his charge; for the former queſtion was put, when Jeſus and he were alone in the judgment-hall, whither the *Jews* would not enter for fear of being defiled; ſee *John* xviii. 28, 33. *ſaying, anſwereſt thou nothing? behold how many things they witneſs againſt thee!* the charges were many, and very heinous, and which *Pilate* thought called for ſelf-defence; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 13.

Ver. 5. *But Jeſus yet anſwered nothing,* &c.] He ſtill continued ſilent, and made no defence for himſelf, which the governor was willing to give him an opportunity to make, and, as his friend, urged him to it: *ſo that Pilate marvelled*; what ſhould be the meaning of his ſilence, when he was ſo capable of defending himſelf, and was ſo innocent, as *Pilate* himſelf was ready to believe; and yet the things he was charged with were of the higheſt nature, and by perſons of the greateſt figure in the nation; ſo that his ſilence expoſed him to a great deal of danger, which *Pilate* thought might eaſily be avoided by anſwering for himſelf; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 14.

Ver. 6. *Now at that feaſt,* &c.] The feaſt of the paſſover, which was at that inſtant; ſee *John* xviii. 39. The *Syriac*, *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read, *at every feaſt*; as if the following cuſtom was uſed at every feaſt in the year, at the feaſts of *Pentecoſt* and *Tabernacles*, as well as at the paſſover; whereas it was only at the latter: *he releaſed unto them the priſoner whomſoever they deſired*; of this cuſtom ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 15.

Ver. 7. *And there was one named Barabbas,* &c.] A priſoner of that name at *Jeruſalem*; *which lay bound with them that had made inſurrection with him*: he had been at the head of a ſeditious mob, and he, and his accomplices were taken and put in priſon: *who had committed murder in the inſurrection*; which may be connected either with *Barabbas*, and read in the ſingular number, as it is in the *Vulgate Latin* verſion, *he had committed*; or with the ſeditious perſons he lay bound with, and be read in the plural number, *they had committed murder*, as it is in the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions; and ſo in the ancient copies; and the *Ethiopic* renders it, *he was bound with ſeditious perſons and murderers*; though, no doubt, he was guilty of murder as well as they; and ſo *Peter* calls him a murderer, *Acts* iii. 14. About this time murders were very frequently committed: the *Jews* ſay [r], that "from the time that "murtherers increaſed, the ſlaying of the red heifer "ceaſed; (the reaſon the commentators [s] give, is, "becauſe they were known who were accuſtomed "to commit murder) and that was from the time "that *Eleazar ben Dinai* came, and *Techinah ben* "*Periſhah* he was called; and they called him "again the Son of a murderer;" ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 16.

Ver. 8. *And the multitude crying aloud,* &c.] The *Vulgate Latin* and *Ethiopic* verſions read, and when the *multitude*, or *people went up*, to the place called the pavement, where the judgment-ſeat was; and ſo it is read in *Beza*'s moſt ancient copy; but the former reading is to be preferr'd: *began to deſire* him to do *as he had ever done to them*; that is, releaſe a priſoner to them, as he had done at every paſſover, ſince he had been a governor over them.

Ver. 9. *But Pilate anſwered them ſaying,* &c.] Being ſatisfied of the innocence of *Jeſus*, and being willing to diſmiſs him: *will ye that I releaſe unto you the king of the Jews?* he who is called ſo; and which he either ſaid by way of deriſion both of Chriſt, and them; or elſe in order to prevail upon them to aſk his releaſe, it being ſcandalous and reproachful to put their king to death.

Ver. 10. *For he knew that the chief-prieſts,* &c.] The *Perſic* verſion reads in the ſingular, *the chief of the prieſts*, or the high-prieſt, *Caiaphas*, *had delivered him for envy*; at his popularity through his doctrine and miracles, and not from any principle of equity and juſtice, or from any regard to *Cæſar*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 18.

Ver. 11. *But the chief-prieſts moved the people,* &c.] Greatly ſolicited and perſuaded them, both in perſon, and by their officers they employed, and diſperſed among them, to make uſe of arguments with them to prevail upon them: *that he ſhould rather releaſe Barabbas unto them*; than *Jeſus* of *Nazareth*; chuſing rather to have a murderer granted unto them, than the holy and juſt one. The *Perſic* verſion, as before, reads, the *chief of the prieſts*; but they were all concerned, and were the moſt active men in bringing about the death of Chriſt; tho' *Caiaphas* was behind none of them in envy, rage, and malice; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 20.

Ver. 12. *And Pilate anſwered and ſaid again unto them,* &c.] Being aſtoniſhed that they ſhould aſk the releaſe of ſuch an infamous perſon; and being very deſirous of ſaving Jeſus: *what will ye then that I ſhall do* unto him, *whom ye call the king of the Jews?* at leaſt many of you; would you have me put him to death? ſurely this can never be deſired; or would you have me inflict ſome ſlight puniſhment on him, as ſcourging him, and ſo diſmiſs him? ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 22.

Ver. 13. *And they cried out again, crucify him.*] For they had cried ſo once before; tho' *Matthew* and *Mark* relate it not, yet *Luke* does, ch. xxiii. 22.

Ver. 14. *Then Pilate ſaid unto them,* &c.] The third time, *Luke* xxiii. 22. *why, what evil hath he done?* worthy of death. They had charged him with many things, but proved nothing againſt him. *Pilate* could find no fault in him, and judged him an innocent perſon, and therefore was loth to condemn him: *and they cried out the more exceedingly*, with louder voices, and greater vehemency, the

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[r] Miſn. Sota, c. 9. §. 9. Maimon. Hilch. Rotzeach, c. 9. §. 12.

[s] Jarchi & Bartenora in ib.

more they found he was inclined to ſave him: *crucify him*; nothing ſhort of death would ſatisfy them, and no other death but that of the croſs; ſee the notes on *Matt.* xxvii. 22, 23.

Ver. 15. *And ſo Pilate willing to content the people,* &c.] To ſatisfy and make them eaſy, who were become very noiſy and tumultuous, and fearing the conſequences of their reſentment, ſhould he not comply, of which he had formerly had experience; therefore to humour them, and keep in their favour, after he had waſhed his hands, to teſtify his innocence in the matter, *he releaſed Barabbas unto them*; the ſeditious perſon, robber, and murderer, as they deſired: *and delivered Jeſus when he had ſcourged him*; or *having ſcourged* him; for this he had done before, hoping the *Jews* would have been ſatisfied with that, and not have inſiſted on any farther puniſhment. The *Arabic* verſion very wrongly renders the words, *and delivered unto them Jeſus, that he might be ſcourged*; as if this was afterwards to be done by the *Jews*, or *Roman* ſoldiers; whereas he had ſcourged him before, and now delivered him *to be crucified*, as they deſired; in which he acted contrary to law and juſtice, to the violation of his own conſcience, and merely to gratify the humour of the people; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 26.

Ver. 16. *And the ſoldiers led him away into the hall,* &c.] From the place called the pavement, where was the judge's bench, from which he paſſed ſentence on Chriſt, to a large room, *called the prætorium*, or judgment-hall; being the hall, or room, where the *prætor*, or *Roman* magiſtrate kept his court of judicature; and is the ſame place the *Jews* would not go into, leſt they ſhould be defiled, and become unmeet to eat the *Chagigah* that day; and into which *Pilate* had Jeſus more than once alone, *John* xviii. 28, 33. and xix. 9. but now he had a large company with him: *and they call together the whole band*; very likely the ſoldiers, into whoſe cuſtody Jeſus was put, and who led him away, were the four ſoldiers that attended his crucifixion, and parted his garments; but for greater diverſion they got together the whole band to which they belonged; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 27.

Ver. 17. *And they clothed him with purple,* &c.] *Matthew* calls it a *ſcarlet* robe; and the *Perſic* verſion here renders it a *red garment*: it was of a colour reſembling purple; it was pretty near it, and therefore ſo called; which is what kings were uſed to wear; and ſo in deriſion of him, as a king, clothed him with this mock purple robe; and which was very likely one of the ſoldiers old coats: *and platted a crown of thorns, and put it about his* head; for a crown, and alſo a reed in his hand, inſtead of a ſceptre, as *Matthew* relates; ſee the notes on *Matt.* xxvii. 28, 29.

Ver. 18. *And began to ſalute him, hail king of the Jews.*] In a mock way, wiſhing him long life and proſperity, as if he was a king juſt come to his throne, and this was his coronation-day.

Ver. 19. *And they ſmote him on the head with a reed,* &c.] Or *cane*, a walking-ſtick which they had put into his hands for a ſceptre: this they took out again, and ſtruck him on the head with it, which drove the ſharp-pointed thorns into his temples: *and did ſpit upon him*; upon his face, as the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions read: *and bowing their knees*, as to a ſovereign prince, *worſhipped him*; ſaying the above words, *hail king of the Jews*; ſee the notes on *Matt.* xxvii. 29, 30.

Ver. 20. *And when they had mocked him,* &c.] To their ſatisfaction, and had had enough of this ſort of diverſion: *they took off the purple from him*; and ſo, in their way, unkinged him; *and put his own clothes on him*: both that he might be known to be the ſame perſon; and that the four ſoldiers, who had the charge of him, might have the perquiſites of his clothes at his execution: *and led him out to crucify him*: they led him out of the *prætorium*, or judgment-hall, and through the city, without the gates of it, to the uſual place of crucifixion; he bearing his own croſs, when firſt led out.

Ver. 21. *And they compel one Simon a Cyrenian,* &c.] See the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 32. *who paſſed by*; as they were leading Jeſus to be crucified: *coming out of the country*; from ſome country village hard by, according to the *Syriac*, and *Vulgate Latin* verſions; or *out of the field*, as the *Perſic* and *Ethiopic*: he might have been in the field, about ſome rural buſineſs; or, as Dr. *Lightfoot* conjectures, to fetch wood from thence, which was lawful to be done on a feaſt-day, with ſome proviſo's, according to the *Jewiſh* canon, which runs thus[t]; "they may bring wood out of the field, (*i. e.* on a feaſt-day, as this was) of that which is gathered together, and out of a place that is fenced about, and even of that which is ſcattered abroad: what is a fenced place? whatever is near to a city, the words of *R. Judah*. *R. Joſe* ſays, whatever they go into by a door, and even within the border of the ſabbath." And according to the commentators[u], it muſt be wood that is gathered together, and that lies not in an open field, but in a fenced place, and this near the city; at leaſt within two thouſand cubits, a ſabbath-day's journey. *The father of Alexander and Rufus*; who were men well known when *Mark* wrote his Goſpel, and very likely men of eminence among Chriſtians: mention is made of *Alexander* in *Acts* xix. 33. and of *Rufus*, in *Rom.* xvi. 13. which ſome have thought the ſame as here; but whether they are or no, is not certain: however, they obliged *Simon to bear his croſs*; the croſs of Chriſt, after him; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 32.

Ver. 22. *And they bring him unto the place, Golgotha,* &c.] A famous, or rather an infamous one, well known, and much noted for the many executions there: *which is, being interpreted, the place of a ſkull*; becauſe the ſkulls of men that had been executed and buried there, being dug up again, lay ſcattered about; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 33.

Ver. 23. *And they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrhe,* &c.] Wine mingled with frankincenſe was what was uſually given by the *Jews* to perſons going to die[w]: "he that goes to be executed they mix for him, קורט של לבונה בכוס של יין, *a grain of frankincenſe in a cup of wine*, that his mind may be diſturbed, or not ſenſible; as it is ſaid, *Prov.* xxxi. 6. *give ſtrong drink to him that is ready to periſh, and wine to the bitter in ſoul*: and the tradition is, that the honourable women in *Jeruſalem* gave this freely, and brought it them; and if they did not, it was provided by the congregation," at the public expence; the deſign of it was to intoxicate, that they might not feel their pain and miſery: but neither the rich women in general, nor were the public ſo diſpoſed towards

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[t] Miſn. Betza, c. 4. §. 2.

[u] Maimon. & Bartenora in ib. Vid. Maimon. Hilch. Yom Tob, c. 2. §. 14.

[w] T. Bab Sanhedrin, fol. 43. 1. Bemidbar Rabba, §. 10. fol. 198. 4. Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 13. §. 2, 3. Moſes Kotſenſ Mitzvot Tora, pr. affirm. 98.

Chriſt, as to provide ſuch a potion for him: it is moſt likely therefore that this was prepared by his friends, as *Mary Magdalene*, *Martha*, and others, in order to chear and refreſh his ſpirits; and was different from what the ſoldiers gave him, which was *vinegar mixed with gall*, tho' the *Perſic* verſion ſo reads here: *but he received it not*; nor would he ſo much as taſte of it, as he did of the other, to ſhew that he needed no ſuch outward means to ſupport his ſpirits, nor deſired any allay of his ſorrows, and was not afraid to meet death in all its terrors; and beſides, he had ſaid he would drink no more of the fruit of the vine till he drank it new in his father's kingdom, *Matt.* xxvi. 29. ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 34.

Ver. 24. *And when they had crucified him*, &c.] Had faſtened him to the croſs, and reared it up, and he was hanging upon it: *they parted his garments, caſting lots upon them, what every man ſhould take.* This laſt clauſe, *what every man ſhould take*, is left out in the *Arabic* verſion. His garments they divided into four parts; and each ſoldier, as there were four of them, took a part; and upon his veſture, or ſeamleſs coat, becauſe they would not rend it, they caſt lots who ſhould have it, and ſo fulfilled a prophecy in *Pſ.* xxii. 18. ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 35.

Ver. 25. *And it was the third hour, and they crucified him.*] The time of the daily ſacrifice of the morning, at which the prieſts ought to have been; and the time when the *Sanhedrim* uſually began to ſit[x]; for "the grand *Sanhedrim* ſat from the daily "ſacrifice of the morning, to the daily ſacrifice of "the evening:" but this being an extraordinary caſe, and they in a hurry to put Jeſus to death, had been ſitting up all night; and early in the morning had procured the ſentence of death on him, which they were going to execute by the time they uſed to ſit: this was about nine o'clock in the morning, and takes in the time between that and twelve at noon. The *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *and it was the ſixth hour*, to make it agree with *John* xix. 14. and for the reconciling of theſe two places, ſee the note there.

Ver. 26. *And the ſuperſcription of his accuſation*, &c.] Or *the cauſe of his death*, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read; the crime for which he ſuffered: *was written*; over his head, upon the croſs, to which it was faſtened; the ſum of which was, *the king of the Jews*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 37.

Ver. 27. *And with him they crucified two thieves*, &c.] For his greater reproach; *the one on his right hand, and the other on his left*; as if he had been one of them, and a principal among them; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 38.

Ver. 28. *And the ſcripture was fulfilled, which ſaith*, &c.] In *Iſ.* liii. 12. *and he was numbered with the tranſgreſſors*: he was no tranſgreſſor of the law of God himſelf, but was perfectly conformable to it in his holy nature, harmleſs converſation, and complete obedience: he knew no ſin, nor committed any in thought, word, or deed, nor could any be found in him by men or devils; and yet he was traduced as a ſinner, and charged with many foul things, none of which could be proved upon him: but inaſmuch as he ſtood in the room, and ſtead of ſinners, and had all the ſins of his people imputed to him, and laid upon him, with his own conſent, he was treated by the juſtice of God as if he had been a tranſgreſſor, and was reckoned as ſuch; of which his being placed between two thieves, was a ſymbol and repreſentation: hence he was ſtricken, and wounded, and died, for the ſins of thoſe in whoſe place he ſtood. The *fifty-third* chapter of *Iſaiah*, where this paſſage ſtands, is a manifeſt prophecy of the Meſſiah, as ſeveral of the *Jewiſh* writers themſelves, both ancient and modern, acknowledge; though ſome would apply it to ſome other perſons[y].

Ver. 29. *And they that paſſed by*, &c.] In the road, and went by the croſs. The *Arabic* verſion adds, *before him*, Chriſt, as he hung on the croſs: *railed on him, wagging their heads*; gave him opprobrious language, and uſed indecent geſtures; *and ſaying, ah! thou that deſtroyeſt the temple*; the *Vulgate Latin* verſion adds, *of God: and buildeſt it in three days*; thou poor vain miſerable creature, that boaſted of thy power, where art thou now? and what doſt thou think of thyſelf?

Ver. 30. *Save thyſelf, and come down from the croſs.*] Suggeſting, that if he was what he had pretended to be, and could do what he gave out he could, he might eaſily free himſelf from the croſs, and make his eſcape; ſee the notes on *Matt.* xxvii. 39, 40.

Ver. 31. *Likewiſe alſo the chief-prieſts mocking*, &c.] Or *laughed at one another*, as the *Syriac* verſion renders it, having gained their point, and ſatiated their revenge on him: *ſaid among themſelves with the Scribes*; who were likewiſe his implacable enemies: *he ſaved others, himſelf he cannot ſave*; ſee the notes on *Matt.* xxvii. 41, 42.

Ver. 32. *Let Chriſt the king of Iſrael*, &c.] Who ſets up for the Meſſiah, and whoſe followers call him the king of *Iſrael*, whom the nation expected: and if he is ſo, let him *deſcend now from the croſs, that we may ſee*; ſee him come down, and be eye-witneſſes of his power: *and believe*; that he is the Meſſiah that was propheſied of, and has been waiting for: *and they that were crucified with him reviled him*; that is, the thieves, at leaſt one of them; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 44.

Ver. 33. *And when the ſixth hour was come*, &c.] Or twelve o'clock at noon, having hung upon the croſs from about the third hour, or nine in the morning: *there was darkneſs over the whole land until the ninth hour*; or three o'clock in the afternoon. The *Ethiopic* verſion renders the whole thus, *and when it was noon, the ſun was darkened, and the whole world was darkened until the ninth hour*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 45.

Ver. 34. *And at the ninth hour Jeſus cried with a loud voice*, &c.] See the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 46. *Saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama ſabachthani?* In *Matthew* 'tis, *Eli, Eli.* Both *Eli* and *Eloi* are *Hebrew* words, and ſignify the ſame; and are both uſed in *Pſ.* xxii. 1, 2. from whence the whole is taken: *which is, being interpreted, my God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 46.

Ver. 35. *And ſome of them that ſtood by*, &c.] The croſs: *when they heard it*; the loud voice of Jeſus, and the words he uttered: *ſaid, behold he calleth Elias*; whom they ignorantly, or wilfully took for *Eloi*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 47.

Ver. 36. *And one ran and filled a ſpunge full of vinegar*, &c.] Chriſt at the ſame time ſaying, I thirſt; ſee *John* xix. 28. *and put it on a reed*; an hyſſop-ſtalk, *John* xix. 29. *and gave him to drink*; and ſo fulfilled a prophecy in *Pſ.* lxix. 21. *ſaying*, or *they ſaid*, as the *Syriac* verſion reads it; not he that fetched the ſpunge, but the others that were with him, and which agrees with *Matt.* xxvii. 49.

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[x] Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 3. §. 1.

[y] See my book of the prophecies of the Old Teſtament, &c. p. 160, 161, &c.

*let alone*; as forbidding him to go near him, and offer to him any thing to drink: *let us ſee whether Elias will come and take him down*; from the croſs; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 49.

Ver. 37. *And Jeſus cried with a loud voice*, &c.] A ſecond time, and ſaid the words which are in *Luke* xxiii. 46. and in *John* xix. 30. *and gave up the ghoſt.* The *Syriac* verſion renders it, *and finiſhed*; his life, his days, his race, his miniſtry, and the work which was given him to do; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 50.

Ver. 38. *And the vail of the temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom.*] At which time alſo there was an earthquake, and the rocks were rent, and graves were opened, as *Matthew* relates, ch. xxvii. 51, 52. ſee the notes there.

Ver. 39. *And when the centurion which ſtood over-againſt him*, &c.] To watch him, that no body releaſed him, and that he did not come down from the croſs himſelf; *ſaw that he ſo cried out, and gave up the ghoſt*; that he cried with ſo loud, and ſtrong a voice, and the next moment expired: *he ſaid truly this man was the Son of God*; and ſo ſaid the reſt of the ſoldiers that were with him, as appears from *Matt.* xxvii. 54. ſee the note there.

Ver. 40. *There were alſo women looking on afar off*, &c.] At ſome diſtance from the croſs, obſerving what was ſaid and done; *among whom was Mary Magdalene*; who had received great favours from Chriſt: *and Mary the mother of James the leſs*; or *little*, ſo called to diſtinguiſh him from *James* the ſon of *Zebedee*, and becauſe he might be little of ſtature: nor was it unuſual with the *Jews* to diſtinguiſh perſons after this manner: ſo we read [z] of *R. Jeſa*, זעירא, *the little*, and of *Samuel*, הקטן, *the little* [a], which ſome have thought to be the apoſtle *Paul*, ſo called from the littleneſs of his ſtature: *and of Joſes*; or *Joſeph*, as the *Vulgate Latin* and *Ethiopic* verſions read; *and Salome*; the mother of *Zebedee*'s children, *James* and *John*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 56. This was a common name among the *Jews*; *Herod* had a ſiſter and a daughter of this name; and the daughter of *Herodias*, who demanded the head of *John* the *Baptiſt*, was of this name; and it is the ſame with *Shalom*: we read [b] of one *Imme Shalom*, or mother *Shalom*, wife of *R. Eliezer*, and ſiſter to *Rabban Gamaliel*. *Salome*, with the *Ethiopians* [c], is ſaid to be *Mary*'s midwife, and to accompany Chriſt, with *Mary*, and *Joſeph*, when they fled into *Egypt*.

Ver. 41. *Who alſo when he was in Galilee followed him*, &c.] Wherever he went in *Galilee*, and from thence to *Jeruſalem*: *and miniſtred unto him*; of their worldly ſubſtance, *Luke* viii. 3. *and many other women which came up with him unto Jeruſalem*; from the ſame parts; ſee *Matt.* xxvii. 55.

Ver. 42. *And now when the even was come*, &c.] *Of the preparation*, as the *Syriac* verſion reads; or *the night of the ſixth day*, as the *Perſic* verſion renders it, *Friday* night: *becauſe it was the preparation*; of the paſſover, and of the ſabbath, when they prepared their food, and got it ready for the enſuing ſabbath, on which it was not lawful to dreſs any: *that is the day before the ſabbath*; that is, *Friday*; on which day, 'tis clear, Chriſt ſuffered, died, and was buried.

Ver. 43. *Joſeph of Arimathea, an honourable counſeller*, &c.] A man of a good aſpect, well dreſſed, and that behaved well and honourably in his office, as a counſeller: he ſeems to have been a prieſt, and one of the bench of prieſts that ſat in the high-prieſt's chamber, which is called, לשכת בלווטי, *the chamber of the counſellers* [d]; with whom he adviſed there, in matters of moment: *which alſo waited for the kingdom of God*; for the coming and kingdom of the Meſſiah, for the Goſpel-diſpenſation, the world to come, the *Jews* were ſo much in expectation of. *Came and went in boldly unto Pilate*; not now aſhamed of Chriſt, or afraid openly to appear in his cauſe, and declare himſelf a lover of him, a believer in him, and a diſciple of his, tho' he formerly was: *and craved the body of Jeſus*; deſired leave to take it down from the croſs, and bury it; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 58.

Ver. 44. *And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead*, &c.] For death, by crucifixion, was a ſlow lingering death; perſons that were in their full ſtrength hung a great while before they expired; and the two thieves, which were crucified with Chriſt, were not dead when he was: *and calling unto him the centurion*; who was ſet to watch him: *he aſked him, whether he had been any while dead*; he enquired of him, whether he was dead, and how long he had been dead.

Ver. 45. *And when he knew it of the centurion*, &c.] Who might inform him of his giving up the ghoſt after he had cried with a loud voice, which ſo much affected him; and how he was found to be really dead when they came to break the legs of the malefactors; and how that one of the ſoldiers pierced his ſide with a ſpear, from whence flowed blood and water; ſo that there was no room to doubt of his being really dead; with which *Pilate* being ſatisfied, *he gave the body to Joſeph*; ordered it to be given to him; gave him leave to take it down from the croſs, and interr it.

Ver. 46. *And he bought fine linen*, &c.] That is, *Joſeph*, as is expreſſed in the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, and *Perſic* verſions; which, when he had done, as is highly probable, in the city of *Jeruſalem*, he went to mount *Calvary*, *and took him down*; took the body of Chriſt down from the croſs; though, no doubt, with the aſſiſtance of others, or by others, and not he himſelf, at leaſt not alone: *and wrapped him in the linen*; wound him up in it, as was the manner of the *Jews*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 59. *and laid him in a ſepulchre, which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a ſtone unto the door of the ſepulchre*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 60.

Ver. 47. *And Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of Joſes*, &c.] Or *Joſeph*, as the *Vulgate Latin* and *Ethiopic* verſions read: *beheld where he was laid*: very likely they ſaw *Joſeph*, and his men, take him down from the croſs, and they followed him, and obſerved where he laid him; or, as the *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *where they buried him*; placing themſelves, as *Matthew* ſuggeſts, right over-againſt the ſepulchre; ſo that they were witneſſes of his death, and of his burial, as they afterwards were of his reſurrection from the dead.

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[z] Zohar in Exod. fol. 63. 2. & paſſim.

[a] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 28. 2. & 29. 1.

[b] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 116. 1.

[c] Ludolph. Lex. Ethiop. p. 525. & Caſtell. Lex. Polyglot. col, 3767.

[d] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 3. 2. & Hiero Yoma, fol. 38. 3.

## CHAP. XVI.

Ver. 1. AND *when the ſabbath was paſt*, &c.] *In the end of* it, as *Matthew* ſays; not *when it was the ſabbath*, as the *Arabic* verſion reads; for it was not lawful to buy ſpices, and anoint with on the ſabbath-day; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxviii. 1. *Mary Magdalene, and Mary*, the mother of *James, and Salome*; who was the wife of *Zebedee*, and the mother of the other *James* and *John*: *had bought ſweet ſpices*; or *bought*, as the *Vulgate Latin*, and all the *Oriental* verſions read; for though the women might have bought ſome on the preparation day, the day before the ſabbath, the ſame evening that Chriſt was buried, *Luke* xxiii. 56. yet they might buy more for the ſame purpoſe, after the ſabbath was over: for this there was a particular market at *Jeruſalem*; for we are [d] told, that "there were there three markets, one by another; in the firſt of which were ſold, all kinds of precious things, ſilks, and embroidered work; in the ſecond, various kinds of fruits, and herbs; and in the third, *all kinds of ſpices*." *That they might come and anoint him*; with thoſe ſweet ſpices, as was the manner of the *Jews*: hence we read [e] of, הבשמים של מתים, *the ſpices of the dead*; which were uſed to expel an ungrateful ſavour: this they did, out of affection to Chriſt, but ſeemed to have no faith in his reſurrection, though he had told them of it, which they had forgot. The *Vulgate Latin* reads, *that they might anoint Jeſus*; the *Ethiopic* verſion, *anoint his body*; but the *Arabic* thus, *anoint the ſepulchre*; his body being anointed before, and wound up by *Joſeph* and *Nicodemus*; and therefore they came to ſtrow the ſepulchre with ſpices and ointments, and give it a ſweet perfume. Though it ſeems moſt likely, that they came to anoint his body; for this was one of the things which was cuſtomary in *Iſrael* to do to dead men, as *Maimonides* [f] obſerves, סכין אותו במיני בשמים, *they anoint him with various ſorts of ſpices*.

Ver. 2. *And very early in the morning, the firſt* day *of the week*, &c.] See the note on *Matt.* xxviii. 1. *They came to the ſepulchre at the riſing of the ſun*; of the ſun of righteouſneſs, as Mr. *Mede* obſerves; or rather, of the natural ſun: for tho' it was dark when they ſet out, and when it dawned towards the firſt day, yet by that time that they all got to the ſepulchre, the ſun was riſing: the *Jews* ſay [g], that "from the aſcending of the morning, or break of day, until the ſun riſes, is an hour and a half." And ſo much time may very well be allowed the women, from their ſetting out, to their coming to the ſepulchre. Moreover, they ſay [h], that "from the hind of the morning, to the time the eaſt is enlightened, a man may walk four miles; and from the time that the eaſt is enlightened, עד שתנץ החמה, *until the ſun riſes*, four miles." But women muſt not be thought to walk ſo faſt: let it be obſerved, that Chriſt, who is called the hind of the morning, *Pſal.* xxii. title, and the morning ſtar, *Rev.* xxii. 16. roſe at this time.

Ver. 3. *And they ſaid among themſelves*, &c.] Either before they ſet out, or as they were going along: *who ſhall roll us away the ſtone from the door of the ſepulchre?* Which they ſaw was placed there by *Joſeph*, or his orders: this was the only difficulty they had, that they were aware of; for they ſeem to know nothing of the ſealing of the ſtone, and of the watch that was ſet to guard the ſepulchre; things which were done on the ſabbath-day, on which they reſted: for had they, in all likelihood they would never have attempted to have gone to it; the guard of ſoldiers would have been a ſufficient diſcouragement: but all their concern was, how, and by whom, the ſtone ſhould be rolled away, that lay at the door of the ſepulchre; and perhaps their concern might be, not only on account of the largeneſs of the ſtone, as being too much for them to remove, but becauſe ſuch a ſtone defiled by touching it, according to the *Jewiſh* traditions [i].

Ver. 4. *And when they looked*, &c.] Towards the ſepulchre, as they came near it: *they ſaw that the ſtone was rolled away*; they perceived it lay at ſome diſtance from the door of the ſepulchre, which doubtleſs was very grateful, and matter of rejoicing to them: *for it was very great*; theſe words are to be read, in connexion with the preceding verſe; for they are not a reaſon, why when they looked towards the ſepulchre, they ſaw the ſtone rolled, becauſe it was a very large one, and ſo eaſily to be ſeen at a diſtance; but a reaſon why they were ſo thoughtful and concerned, who ſhould roll it away for them, it being ſo big, that they could not think that they were able to do it themſelves.

Ver. 5. *And entring into the ſepulchre*, &c.] For the ſepulchres of the *Jews* were made ſo large, that perſons might go into them: the rule for making them is this [k]; "he that ſells ground to his neighbour to make a burying-place, or that receives of his neighbour to make a burying-place, muſt make the inſide of the cave four cubits by ſix, and open in it eight graves; three here, and three there, and two over-againſt them; and the graves muſt be four cubits long, and ſeven high, and ſix broad. *R. Simeon* ſays, he muſt make the inſide of the cave ſix cubits by eight, and open within thirteen graves; four here, and four there, and three over-againſt them; and one on the right hand of the door, and one on the left; and he muſt make, חצר, *a court*, at the mouth of the cave ſix by ſix, according to the bier, and thoſe that bury; and he muſt open in the midſt of it two caves, one here and another there. *R. Simeon* ſays, four at the four ſides; *R. Simeon ben Gamaliel* ſays, all is according to the nature of the rock." Now it was in the court that the women entered, where the bier was to be put down by the bearers; and where they could look into the ſepulchre, and the ſeveral caves and graves in it, and what were in them. So *Maimonides* ſays [l], "they dig caves in the earth, and make a grave on the ſide of the cave, and bury in it." And there being a door into one of theſe caves, perſons might enter in, and ſee where the graves were, and the bodies lay. *They ſaw a young man*; an angel; as angels uſed to appear in the form of men: nor is this any contradiction to *John*'s account, who ſays there were two angels, one at the head, and another at the feet; ſince *Mark* does not ſay there was no more than one; beſides, *John* relates what *Mary Magdalene* ſaw when alone, and *Mark* what all the women ſaw: *ſitting on the right ſide*; from whence we learn, on what ſide of the door of the ſepulchre Chriſt was laid, according to the above deſcription of one: *clothed in a long white garment*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxviii. 3. which was as white as ſnow: *and they were affrighted*; at the ſight of him; not expecting ſuch a viſion, but to have ſeen the body of their Lord.

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[d] Jechus Haabot, p. 24. Ed. Hottinger.

[e] Miſn. Beracot, c. 8. §. 6. & Bartenora in ib. T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 12. 2.

[f] Hilchot Ebel, c. 4. §. 1.

[g] Piſke Toſaphot in Peſach. art. 44.

[h] T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 2. 3. Bereſhit Rabba, §. 50. fol. 45. 2.

[i] Miſn. Oholot, c. 2. §. 4.

[k] Miſn. Bava Bathra, c. 6. §. 8.

[l] Maimon. Hilch. Ebel, c. 4. §. 4.

Ver. 6. *And he ſaith unto them, be not affrighted,* &c.] See the notes on *Matt.* xxviii. 5, 6. where the ſame things, and almoſt in the ſame words, are ſaid as here.

Ver. 7. *But go your way, tell his diſciples and Peter,* &c.] *Peter* is particularly mentioned, not as diſtinct from the apoſtles, or as if he was not one of them, having ſinned in the manner he had done; much leſs becauſe he was the chief of them; but to comfort him in his great ſorrow, on account of his fall; and to encourage him to meet Chriſt with the reſt of the diſciples, who might be both afraid and aſhamed, becauſe he had ſo baſely denied him: this is a kind intimation in favour of *Peter*; none of the other *Evangeliſts* obſerve it; but this Goſpel being publiſhed, as is thought by ſome, under the direction and examination of *Peter* himſelf, he was careful to relate every thing, that either aggravated his own crime, or illuſtrated the grace of God, and love of Chriſt towards him. The *Perſic* verſion puts *Peter* firſt, rendering it, *ſay to Cephas and the reſt of the diſciples*; all copies, and other verſions, put him laſt: *that he goeth before you into Galilee, there ſhall ye ſee him*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxviii. 7. *as he ſaid unto you,* as in ch. xiv. 28.

Ver. 8. *And they went out quickly,* &c.] Out of the ſepulchre, into which they had been, to ſee where Chriſt lay, as invited by the angel, ver. 6. The word *quickly*, is not read in the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions: *which when they heard*; that is, when they heard the angel's orders and inſtructions, immediately they went out: *and fled from the ſepulchre*; as ſurprized and affrighted: *for they trembled and were amazed*; at what they ſaw and heard, and yet this dread and fear, were mixed with joy at the news of Chriſt's reſurrection, as *Matthew* relates, ch. xxviii. 8. *Neither ſaid they any thing to any man*; they met with by the way, till they came to the diſciples; to whom they told all, otherwiſe they would not have acted according to the angel's orders: *for they were afraid*; not only affrighted with what they had ſeen and heard, but they were afraid to tell any but the diſciples of theſe things, for fear of the *Jews*; leſt they ſhould be thought to have ſtolen the body of Chriſt, and ſo be taken up on that account, and puniſhed.

Ver. 9. *Now when* Jeſus *was riſen early the firſt* day *of the week,* &c.] Though the word *Jeſus* is not in the text, it is rightly ſupplied; for of the riſing of no other, can the words be underſtood; and ſo the *Perſic* verſion ſupplies *Meſſiah*, or *Chriſt*: that Jeſus roſe from the dead on the firſt day of the week, agrees with the accounts of all the Evangeliſts, and is here expreſsly affirmed; the phraſe, *the firſt day of the week*, is ſo indeed placed, as that it may be thought to be connected with the following words, as it is by ſome; fancying there would otherwiſe be a diſagreement with *Matt.* xxviii. 1. whereas there is none; ſee the note there: though it is true alſo, that he did appear on that day to *Mary Magdalene*, it being the ſame day he roſe from the dead. But the true reading and pointing are as here placed; and the phraſe belongs to, and points out the day of Chriſt's riſing from the dead; and which ambiguity is removed in the *Syriac* verſion, which renders it, *now early on the firſt day of the week he roſe*; and ſo the *Perſic* verſion, *the Meſſiah*, or *Chriſt*, *therefore on the morning of the firſt day, roſe from the dead*: and that he roſe early on that day, is clear from the women, who ſet out at the end of the ſabbath, when that was paſt and over; and got to the ſepulchre by the time the day dawned; and one of them, while it was dark, and all of them by break of day, at leaſt by ſun riſing, and he was then riſen: *he appeared firſt to Mary Magdalene*; in the habit of a gardener, for whom ſhe took him at firſt; and this was at the ſepulchre, where ſhe ſtaid after the diſciples were gone. That ſhe was the very firſt perſon, that Chriſt ſhewed himſelf to, after his reſurrection, may be concluded from hence, and from the account the Evangeliſt *John* has given, ch. xx. 14. nor is there any reaſon to think, that before this, he appeared to his mother, of which the Evangeliſts are entirely ſilent. This was a very great favour, and an high honour that was beſtowed upon her; and who had received large favours from him before: *out of whom he had caſt ſeven devils*; ſee *Luke* viii. 2. And if ſhe had been a very wicked perſon, as ſhe is commonly thought to be, and very likely ſhe had been, ſince ſatan had ſuch a power over her, as to lodge ſeven devils in her, it is an inſtance of abounding grace, that Chriſt ſhould heap up favours on ſuch an one; and ſhe ſhould be the firſt that he ſhould appear to, and converſe with after his reſurrection.

Ver. 10. *And ſhe went and told them that had been with him,* &c.] Not *with her*, as the *Perſic* verſion reads, but with him; that is, with Chriſt: ſhe went, as ſhe was bid by Chriſt, and told his diſciples, what ſhe had heard and ſeen; even thoſe who had been with him from the beginning, and had heard his doctrines, and ſeen his miracles, and had had communion with him, and truly believed in him, and were his conſtant followers, and real diſciples; not only *Peter*, *James*, and *John*, who were with him, particularly at the raiſing of *Jairus*'s daughter, and at his transfiguration on the mount, and when in his ſorrows, in the garden; but the reſt of the eleven, and not only them, but others that were with them; ſee *Luke* xxiv. 9. *As they mourned and wept*; being inconſolable for the death of their Lord, and the loſs of his preſence; and alſo for their carriage towards him, that one among them ſhould betray him; another deny him, and all forſake him: thus were they like doves of the valley, mourning for their abſent Lord, and for their own iniquities; and in this condition were they, when *Mary* brought them the joyful news of Chriſt's reſurrection from the dead.

Ver. 11. *And they, when they had heard that he was alive,* &c.] That is, the apoſtles, and thoſe that were with them; when they heard the report of *Mary Magdalene*, that Chriſt was raiſed from the dead, and was certainly alive; or of all the women, for the *Syriac* verſion reads, *when they heard them ſaying that he was alive*; not only *Mary Magdalene*, but *Joanna*, and *Mary* the mother of *James*, and other women; for theſe all related this to the apoſtles, and the reſt; ſee *Luke* xxiv. 9, 10. *And had been ſeen of her*; of *Mary Magdalene*; or *of them*, as the *Syriac* verſion reads, and as it is read in one of *Beza*'s copies: they *believed not*; the words of *Mary*, and the other women, for they ſeemed as idle tales to them, *Luke* xxiv. 11. imagining they were deceived with the ſight of a ſpectre or apparition; and fearing the news were too good and great to be true; forgetting the words of their Lord, that he ſhould riſe again the third day, and which had been ſo often repeated to them; and all this thro' ſtupidity of mind, occaſioned by the trouble and conſternation they were in.

Ver. 12. *After that*, &c.] A little time, or ſome few hours after, on the ſelf-ſame day; ſee *Luke* xxiv. 13. *he appeared in another form*: it ſeems to have been the form, or habit of a gardener that he appeared in to *Mary*; ſince ſhe thought him to be one, and to be the gardener that belonged to the garden, in which the ſepulchre was: but now it was in another form, or habit, that he appeared; very likely in the habit of a *Scribe*, or doctor; ſince he took upon him to expound the ſcriptures to the perſons he appeared to; as alſo took bread, and bleſſed it, when at ſupper with them, *Luke* xxiv. 27, 30. According to the *Jewiſh* canons [m], "if "two perſons eat together, and one of them is "a *Scribe*, and the other an unlearned man, "סופר מברך, *the Scribe bleſſes*, and the unlearned "man is excuſed." This is not to be underſtood of any change in the ſhape of his body, or the features of his face; for as ſoon as their eyes were opened, which had been before held, they knew him perfectly well: whereas, if there had been ſuch an alteration made in him, that he could not have been known for the ſame, there would have been no need of holding their eyes, that they ſhould not know him, *Luke* xxiv. 16, 31. This appearance was *unto two of them*; one of them was *Cleophas*, or *Alpheus*, which is the ſame, *Luke* xxiv. 18. the other is by ſome [n] thought to be *Simon Peter*, from what is ſaid in *Luke* xxiv. 34. tho' others [o] think it was *Nathanael*, and others [p] *Luke* the Evangeliſt, who conceals his own name, when he mentions the other; and ſome [q], that his name was *Ammaon*, which perhaps may be thro' miſtake of the place, *Emmaus*, where they were going, for the name of one of them, and the appearance to them was, *as they walked, and went into the country*; to a country-village called *Emmaus*, about ſixty furlongs, or ſeven miles and a half from *Jeruſalem*; ſee *Luke* xxiv. 13.

Ver. 13. *And they went and told it unto the reſidue*, &c.] Upon their return to *Jeruſalem*, which was on the ſame night, they went to the eleven Apoſtles, and the other diſciples that were with them, and related the whole affair to them; how that Jeſus had joined them by the way, and diſcourſed much with them about himſelf, and expounded the ſcriptures on the road; and when they came to the end of their journey, ſat down at meat with them, when he was very plainly diſcerned, and known by them, and then diſappeared; ſee *Luke* xxiv. 33, 35. *neither believed they them*. *Theſe two*, as the *Arabic* verſion reads; tho' they were men, and fellow-diſciples; and this was a repeated teſtimony, and a ſecond ſett of witneſſes of Chriſt's reſurrection to them; all which aggravates their unbelief: upon ſight of them they ſaid, *the Lord is riſen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon*; the reaſon of which Dr. *Lightfoot* thinks was this, that *Peter* hearing that Chriſt was riſen, and went before them into *Galilee*, was eager to ſee him, and therefore took this *journey* along with *Cleophas*, which the reſt of the diſciples knew; and he returning ſo ſoon, they concluded he had ſeen him: but when he, and *Cleophas*, told the whole affair, they were as unbelieving as ever.

Ver. 14. *Afterward he appeared unto the eleven*, &c.] Apoſtles; for this was now the number of them, *Judas* being gone from them, and dead; and they were ſo called, tho' *Thomas* was not now with them, becauſe their whole company conſiſted of this number: this appearance of Chriſt to them was on the ſame firſt day of the week, at evening, *John* xx. 19. tho' it muſt be very late at night; for it was after the two above diſciples were returned from *Emmaus*, where Chriſt and they had ſupped together; ſee *Luke* xxiv. 29, 30, 33, 36. *as they ſat at meat*; or *ſat together*; being aſſembled together, and the doors ſhut faſt for fear of the *Jews*, *John* xx. 19. and ſo the *Arabic* renders it, *while they were gathered together*; and the *Perſic* verſion, *who being gathered together were ſitting*: nor does the word neceſſarily ſignify ſitting at meat; nor is it very likely that they ſhould be eating ſo late at night; tho' it is probable they had been eating, as ſeems from *Luke* xxiv. 41, 42, 43. *and upbraided them with their unbelief, and hardneſs of heart*: not but that their hearts were very contrite for their ſinful carriage to Chriſt; and very much humbled they were under the preſent diſpenſation: their hearts were much affected, and they were filled with ſorrow and trouble for the loſs of Chriſt; but in this point their unbelief increaſed by their fears, and ſo much prevailed, that all that were ſaid by one, and another, made no impreſſion on them: and a great aggravation of their incredulity, and a reaſon of Chriſt's upbraiding them in this manner were, *becauſe they believed not them which had ſeen him after he was riſen*; as *Mary Magdalene*, and the other women, and *Cleophas*, and the other diſciple that was with him, who were eye-witneſſes that he was riſen from the dead; and ſuch as might have been depended on.

Ver. 15. *And he ſaid unto them*, &c.] Not at the ſame time, and place, as before; not on the firſt day of the week, on which he roſe from the dead, but forty days after, juſt upon his aſcenſion to heaven; ſee ver. 19. nor at *Jeruſalem*, but in *Galilee*, where he appointed to meet his diſciples, and did, when he gave them the following commiſſion; ſee *Matt.* xxviii. 16, 18, 19. *go ye into all the world*: not only into *Judæa*, and thro' all the cities of it, where they had been before confined; nor only into the *Roman* empire, which is ſometimes ſo called, becauſe great part of the world was under that government; but into every known and habitable part of the whole univerſe, to all the nations of the world under heaven: and it is to be obſerved, that this command is not enjoined on every Apoſtle ſeparately, as if each of them was to go into all the world, and travel over every part; but that one was to go one way, and another another way; every one had his line, or that part of the world marked out for him, whither he was to ſteer his courſe, and where he was to fulfil and finiſh his miniſtry: and beſides, this commiſſion not only included the Apoſtles, but reaches to all the miniſters of the Goſpel in ſucceeding ages, to the end of the world; and ſince this, one part of the world, which was not known, is now diſcovered; and the order includes that, as well as the then known parts of the world, and the Goſpel accordingly has been ſent into it. *And preach the Goſpel to every creature*; not to inanimate and irrational creatures, as ſtocks and ſtones, the beaſts of the field, *&c.* nor to all rational creatures, as angels, good or bad; the former need not the preaching of the Goſpel, and the latter are denied the bleſſing; but men, the offspring of fallen *Adam*, the objects of God's good-will: theſe are ſtiled *the creatures*, becauſe the chief of God's creation on earth; and are often in the *Jewiſh* writings ſo called; take an inſtance or two: "*R. Chanina ben Douſa*[r] uſed to "ſay, all in whom, הבריות, *the creatures* (*i. e.* "men) have delight, God has delight; and in "whomſoever *the creatures* (or men) have no de"light, God has no delight." One of the ſeven qualifications of a member of the *Sanhedrim* is, אהבת הבריות, *love of the creatures*[s], or love of men: ſo it is ſaid[t], that "the holy bleſſed God, "ſits in the heighth of the world, and gives a por"tion of food, לכל בריה, *to every creature.*" that is, to every man: and particularly the *Gentiles*, as diſtinguiſhed from the *Jews*, are often intended by this phraſe: thus "ſays[u] *R. Judah*, "perhaps, הבריות, *the creatures*, (*i. e.* the *Gen*"*tiles*) knew the love with which the holy bleſſed "God loved *Iſrael*, and roared like lions to purſue "after them." It is elſewhere[w] ſaid, "all the "prayers, של בריות, *of the creatures* (the Hea"thens) are only concerning the earth; Lord, let "the earth bring forth! Lord, let the earth be "fruitful! All the prayers of the *Iſraelites*, are "only for the houſe of the Lord; Lord, let the "houſe of the ſanctuary be built, *&c.*" And in this ſenſe is the phraſe uſed, in *Rom.* viii. 22, 23. *Col.* i. 23. 1 *Pet.* ii. 14. Now to theſe, Chriſt would have the Goſpel preached, as well as to the *Jews*; even to all, without any diſtinction of people, *Jews* and *Gentiles*, *Barbarians*, *Scythians*, bond and free, male and female, rich and poor, greater or leſſer ſinners, even to all mankind; than which, nothing was more provoking to the *Jews*; who would, if they could, have revoked and made null this commiſſion of Chriſt; ſee 1 *Theſſ.* ii. 16. It was the Goſpel he would have preached to them, the word of peace and reconciliation, by his atoning ſacrifice; the doctrine of free and full pardon by his blood; and of juſtification by his righteouſneſs; and of compleat ſalvation by him: even every doctrine relating to his perſon, as God and man; to every office of his, as prophet, prieſt, and king; to his incarnation, ſufferings, and death, his reſurrection, aſcenſion, ſeſſion at the right-hand of God, and interceſſion for his people, and ſecond coming to judgment; with every doctrine relating to the grace of God, of the Father in election, and the covenant of peace, of the Son in redemption, and of the Spirit in regeneration and ſanctification: all which he would have publiſhed and declared in the moſt free, plain, and open manner, with all boldneſs, faithfulneſs, and conſtancy. A compendium and ſummary of which, is given in the next words.

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[m] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 45. 2.

[n] Lightfoot, Hor. in v. 13. & in Luk. xxiv. 13.

[o] Epiphan. contra Hæreſ. l. 1. Hæreſ. 23.

[p] Vid. Theophylact. in Luc. xxiv. 13.

[q] Ambroſ. in Luc. 12. 49. & 24.

Ver. 16. *He that believeth*, &c.] Not notionally only, or that gives a bare aſſent to the truth of the Goſpel; but ſpiritually, who ſees Chriſt, his need of him, and the worth and excellency, ſuitableneſs and fulneſs of him; who comes to him as a poor periſhing ſinner, and ventures on him, and commits himſelf to him, and lives upon him; believing alone in him, and expecting life and ſalvation alone by him: *and is baptized*; faith muſt precede baptiſm, as theſe words of Chriſt, and ſcripture examples ſhew; and ſuch as have it, ought to make a profeſſion of it, and be baptized; and in which way it is that faith diſcovers itſelf, and works by love to Chriſt; namely, in obſerving his commands, and this among the reſt: *ſhall be ſaved*; ſuch receive the remiſſion of their ſins, a juſtifying righteouſneſs, the privilege of adoption, a right and meetneſs for heaven now, and ſhall be ſaved in Chriſt, with an everlaſting ſalvation: not that either faith or baptiſm, are the procuring cauſes of ſalvation: not faith, for Chriſt is the author of ſalvation; and faith is the grace that looks to him for it, receives the aſſurance of it now, and that will be the end of it hereafter: faith and eternal life are ſo connected together, that he that has the one, ſhall have the other; and it is deſcriptive of the perſon that ſhall enjoy it: and baptiſm, though it is ſaid to ſave by the reſurrection of Chriſt, as it is a means of leading faith to Chriſt's reſurrection for juſtification, yet has no cauſal influence upon ſalvation; it is not eſſential to it; the thief on the croſs, went to heaven without it, and *Simon Magus* to hell with it; but it is the duty of every one that believes, and he that truly believes, ought to be baptized, and prove the truth of his faith, by his obedience to Chriſt, and ſuch ſhall be ſaved: *but he that believeth not ſhall be damned*; ſuch are here chiefly deſigned, who are favoured with the Goſpel revelation; but either deny it, reject and deſpiſe it, or neglect it, and are diſobedient to it; whoſe guilt is the greater, and whoſe puniſhment and damnation will be the more intolerable; even more ſo, than that of *Sodom* and *Gomorrha*, *Tyre* and *Sidon*, or any of the *Gentiles* that periſh without the law, and the knowledge of the Goſpel; and alſo ſuch are meant, who are finally unbelievers, who live and die in a ſtate of impenitence and unbelief; otherwiſe, one that believes not to day, may believe to morrow, and be ſaved.

Ver. 17. *And theſe ſigns ſhall follow them that believe*, &c.] Not all of them, but ſome; and not always, only for a time; and which were neceſſary for the confirmation of the Goſpel, and the eſtabliſhment of Chriſtianity in the world; and not only believing hearers, but believing miniſters of the word, are chiefly deſigned; and this is ſaid, for the encouragement both of thoſe that preach the Goſpel, and of them that hear, believe and obey. The *Perſic* verſion, contrary to all others, reads, *ye ſhall ſhew ſigns and wonders to them that believe not*; ſee 1 *Cor.* xiv. 22. *In my name ſhall they caſt out devils*; ſo the apoſtle *Paul* diſpoſſeſſed the damſel, that had a ſpirit of divination; commanding the ſpirit, in the name of Jeſus Chriſt, to come out of her, and it did; and evil ſpirits alſo went out of others, through his means, by the power of Chriſt, *Acts* xvi. 18. and xix. 12. and this power continued for a conſiderable time among the ſaints: the phraſe *in my name*, is in the *Arabic* verſion, joined to the word *believe*, in the preceding clauſe; and is omitted in the *Perſic* verſion, but is rightly retained by all others in this place; for by the power and authority of Chriſt, and not their own, and by calling upon, and making uſe of his name, ſuch miraculous operations were wrought by the apoſtles: *they ſhall ſpeak with new tongues*; or languages, not ſuch as were new made, and had never been heard and known before; but foreign languages, ſuch as they had never learned, or were able to ſpeak, or underſtood before; and this not only did the apoſtles on the day of *Pentecoſt*, but even common believers at other times, *Acts* ii. 4, 6, 11. and x. 45, 46. 1 *Cor.* xii. 10, 28, 30. and xiv. 13, 18, 26, 27.

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[r] Pirke Abot, c. 3. §. 10.

[s] Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 2. §. 7.

[t] T. Bab. Peſachim, fol. 118. 1. Vid. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 86. 1.

[u] Zohar in Exod. fol. 2, 3.

[w] Bereſhit Rabba, §. 13. fol. 11. 3. Vid. T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 12. 2.

Ver. 18. *They ſhall take up ſerpents,* &c.] The *Arabic* verſion adds, *in their own hands*; and in an ancient manuſcript of *Beza*'s it is read, *in the hands*; ſo the apoſtle *Paul* had a viper, which faſtened and hung on his hand, which he ſhook off; without receiving any harm from it, *Acts* xxviii. 3, 4, 5, 6. *And if they drink any deadly thing, it ſhall not hurt them*; not that they were hereby warranted to drink poiſon, to ſhew what power they had; but ſhould they accidentally drink it, or rather ſhould they be forced to it by their enemies, in order to deſtroy them, they ſhould find no hurt by it: and *Papias*[z] reports of *Barſabas*, ſurnamed *Juſtus*, who was put up with *Matthias* for the apoſtleſhip, *Acts* i. 23. that he drank a poiſonous draught, and by the grace of the Lord, received no hurt: and the *Jews* themſelves report[y], that "a ſon of *R. Joſhua ben Levi*, ſwallowed ſomething hurtful; and one came and whiſpered to him in the name of *Jeſus*, the ſon of *Pandira* (ſo they call our Lord) and he did well." It follows, *and they ſhall lay hands on the ſick, and they ſhall recover*; as the apoſtle *Paul* did on the father of *Publius*, who was thereby healed of a fever, and a bloody flux, and alſo others, *Acts* xxviii. 8, 9. nay, ſome were healed by the ſhadow of *Peter*, *Acts* v. 15, 16. and others, by handkerchiefs and aprons taken from the body of *Paul*, *Acts* xix. 12. The *Perſic* verſion adds, without any authority, *whatſoever ye aſk in my name, ſhall be given unto you.*

Ver. 19. *So then after the Lord,* &c.] The *Vulgate Latin* and *Syriac* verſions add, *Jeſus*; and the *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *our Lord, the Lord Jeſus*; and both *Syriac* and *Perſic* read, *our Lord*; which is common in theſe verſions, where the word *Lord* is uſed: *had ſpoken unto them*; the diſciples, the above words, which commiſſioned them where to go, what to do, and what to ſay; and what ſhould follow them, for the confirmation of their miſſion and doctrine: *he was received up into heaven*; in a cloud, angels attending him, and devils led captive by him, and with a welcome into his Father's preſence: *and ſat on the right hand of God*; the *Ethiopic* verſion adds, *his own Father*; and which is an evidence of his having done his work; and that to full ſatisfaction; and is an honour never conferred on angels, or any mere creature; and is a peculiar dignity conferred on the human nature of Chriſt, in union with his divine perſon; and here he will remain, till his ſecond coming.

Ver. 20. *And they went forth,* &c.] After this the apoſtles went forth, from *Galilee* to *Jeruſalem*; and on the day of *Pentecoſt*, they appeared publickly, and preached the Goſpel in divers languages; and after the death of *Stephen*, and the perſecution raiſed upon that, they went forth from *Jeruſalem*; ſee *Iſa.* ii. 3. *And preached every where*; not only in *Judæa*, and in the neighbouring countries, but all over the world, in proceſs of time: *the Lord working with them*; making their miniſtry uſeful, for the conviction and converſion of large multitudes, and for the forming and ſettling abundance of Goſpel churches, and for the comfort and edification of the ſaints; all which was done, by the power and grace of Chriſt, without whom they could do nothing; ſee 1 *Cor.* iii. 9. *And confirming the word with ſigns following*; the *Arabic* verſion adds *them*; or *which they did*, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions render it; not by their own power, but, as the latter of theſe verſions adds, *by the help of our Lord*; ſee *Heb.* ii. 4. to all which, the Evangeliſt puts his *Amen*; ſo let it be, or ſo it ſhall be, and ſo it was.

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[z] Apud Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccl. l. 3. c. 39.

[y] T. Hieroſ. Sabbat, fol. 14. 4. & Avoda Zara, fol. 40. 4. & Midraſh Kohelet, fol. 81. 1.

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# AN EXPOSITION, &c.

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# The Goſpel according to St. LUKE.

THE writer of this Goſpel, *Luke*, has been, by ſome, thought, as *Origen* [a] relates, to be the ſame with *Lucius*, mentioned in *Rom.* xvi. 21. but he ſeems rather to be, and without doubt is, *Luke* the beloved phyſician, who was a companion of the Apoſtle *Paul* in great part of his travels in the *Gentile* world: he came with him to *Jeruſalem*, and from thence accompanied him to *Rome*, and continued with him when in priſon, and was with him to the laſt; ſee *Acts* xvi. 10, 11, &c. *Col.* iv. 14. 2 *Tim.* iv. 11. *Philem.* v. 24. *Jerom* [b], and others, ſay, he was a *phyſician* of *Antioch* in *Syria*; where it may be the Apoſtle *Paul* met with him, and might be the happy inſtrument of his converſion; ſo that he ſeems to be, by nation, a *Syrian*, as *Jerom* [c] calls him. *Grotius* thinks his name is *Roman*, and that it is the contraction of *Lucilius*. It is not an *Hebrew* name, but might be in common uſe in *Syria*; for though the *Jews* reckon, לוקום, *Lukus*, among foreign names, yet ſay [d] it was a very illuſtrious one, and well known to them, as it may well be thought to be if *Syriac*, the language being ſpoke by them: and many *Jews* lived in *Syria*, and particularly in *Antioch*. Some ſay that this Goſpel was written by the advice, and aſſiſtance, and under the direction of the Apoſtle *Paul*, as the Goſpel according to *Mark* was by that of *Peter*; though the following preface does not ſeem ſo well to accord with this. *Euſebius* ſays [e], that it was the ſenſe of the ancients, that whenever the Apoſtle *Paul* makes mention of his Goſpel, he intends this according to *Luke*. The time of the writing of it is not certain; ſome ſay it was written in the *fifteenth* year after the aſcenſion of our Lord; others in the *twenty-ſecond*; and others in the *twenty-ſeventh*. It is commonly thought to have been written after the Goſpels of *Matthew* and *Mark*, according to the order in which it ſtands; but this is rejected by ſome learned men, who rather think that *Luke* wrote firſt of all: and indeed, there are ſome things in his preface which look as if there had not, as yet, been any authentic account publiſhed, at leaſt which was come to the knowledge of this Evangeliſt. The place where he wrote it is alſo uncertain. *Jerom* ſays [f], he wrote it in the parts of *Achaia*, perhaps at *Corinth*: according to the titles prefixed to the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions, he wrote it in *Alexandria*: the former of theſe runs thus; "the Goſpel of "*Luke*, the Evangeliſt, which he ſpake and pub"liſhed in *Greek* in *Alexandria* the great." And the latter thus; "the Goſpel of *Luke*, which he "wrote in the *Greek* tongue in *Alexandria* of "*Egypt*." However, 'tis agreed on all hands, that it is genuine, and of divine inſpiration. *Euſebius* [g] relates, that it was affirmed by ſome, that this Goſpel, together with thoſe of *Matthew* and *Mark*, were brought to the Apoſtle *John*, who approved of them, and bore witneſs to the truth in them.

## CHAP. I.

Ver. 1. FORASMUCH *as many have taken in hand*, &c.] From hence, to the end of ver. 4. is a preface of the Evangeliſt to his Goſpel, ſetting forth the reaſons of his writing it; and which he wrote and ſent to the excellent *Theophilus*, for the further confirmation of him in the faith of Chriſt. It ſeems that many had took in hand, or attempted *to ſet forth in order a declaration of thoſe things which are moſt ſurely believed among us*; that is, they undertook to write and publiſh a very particular and exact narrative of the birth, life, actions, doctrines, miracles, ſufferings, death, reſurrection, and aſcenſion of Jeſus Chriſt; things which *Luke*, and other Chriſtians, had the fulleſt and ſtrongeſt evidence, and were confidently aſſured of, and moſt firmly believed, even with a full aſſurance of faith. By theſe *many*, he cannot mean the authentic hiſtorians of evangelical facts, as *Matthew* and *Mark*; for they two can't, with any propriety, be called many; and beſides, it is not ſo very clear and certain a point, that they had, as yet, wrote their Goſpels; nor would this Evangeliſt ſuggeſt any deficiency, weakneſs, and inaccuracy in them, as he ſeems to do: nor does he intend ſuch ſpurious writers as the authors of the Goſpels according to the *Nazarenes*, *Hebrews*, and *Egyptians*; of *Nicodemus*, *Thomas*, *Matthias*, and of the twelve Apoſtles; and ſtill leſs, the Goſpels of *Cerinthus*,

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[a] In Rom. xvi. 21.

[b] Catolog. Script. Eccleſ. §. 17. fol. 91. Euſeb. Eccl. Hiſt. l. 3. c. 4.

[c] Præfat. in Luc.

[d] T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 11. 2. & Gloſſ. in ib.

[e] Ubi ſupra.

[f] Præfat. in Luc.

[g] Eccl. Hiſt. l. 3. c. 24.

*Cerinthus*, *Baſilides*, and other hereticks; ſince theſe would not have paſſed without a cenſure from him, for the falſhood, fabulous, and trifling ſtuff in them, as well as for the wicked and heretical opinions propagated by them; and beſides, theſe pieces were not extant when this Goſpel was written: but he ſeems to deſign ſome honeſt and well-meaning Chriſtians, who undertook to write, and did write an account of the above things, which were firmly believed by all; and which they took from the Apoſtles, and firſt miniſters of the Goſpel, from their ſermons and diſcourſes, and from converſation with them; and which they committed to writing, partly to help their own memories, and partly for the benefit of others; in which, no doubt, they acted an upright part, tho' attended with weakneſs: wherefore, the Evangeliſt does not cenſure them as falſe, wicked, and heretical, nor approve of them as divine and perfect; for tho' they honeſtly meant, and deſigned well, yet there might be many things collected by them, which were impertinent, and not proper to be tranſmitted to poſterity; and what might be wrote with great inaccuracy and deficiency, and in a ſtile, the Holy Ghoſt, thought improper, things of this kind ſhould be delivered in: and therefore the Evangeliſt, moved and inſpired by the Spirit of God, ſet about the following work, and under the ſame influence compleated it. The phraſe, αναταξασθαι διηγησιν, *to ſet forth in order a declaration*, is, as Dr. *Lightfoot* obſerves, out of the *Talmud*[h], agreeable to the *Jewiſh* way of ſpeaking. "*R. Chaſdai* ſaid to one of the *Rabbins*, who was, "מסדר אגדתא, *ſetting in order a declaration* be- "fore him, *&c.* or relating in order a ſtory be- "fore him."

Ver. 2. *Even as they delivered them unto us*, &c.] By whom the Evangeliſt means, as appears from the after deſcription of them, the twelve Apoſtles, and ſeventy Diſciples; who handed down to others the accounts of the birth, life, and death of Chriſt; and according to which the above Chriſtians propoſed to write: *which from the beginning were eye-witneſſes and miniſters of the word*; either of the Goſpel, or rather of Chriſt himſelf, the eternal Word of God; for from the beginning of Chriſt's preaching the Goſpel, or as ſoon as he entered upon his publick miniſtry, he called his Apoſtles, as *Simon*, *Andrew*, *James*, *John*, &c. and afterwards ſeventy Diſciples; who were eye-witneſſes of him, of the truth of his incarnation, and of his miniſtry and miracles; ſaw, and converſed with him after his reſurrection from the dead, and beheld his aſcenſion to heaven; and were miniſters that were called, qualified, and ſent out by him, and waited on him, and ſerved him. This ſhows, as is by ſome rightly obſerved, that *Luke* was not one of the ſeventy diſciples, as ſome[i] have thought, and as the title of this Goſpel, to the *Arabic* verſion of it, expreſſes; for then he would have been an eye-witneſs himſelf: nor did he take his account from the Apoſtle *Paul*; for he was not a miniſter of the word from the beginning, but was as one born out of due time.

Ver. 3. *It ſeemed good to me alſo*, &c.] Being moved to it by the Holy Ghoſt; for he did not undertake this work of himſelf, merely by the motion of his own will, but was influenced, and directed to it by the Spirit of God, as well as by him aſſiſted in it: *having had perfect underſtanding of all things*; relating to the ſubject of this Goſpel, concerning the conception, birth, miniſtry, baptiſm, and death of *John* the *Baptiſt*; concerning the conception, birth, private and public life of Chriſt, together with his ſufferings, death, reſurrection, and aſcenſion. The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions refer the word *all* to perſons, to the eye-witneſſes and miniſters of the word; rendering the clauſe thus, *who have been ſtudiouſly near to them all*: and both ſenſes may be taken in, and the meaning be, that *Luke* had diligently ſought after, and had attained unto a perfect knowledge of all the affairs of Chriſt; having ſtudiouſly got into the company of, and intimately converſed with all, or as many as he could, who had ſeen Chriſt in the fleſh; and were, from the very firſt of his miniſtry, attendants on him, that he might have the moſt certain and exquiſite account of things, that could be come at: *from the very firſt*; and to the laſt; from the conception of *John*, the forerunner of the Meſſiah, which is higher than any other Evangeliſt goes, to the aſcenſion of Chriſt; though ſome chuſe to render the word here uſed, *from above*, as it may be, and ſometimes is; and may ſignify, that the Evangeliſt had his perfect knowledge of things by a revelation from above, by divine inſpiration; and this moved him to write, and which he mentions, that *Theophilus*, to whom he writes, and every other reader, may depend, with certainty, on what is ſaid in it. This clauſe is omitted in the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions, but is in all copies, and by all means to be retained: this being the caſe, theſe reaſons prevailed upon him, as he ſays, *to write unto thee, in order, moſt excellent Theophilus*; which regards not ſo much the order of time, which he does not always ſtrictly obſerve, as the particulars of things, related in order, and with great exactneſs: who this *Theophilus* was, to whom he writes his Goſpel; cannot be ſaid; by his title, which is ſuch as was given to governors of provinces, as to *Felix* and *Feſtus*, *Acts* xxiii. 26. and xxvi. 25. he ſeems to be, or to have been, a civil magiſtrate in ſome high office; for though not many rich, and mighty, yet ſome have been, and are, called by grace. *Theophylact*[k] ſays, he was of the order of the ſenators, and perhaps a nobleman, or prince: however, this name was not a general name, for every *lover of God*, as the word ſignifies, as *Salvian*[l] thought; but the name of a particular man, who believed in Chriſt, and was an acquaintance of *Luke*'s; tho' *Epiphanius*[m] makes a doubt of it which it ſhould be.

Ver. 4. *That thou mighteſt know the certainty*, &c.] The end the Evangeliſt had in writing this Goſpel, and ſending it to *Theophilus*, was, that he might be more ſtrongly aſſured of, and more firmly eſtabliſhed in the truths of the Goſpel. The *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, and *Arabic* verſions render it, *that thou mighteſt know the truth*; that is, the certain truth of things: the truth he did in ſome meaſure know before, but *Luke*'s view was, that he might have a more certain knowledge of it; both truth, and the certainty of it may be intended: ſo the *Hebrew* word, אמונה, ſignifies both truth and firmneſs; and the word here uſed ſignifies ſuch a certain evidence of things, as may be ſafely depended on; even of things, *wherein thou haſt been inſtructed*; or catechized, ſignifying, that he had been hitherto taught, as a catechumen, the rudiments, and firſt principles of the Chriſtian religion, by word of mouth; and he had taken them in upon the evidence they came with, and the authority of thoſe that inſtructed him in them; and now he ſent him in writing this account, to increaſe his knowledge, ſtrengthen his faith, and to give him ſuch a ſure proof of things, as might preſerve him ſafe in the belief of them, from all doubting and defection. Having finiſhed his preface, he proceeds to the narrative itſelf, which begins as follows.

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[h] T. Bab. Succa, fol. 53. 1.

[i] Epiphan. contra Hæreſ. l. 2. Hæreſ. 51. Theophylact. in Argument. in Luc.

[k] Ut ſupra.

[l] Salonio Epiſt. p. 337.

[m] Ut ſupra.

Ver. 5. *There was in the days of Herod the king of Judæa*, &c.] This was *Herod*, the ſon of *Antipater*, ſometimes called *Herod* the great, and is rightly here ſaid to be the king of *Judæa*; for, by deputation from the *Roman* emperor, he had the government of all *Judæa*, which upon his death was divided among his ſons. The phraſe, *in the days of*, is an eaſtern way of ſpeaking; ſee *Gen.* xiv. 1. *Ruth* i. 1. 1 *Sam.* xvii. 12. and intends the time of his reign; in which there was a *certain prieſt named Zacharias:* a name famous among the *Jews*, for an high-prieſt, who was ſlain by them in the court of the temple, 2 *Chron.* xxiv. 20, 21. and for one of the later prophets, *Zech.* i. 1. who were of this name. This man, the father of *John* the *Baptiſt*, was not an high-prieſt, as this character of him, and the work afterwards aſcribed to him, ſhow; tho' he has been thought to be ſo by ſome; and *John* himſelf is ſo called by the *Jews*[n]: he was *of the courſe of Abia*. The *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *in the days of Abia:* and it has been the opinion of ſome, that *Zacharias* and *Abia* were two prieſts, who performed their miniſtry in ſucceſſion, one after another; one miniſtred one time, and another at another time; but ſuch betray their ignorance both of ſcripture, and of *Jewiſh* affairs. In *David*'s time, there was a diviſion of the ſons of *Aaron* into *twenty-four* orders, or courſes; and this of *Abia* was one, and the *eighth* of them; ſee 1 *Chron.* xxiv. 1, 4, 10. The account the *Jews*[o] give of this matter, and in which they are not agreed, is this: "ſays *Rab Chama bar Guria*, ſays *Rab*, *Moſes* ordered for the *Iſraelites* eight courſes, four from *Eleazar*, and four from *Ithamar*; *Samuel* came and made them *ſixteen*; *David* came and made them twenty-four.——'Tis a tradition that *Moſes* ordered for the *Iſraelites*, ſixteen courſes, eight from *Eleazar*, and eight from *Ithamar*; and when the children of *Eleazar* increaſed above the children of *Ithamar*, they divided them, and appointed them twenty-four." The account, as given by *Maimonides*[p], is as follows: "*Moſes*, our maſter, divided the prieſts into eight courſes, four from *Eleazar*, and four from *Ithamar*, and ſo they were until *Samuel* the prophet; and in the days of *Samuel*, he and *David*, the king, divided them into twenty-four courſes; and over every courſe one head was appointed, and they went up to *Jeruſalem* to the ſervice of the courſe every week; and from ſabbath to ſabbath they changed; one courſe went out, and another came in, till they finiſhed, and returned again." Now of theſe there were but four courſes returned from the *Babyloniſh* captivity, as appears from *Ezra* ii. 36—39. and with this the *Jewiſh* accounts agree[q]. "The *Rabbins* teach, that four courſes came up from the captivity, *Jedaiah*, *Harim*, *Paſhur*, and *Immer*; the prophets that were among them ſtood up, and divided them, and appointed four and twenty lots, and put them into a box: *Jedaiah* came and took his lot, and the lot of his companions, ſix; *Harim* came and took his lot, and the lot of his companions, ſix; and ſo *Paſhur* and *Immer:* and ſo the prophets that were among them taught, that if *Jehoiarib*, the firſt courſe, came up from captivity, he ſhould not drive away *Jedaiah* out of his place; but *Jedaiah* ſhould be the principal, and *Jehoiarib* an appendix to him." Now, though the courſe of *Abia* did not return from captivity, yet its order and name were retained as the reſt of the courſes, being divided between theſe four by whom they were ſupplied; and therefore *Zacharias* is not ſaid to be of the poſterity of *Abia*, but of his courſe. To theſe courſes there were added as many ſtations; and what they were, and their uſe, may be learnt from what follows[r]. "The former prophets ordered four and twenty courſes; and to every courſe there was a ſtation at *Jeruſalem*; conſiſting of prieſts, levites, and *Iſraelites:* and when the time came for the courſe to go up, the prieſts and levites went up to *Jeruſalem*, but the *Iſraelites*, which were in that courſe, gathered themſelves to their cities, and read in the hiſtory of the creation; and the men of the ſtation faſted four days in the week, from the ſecond day, to the fifth." The ſenſe of which, according to their commentators[s], is, that theſe ſtations were ſubſtituted in the room of, and repreſented all *Iſrael*; and their buſineſs was to give themſelves up to divine worſhip, prayer, and ſacrifices; and ſuch of them as were near *Jeruſalem*; when the time of their courſe came, aſſiſted at the ſacrifices; and ſuch as were afar off, betook themſelves to the ſynagogues in their cities, and there faſted, prayed, and read. And ſo another of their authors[t] ſays, "there were twenty and four courſes of the prieſts, and ſo twenty and four courſes of the levites; and every week the courſe of the prieſts and levites goes to *Jeruſalem*; and the twenty and four ſtationary men, half of them go thither, and half are left in their houſes, and pray over the offerings:" for they had their ſtationary cities, where theſe men dwelt[u]. *Jericho* was one: they ſay[w], "*Jericho* was able to produce a complete ſtation itſelf; but becauſe of dividing the glory to *Jeruſalem*, it furniſhed out but half an one:" hence you need not wonder to hear of a prieſt and levite on the road to *Jericho* from *Jeruſalem*, as in *Luke* x. 31, 32. for they ſay, in the ſame place, that twenty-four thouſand, a ſtation conſiſted of at *Jeruſalem*, and there was half a ſtation at *Jericho:* as for the heads of the courſes of the houſes of their fathers, "there were in a courſe five, ſix, ſeven, eight, nine of them; a courſe which had five (heads) in it, three offered three days, and two offered four days; a courſe in which were ſix, five offered five days, and one offered two days; a courſe in which were ſeven, every one offered on his day; a courſe in which were eight, ſix offered ſix days, and two offered one day; a courſe in which were nine, five offered five days, and four offered two days; and there were ſome that fixed themſelves for ever; and a courſe that was (or began) on a ſabbath-day, was always on a ſabbath; and that which was at the going out of the ſabbath, was always at the going out of the ſabbath; and there were ſome of them that offered at every courſe; and there were ſome that caſt lots at every courſe[x]." But to ſay no more of theſe courſes and ſtations, I conclude with what *Maimonides* [y] ſays of them: "it is "not poſſible, that a man's offering ſhould be "offered up, and he not ſtand by it; but the offerings of the congregation are the offerings of "all *Iſrael*; and it is not poſſible that all *Iſrael* "ſhould ſtand in the court at the time of ſacrifice: "wherefore the former prophets ordered, that they "ſhould chuſe out of *Iſrael* men that were fit, and "feared to ſin, that they may be the meſſengers "of all *Iſrael* to ſtand by the offerings, and theſe "are called the men of the ſtation; and they divided them into twenty and four ſtations, according to the number of the courſes of the "prieſts and levites; and at every ſtation one of "them was appointed over them all, and he is "called the head of the ſtation; and every week "the men of the ſtation of that week gather together; and ſuch of them as are in *Jeruſalem*, "or near to it, go into the temple, with the courſe "of the prieſts and levites of that week; and they "who are in that ſtation, that are at a diſtance, "when their ſtation comes, they gather together to "the ſynagogue, which is in their place." Then he goes on to give an account, as before, how often they faſt in that week, how many prayers they ſay, and what they read. *And his wife was of the daughters of Aaron.* It is a ſaying of *R. Jochanan* [z]; "he "that would be rich, let him join himſelf to the "the ſeed of *Aaron*; for ſo it is, that the law and "the prieſthood make rich.——*R. Idi bar Abin* "married a prieſteſs, and from him proceeded "that were made doctors, *R. Sheſheth*, the ſon of "*R. Idi*, and *R. Joſhua*, the ſon of *R. Idi*." This is not ſo much ſaid in commendation of *Zacharias*, that he took a wife of the ſame tribe, and of the prieſtly line: for it was lawful for the tribe of *Levi* to take a wife of any other, becauſe it did not make any alteration in the inheritances of tribes; and it is a rule with the *Jews* [a], that prieſts, levites, and *Iſraelites* might marry with one another; as *Mary*, who was of the tribe of *Judah*, was akin to *Elizabeth*: but to point the original of *John*, and ſhew of what extraction he was, his father and mother being both of the family of *Aaron*. *And her name was Elizabeth*; the ſame name with אלישבע, *Eliſheba*, the wife of *Aaron*, *Exod.* vi. 23. and whom the *Septuagint* interpreters there call, as here, *Eliſabeth*: and this being the name of *Aaron*'s wife, it is very probable it might be a common name among the daughters of *Aaron*, in ſucceeding generations.

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[n] Ganz. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 25. 2.

[o] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 27. 1.

[p] Hilch. Cele Hamikdaſh, c. 4. §. 3.

[q] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 27. 1, 2. Eracin, fol. 12. 2. & 13. 1. T. Hieroſ. Taanioth, fol. 68. 1.

[r] Miſn. Taanith, c. 4. §. 2, 3.

[s] Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

[t] Piſke Toſeph. Moed Katon, art. 62.

[u] Miſn. Biccurim, c. 3. §. 2. & Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

[w] T. Hieroſ. Taaniot, fol. 67. 4.

[x] Ib. fol. 68. 1.

Ver. 6. *And they were both righteous before God,* &c.] Not as the *Phariſees*, only righteous before men, but in the ſight of God, who ſees the heart, and whoſe judgment is according to truth; and therefore were not juſtified by the deeds of the law; for by them no man can be juſtified in the ſight of God; but were made righteous thro' the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, by which the ſaints were made righteous before the coming of Chriſt, as thoſe after it; ſee *Acts* xv. 11. *Rev.* xiii. 8. God beheld them in his Son, as clothed with that righteouſneſs he engaged to bring in, and as cleanſed from all ſin in that blood of his which was to be ſhed; and they appeared to him, and in the eye of his juſtice, and according to his law, righteous perſons: tho' this character may alſo regard the internal holineſs of their hearts, and the truth and ſincerity of grace in them; which God, who trieth the hearts and reins of the children of men, knew, took notice of, and bore teſtimony to; as likewiſe their holy, upright walk and converſation before men, and which was obſerved by God, and acceptable to him, tho' imperfect, as ariſing from a principle of grace, being performed in the faith and fear of him, and with a view to his glory, and for the ſake, and through the righteouſneſs of his Son. *Walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord*: this was not the matter of their righteouſneſs before God, but the evidence of it before men: by *the commandments* are meant, all thoſe that are of a moral nature, which regarded their duty to God and man, and which are comprehended in love to both; and by *the ordinances of the Lord*, are intended the injunctions and inſtitutions of the ceremonial law, which is called the law of commandments, contained in ordinances, which, tho' now aboliſhed, were then in force: and it was right and commendable in them to obſerve them, who by their *walking* in them, ſhewed they loved them, both one and the other; eſteemed them, concerning all things to be right; and had reſpect to them all, and obſerved them, and took pleaſure in walking in them, which, by the grace of God, they continued to do; for walking not only ſhews that theſe commands and ordinances were a way marked out for them, but in which they took pleaſure, and made progreſs: and were *blameleſs*; not that they were without ſin, as none are; and it appears from this chapter that *Zacharias* was not, ſee ver. 20. but they were ſo in the ſight of God; as they were juſtified by the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, ſo they were without fault before the throne, and unreproveable before God; and as to their moral and religious character and conduct before men, they did not indulge themſelves in any known ſin, but lived in all good conſcience among men; nor were they remiſs and negligent in the diſcharge of duty; they were not guilty of any notorious breach of the law of God, or of any remarkable negligence in the buſineſs of religious obſervances: and though they might obſerve enough in them to charge themſelves with, and to humble themſelves before God and men; yet ſo ſtrict were they in their lives and converſations, that thoſe who were the moſt intimately acquainted with them, had nothing very material to blame them for.

Ver. 7. *And they had no child,* &c.] Son or daughter; and which was accounted a great infelicity; but this was not owing to the judgment of God upon them for any ſins they had been guilty of, as the above character of them ſhews; and it had been the caſe of ſome righteous pairs before them for a great while, as *Abraham* and *Sarah*, *Manoah*, and his wife, *Elkanah* and *Hannah*: *becauſe that Elizabeth was barren*; ſo that it was peculiarly her caſe, and not *Zacharias*'s: and tho' God had promiſed the people of *Iſrael* that there ſhould be no male nor female barren among them, *Deut.* vii. 14. yet there were inſtances and exceptions to this general rule, as before mentioned, when it was the pleaſure of God to make himſelf known, and magnify his power in the extraordinary conception and birth of any perſon; and therefore, though barrenneſs was reckoned a reproach to a perſon, there was, in this caſe, a particular hand of God, to anſwer a ſpecial purpoſe: the ſigns of ſterility are, according to the *Jews* [b], when a woman had not breaſts as other women have, her voice groſs, ſo that it could not be diſcerned, whether it was a man's or a woman's, *&c. and they both were* now *well ſtricken in years*; which made the conception and birth of *John*, the more extraordinary, and even miraculous, and ſo the belief of it the more difficult; ſee *Gen.* xvii. 17. It may be literally rendered, *they had proceeded*, or had far advanced *in their days:* it is an *Hebraiſm*, and anſwers to, באים בימים, in *Gen.* xviii. 11. *Joſh.* xiii. 1. and xxiii. 1, 2. and 1 *Kings* i. 1. where the *Septuagint* render it by the ſame phraſe as here. The *Mahometan* writers *Beidavi* and *Jallallo'din* ſay [c], that *Zacharias* was *ninety nine* years of age, and his wife *eighty nine*.

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[y] Hilch. Cele Hamikdaſh, c. 6. §. 1, 2.

[z] T. Bab. Peſachim, fol. 49. 1.

[a] Miſn. Kidduſhin, c. 4. §. 1.

[b] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol 80. 2. Maimon. & Bartenora in Miſn. Yebamot, c. 1. §. 1. & Maimon. Hilch. Iſhot, c. 2. §. 6.

Ver. 8. *And it came to paſs, that while he executed the prieſts office*, &c.] To which he was called and ordained, even to offer gifts and ſacrifices for men; whilſt he was in the way of his duty, when oftentimes God appears to, and in favour of his people; whilſt he was performing it, *before God*; in the temple, where was the ſymbol of the divine preſence, before the altar of the Lord; and as having the fear of God before his eyes; conſidering himſelf as in the ſight of God, and doing his work faithfully and ſincerely: *in the order of his courſe*; taking his turn in the order of the courſe of *Abia*, to which he belonged; ſee the note on ver. 5.

Ver. 9. *According to the cuſtom of the prieſts office*, &c.] In which, every man took his part in the execution of it by lot; and which was not an original ſettled law of God, but a cuſtom, which, in proceſs of time, through the number of the prieſts, took place, and prevailed: the occaſion of it was this; "at firſt, whoever would, might ſweep the "altar, or cleanſe it——it happened that two alike "ran, and came up to the aſcent of the altar, and "one thruſt down the other, and he fell, and his "leg was broke; and when the *Sanhedrim* ſaw that "they came into danger, they ordered that they "ſhould not cleanſe the altar, but by lot [d]." And ſo likewiſe all other ſorts of ſervice, were ſettled by lot: *his lot was to burn incenſe, when he went into the temple of the Lord*; where was the altar of incenſe, and which was burnt upon it morning and evening; ſee *Exod.* xxx. 1, 7, 8. and was typical of the continual interceſſion of Jeſus Chriſt; and this part of ſervice was aſſigned him by lot. The prieſts uſed to caſt lots, what part they ſhould take in the ſervice of the temple, in the order of the courſe, to which they belonged [e]. "There were four lots "there, and this was the firſt lot (*i. e.* to cleanſe "the altar); the ſecond lot was, who ſhould ſlay (the "ſacrifice,) who ſhould ſprinkle (the blood,) who "ſhould remove the aſhes from the innermoſt al- "tar, who ſhould cleanſe the candleſtick, who "ſhould bring the members (or parts of the ſacri- "fice) to the aſcent of the altar——the third lot "was, ye new ones, to the incenſe come, והפיסו, "and *caſt lots*; and the fourth, ye new ones, with "the old ones, who ſhall bring up the parts from "the aſcent of the altar, to the altar." And this was not only the caſe on the day of atonement, to which theſe rules belong; but every day in the daily ſervice and ſacrifice, when the ſame rules were obſerved, as appears from the rubrick of the daily ſacrifice [f]: "the preſident ſaid unto them "(the prieſts) come and caſt lots who ſhall ſlay, "who ſhall ſprinkle, who ſhall remove the aſhes "from the innermoſt altar, who ſhall remove the "aſhes from the candleſtick, who ſhall bring up "the parts to the aſcent of the altar, *&c.*" Again [g], "he ſays to them, O ye new ones, to the incenſe "come, and caſt lots; and they caſt lots, and he is "worthy, whom he accounts worthy—and he that "is accounted worthy of the incenſe, takes a veſſel, "and the veſſel is like to a large golden buſhel, "that holds three kabs, and a bowl in the middle "of it, full and heaped up with incenſe, with a "cover, and a ſort of a linen cloth put over it." And it is afterwards ſaid [h], "he that is wor- "thy of the incenſe, takes the bowl out of the "veſſel, and gives it to his friend, or he that is "near to him; and if it is ſcattered from it, in "the midſt of it, he puts it into his fiſt; and they "teach him, *ſaying*, take care that thou doſt not "begin before thy face, that thou art not burnt: "when he begins, he ſpreads it, and goes out; "and he that burns incenſe, may not do it, un- "til the preſident ſays, burn incenſe." The account *Maimonides* gives [i] of this matter, is as follows; "all the ſervices that they do every day, "they do, בפיים, *by lot*; and how do they do "it? All the prieſts of the houſes of the fathers, "of the day, go into the paved chamber, after "the pillar of the morning has aſcended, and "cloath themſelves with the prieſtly garments; "and the preſident who is over the lots is with "them, and they ſtand in a circle; and the preſi- "dent takes a mitre from off the head of one of "them, and goes round with it, and the man "from whom he begins to number, and they caſt "lots, as has been explained———how do they "caſt lots? they ſtand in a circle, and agree upon "a number, eighty, a hundred, or a thouſand, "or whatſoever number they may agree upon; and "the preſident ſays to them, put out your fingers, "and they put out their fingers, one, or two; "and if one puts out three, they number him "three; and they don't put out the thumb in the "ſanctuary, becauſe of deceivers; for the thumb "is ſhort, and eaſy to be put out, and to bend; "and he that puts out the thumb, they don't "number for him; and the preſident begins to "number from the man that is known, whoſe "mitre he took off firſt, and he numbers by their "fingers, and returns in the round, until he has "perfected the number they agreed upon; and "the man that compleats the number with his "finger, he is he that goes out by the firſt lot to "ſervice: and why does he number the number "they agree upon, by their fingers that they put "out, and does not number them by the men "themſelves? becauſe it is forbidden to number "*Iſrael*, but by means of another thing; as it is "ſaid, 1 *Sam.* xv. 4. *And numbered them in Te- "laim.* There were four lots they caſt every day "in the morning; the firſt lot was, who ſhould "cleanſe the altar: they caſt lots, and he was "worthy that was accounted worthy to cleanſe it; "and he ſets the row in order, and brings up the "two pieces of wood to the altar, and he brings in "the cenſer full of fire, from the outer altar, to the "golden altar, to burn incenſe upon it: and the ſe- "cond lot, thirteen were worthy of it, according to "the order of their ſtanding; how? the preſiden "ſays to them, put out your fingers, and he num- "bers in the way that has been explained; and h "that goes out by the firſt lot, is he that ſlays th "daily ſacrifice of the morning; and the ſecon "that ſtands by his ſide, is he that receives th "blood of the daily ſacrifice, and ſprinkles it; an

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[c] In Koran, c. 3. [d] Miſn. Yoma, c. 2. §. 1, 2. [e] Ib. §. 2, 3, 4. [f] Miſn. Tamid. c. 3. §. 1. [g] Ib. c. 5. §. 2. [h] Ib. c. 6. §. 3. [i] Hilchot Tamidin, c. 4. §. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. Vid. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 25. 1. & Gloſſ. in fol. 22. 1. Maimon. & Bartenora in Miſn. Yoma, c. 2. §. 1.

the third that is next to the ſecond, receives the aſhes from the innermoſt altar, which is the altar of incenſe; and the fourth, that is by his ſide, cleanſes the candleſtick, and trims the lamps; and the fifth brings up the head of the daily ſacrifice, and its leg to the aſcent of the altar; and the ſixth brings up the two ſhoulders; and the ſeventh brings up the extreme part of the back bone, and the other leg; and the eighth brings up the breaſt and the gullet; and the ninth brings up the two ſides; and the tenth brings up the inwards; and the eleventh brings up the fine flour, and the drink-offerings; and the twelfth brings up the things that were fried; and the thirteenth brings up the wine of the drink-offerings: the third lot, the preſident ſays to them, *even* to all the men of the houſe of the father of that day, whoever has never burnt incenſe, let him come and *caſt lots*; and they gather together to the preſident, and caſt lots; and he that goes out by the lot firſt, he is he that is worthy to burn incenſe; the fourth lot, they all gather together, and caſt lots to know who ſhall bring up the parts from the aſcent of the altar, to the altar; they caſt lots, and he is worthy who is accounted worthy: the daily evening ſacrifice, they don't caſt another lot for it; but every prieſt that is worthy of any ſervice of the ſervices of the morning, is worthy of the evening, except that of the incenſe; for they caſt another lot for that in the evening; and every one may come, who has never burnt incenſe of the men of that houſe of the fathers, and caſt lots for it; but if they have all of them burnt incenſe already, they all of them caſt lots, in the morning, at the third lot; and he that is worthy of it in the morning, burns incenſe in the evening." Hence it appears, that the burning of incenſe, as other parts of the prieſt's ſervice, was by lot; and that they were new prieſts, or ſuch who had never burnt incenſe, that caſt lots for it: for it is a tradition [k], that no man ever burnt incenſe twice; the reaſon aſſigned for it is, becauſe it makes a man rich; and therefore that every one might partake of the bleſſing in their turns, new ones were called unto it: whether *Zacharias* had ever burnt incenſe before, and whether he now did it in the morning or evening, is not certain.

Ver. 10. *And the whole multitude of the people were praying without*, &c.] In the court of the *Iſraelites*, whilſt *Zacharias* was in the holy place; though not in the holy of holies, where only the high-prieſt entered: it looks, as Dr. *Lightfoot* conjectures, as if this was on a ſabbath-day, ſince there was ſuch a multitude of people together; for on the week-day, there were only the prieſts and *Levites* of the courſe, and the ſtationary men, which repreſented the *Iſraelites*, and ſome of the more devout ſort of the people; but here, was the whole multitude of the people; or as the *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *all the people were in a full congregation praying*: prayer was wont to be made at the time of incenſe; hence it is compared to it, *Pſal.* cxli. 2. And hence it is, that Chriſt is ſaid to offer up the prayers of all ſaints, with his much incenſe, *Rev.* viii. 3, 4. *in the time of incenſe*; whether it was morning or evening, the people were obliged to be at a diſtance, whilſt that was burning; the *Jewiſh* canons confirm this [l]: "in the time they burn the incenſe in the temple every day, פורשין כל העם, *they ſeparate all the people*, from the temple, and from between the porch and the altar; there is not a man there till he comes out that burns the incenſe."

Ver. 11. *And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord*, &c.] *Gabriel*, as ſeems manifeſt from ver. 19, 26, 36. the ſame angel that had appeared to *Daniel*, about the time of the evening oblation, near five hundred years before, and gave him an account of the time of the *Meſſiah*'s coming, *Dan.* ix. 21. The *Jews* ſometimes ſpeak of divine and wonderful appearances to their prieſts, at ſuch times, and in ſuch places: "it is a tradition that *R. Iſhmael ben Eliſhah*, ſhould ſay, one time I went in, להקטיר קטרת, *to burn incenſe*; and I ſaw *Actariel* (one of the names of God with them) the Lord, the Lord of hoſts, who was ſitting on a throne, high and lifted up [m]." And ſo they ſay of *Simeon* the juſt, that there was always an appearance when he went into the holy of holies; 'tis related thus [n]: "*Simeon* the juſt, miniſtred unto *Iſrael* in the high prieſthood, forty years; and in the laſt year, he ſaid to them, I ſhall die this year: they ſaid to him, from whence doſt thou know it? He replied to them, every year that I have entered into the holy of holies, there was, זקן אחד, *one old man*, clothed in white, and veiled in white, that went in with me, and came out with me; and this year he went in with me, but did not come out with me." And according to *Joſephus* [o], the high-prieſt *Hyrcanus*, received an oracle, or anſwer from God, as he was offering incenſe; ſo that the *Jews* ought not to diſcredit ſuch an appearance to *Zacharias*: *ſtanding on the right ſide of the altar of incenſe*; of which, ſee *Exod.* xxx. 1—10. and xxxv. 25—28. the ſituation of it, according to the *Jews*, was this [p]: "the table (of ſhew-bread) was in the north, two cubits and a half diſtant from the wall; and the candleſtick was in the ſouth, two cubits and a half diſtant from the wall; and the altar (of incenſe) was in the middle, and ſtood between them." And to this agrees the account of *Maimonides* [q], who ſays, "the candleſtick was on the ſouth, on the left hand, as you go in; and the table of ſhew-bread on the right hand, and both of them on the ſide of the holy of holies without; and the altar of incenſe was between them both without." So that it was on the north ſide that the angel ſtood.

Ver. 12. *And when Zacharias ſaw him*, &c.] The angel; *he was troubled, and fear fell upon him*; for ſuch appearances of angels, were not now ſo common as formerly; and when they were more uſual, generally had ſuch effects on the minds, even of good men; ſee *Judges* vi. 22. *Dan.* viii. 17.

Ver. 13. *But the angel ſaid unto him, fear not Zacharias*, &c.] He calls him by his name; for holy men are known to angels in perſon, and by name; to whom they are miniſtring ſpirits, and for whoſe good they are concerned; and bid him not be afraid, as the angel alſo ſaid to the women at Chriſt's ſepulchre, *Matt.* xxviii. 5. for he ſaw by his countenance and geſtures, that he was greatly ſurprized and terrified at the ſight of him: *for thy prayer is heard*; which he had many years ago put up for a ſon; for it cannot be thought that he had been now praying for one, being in ſuch an advanced age, and having for years paſt given up all hopes of one, and was even unbelieving, when he was told by the angel he ſhould have one: prayer is ſometimes immediately heard, and anſwered; and ſometimes an anſwer is deferred a long time, to try the faith and patience of the ſaints, and to diſcover the more the wiſdom, power, and goodneſs of God: or this may have regard to his preſent prayer, one branch of which, might concern the coming of the Meſſiah, which was now expecting, and therefore is told, that his prayer was heard; ſince the angel that appeared to him, brought him the news of the conception and birth, of his forerunner: *and thy wife Eliſabeth ſhall bear a ſon*; who had been always barren, and was called ſo, ver. 7, 36. *And thou ſhalt call his name John*; in *Hebrew*, *Jochanan*, and ſignifies *gracious*; a fit name for one that was filled with the gifts and graces of the Spirit; and was the harbinger of the Meſſiah, who is full of grace and truth; and the uſherer in of the Meſſiah's kingdom, which is a diſpenſation of grace.

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[k] T. Bab Yoma, fol. 26. 1.

[l] Maimon. Hilch. Tamidin, c. 3. §. 3. 9. & Yom haccipurim, c. 4. §. 2. Vid. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 44. 1.

[m] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 7. 1.

[n] T. Hieroſ. Yoma, fol. 42. 3.

[o] De Bello Jud. l. 13. c. 18.

[p] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 33. 2.

[q] Hilch. Beth habbechira, c. 1. §. 7.

Ver. 14. *And thou ſhalt have joy and gladneſs*, &c.] Not only becauſe of his having a ſon; but becauſe this his ſon would be, the prophet of the higheſt; would go before the Lord, and prepare his ways; give knowledge of ſalvation to many, and light to them that were in darkneſs, and guide their feet in the way of peace: all which, and more, he afterwards expreſſes in his ſong, whereby this part of the angel's prediction had its accompliſhment; *and many ſhall rejoice at his birth*; as the neighbours and couſins of his parents did; ſee ver. 58. and not only they, but all others, who afterwards had knowledge of him as a prophet, and as the forerunner of the Meſſiah.

Ver. 15. *For he ſhall be great in the ſight of the Lord*, &c.] Of *Jehovah*, the Father; with whom, what is highly eſteemed among men, is oftentimes an abomination; and of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, before whom he was to go, and who pronounced him a prophet, and more than a prophet, and even greater than any born of women, *Matt.* xi. 9, 11. and of the Lord, the Spirit, with whom he was filled from his mother's womb: he was great, not in birth and blood, in worldly riches and grandeur, but in gifts and grace, in his work, office, and uſefulneſs, and in the eſteem of God, and even of men too: *and ſhall drink neither wine nor ſtrong drink*; which were forbidden the *Nazarites*, *Numb.* vi. 3. where the *Jews*, by *wine*, underſtand new wine; and by *ſtrong drink*, old wine: ſo all the *three Targums*, of *Onkelos*, *Jonathan ben Uzziel*, and the *Jeruſalem*, paraphraſe the words there, *from wine new and old, he ſhall ſeparate himſelf*; and they allow ſtrong drink to a *Nazarite*, that has no wine in it: their canon [r] runs thus, "three things "are forbidden a *Nazarite*, defilement, and ſhaving, and whatever proceeds from the vine, whe"ther fruit, or the refuſe of fruit; but ſtrong "drink made of dates, or dried figs, and ſuch "like, is free for a *Nazarite*; and the ſtrong drink "which is forbidden him in the law, is ſtrong "drink made of mixture of wine." But the *Hebrew* word, שכר, and which is here retained by the Evangeliſt, ſignifies [s] any ſort of liquor, which is inebriating, whether it is made of fruits, or honey, or what not. The *Jews* had no ſuch ſtrong drink as ours, which we call beer, or ale; but they ſpeak of the ſtrong drink of the *Medes*, which they ſay was an inebriating liquor, made of barley [t]: *and he ſhall be filled with the Holy Ghoſt, even from his mother's womb*; or *whilſt in his mother's womb*, as the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions, render it: like *Jeremy*, he was ſanctified, ſet apart, and ordained to be the prophet of the higheſt, before he came out of his mother's womb; and was then under ſuch an influence of the Spirit of God, as to leap in it for joy, at the ſalutation of the mother of Chriſt to his, ver. 41, 44. and very early appeared to have the extraordinary gifts and graces of the Holy Ghoſt, qualifying him for his work.

Ver. 16. *And many of the children of Iſrael*, &c.] To whom only, or at leaſt chiefly, he was ſent, and came preaching, and adminiſtring the ordinance of baptiſm; and great multitudes of them flocked unto him, attended on his miniſtry, believed in his doctrine, and ſubmitted to his baptiſm, but not all; for ſome ſlighted his preaching, and rejected his baptiſm: however, ſome there were, and many too, that were converted under his miniſtry, confeſſed their ſins, and were baptized by him; which verified this prediction: *ſhall he turn to the Lord their God*; not *Jehovah*, the Father; for though he was the Lord God of the *Jews* in general, and of thoſe that were turned by *John*'s miniſtry in a ſpecial manner; yet *John* cannot be ſaid to *go before him*, as he is in the next verſe; but the Meſſiah is here meant, who is the Lord *Jehovah*, and is often ſo called in the Old Teſtament; particularly in a prophecy afterwards reſpected, *Iſa.* xl. 3. a name peculiar to God alone: and who alſo is called God, as he is frequently with additional epithets; as the mighty God, God over all, the great God, the true God, and eternal life; and our, your, and their God, the God of his covenant people, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*; ſee *Iſa.* xxv. 9. and xxxv. 4. Converſion, which is meant by turning to God, is not man's work, but God's, and is effected by his mighty power, which is only equal to it: but *John* was to be, and was, an inſtrument of the converſion of many among the *Jews*, by preaching the doctrine of repentance towards God, and faith in the Meſſiah, that was juſt ready to come: he was the means in the hand of God, of turning many from ſin, of bringing them to a true ſenſe of it, and to an hearty and ingenuous confeſſion and acknowledgment of it; and from truſting to, and depending upon, their birth-privileges, legal duties, and ſelf-righteouſneſs; and from their groſs notions of a temporal Meſſiah; and of leading them to believe in Chriſt as a ſpiritual Saviour, as the Lamb of God, that ſhould take away the ſin of the world.

Ver. 17. *And he ſhall go before him*, &c.] The Lord his God, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, whoſe forerunner he was; the meſſenger of him, that according to the prophecies in *Iſa.* xl. 3. *Mal.* iii. 1. was to go before him, and prepare his ways; as he did, by his wonderful conception and birth, which made way for the more eaſy belief of the conception and birth of the Meſſiah, by a virgin; and by his preaching the doctrine of repentance, and adminiſtring the ordinance of baptiſm; which were done to awaken the people's expectation of the Meſſiah, and that he might be made manifeſt in *Iſrael*, and by pointing him out to them in his preaching: *in the ſpirit and power of Elias*; or *Elijah*, the *Syriac* an *Perſic* verſions add, *the prophet*: *John* the *Baptiſ* and *Elijah*, were men much of the ſame ſpirit an diſpoſition, and of like power, life, and zeal i religion; and therefore the one, goes by the nam of the other: they both much converſed in th wilderneſ wilderneſs; agreed in the auſterity of their lives; their habit and dreſs were much alike; they were both reſtorers of religion, when very low, and much decayed; were famous for their faithfulneſs in reproving the vices of kings, and for their warm zeal for true religion, and for the perſecution they endured for the ſake of it: *to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children*; in *Mal.* iv. 6. which is the prophecy referred to, 'tis added, *and the heart of the children to their fathers*; which ſome underſtand, of his turning the degenerate offspring of the *Jews*, to the ſentiments of their forefathers, and cauſing them to agree with them in their notions of the Meſſiah: others, of the turning of the *Jews* to Chriſt, and his apoſtles; and others, of his being a means, through his miniſtry and baptiſm, of reconciling *Jews* and *Gentiles* together, which is the great buſineſs of the Goſpel diſpenſation, uſhered in by *John*; and who preached that all men ſhould believe in Chriſt, and baptized publicans and *Roman* ſoldiers, as well as *Jews*; and which ſenſe pretty much agrees with the interpretation the *Jews* put upon the prophecy, as referring to *Elijah* the *Tiſhbite*, whom they expect in perſon, before the coming of the Meſſiah: ſay[u] they, "*Elijah* comes to defile and to cleanſe (*i. e.* to pronounce what things are clean or unclean) and to remove afar off, and to bring near (*i. e.* to determine what families are legitimate or illegitimate.) *R. Simeon* ſays, *to compoſe differences*; and the wiſe men ſay, neither to remove, nor to bring near, but, לעשות שלום, *to make peace in the world*; as it is ſaid, *behold, I ſend unto you Elijah the prophet*, &c. *and he ſhall turn the heart of the fathers*, &c." But the true meaning is, that *John* the *Baptiſt*, who is meant by *Elias*, ſhould be an inſtrument of turning fathers with their children, and children with their fathers, to the Lord; that he ſhould be a means of converting both fathers and children, one as well as another; and to gather perſons of every age, and ſtation; for the particle על, which we render *to*, is the ſame as עם, *with*, as *Kimchi* on the text obſerves: *and the diſobedient to the wiſdom of the juſt*. By the *diſobedient* are meant, either *Jews* or *Gentiles*; ſome underſtand it of the *Gentiles*, who were children of diſobedience, before the light of the Goſpel came among them: but rather the former are meant, who were a diſobedient, rebellious, and gainſaying people; who were gone off from the wiſdom, knowledge, and religion, of the juſt, or righteous ones, their forefathers; who propheſied of Chriſt, rejoiced to ſee his day, longed for him, and believed in him: now *John* was to be an inſtrument of turning ſome of the unbelieving *Jews*, to the true knowledge of ſalvation by Chriſt; which their righteous progenitors waited for, had a right knowledge of, and an intereſt in; and of leading them either into the Goſpel of Chriſt, that wiſdom of God in a myſtery; the manifold wiſdom of God, in which he has abounded in all wiſdom and prudence; and which the righteous men among the *Jews*, ſearched diligently into, attained ſome knowledge of, and which even the holy angels deſire to look into; ſo the patriarchs were called juſt, or righteous, as righteous *Abel*, juſt *Noah*, &c. and ſo the *Jewiſh* fathers: hence in the *Targum* on *Jer.* xii. 5. and xxxi. 16, 21. mention is made of thy fathers, צדיקיא, *the juſt*, who were of old: or to Chriſt himſelf, who is the wiſdom of God, and in whom are hid all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge, to know him, and believe in him; who in the ſame *Targum* on *Jer.* xxiii. 5. is called, משיח דצדיקיא, *the Meſſiah of the juſt*. *To make ready a people prepared for the Lord.* The *Vulgate Latin* and *Syriac* verſions read, a *perfect people*; and the *Perſic* verſion, *all the people*: not all the people of the *Jews*, but God's elect among them; who from all eternity were *prepared*, as a people in a covenant relation, as the portion of Chriſt, and as his ſpouſe and bride, and as ſuch, given to him; they were in electing grace, veſſels of mercy, afore prepared for glory; and heaven, as a kingdom, was prepared for them from the foundation of the world: they were provided with all ſpiritual bleſſings, which were prepared for them, and beſtowed on them in heavenly places, in Chriſt, before the foundation of the world; even all their grace, and all their glory; yea, even their good works are ſuch, which God has fore-ordained, or fore-prepared that they ſhould walk in. Now, the work of *John* the *Baptiſt*, was *to make ready* this people, by pointing out to them, in a miniſterial way, wherein their readineſs lay, to meet the Lord, and be for ever with him in heaven; not in a civil, moral, or legal righteouſneſs; or in outward humiliation for, and abſtinence from ſin; nor in a ſubmiſſion to Goſpel ordinances, and in a mere profeſſion of religion, and in an obſervance of a round of duties; but in juſtification by the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and in regeneration and ſanctification, by his Spirit and grace; the one giving a right to, the other a meetneſs for the heavenly inheritance: and *John*, and ſo any other Goſpel miniſter, may be ſaid to make ready a people, in this ſenſe; when they are the inſtruments of the regeneration and converſion of ſinners, and of leading them to the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, for their juſtification before God, and acceptance with him.

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[r] Maimon. Hilch. Nezirut, c. 5. §. 1. & Jarchi, Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

[s] R. David Kimchi in Sepher Shoraſhim, rad. שכר.

[t] Miſn. Peſach. c. 3. §.

Ver. 18. *And Zacharias ſaid unto the angel, whereby ſhall I know this?* &c.] Notwithſtanding ſuch an appearance of an angel to him, which in thoſe times was not ſo uſual, and this in the holy place; and the things themſelves which were told him, and theſe as the return of prayer; yet he diſtruſted, and wanted a ſign, whereby he might know the truth of them; as the *Jews* were generally deſirous of, and as the father of them was; who expreſſed himſelf in much ſuch language, on a certain occaſion, as this his ſon did; ſee *Gen.* xv. 8. *For I am an old man*; at leaſt ſixty years of age; for with the *Jews*, ſixty years were reckoned, לזקנה, *for old age*[w]; and a man of theſe years, was accounted an old man: and the *Jewiſh Rabbins* obſerve[x], that the word for old age in *Job* xxx. 2. is by *Gematry*, *ſixty*; that is, the letters of the word, numerically make ſo much. The *Mahometan* writers, as before obſerved on ver. 7. make him to be ninety nine years of age: he was not diſcharged from ſervice; the *Levites* were at fifty, but not the prieſts; blemiſhes, as the *Jewiſh* writers ſay[y], made them unfit for ſervice, but years did not: and even the law concerning the *Levites*, they ſay[z], only reſpected the time they carried the ſanctuary from place to place, and not future generations; and that they are diſqualified neither by blemiſhes, nor by years, only by voice, for ſinging of the ſong; but then they might be among the porters; ſo that they were not on that account laid aſide from all ſervice: *and my wife well ſtricken in years.* The *Mahometan* writers, as before, ſay, ſhe was

[u] Miſn. Ediot, c. 8. §. 7.

[w] Miſn. Abot, c. 5. §. 21. & Maimon. in ib.

[x] R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 24. 2.

[y] T. Bab. Cholin, fol. 24. 1.

[z] Maimon. Hilch. Cele Hamikdaſh, c. 3. §. 8.

was *eighty-nine*; a like objection *Abraham* made, tho' he afterwards got over it, and was ſtrong in faith, giving glory to God, believing in his power and faithfulneſs; ſee *Gen.* xvii. 17.

Ver. 19. *And the angel anſwering, ſaid unto him, I am Gabriel.* &c.] The name of an angel well known to *Zacharias* from *Daniel*'s prophecies, *Dan.* viii. 16. and ix. 21. and is the firſt time we read of the name of an angel: the *Jews* ſay [a], the names of angels came out of *Babylon*, by the means of the *Iſraelites*; and it was there that *Daniel* became acacquainted with this name of *Gabriel*, and alſo of *Michael*. Frequent mention is made of *Gabriel* in the *Jewiſh* writings [b]: were there a particular angel appointed over conception, as the *Jews* ſay [c] there is, one would be ready to think it ſhould be *Gabriel*, ſince he was ſent to declare the conception and birth both of *John* the *Baptiſt*, and of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt: the name of that angel the *Jews* indeed ſay [d] is *Lilah*; but yet the *Cabbaliſtic* doctors [e] affirm, that that angel is under *Gabriel*. In what language this angel ſpoke to *Zacharias*, and afterwards to *Mary*, may be a needleſs enquiry; but ſince the *Syriac* language was generally ſpoken, and underſtood by the *Jews* at this time, 'tis highly reaſonable that he ſpoke to them in that. The *Jews* have a notion, that none of the miniſtring angels underſtand the *Syriac* language, excepting *Gabriel*; and he, they ſay, underſtood, ſeventy languages [f]. Now the angel, by making mention of his name, puts *Zacharias* in mind of the prophecy of *Daniel* concerning the coming of the Meſſiah, which he had from him; and whereas his name ſignified, *a man of God*, or *the power*, or *ſtrength of God*, or *God is my ſtrength*, he ſuggeſts unto him, that he ought not to have diſtruſted his words, ſince with God all things are poſſible: he adds, *that ſtand in the preſence of God*; beholding his face, hearkening to his voice, and miniſtring to him, and ſo had this affair immediately from him; and therefore he had no reaſon to doubt of the accompliſhment of it. *Gabriel*, according to the *Jews*, is one of the four angels that ſurround the throne of God: their names are *Michael*, *Uriel*, *Raphael*, and *Gabriel* [g]. “ *Michael* they place at his right “ hand, and *Uriel* at his left hand, and *Gabriel*, “ מלפניו, *before him*, (in his preſence, as he here ſays “ of himſelf) over-againſt the kingdom of *Judah*, “ and *Moſes* and *Aaron*, who were in the eaſt (of “ the camp of *Iſrael*); and why is his name called “ *Gabriel?* of *Judah* it is written, 1 *Chron.* v. 2. “ *for Judah*, גבר, *prevailed above his brethren*; “ and of *Moſes* it is written, *Lev.* i. 1. and *God* “ *called unto Moſes*; and it is written, *Iſ.* ix. 6. *and* “ *ſhall call his name wonderful, counſellor*, אל גבור, “ *the mighty God*, lo! *Gabriel*.” *And am ſent to ſpeak unto thee, and to ſhew unto thee theſe glad tidings*: wherefore, on account of his name, his office, and his miſſion, eſpecially the ſubject of it being welcome news, good tidings, what he ſaid ought to have obtained credit with him. *Gabriel* was one of the miniſtring ſpirits ſent to miniſter to them that were heirs of ſalvation; his meſſages were meſſages of mercy, grace and love; he was not a miniſter of the wrath and vengeance of God, but of his favour. Agreeably to this the *Jews* ſay of him, that his name *Gabriel* is, by *Gematry*, or numerically, the ſame with רחם, *merciful* [h]: he is called, in the *Talmud* [i], רוח פסקונית, *the deciſive ſpirit*, and is ſaid to have three names, *Piſkon*, *Itmon*, and *Sigron*. He is called *Piſkon*, becauſe he decides, or determines judgment againſt them that are above; and *Itmon*, becauſe he ſtops up the ſins of the *Iſraelites*; and *Sigron*, becauſe when he ſhuts (the gates of judgment) there is none can open again. Hence alſo they ſay, that he is the angel that is appointed over water which quenches fire. The *Targumiſt* on *Job* xxv. 2. paraphraſes the words thus: “ *Michael* on the right hand, who is over “ fire; and *Gabriel* on the left hand, who is over “ water; and the holy creatures mingle fire and “ water, and by his dominion and fear, make peace “ in his heaven of heavens.”

Ver. 20. *And behold, thou ſhalt be dumb*, &c.] Or *ſilent*; *and not able to ſpeak*, if he would. Silence is ſometimes voluntary; but this was what he could not help: *until the day that theſe things ſhall be performed*; which he had ſaid concerning the conception and birth of a ſon, and the impoſition of a name on him; for this dumbneſs remained upon *Zacharias*, not only until his wife had conceived, and the child was born, but until the eighth day after, when he was circumciſed, and his name was given him the angel directed to: *becauſe thou believeſt not my words*: he was ſtruck both deaf and dumb, as appears from his friends making ſigns to him, ver. 62. which they had no need to have done, could he have heard: he was ſtruck with deafneſs, becauſe he hearkened not to the angel's words; and with dumbneſs, becauſe from the unbelief of his heart he objected to them. We learn from hence, what an evil unbelief is, and how much reſented by God, and how much it becomes us to take heed, that it prevails not in us; and eſpecially ſince it eaſily beſets us: *which ſhall be fulfilled in their ſeaſon*; firſt the conception, then the birth; after that the calling him by his name, and in proceſs of time, the doing of his work and office; ſo that the unbelief of *Zacharias* did not make the faith of God of none effect; for though ſometimes the people of God are very unbelieving, yet he abides faithful to his word and promiſes. *Mahomet*, in his *Alkoran* [k], very wrongly makes the angel to ſay theſe words to *Zacharias*; “ thy ſign “ ſhall be, that thou ſhalt ſpeak unto no man for “ three days, otherwiſe than by geſture.” And elſewhere [l] 'tis ſaid, three nights.

Ver. 21. *And the people waited for Zacharias*, &c.] That were without, in the court of the *Iſraelites*, praying there, while he was offering incenſe: theſe were waiting for his coming out, in order to be bleſſed by him, according to *Numb.* vi. 23, 24, 25, 26. and be diſmiſſed: *and marvelled that he tarried ſo long in the temple*; beyond the uſual time of burning incenſe; which might be occaſioned either by a longer diſcourſe of the angel with him than what is here related; or being ſtruck with amazement at the ſight and hearing of the angel, he might continue long muſing on this unexpected appearance and relation; or he might ſpend ſome time not only in meditation upon it, but in mental prayer, confeſſion, and thankſgiving. The high-prieſt, when he went in to burn incenſe on the day of atonement, “ made a ſhort prayer in the out- “ ward houſe, (in the temple) and he did not con- “ tinue long in his prayer, שלא להבעית, *that he* “ *might*

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[a] T. Hieroſ. Roſh Haſhana, fol. 56. 4.
[b] Targum Jon. in Exod. xxiv. 10. Targum in Eſth. iv. 12. & in Pſ. cxxxvii. 8. T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 19. 2. Shemot Rabba, fol. 91. 2. Sithre Tora in Zohar in Gen. fol. 65. 3. & 66. 2.
[c] Targum in Job iii. 3.
[d] T. Bab. Nidda, fol. 16. 2.
[e] Lex. Cabbal. p. 230.
[f] T. Bab. Sota, fol. 33. 1. & Toſephot in Sabbat, fol. 12. 2.
[g] Bemidbar Rabba, §. 2. fol. 179. 1.
[h] Lex. Cabbal. p. 230.
[i] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 44. 2.
[k] C. 3. p. 40. Ed. Sale.
[l] C [illegible]

“ *might not affright* the *Iſraelites*[m]”, thinking that he was dead; for many high-prieſts that were unfit for, or made alteration in the ſervice, died in the holy of holies[n]. “It is reported[o] of one “high-prieſt, that he continued long in his prayer, “and his brethren, the prieſts, thought to have “gone in after him; and they began to go in, “and he came out; they ſay unto him, why didſt “thou continue long in thy prayer? he replied to “them, is it hard in your eyes that I ſhould pray “for you, and for the houſe of the ſanctuary, that “it might not be deſtroyed? they anſwered him, “be not uſed to do ſo; for we have learned, that “a man ſhould not continue long in prayer, that “he may not affright *Iſrael*.” This high-prieſt, they elſewhere ſay[p], was *Simeon* the juſt.

Ver. 22. *And when he came out, he could not ſpeak unto them*, &c.] Or deliver the benediction they were waiting for: *and they perceived that he had ſeen a viſion in the temple*; which he made them to underſtand, by the geſtures he uſed: *for he beckned unto them*; by nodding his head, or by ſome motions of his hands, the *Ethiopic* verſion adds, *with his hand*; or of his lips; for the ſigns of a dumb man are diſtinguiſhed into רמיזה and קפיצה[q]; the one is a ſign which is expreſſed by the head and hands; and the other is a ſign expreſſed by the lips: hence that rule[r], “a dumb man beckens, “and is beckened to; and *Ben Bethira* ſays, he “moves his lips, and lips are moved to him:” *and remained ſpeechleſs*; to the time the angel fixed.

Ver. 23. *And it came to paſs, that as ſoon as the days of his miniſtration*, &c.] In the order of the courſe, which might be three, four, five, or ſix days, according to the number of the heads of the houſe of their fathers in the courſe; ſee the note on ver. 5. *were accompliſhed*: for tho' he was deaf and dumb, he was not hereby diſqualified for ſervice. Deafneſs and dumbneſs excuſed perſons from various duties[s], but did not diſqualify prieſts: a *levite*, if he had loſt his voice, was diſqualified, but not a prieſt[t]; the reaſon was this, becauſe it was one part of the work of the *levites* to ſing, and therefore could not perform it without a voice; but ſuch was the work of the prieſts, that though deaf and dumb, they could diſcharge it; as cleanſing the altar, trimming the lamps, carrying the parts to the altar, laying them upon it, and burning them, or offering any ſacrifice, burning incenſe, *&c.* which was the buſineſs of *Zacharias*; which when he had fulfilled, he *departed to his own houſe*; which was not at *Jeruſalem*, but in the hill-country, in a city of *Judah* there; ſee ver. 39, 40.

Ver. 24. *And after thoſe days*, &c.] The days of his miniſtration in the temple, quickly after his return home; the *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *after two days*: *his wife Elizabeth conceived*; according to the angel's prediction, and notwithſtanding her barrenneſs, and the unbelief of her huſband; *and hid herſelf five months*. The *Arabic* and *Perſic* verſions render it, *hid her bigneſs*; but there could be no occaſion to take any methods to hide this, ſince, if ſhe ſaid nothing of it herſelf, and there could be no ſuſpicion of it in one of her years, it could not be much diſcerned in her by ſuch a time; but ſhe hid herſelf, or lived retired, that ſhe might be fully ſatisfied that ſhe was with child, before ſhe ſaid any thing about it; and that ſhe might not diſcover any pride or vanity on account of it; and to avoid all diſcourſe with others about it, which might be rumoured abroad; and chiefly to ſhun all ceremonial uncleanneſs, which one, that was bred a *Nazarite*, was obliged to; ſee *Judg.* xiii. 14. and moſt of all, that ſhe might be retired, and ſpend her time in meditation upon the goodneſs of God, and in returning thanks to him for the favour ſhe had received; *ſaying*, as in the following verſe.

Ver. 25. *Thus hath the Lord dealt with me*, &c.] In a very gracious and bountiful manner; in giving her ſtrength to conceive a ſon in her old age, and ſuch an one that was to be great, and ſo uſeful in his day; of which her huſband had doubtleſs informed her by writing, tho' he could not ſpeak: *in the days wherein he looked on me*; with a favourable eye, with a look of love and mercy: *he took away my reproach from among men*; as barrenneſs was accounted, eſpecially among the *Iſraelites*, the ſeed of *Abraham*; to whom was promiſed a numerous iſſue, as the ſtars in the ſky, and as the ſand on the ſea-ſhore, and particularly the Meſſiah; ſee *Gen.* xxx. 23. *Iſ.* iv. 1.

Ver. 26. *And in the ſixth month*, &c.] After *Elizabeth*'s conception; for ſo long was *John* the *Baptiſt* conceived before Chriſt, and ſo long he was born before him; and it ſeems as if there was the ſame diſtance between the public miniſtry of the one, and the other: *John* was before Chriſt, as man, being his forerunner; but Chriſt was preferred unto him as mediator, and exiſted before him, as the eternal Son of God: *the angel Gabriel was ſent from God*; the ſame angel, that near five hundred years before gave *Daniel* an exact account of the time of the Meſſiah's coming, and ſix months ago acquainted *Zacharias* with the conception, birth, character, and office of his forerunner: *unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth*; the whole country of *Galilee* was mean and contemptible with the *Jews*: they obſerve, tho' thro' miſtake, that no prophet aroſe out of it, *John* vii. 52. and *Nazareth* particularly was exceeding deſpicable in their eye: hence thoſe words of *Nathanael*, *can any good thing come out of Nazareth? John* i. 46. ſee the note on *Matt.* i. 23. and yet hither an angel was ſent by God; and here dwelt the mother of our Lord.

Ver. 27. *To a virgin*, &c.] A pure virgin, that never knew man; ſee ver. 34. and yet *eſpouſed to a man whoſe name was Joſeph*; but they were not come together, nor had he taken her for his wife, and home to his houſe, nor had they cohabited: *of the houſe of David*; which, according to the grammatical conſtruction of the words, may be connected either with the virgin, or with *Joſeph*, to whom ſhe was eſpouſed; and is true of both; for they both were of the houſe and lineage of *David*: and this ſhews what a low condition *David*'s family was in, that the perſons that were the neareſt allied to it were a carpenter, and a poor virgin; and both reſiding in ſo deſpicable a place as *Nazareth* in *Galilee*: *and the virgin's name was Mary*; a name frequent among the *Jews*, and the ſame with *Miriam*; of which name was the ſiſter of *Moſes* and *Aaron*.

Ver. 28. *And the angel came in unto her*, &c.] Into her houſe, and into the room where ſhe was: *and ſaid, hail*; all health, happineſs, and proſperity attend thee; ſee *Matt.* xxviii. 9. *thou art highly favoured*; or graciouſly accepted, or haſt obtained grace; not referring to electing, redeeming, juſtifying, pardoning, adopting, and ſanctifying grace, which ſhe had in common with other ſaints; but to that ſpecial and particular favour, in being choſe and ſingled out from all other women, to be the mother of the Meſſiah: *the Lord is with thee*; ſo the angel to *Gideon*, *Judg.* vi. 12. or *be with thee*, an uſual form of ſalutation among the *Jews*; ſee *Ruth* ii. 4. *thou art bleſſed among women*; and will be pronounced ſo by other women, as ſhe was by *Elizabeth*, ver. 42. and by another woman, *Luke* xi. 27.

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[m] Miſna Yoma, c. 5. §. 1.

[n] Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

[o] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 53. 2.

[p] T. Hieroſ. Yoma, fol. 42. 3.

[q] Bartenora in Miſn. Gittin, c. 5. §. 7.

[r] Miſn. ib.

[s] Miſn. Trumot, c. 1. §. 1, 2. Chagiga, c. 1. §. 1.

[t] Maimon. & Bartenora in Miſn. Cholin, c. 1. §. 6.

Ver. 29. *And when ſhe ſaw him*, &c.] The *Perſic* verſion renders it, *when Mary ſaw the angel*; which expreſſes the true ſenſe of the words. The *Vulgate Latin* reads, *when ſhe heard*; i. e. the ſalutation: *ſhe was troubled at his ſaying*; at his ſpeaking to her; ſhe was ſurprized at the ſight of him, and more at what he ſaid to her; *and caſt in her mind*, or thought, and reaſoned within herſelf, *what manner of ſalutation this ſhould be*; for it was not uſual with the *Jews* for a man to uſe any ſalutation to a woman; with them it was not lawful to be done at all in any ſhape or form; not by a meſſenger, nor even by her own huſband[u]; ſo that *Mary* might well be thrown into a concern what ſhould be the meaning of this; and eſpecially, that ſhe ſhould be addreſſed in ſuch language, and ſaluted as a peculiar favourite of God, and bleſſed among women.

Ver. 30. *And the angel ſaid unto her*, &c.] Obſerving the conſternation and confuſion ſhe was in; *fear not Mary*: he calls her by her name, ſignifying that ſhe was well known to him, as the ſaints are to the miniſtring angels, who are often ſent unto them, encamp about them, and do them many good offices; and bids her not be afraid, he had no ill deſign upon her, nor brought any ill news to her: *for thou haſt found favour*, or *grace with God*; and what that particular grace and favour was, is expreſſed in the following verſes.

Ver. 31. *And behold, thou ſhalt conceive in thy womb*, &c.] Though a pure virgin, which never knew a man; and therefore, *a behold*, is prefixed to it, as being what was extraordinary and wonderful; as it is alſo, in the prophecy of it, in *Iſ.* vii. 14. to which the angel manifeſtly refers, and is, by *Matthew*, cited, as accompliſhed hereby; ſee the note on *Matt.* i. 22, 23. *and bring forth a ſon, and ſhalt call his name Jeſus*; which ſignifies a *ſaviour*; and a ſaviour Chriſt is of God's appointing, providing and ſending; and a very ſuitable one, being a ſpiritual ſaviour, and a compleat one, both able and willing to ſave to the uttermoſt all that believe in him; nor is there any other, nor ſalvation in any other: he is the ſaviour of his people, whom the father has given him, even of all the elect, whether of *Jews* or *Gentiles*; and of them from all their ſins, and from all their enemies; and whom he ſaves with a ſpiritual and eternal ſalvation.

Ver. 32. *He ſhall be great*, &c.] In his perſon, as God-man; this child born, and ſon given, being the angel of the great counſel, the mighty God, and everlaſting Father; ſee *Iſ.* ix. 6. which is here referr'd to; and in his offices, in his prophetic office, being that great and famous prophet *Moſes* ſpoke of, mighty in word and deed, in his doctrine and miracles; in his prieſtly office, being a great high-prieſt, both in the oblation of himſelf, and in his prevalent interceſſion; and in his kingly office, being the king of kings, and lord of lords; and in the whole of his office, as mediator, being a great ſaviour, the author of a great ſalvation for great ſinners; in which is greatly diſplayed the glory of all the divine perfections: great alſo in his works, the miracles that he wrought, as proofs of his deity and Meſſiahſhip, the work of redemption, the reſurrection of himſelf from the dead, and of all men at the laſt day; and in the glory he is now poſſeſſed of in human nature, at the Father's right hand, where he is highly exalted above all principality and power: *and ſhall be called the Son of the higheſt*; that is, of God, one of whoſe names is, עליון, *the moſt high*; ſee *Gen.* xiv. 18, 19, 20. not by creation, as angels and men, nor by adoption, as ſaints, nor by office, as magiſtrates, are called *the children of the moſt high*, *Pſ.* lxxxii. 6. but by nature, being the eternal Son of God; of the ſame nature with him, and equal to him: for he was not now to begin to be the Son of God, he was ſo before, even from all eternity; but the ſenſe is, that he ſhould now be known, owned, and acknowledged to be the Son of God, being as ſuch manifeſted in human nature, and ſhould be proved to be ſo by the works he wrought, and declared to be the Son of God with power by his reſurrection from the dead: *and the Lord God ſhall give unto him the throne of his father David.* Chriſt, as God, is the Son of God, as man, the Son of *David*; a name often given to the Meſſiah, and by which he was well known among the *Jews*; and as Chriſt deſcended from him, as man, in a literal ſenſe, he had a right to the throne of his father *David*; and the *Jews* themſelves ſay, that he was, קרוב למלכות, *nearly allied to the kingdom*[w]: but here it intends not his throne, in a literal, but in a figurative ſenſe; for as *David* was a type of the Meſſiah in his kingly office, hence the Meſſiah is called *David their king*, *Hoſ.* iii. 5. ſo his throne was typical of the Meſſiah's throne and kingdom; which is not of this world, but is in his church, and is ſet up in the hearts of his people, where he reigns by his Spirit and grace; and this is a throne and kingdom *given* by the Lord God. The kingdom of nature and providence he has by right of nature, as the Son of the higheſt; the kingdom of grace, or the mediatorial kingdom, the kingdom of prieſts, or royal prieſthood, is a delegated one; his father has ſet him as king over his holy hill of *Zion*; and he is accountable for his government to him, and will one day deliver it up complete and perfect.

Ver. 33. *And he ſhall reign over the houſe of Jacob*, &c.] Not over the *Jews*, the poſterity of *Jacob*, in a literal ſenſe; but over the whole *Iſrael* of God, conſiſting of *Jews* and *Gentiles*. For as his father *David* reigned over the *Idumeans*, *Syrians*, and others, as well as over the houſe of *Judah* and *Iſrael*, ſo this his ſon ſhall reign over both *Jews* and *Gentiles*; his kingdom ſhall be from one end of the earth to the other, even over all the elect of God; who in ſucceſſive generations call themſelves by the name of *Jacob*, and ſurname themſelves by the name of *Iſrael*, of whatſoever nation they be; and this reign of his ſhall be *for ever*, *and of his kingdom there ſhall be no end*; referring to *Iſ.* ix. 7. ſee alſo *Dan.* ii. 44. and vii. 14. he ſhall reign in the hearts of his people here unto the end of the world; and with his ſaints a thouſand years in the new heavens and new earth; and with them to all eternity, in the ultimate glory.

Ver. 34. *Then ſaid Mary to the angel, how ſhall this be*, &c.] This ſhe ſaid not as doubting the truth of what was ſaid; for ſhe required no ſign, as *Zacharias* did; nor is ſhe charged with, and blamed for unbelief, as he was; yea, it is expreſsly ſaid, ver. 45. that ſhe believed: nor was this a curious queſtion, as whether ſhe ſhould have this ſon by a man in a married ſtate, or in her preſent virgin-ſtate; for ſhe clearly underſtood the angel to mean the latter; and therefore her words expreſs her admiration at it, and alſo her deſire to be informed of the manner how it ſhould be: as to the matter of fact, ſhe did not diſpute it, but wanted to be reſolved by what means it would be brought about: ſhe knew, by prophecy, that the Meſſiah was to be born of a virgin, and ſhe perceived, by the angel's declaration, that ſhe was that virgin, but could not imagine in what way this amazing thing ſhould be effected; and therefore propoſes this queſtion for the following reaſon, *ſeeing I know not a man?* A *huſband*, as the *Arabic* verſion renders it; not *Joſeph*, nor any other man; for tho' ſhe was eſpouſed to *Joſeph*, yet he had not taken her to wife; nor were they, as yet, come together; and before they did, ſhe was found with child of the Holy Ghoſt, *Matt.* i. 18. ſhe was a pure virgin, untouched by man. The words are an *Euphemiſm*, or a modeſt way of expreſſing carnal copulation; ſee *Gen.* iv. 1.

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[u] T. Bab. Kidduſhin, fol. 70. 1, 2. Maimon. Hilch. Iſſure Biah, c. 21.

[w] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 43. 1.

Ver. 35. *And the angel anſwered and ſaid unto her*, &c.] The angel gave her an account of the manner in which, what he had ſaid, ſhould be effected, as well as obſerved ſome things for the ſtrengthning of her faith. *The Holy Ghoſt ſhall come upon thee.* The words, *upon thee*, are left out in the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions; but are retained in others, and in all copies: the formation of Chriſt's human nature, though common to all the three perſons, yet is particularly, and moſt properly aſcribed to the Spirit; not to the firſt perſon, the Father, leſt it ſhould be thought that he is only the Father of him, as man; nor to the ſecond perſon, the Son, ſince it is to him that the human nature is perſonally united; but to the third perſon, the Spirit, who is the ſanctifier; and who ſeparated, and ſanctified it, the firſt moment of its conception, and preſerved it from the taint of original ſin. His *coming upon* the virgin muſt be underſtood in conſiſtence with his omnipreſence, and immenſity; and cannot deſign any local motion, but an effectual operation in forming the human nature of her fleſh and ſubſtance; and not in the ordinary manner in which he is concerned in the formation of all men, *Job* xxxiii. 4. but in an extraordinary way, not to be conceived of, and explained. The phraſe moſt plainly anſwers to, בא על, in frequent uſe with the *Jews* [x], as expreſſive of coition. *And the power of the higheſt ſhall over-ſhadow thee.* By *the power of the higheſt* is not meant the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who is ſometimes called the power of God; but rather the Holy Ghoſt, as before, who is ſtiled the finger of God, and power from on high, *Luke* xi. 20. and xxiv. 49. unleſs it ſhould be thought that the perfection of divine power common to all the three perſons is intended; and ſo points out the means by which the wondrous thing ſhould be performed, even by the power of God; and which ſhould not only be employed in forming the human nature of Chriſt, but in protecting the virgin from any ſuſpicion and charge of ſin, and defending her innocence and virtue, by moving upon *Joſeph* to take her to wife. In the word, *overſhadow*, ſome think there is an alluſion to the Spirit of God moving upon the face of the waters, in *Gen.* i. 2. when, מרחפת, he *brooded* upon them, as the word may be rendered; and which is the ſenſe of it, according to the *Jewiſh* writers [y]; as a hen, or any other bird, broods on its eggs to exclude its young: and others have thought the alluſion may be to חופת חתנים [z], *the nuptial covering*; which was a veil, or canopy, like a tent, ſupported on four ſtaves, under which the bridegroom and bride were betrothed; or, as Dr. *Lightfoot* thinks, 'tis a modeſt phraſe alluding to the conjugal embraces, ſignified by a man's ſpreading the ſkirt of his garment over the woman, which *Ruth* deſired of *Boaz*, *Ruth* iii. 9. though the *Jewiſh* writers ſay [a], that phraſe is, לשון נישואין, expreſſive of the act of marriage, or taking to wife. The phraſe of being מטללין ברוח נבואה, *over-ſhadowed*, or *covered with the ſpirit of prophecy*, as the virgin alſo was, is uſed by the *Targumiſt*, on 1 *Chron.* ii. 55. *therefore alſo that holy thing which ſhall be born of thee ſhall be called the Son of God.* The human nature of Chriſt is here called a *thing*; for it was not a perſon; it never ſubſiſted of itſelf, but was taken at once into union with the perſon of the Son of God, otherwiſe there would be two perſons in Chriſt, whereas he is God, and man, in one perſon; and it is ſaid to be *holy*, being free from that original pollution and ſin, in which all that deſcend from *Adam*, by ordinary generation, are conceived, and brought forth; and is, moreover, ſaid to be born of a virgin, *of thee*, or, *out of thee.* Chriſt's fleſh was formed out of the virgin's; he took fleſh of her; his body did not deſcend from heaven, or paſs thro' her, as water thro' a pipe, as ſome hereticks of old ſaid: nor did his human nature, either as to ſoul or body, pre-exiſt his incarnation; but in the fulneſs of time he was made of a woman, and took a true body of her, and a reaſonable ſoul, into union with his divine perſon; and *therefore ſhould be called the Son of God*: not that he was now to become the Son of God; he was ſo before his incarnation, and even from all eternity; but he was now to be manifeſted as ſuch in human nature: nor does the angel predict, that he ſhould, for this reaſon, be called the Son of God; for he never was, on this account, ſo called, either by himſelf, or others: nor is the particle, *therefore*, cauſal, but conſequential: the angel is not giving a reaſon why Chriſt ſhould be the Son of God, but why he ſhould be owned, and acknowledged as ſuch by his people; who would infer, and conclude from his wonderful conception and birth, that he is the *Emmanuel*, God with us, the child that was to be born, and the Son given, whoſe name ſhould be wonderful, counſellor, the mighty God, &c. *Iſ.* vii. 14. and ix. 6. Moreover, the word, *alſo*, is not to be over-looked; and the ſenſe is, that ſeeing that human nature, which ſhould be born of the virgin, would be united to the Son of God, it likewiſe ſhould bear the ſame name, being in perſonal union with him, who was ſo from all eternity.

Ver. 36. *And behold thy couſin Elizabeth*, &c.] For tho' *Elizabeth* was of the daughters of *Aaron*, or of the tribe of *Levi* by her father's ſide, yet might be of the tribe of *Judah* by her mother's ſide, and ſo akin to *Mary*. The *Perſic* verſion calls her *aunt by the mother's ſide*: intermarriages between the two tribes of *Levi* and *Judah* were frequent; nor were they at all contrary to the intention of that law, that forbid the tribes to intermarry, which was to preſerve the inheritance in each tribe, ſince the tribe of *Levi* had none at all. Tho' ſhe might be called her couſin in a more general ſenſe; it being uſual with the *Jews* to call all of their own nation their kinſmen and kinſwomen, according to the fleſh: but the former ſenſe ſeems more agreeable; and ſo *Mary* is directed to her own family, and to her own relations, and known friends, for a ſign, by which her faith might be confirmed, in what the angel had ſaid unto her; for if ſhe found the one to be true, ſhe might conclude the other was alſo; which is as follows: *ſhe hath alſo conceived a ſon in her old age:* tho' *Mary* aſked no ſign, yet one is given her, whereby ſhe might know the truth of what was ſpoken: for if it ſhould appear that *Elizabeth* had received ſtrength to conceive, as was declared by the angel; and that a ſon too, which he could not have known without a divine revelation; and that in her old age, which was extraordinary and ſuper-natural, ſhe might aſſure herſelf, that the meſſage brought to her was from God; and that ſhe likewiſe, tho' a virgin, might conceive, and bear a ſon: the angel adds, as a further teſtimony of the truth of things; *and this is the ſixth month with her who was called barren. Elizabeth* was generally known to be barren, and was, by way of reproach, uſually called ſo, but was now ſix months gone with child; ſo that it was a plain caſe, and out of queſtion; the ſigns of her pregnancy were very apparent.

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[x] Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 7. §. 4. & paſſim alibi.

[y] R. Sol. Jarchi, R. Aben Ezra, & R. Levi ben Gerſon in Gen. 1. 2.

[z] T. Bab. Sota, fol. 49. 2. Vid. David de Pomis, Lex. Heb. p. 67. 2.

[a] Targum, Jarchi, & Aben Ezra in loc.

Ver. 37. *For with God nothing ſhall be impoſſible.*] That is conſiſtent with his nature and perfections, with his counſels, purpoſes, and promiſes: every thing that he has ſaid, purpoſed, or promiſed, he is able to do, and will; every word that he has ſpoken, every thing predicted by his prophets, or declared by his angels, and particularly this of a virgin's conceiving and bearing a ſon: ſo that the angel not only anſwers her queſtion, how this ſhould be, but confirms her faith in it; partly by the inſtance of her couſin *Elizabeth*, and partly by obſerving the infinite omnipotence of God.

Ver. 38. *And Mary ſaid, behold, the handmaid of the Lord,* &c.] In which words ſhe expreſſes her obedience of faith; ſhe owns herſelf to be the handmaid of the Lord, and deſires to obey him, and be ſubmiſſive to him as ſuch; and tacitly acknowledges her meanneſs, and great unworthineſs: *be it unto me, according to thy word*; ſhe aſſented to what the angel ſaid ſhould be unto her; ſhe earneſtly deſired it might be, and firmly believed it would be; ſhe ſet her *Amen* to the angel's meſſage: *and the angel departed from her*; to the heavenly regions, from whence he came; to his great Lord and maſter, that ſent him; having diſpatched the buſineſs he came about, and which he was accountable to him for.

Ver. 39. *And Mary aroſe in thoſe days,* &c.] The *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *in that day*; directly, immediately, as ſoon as the angel was gone from her; partly to know the truth of things, and to make uſe of the ſign which had been given her, for the further confirmation of her faith, which was very right and proper for her to do; and partly to converſe with *Elizabeth* about the great things which God had done for each of them, and to praiſe his name together: *and went into the hill country with haſte*; the ſame which is called the country of the hills, and the hills, and the mountains, in *Joſh.* x. 40. and xi. 2, 16. and xvi. 1. and xviii. 13. and 2 *Chron.* xxvi. 10. where the *Septuagint* uſe the ſame word as here: the land of *Judæa* was divided into three parts, ההר, *the mountain*, or hill country, the champaign country, and the valley [b]: from *Bethoron* to *Emmaus* is הר, *the hill country*; from *Emmaus* to *Lud*, or *Lydda* is the champaign country; and from *Lydda* to the ſea the valley [c]. This place is frequently called, in the *Jewiſh* writings [d], the king's mountain, or the royal mountain, and is ſaid to be very full of cities: ten thouſand cities, they ſay [e], were in the king's mountains and a thouſand of them belonged to *R. Eleazer ben Harſum*: yea, they ſay [f], that king *Jannai* had ſixty myriads of cities in the mountain of the king. The *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions render it, *went to the mountain*, to this mountain, and which is called the mountain, or, as we read it, the hill-country of *Judah*, *Joſh.* xxi. 11. on which *Hebron* was ſituated; and ſeems to be the city next mentioned: *into a city of Juda*; for that was given to the children of *Aaron*, and ſo may reaſonably be thought to be the city where *Zacharias* dwelt, and not *Jeruſalem*, which was in the tribe of *Benjamin*. *Hebron* was a city peculiar to the prieſts; whereas *Jeruſalem* was not; and it was in the hill-country of *Judæa*; it was remarkable for the goodneſs of its ſtones. 'Tis ſaid [g], "you have no ſtones in all "the land of *Iſrael* harder than at *Hebron*; hence "they buried the dead there."

Ver. 40. *And entered into the houſe of Zacharias,* &c.] Which was in the above city, and might be well known to her: *and ſaluted Elizabeth*; not *Zacharias*; either becauſe he was not at home; or becauſe he was deaf and dumb, and could neither hear her ſalutation, nor return it; or becauſe it was not uſual for women to ſalute men, nor men to ſalute women; ſee the note on ver. 29. yet one woman might ſalute another; and eſpecially *Mary* ſaluted *Elizabeth*, becauſe ſhe came to pay the viſit to her, and it was with her ſhe was principally concerned.

Ver. 41. *And it came to paſs that when Elizabeth heard the ſalutation of Mary,* &c.] Which might be before ſhe ſaw her, and at ſome little diſtance from her: *the babe leaped in her womb*; which motion was not natural, but ſupernatural; being made at hearing the voice of *Mary*, who had now conceived the Meſſiah, whoſe forerunner this babe, *John* the *Baptiſt*, was to be; and who, by this motion, gave the firſt notice of his conception, which his mother *Elizabeth* took from hence; as he afterwards pointed him out by his finger, and by his baptiſm made him manifeſt to *Iſrael: and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghoſt*; not with the ordinary graces of the Spirit; for theſe ſhe had been filled with before, but with extraordinary gifts, with a ſpirit of prophecy; by which ſhe knew that the Meſſiah was conceived, and that *Mary* was the mother of her Lord; that many things had been told her; that ſhe had believed them; and there would be a performance of them; and perhaps it was at this time that *John* the *Baptiſt* was filled with the Holy Ghoſt alſo; ſee ver. 15.

Ver. 42. *And ſhe ſpake out with a loud voice,* &c.] So as that all in the houſe might hear; ſhe ſpake with great vehemency of ſoul, and ſtrength of affection, being under a very powerful impreſſion of the Spirit of God: *and ſaid, bleſſed art thou among women*; the ſame words that the angel had ſaid to her before, ver. 28. *and bleſſed is the fruit of thy womb:* this is a reaſon why ſhe is called bleſſed, becauſe her child was bleſſed; being in union with a divine perſon, who is God over all, bleſſed for ever; and who has all ſpiritual bleſſings in him, and is that ſeed, in which all nations of the earth were to be bleſſed; and ſo is both bleſſed in himſelf, and the ſource of all bleſſedneſs to others. The *Jews* ſay [b], that the ſix meaſures of barley, *Boaz* gave to *Ruth*, ch. iii. 15. ſignified, that ſix righteous men ſhould ſpring from her, and among them the Meſſiah; who ſhould be *bleſſed* with ſix bleſſings, and they are theſe; the ſpirit of wiſdom and underſtanding, of counſel and of might, the ſpirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord; ſee *Iſa.* xi. 2.

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[b] Miſn. Sheviith, c. 9. §. 2. Maimon. & Bartenora in ib. [c] T. Hieroſ. Sheviith, fol. 38. 4. [d] Targum in Jud. iv. 5. T. Hieroſ. Avoda Zara, fol. 44. 4. [e] T. Hieroſ. Taanioth, fol. 69. 1. [f] T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 57. 1. [g] T. Bab. Sota, fol. 34. 2 & Cetubot, fol. 112. 1.

Ver. 43. *And whence is this to me,* &c.] How comes it to paſs, that ſuch notice is taken of me, ſuch an honour is done me; that beſides being favoured with a child, who ſhall be great, *that the mother of my Lord ſhould come to me? Eliſabeth* was far from envying the ſuperior honour conferred on her kinſwoman, who was both meaner and younger than ſhe; that ſhe eſteems it a wonderful favour, that ſhe ſhould be indulged with a viſit from her, who had already conceived the Meſſiah; and in due time would be the mother of him, as man; who in his divine nature, is Lord of all angels, and men, and every creature; and in an eſpecial manner was her Lord, and the Lord of all the ſaints; by his Father's gift from eternity, by his own purchaſe in time, and by the power of his grace on each of their ſouls. Thus the virgin is ſaid to be the mother of our Lord, and ſo may be called the mother of God; becauſe ſhe was parent of that child, which was in union with him, who is truly Lord and God: juſt in ſuch ſenſe as the Lord of life and glory is ſaid to be crucified, and God is ſaid to purchaſe the church with his own blood, 1 *Cor.* ii. 8. *Acts* xx. 28.

Ver. 44. *For lo, as ſoon as the voice of thy ſalutation ſounded in mine ears,* &c.] This ſhe mentions, as the ſignal by which ſhe knew that ſhe was the mother of her Lord; namely, from that unuſual and extraordinary motion of the child, ſhe felt within her: *the babe leaped in my womb for joy*; that the mother of her Lord, and his, was come thither: the *Jews* ought not to object to this, who affirm, that the *Embryo's*, or infants in their mother's womb, ſung the ſong at the *Red-ſea*, and praiſed God [i].

Ver. 45. *And bleſſed is ſhe that believed,* &c.] Meaning *Mary*, a woman, a very young woman, and who had had things very incredible to nature and reaſon, told her; and yet ſhe believed, without objecting thereto, or requiring a ſign; tacitly referring to the unbelief of *Zacharias*, who was a man, a man in years, a prieſt by office; and yet had been very incredulous, in a thing that was much more poſſible; becauſe there had been inſtances of it before, in *Sarah*, *Hannah*, and *Manoah's* wife; than what was related to the virgin, of which there had been none; and which to reaſon, and with men, was impoſſible: and happy indeed is every one, that has true faith in any degree; for faith is the faith of God's elect, and is both a fruit and evidence of electing grace, which is the ſource of all bleſſings; it is the gift of God, and the operation of his Spirit, and can never be loſt: many are the bleſſings, ſuch as believe, are in the poſſeſſion of, and openly entitled to; as the juſtification of their perſons, the remiſſion of their ſins, their adoption into the houſhold of God, liberty at the throne of grace, and a right to the eternal inheritance; they enjoy much ſolid peace, joy, and comfort in their own ſouls; bring much glory to God, and ſhall be ſaved in the Lord, with an everlaſting ſalvation: *for there ſhall be a performance of thoſe things, which were told her from the Lord:* theſe words may be conſidered, either as the ſubject matter of her faith, and be rendered in connexion with the former, thus, *bleſſed is ſhe that believed, that there ſhall be a performance,* &c. being fully perſuaded, that what the angel had told her, concerning the conception and birth of a ſon, concerning his name, and the greatneſs of his perſon, and the nature, extent, and duration of his kingdom, ſhould be certainly and punctually fulfilled; or as a reaſon of her happineſs, becauſe there ſhould be a ſure accompliſhment of them. Whatever God has ſpoken to any of his people, whether it be with reſpect to things temporal, ſpiritual, or eternal, ſhall be performed; as may be ſtrongly concluded from the veracity of God, who cannot lie; and from his power, who is able to do all things; and from his faithfulneſs, which he will never ſuffer to fail; and from inſtances, and matters of fact; from the experience of the ſaints in all ages, who know, and are conſcious to themſelves, that not one of the good things the Lord God has ſpoken to them, has ever failed, but that all have come to paſs; ſee *Joſh.* xxiii. 14.

Ver. 46. *And Mary ſaid, my ſoul doth magnify the Lord.*] Either *Jehovah*, the Father, or the Son; who, as he was *David's* Lord, according to his divine nature, though his ſon after the fleſh, was in the ſame ſenſe, *Mary's* Lord, as well as her ſon: and by *magnifying* him is meant, not making him great, for he cannot be made greater than he is; but aſcribing greatneſs to him, even all the perfections of the deity, and praiſing him on account of them; and alſo declaring and ſpeaking well of his many and mighty works of power, goodneſs, grace, and mercy, and giving him the glory of them: this *Mary* did, not in lip and word only, but with her whole heart and ſoul, and with all the powers and faculties of it; being filled with the Holy Ghoſt, and under a more than ordinary influence of his, as her couſin *Eliſabeth* was: and it is to be obſerved, that ſhe all along ſpeaks in the prophetic ſtile, of things, as if they were done, which were doing, or would ſhortly be done.

Ver. 47. *And my ſpirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.*] Which alſo may be underſtood, either of God the Father, who was her Saviour, both as the God of nature and providence; ſo the *Perſic* verſion renders it, *in God that gives me life*; and who had ſupported, maintained, and preſerved her life; and as the God of grace, who has contrived the ſcheme of ſalvation, fixed upon, and appointed Chriſt to be the Saviour; and who ſaves by him, and therefore is ſometimes ſaid to be our Saviour, *Tit.* iii. 4, 6. Or of Chriſt, the Son of God, who being truly and properly God, was fit to be a Saviour; and is a very ſuitable, able, and willing one; and which is the great encouragement to ſenſible ſinners, to look unto him, and be ſaved; and lays a ſolid foundation for rejoicing in him; ſince what he did as man, had hereby an infinite virtue and efficacy put into it, as was put into his blood, ſacrifice, and righteouſneſs; whereby the purpoſes deſigned, were anſwered by them; and ſince he muſt be able to keep their immortal ſouls, which they commit unto him, and muſt have an intereſt with his Father, as their advocate, and a fulneſs to ſupply all their wants: the conſideration of Chriſt, by *Mary*, as God her Saviour, as having an intereſt in him, as a Saviour, and this her Saviour, God, gave her greater joy, than being the mother of him as man; and this her joy was not carnal, nor merely external, but inward and ſpiritual: it was a joy in her own ſpirit, and was excited there by the holy Spirit of God.

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[b] Targum & R. Sol. Jarchi in loc. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 75. 3.

[i] Targum in Pſal. lxviii. 27. Zohar in Exod. fol. 23. 3. T. Hieroſ. Sota, fol. 20. 3.

Ver. 48. *For he hath regarded the low eſtate of his handmaiden*, &c.] Meaning, either her outward temporal eſtate, which was very low and mean: *David*'s family was now very much reduced, it had its ſeat not at *Jeruſalem*, but at *Nazareth*, in *Galilee*: *Mary* of that houſe, was a poor virgin, and *Joſeph* of the ſame, to whom ſhe was betrothed, was a poor carpenter; and yet God paſſed by the rich and noble families of the *Jewiſh* people, and pitched upon this poor virgin, to be the mother of the Meſſiah: or her eſtate, in a ſpiritual ſenſe, which, as that of every ſon and daughter of *Adam*, was very low by the fall; for ſin has run all mankind into debt, and they have nothing to pay: it has ſtripped them of original righteouſneſs, and cloathed them with rags; it has filled them with diſeaſes, from the crown of the head, to the ſole of the feet; it has expoſed them to a priſon, into which being caſt, they muſt lie, till they have paid the uttermoſt farthing; and has left them hopeleſs and helpleſs, poor and miſerable, and blind and naked: but God has remembered his elect, in this their low eſtate, and has provided a Saviour for them, and ſent him to deliver them out of it; becauſe his mercy endures for ever; and of this *Mary* was ſenſible, and therefore rejoiced in God her Saviour: *for behold, from henceforth all generations*; not *Jews* only, but *Gentiles* alſo, *ſhall call me bleſſed*; both on account of her ſon ſhe had now conceived, and was bearing; becauſe ſhe was the mother of our Lord, who had reaſon ſo to conclude, from the nature of the thing, and from the words of the angel, and of *Eliſabeth*, ver. 28, 42. and much more than *Leah* had, who ſaid ſomething like this, at the birth of her ſecond ſon, *Gen.* xxx. 13. and alſo on account of her intereſt in Chriſt, as God her Saviour; in whom ſhe was bleſſed, with all ſpiritual bleſſings; ſo that ſhe was truly bleſſed, and might well be called ſo.

Ver. 49. *For he that is mighty hath done to me great things*, &c.] With reſpect to the incarnation of Chriſt, a new, a great, and unheard of thing; in cauſing her, though a virgin, to conceive; and alſo to bear ſuch a ſon, who ſhould be called *Jeſus*, a Saviour, *Immanuel*, God with us; and who was no other than the mighty God, the everlaſting Father, and prince of peace: wherefore ſhe deſcribes God the author of it, by a proper periphraſis of him, *he that is mighty*; ſince this was a work of almighty power, and very juſtly adds, *and holy is his name*: ſeeing this was brought about without any impurity, through the overſhadowing influence of the Holy Ghoſt; whereby the human nature was preſerved from the infection of ſin, was ſanctified, and fit to be united to the Son of God, and to be a ſacrifice for the ſins of his people. This may alſo have regard to the great things, God had done for her in a ſpiritual ſenſe; in the choice of her to eternal life, in the redemption of her by the Meſſiah, and in her regeneration and ſanctification; wherein God had diſplayed his ſovereign grace and goodneſs, and his almighty power, in a way conſiſtent with his juſtice and holineſs.

Ver. 50. *And his mercy is on them that fear him*, &c.] Not with ſlaviſh fear of hell and damnation, but with reverence and godly fear; with a filial fear, with a reverential love of God, and affection for him; with that fear which ſprings from the goodneſs of God, which has that for its object, and is encouraged by it: and though this fear is not the cauſe and reaſon of the mercy of God, yet is deſcriptive of the perſons towards whom it is exerciſed in various ways, and to whom it is openly ſhewn; they hereby appearing to be the veſſels of mercy, afore-prepared to glory; and in whoſe redemption, mercy and truth have met together, and who, according to the abundant mercy of God the Father, have been begotten again; whoſe unrighteouſneſſes he has been merciful to, and whoſe ſins he'll remember no more: and it may have a particular regard to the incarnation of Chriſt, which in this chapter is ſaid to be in remembrance of mercy; to be the mercy promiſed, and to come through the tender mercy of our God, ver. 54, 72, 78. And which was a mercy *Mary* conſidered, not as peculiar to herſelf, but as extended to all that fear the Lord; not in that age only, but *from generation to generation*; to the end of the world, to God's elect in all times and places, who ſhould all be partakers of it, and ſharers in it.

Ver. 51. *He hath ſhewed ſtrength with his arm*, &c.] Of almighty power, in the buſineſs of the incarnation, and in working out ſalvation for his people; which is done by his own arm, he being mighty to ſave, and travelling in the greatneſs of his ſtrength; ſee *Iſa.* lxiii. 1, 5. *He hath ſcattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts*; whom he always reſiſts, and both in providence and grace, takes ſuch methods, as tend to humble and confound them: here particularly, it may regard the proud and haughty *Jews*; who imagined nothing leſs, than that the Meſſiah would be born of one of the rich and noble families in *Judea*; that he would appear as a temporal prince, and ſet up a temporal kingdom in great ſtate and ſplendor, and make them a free and flouriſhing people: when inſtead of this, he was to be born of a poor virgin, of whom they diſdainfully ſay, is not his mother called *Mary?* who was of *Nazareth* in *Galilee*, of which 'tis ſaid, ſhall Chriſt come out of *Galilee?* or any good thing out of *Nazareth?* A virgin betrothed to a carpenter, and her ſon of that buſineſs alſo, with which both were flouted; and becauſe of this meanneſs, the Meſſiah was rejected by them; and thus were they ſcattered and confounded in their imaginations.

Ver. 52. *He hath put down the mighty from their ſeats*, &c.] As mighty kings and emperors from their thrones, as he often does, in the courſe of his providence; ſetting up one, and putting down another: or the mighty angels, from their ſeats of bliſs and happineſs in heaven; who rebelling againſt God, oppoſing the incarnation of Chriſt, taking it ill, that the human nature ſhould be advanced above theirs, were caſt down to hell; and are reſerved in chains of darkneſs, to the judgment of the great day: or this may have reſpect to the putting down the monarchies and kingdoms of this world, by the kingdom of the Meſſiah to be ſet up; which, though at firſt was mean and deſpicable, like a ſtone cut out of a mountain, will increaſe, ſpread, and break in pieces, and deſtroy all other kingdoms: *and exalted them of low degree*; as *David* to the throne of *Iſrael*, from the ſheepfold, and following the ews great with young; and now his houſe and family, which were ſunk very low, by raiſing of his ſeed, of a poor virgin in his family, unto *Iſrael*, a Saviour Jeſus; in whoſe days the poor had the Goſpel preached, and received it; theſe were choſen and called: the great things of the Goſpel were revealed to babes, and hid from the wiſe and prudent; and beggars were raiſed from the dunghill, to ſit among princes, and to inherit the throne of glory: a method, which God in his infinite wiſdom and grace, has been pleaſed to take, more or leſs, in all ages of time; for not many mighty and noble, are called by grace; but uſually the fooliſh, the weak, and the baſe things of the world.

Ver. 53. *He hath filled the hungry with good things*, &c.] Such as earneſtly deſired and longed after the coming of the Meſſiah, as good old *Simeon*, and *Anna* the propheteſs; and thoſe that looked for redemption in *Iſrael*, to whom ſhe ſpake: and all ſuch perſons as heartily deſire ſalvation by Chriſt, and breathe after the forgiveneſs of their ſins through his blood, and thirſt after his righteouſneſs, and long for communion with him, and a greater knowledge of him, and more conformity to him, and pant after his word and ordinances; theſe are filled, ſooner or later, with a ſenſe of their intereſt in Chriſt, and his ſalvation; with a view of the full and free forgiveneſs of their ſins, and with his righteouſneſs they hunger after; and with every good thing they ſtand in need of, with joy and peace, with food and gladneſs, even to ſatisfaction; ſo that they can ſay with *Jacob*, they have enough, yea, all things; ſeeing Chriſt is theirs, and all things with him: *and the rich he hath ſent empty away*: not the rich in this world's goods, though ſuch who truſt in their wealth, and boaſt of their riches, or do not make a proper uſe of them, God in his providence, ſometimes ſtrips them of all, and turns them into the world naked and empty; much leſs the rich in grace, who are often the poor of the world; and who, though they ſeem to have nothing, yet poſſeſs all things, and are full: but ſuch who are rich in their opinion, and in their own works; and truſt in their righteouſneſs, and deſpiſe others; theſe, as they come full of themſelves to the throne of grace, as the *Phariſee*, are ſent empty away; without any token of the love and favour of God, or any bleſſing from him: and as they come to ordinances in their own ſtrength, and truſt in the performance of them, they go away empty, as they came; theſe are dry breaſts unto them, whilſt they are full breaſts of conſolation to the poor in ſpirit, and to all meek and humble ſouls: and what is ſtill worſt of all, notwithſtanding all their good works they boaſt of, and truſt in, they'll be ſent away at the laſt judgment from the preſence of Chriſt, as not known by him, and as workers of iniquity.

Ver. 54. *He hath holpen his ſervant Iſrael*, &c.] Meaning, not the natural poſterity of *Jacob*, or *Iſrael* in general, but the elect of God among them; for all were not *Iſrael*, who were of *Iſrael*; and not them only, but alſo all the choſen ones among the *Gentiles*; who, with the former, make up the whole *Iſrael* of God, in a ſpiritual and myſtical ſenſe: theſe are the *Iſrael*, God has choſen, redeemed, and calls by his grace, and are here ſtiled *his ſervant*, as *Iſrael* is frequently called, *Iſa.* xli. 8. and xliv. 21. The word ſignifies a *child*, as well as a *ſervant*; and may deſign, either the weak and helpleſs condition God's elect are in by nature, which calls for, and requires divine help and aſſiſtance; or the relation they ſtand in to him, being his adopted children, and which is the reaſon of his helping them: and which ſignifies to take them by the hand, and lift them up, and ſupport and uphold them; and ſuppoſes them to have been fallen down, and unable to raiſe themſelves up; but God having laid help for them on one that is mighty, ſent him to take upon him their nature; and by obeying, ſuffering, and dying for them, to help them out of their ſtate of ſin and miſery; and to uphold them with the right hand of his righteouſneſs, and bring them ſafe to glory; and all this, *in remembrance of his mercy*; which he had in his heart towards them, and had promiſed in his covenant to them: the mercy of God, is the ſpring and ſource of redemption; mercy provided a Redeemer, and a ranſom; and it is owing to it, that the Redeemer came; and he, in his love and pity, performed the work: and therefore ſalvation is to be aſcribed, not to works of righteouſneſs done by men, but to the abundant mercy of God our Saviour.

Ver. 55. *As he ſpake to our fathers*, &c.] To *David*, of whoſe family *Mary* was; and to *Jacob*, or *Iſrael*, of whoſe ſtock ſhe was; and to *Iſaac*, in whom the ſeed was to be called; and particularly, *to Abraham and to his ſeed for ever*: not his natural, but his ſpiritual ſeed; both among *Jews* and *Gentiles*, to the end of the world; to theſe God promiſed this mercy of a Saviour and Redeemer, and to theſe he performs it, and will to all generations.

Ver. 56. *And Mary abode with her about three months*, &c.] That is, ſhe continued with *Eliſabeth*, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions expreſs, about the ſpace of three months; in which time, ſhe had full ſatisfaction of the truth of the ſign, the angel had given her; namely, of *Eliſabeth*'s conception and pregnancy, for by this time ſhe was ready to lie in; and ſhe muſt now be fully aſſured, that ſhe was with child herſelf: this ſpace of three months, is a term of time fixed by the *Jewiſh* doctors, to know whether a woman is with child or not, as in caſe of divorce or death: the rule runs thus[k]; “every woman that is divorced, or becomes a “widow, lo, ſhe may not marry, nor be betrothed, “until ſhe waits, תשעים יום, *ninety days* (*i. e.* “three months) excluſive of the day in which ſhe is “divorced, or her huſband dies, and of the day in “which ſhe is betrothed; that ſo it may be known, “whether ſhe is with child or not, in order to “diſtinguiſh between the ſeed of the former, and “the ſeed of the ſecond huſband.” And ſo in the caſe of marrying the wife of a brother, that died without iſſue[l], and of new married couples miſtaking their ſpouſes[m]: *and returned to her own houſe*; at *Nazareth*, in *Galilee*; and now it was, that *Joſeph*, to whom ſhe was betrothed, perceived ſhe was with child; and ſuſpecting evil, had a mind to put her away privately; but was informed by an angel of God in a dream, of the whole matter; and was adviſed and encouraged to take her to wife, which he accordingly did; ſee *Matt.* i. 18, 19, 20.

Ver. 57. *Now Eliſabeth's full time came*, &c.] The nine months, which is the full time of a woman's going with child, were now compleat; for in the ſixth month of *Eliſabeth*'s pregnancy, or when ſhe had been gone ſix months with child, the angel acquainted *Mary* with it, and ſhe had ſtaid about three months with her; but now had left her, to ſhun the company which would be at the delivery of her; though ſome think, ſhe ſtaid till that time was over, which is not ſo probable; and ſo her reckoning being out, and the time come,

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[k] Maimon. Hilch. Geruſhin, c. 11. §. 18. Vid. T. Bab. Becorot, fol. 47. 1.

[l] Miſn. Yebamot, c. 4. §. 10. T. Hieroſ. Yebamot, fol. 6. 1. T. Bab. ib. fol. 34. 2. & 35. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Yebum, c. 1. §. 19. T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 47. 1.

[m] Miſn. Yebamot, c. 3. §. 10.

*that ſhe ſhould be delivered*; and *ſhe brought forth a ſon*, according to the angel's prediction both to *Zacharias* and *Mary*, ver. 13, 36.

Ver. 58. *And her neighbours, and her couſins*, &c.] That lived in *Hebron*, and the parts adjacent, whether of the houſe of *Aaron*, or of the tribe of *Judah*; to both which ſhe was related, and who dwelt near her, the prieſts in the city of *Hebron*, and the children of *Judah* in the places about it: *heard how the Lord had ſhewed great mercy upon her*; or *had magnified his mercy with her*; ſee *Gen.* xix. 19. in removing her barrenneſs, and ſo taking away her reproach from among men; in giving her ſtrength to conceive, and bring forth a ſon, that was to be ſo great, as the prophet of the higheſt; and more than a prophet, and greater than any born of women: *and they rejoiced with her*; as the angel had foretold they ſhould, ver. 14. The *Perſic* verſion reads, *with him, Zacharias*; having rendered the other clauſe thus, tho' wrongly, *hearing that God had poured out his mercy on the houſe of Zacharias*; ſee *Rom.* xii. 15.

Ver. 59. *And it came to paſs that on the eighth day*, &c.] The preciſe time fixed in the original inſtitution of the ordinance of circumciſion, *Gen.* xvii. 12. tho' this was not always attended to, but circumciſion was ſometimes deferred to another time; yet keeping the exact time was judged moſt commendable and praiſe-worthy; ſee the note on *Phil.* iii. 5. *they came to circumciſe the child*; that is, the neighbours and couſins of *Elizabeth*, who were at the time of her delivery; eight days after they came again to be at the circumciſion of the child: who was the operator is not known; nor was there any particular perſon appointed for this ſervice; but any one might do it, whether eccleſiaſtic or laic, men or women, father or mother, or any other friend: for the rule is[n], "all are fit to circumciſe; "even an uncircumciſed perſon, and a woman, and "a minor, may circumciſe in a place where there is "no man; but a *Gentile* may not circumciſe at "all." The circumciſion of *John* ſeems to be performed in *Zacharias*'s houſe, and by one of thoſe that came; for *Zacharias*, being dumb, could not ſay the bleſſing which the circumciſer was obliged to ſay: nor indeed could he ſay that, which as the father of the child, belonged to him; concerning which, take the following account[o]: "the circumciſer bleſſes before he circumciſes, *ſaying*, "bleſſed is that hath ſanctified us by his precepts, "and hath commanded us concerning circumciſion: if he circumciſes the ſon of his friend, or "if he circumciſes his own ſon, he bleſſes him with *this bleſſing*; and hath commanded us to circumciſe a ſon: and the father of the ſon bleſſes with "another bleſſing; bleſſed art thou, O Lord our "God, the king of the world, who hath ſanctified us by his precepts, and hath commanded us "to enter him into the covenant of *Abraham* our "father.——If his father is not there, they do "not ſay this other bleſſing.——And if there "are any ſtanding there, they ſay, as he hath "brought him into the covenant, ſo bring him to "the law, and to matrimony, and to good works; "and after that the father of the child, or the "circumciſer, or one of thoſe that ſtand by, bleſs, "*ſaying*, bleſſed art thou, O Lord our God, the "king of the world, who ſanctified the beloved "(*Iſaac*) from the womb, *&c.*" How many of *Elizabeth*'s neighbours and relations were preſent at this ceremony, is not related; but the *Jews* require ten perſons as witneſſes of it; for they ſay[p], that "teſtimonies worthy of belief, in *Iſrael*, are ten, "the witneſſes of the covenant of circumciſion are "ten, the witneſſes of a dead perſon ten," *&c.* and at this time alſo it was uſual to give the child a name, which was not by divine appointment, but was a cuſtom that prevailed among them; which took its riſe from *Abraham*, having his name changed at the time when circumciſion was enjoined him, *Gen.* xvii. 5, 10. and from the naming and circumciſion of *Iſaac*, mentioned together, *Gen.* xxi. 3, 4. *and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father*; as the neighbours of *Naomi* gave a name to the ſon of *Boaz* and *Ruth*, calling him *Obed*, *Ruth* iv. 17. This they took upon them to do, becauſe that *Zacharias* was deaf and dumb; but why they ſhould call him by his name, cannot well be accounted for, it not being uſual to call the father, and the ſon, by the ſame name; unleſs they were deſirous of continuing the ſame name in the family, which had been famous in *Iſrael* for a prophet, and a prieſt: to call children by *Gentile* names was not lawful. In the *Targum* on *Amos* vi. 1. 'tis ſaid, "wo to them that name their children after the "names of the *Gentiles*."

Ver. 60. *And his mother anſwered and ſaid*, &c.] That is, *Elizabeth: not ſo, but he ſhall be called John*; knowing that this was the name wherewith the angel ſaid he ſhould be called; either by divine revelation, ſhe being filled with the Holy Ghoſt, ver. 41. or by information of her huſband, who, doubtleſs, in writing, gave her an account of all that the angel had ſaid unto him.

Ver. 61. *And they ſaid unto her*, &c.] Her neighbours and relations, *there is none of thy kindred that is called by this name*: from whence it appears, that it was uſual to give names to children after their anceſtors, relations, and friends. The *Perſic* verſion renders it, *in thine Iſrael there is not any one of this name*: but this could not be true; for the name of *Jochanan*, or *John*, was a name very common among the *Iſraelites*, tho' not in *Elizabeth*'s family, or her huſband's.

Ver. 62. *And they made ſigns to his father*, &c.] Who was deaf, as well as dumb; otherwiſe there would have been no occaſion to have ſigns made to him: and ſo the word uſed, in ver. 20. ſignifies both deaf and dumb. Theſe ſigns were made by hands or head; for ſuch uſed to be made to a dumb man. According to the canon[q], a dumb man nods, and ונרמן, *and is nodded*, or *beckened to*: and which beckening one of the commentators[r] ſays, is a ſign which is expreſſed either by the hands or head. Such a method as theſe took with *Zacharias*, about the name of his ſon, is directed to in caſe of a father's deafneſs, in relation to knowing who is his firſt-born[s]: "a father that is dumb, they ſearch "or examine him in the way they ſearch for divorces; if he makes ſigns, or writes, that this "is his firſt-born, lo! this takes the double portion." *How he would have him called*; by what name, *Zacharias* or *John*; and they were right in applying to him, to whom it moſt properly belonged, to give a name to his child.

Ver. 63. *And he aſked for a writing-table*, &c.] That is, he made ſigns for one, for as yet he could not ſpeak. The *Perſic* verſion renders it *ink*, and the *Ethiopic*, a book, and the *Vulgate Latin*, a notebook. The word ſignifies *a little table*, ſuch as they uſed to write not only *upon*, but *in*; and was ſometimes of braſs[t], ſometimes of wood, and ſometimes of wax [v], on which they wrote with a ſtyle or pen; *and wrote, ſaying, his name is John:* not that he muſt be, or ſhall be, ſo called; but this is his name, and no other; being what the angel had given him before his conception, and *Zacharias* now confirms: *and they marvelled all*; they were aſtoniſhed, not ſo much at the new name brought into the family, as at the agreement between *Elizabeth* and *Zacharias* in this point, when the latter was both deaf and dumb; they knowing nothing, as yet, of the angel's meſſage to him.

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[n] Maimon. Hilch. Milah, c. 2. §. 1.

[o] Ib. c. 3. §. 1, 2, 3.

[p] Pirke Eliezer, c. 19.

[q] Miſn. Gittin, c. 5. §. 7.

[r] Bartenora in ib.

[s] Maimon. Hilch, Nechalot, c. 2. §. 15. & 4. 1.

[t] Harpocration. Lex. p. 244.

Ver. 64. *And his mouth was opened immediately*, &c.] As ſoon as ever the child was named, and ſo all things accompliſhed which the angel had foretold; *and his tongue* looſed; the impediments of ſpeech were removed, and the uſe of his tongue and lips was reſtored unto him: *and he ſpake and praiſed God*; for the ſafe delivery of his wife; for the birth of his ſon, the fore-runner of Chriſt; for the conception of the Meſſiah; for God's gracious regards to his church and people, in theſe inſtances; and for the reſtoration of ſpeech and hearing to himſelf, of which he had been ſometime deprived for his unbelief.

Ver. 65. *And fear came on all that dwelt round about them*, &c.] That is, the fear of God, an awful reverence of the divine majeſty; they perceived the hand of God was in theſe things, and that theſe were effects of divine power; and which made very ſerious impreſſions upon their minds, and they thought, and ſpoke of them with great ſolemnity; ſee *Acts* ii. 43. and v. 11. *and all theſe ſayings were noiſed abroad throughout all the hill-country of Judæa:* the ſeveral things relating to the appearance of the angel to *Zacharias* in the temple; his meſſage to him; the ſtriking him deaf and dumb; the conception of *Elizabeth*, who had been barren; the birth of her ſon; the unuſual name given him; and the more unuſual manner in which it was given; and the opening of *Zacharias*'s mouth, and the looſening of his tongue upon this, were reported, and commonly talked of by all people in that part of *Judæa*, where the parents of *John* dwelt.

Ver. 66. *And all they that heard* them, &c.] The above things, *laid them up in their hearts*; treaſured them up in their memories, and often thought of them in their minds, what ſhould be the meaning, and what would be the iſſue of them: *ſaying, what manner of child ſhall this be?* what will he be, or come to? and what is it that he ſhall do? ſurely he muſt be deſigned in providence to be put into ſome high ſtation, and for ſome eminent work and ſervice; ſince ſo many, and ſuch great things, have gone before, and attended his birth: *and the hand of the Lord was with him*; which may intend the ſpecial care, and peculiar providence of God in preſerving his life, giving him health, cauſing him to grow ſtrong and robuſt, and in ſtature of body, and in endowments of mind; and alſo the communications of grace unto him, and the gracious preſence of God with him, ſo ſoon as he was capable of enjoying them; as likewiſe a ſpirit of prophecy, which is ſometimes ſignified by the hand of the Lord; and the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, which, in proceſs of time, appeared in him, qualifying him for his high office and work: the hand of the Lord, with the *Jews*, is the Holy Ghoſt: thus they interpret 1 *Chron.* xxviii. 19. *all in writing*, this is the *Maſora*; *from the hand of the Lord*, זו רוח הקודש, *this is the Holy Ghoſt* [w].

Ver. 67. *And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghoſt*, &c.] With a ſpirit of prophecy, as his wife *Elizabeth* had been before, ver. 41. *and propheſied, ſaying*; the following things, relating to the Meſſiah, his incarnation and redemption by him; to the accompliſhing of the covenant, oath, promiſe and mercy of God to his people; and to his ſon, the fore-runner of Chriſt; and to his work and office, in the various parts and branches of it, which he ſhould perform. Whence it appears, that the following ſong is of divine inſpiration; and that *Zacharias* ſpake it as he was moved by the Holy Ghoſt, as the prophets of old did.

Ver. 68. *Bleſſed be the Lord God of Iſrael*, &c.] This was a form of bleſſing of long ſtanding, *Pſ.* lxxii. 18. and very likely was in uſe, more or leſs, ever ſince *Iſrael* was diſtinguiſhed from other nations, became a body politick, and were ſettled in the land of *Canaan*, in the enjoyment of peculiar privileges, both civil and religious; ſee other forms before it in *Gen.* ix. 26. and xxiv. 27. and *Exod.* xviii. 10. And now, this was very near being antiquated, and out of date; for upon the birth of Chriſt, the Son of God manifeſt in the fleſh, the New Teſtament-form of bleſſing runs, as in 2 *Cor.* i. 3. *Eph.* i. 3. 1 *Pet.* i. 3. The reaſon of its being now made uſe of might be, becauſe the Meſſiah, the principal ſubject of this ſong, was peculiarly promiſed unto *Iſrael*, was raiſed up for them, and ſent unto them. To bleſs God, is not to invoke a bleſſing on him; for there is none greater than he to aſk one of; nor does he ſtand in need of any, being the Creator, who is bleſſed for ever in himſelf, and is the fountain of bleſſedneſs to his creatures: and therefore, alſo, cannot ſignify to confer a bleſſing on him, but to praiſe and glorify him, on account of the perfections of his nature, and the works of his hands; and to give thanks unto him for all mercies, ſpiritual and temporal; and eſpecially for Jeſus Chriſt, his miſſion, incarnation, and ſalvation by him, which are the things the God of *Iſrael* is bleſſed for in this ſong: *for he hath viſited, and redeemed his people*; as he did *Iſrael* of old, *Exod.* iii. 16, 17. when the Lord looked upon them, and delivered them out of the bondage of *Egypt*, and which was a type and reſemblance of redemption by Chriſt; and to which reference here ſeems to be had. The *people* here ſaid to be viſited, and redeemed, deſign all the elect of God, not only among the *Jews* but *Gentiles* alſo; all thoſe whom God has choſen to be his people, and has in his covenant taken and declared to be ſuch; whom he has given to Chriſt, as his people and portion; for whoſe ſins he was ſtricken, and made reconciliation, and whom he ſaves from their ſins. The act of *viſiting* them, as previous to redemption, may include God's look of love upon them from everlaſting; his choice of them in Chriſt unto ſalvation; the appointment and proviſion of a Saviour for them; the covenant of grace made with them in Chriſt, the foundation and ſecurity of their ſalvation; and particularly the miſſion of Chriſt in human nature, in conſequence of the council, covenant, and promiſe of God: or it deſigns his incarnation, for he was now actually conceived in the womb of the virgin; ſo that God had viſited, and looked upon his people, and remembered his love and mercy, his covenant and promiſe to them: and the *redemption* of them, which was now ſaid to be made, or done, becauſe Chriſt was now ſent to do it, and becauſe it was as ſure, as if it was done, which intends the ſpiritual and eternal redemption of them by the price of his blood, from the ſlavery of ſin, the bondage of the law, and curſe of it, and the captivity of ſatan, and a deliverance out of the hands of every enemy; a redemption which reaches both to ſoul and body, and ſecures from all condemnation and wrath to come; and includes every bleſſing in it, as juſtification, forgiveneſs of ſins, adoption, ſanctification, and eternal life; and is a plenteous, full, complete, and everlaſting one.

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[v] Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 2. c. 30.

[w] T. Hieroſ. Megilla, fol. 70. 1.

Ver. 69. *And hath raiſed up an horn of ſalvation for us*, &c.] Meaning the Meſſiah, whom God had now raiſed up: *in the houſe of his ſervant David*; in *David*'s family, he being now conceived by a virgin of his houſe; and who, in a little time, would be born in *Bethlehem*, the city of *David.* He is called *an horn of ſalvation*, becauſe he is a powerful Saviour. *Horn* denotes power; it being that to a beaſt, as the arm is to a man, by which it defends itſelf, and puſhes down its enemies; and *ſalvation* is the work Chriſt came to effect, and for which he was raiſed up, and ſent: and a Saviour he is, and a mighty one, as appears from his doing and ſuffering what he has; as bearing all the ſins of his people, and making reconciliation for them; obeying all the precepts of the law, and undergoing the penalty of it; being made a curſe, and becoming obedient to death, even the death of the croſs: as alſo, from his delivering them from ſin, ſatan, and the law, which no other could have done; and from his grappling with, conquering, ſpoiling, and deſtroying all his, and our enemies. Moreover, the word *horn* ſignifies regal power, honour, and dignity; ſee *Dan.* vii. 24. and ſo may not only denote the work of Chriſt as a Saviour, but his office alſo as a king, who in the diſcharge of that is likewiſe a Saviour; for he not only rules, and governs, but protects, defends, and preſerves his people, by his power; ſee 1 *Sam.* ii. 10. *Pſ.* cxxxii. 17.

Ver. 70. *As he ſpake by the mouth of his holy prophets*, &c.] Which ſhows not only the veracity and faithfulneſs of God in his promiſes, but the early intimations that were given by him concerning the Meſſiah: for it follows, *which have been ſince the world began*; or from the beginning of the world; ever ſince the firſt hint of the Meſſiah, as the ſeed of the woman, that ſhould bruiſe the ſerpent's head, was given, he was more or leſs ſpoken of. *Adam*, the firſt prophet, ſeems to have reſpect to him, when he calls his wife *Eve*, which ſignifies life; and becauſe ſhe ſhould be the mother of all living. *Enoch*, the ſeventh from *Adam*, propheſied of him, of his ſecond coming, which ſuppoſes his firſt; and *Lamech* may be thought to have ſome regard to him, when he named his ſon *Noah*, and ſaid what he did concerning him: Chriſt was ſpoken of to *Abraham*, as his ſeed, in whom all nations of the earth ſhould be bleſſed; and God ſpake of him by the patriarch *Jacob*, under the name of *Shiloh*, as who ſhould ſpring from the tribe of *Judah*, before the ſceptre and law-giver were departed from it. *Moſes* foretold that there ſhould ariſe a prophet from the midſt of his brethren like unto him, to whom the *Iſraelites* were to hearken. *David*, the prophet, often ſpeaks of him, particularly of his death, his reſurrection from the dead, his aſcenſion to heaven, and ſeſſion at God's right hand; and the evangelical prophet *Iſaiah* predicts his birth of a virgin, and teſtified before hand of the ſufferings of Chriſt, and the glory that ſhould follow. *Micah* points out the very place of his birth; and *Zachary* deſcribes the manner of his entrance into *Jeruſalem*, as riding on an aſs: to ſay nothing of what *Jeremy*, *Ezekiel*, *Daniel*, and others, have propheſied of him. 'Tis a common ſaying of the *Jews* [x], that "all the prophets, all of them "propheſied not, אלא לימות המשיח, *but of the* "*days of the Meſſiah.*" The men, by whom God ſpoke of the Meſſiah, of the miſſion of him, and of raiſing up this horn of ſalvation, for his people, were *prophets*; men endued with a ſpirit of prophecy; *holy* men, who were ſanctified by the Holy Ghoſt, and ſpake, as they were moved by him; and theſe all ſpake as if it were with one *mouth*; they all agree in their accounts concerning Chriſt, tho' they lived in different periods of time, from the beginning of the world.

Ver. 71. *That we ſhould be ſaved from our enemies*, &c.] This, and the two following verſes, either contain and expreſs the ſum, and ſubſtance of what God ſpake by the prophets; or point out the end or ends of his raiſing up an horn of ſalvation, or a Saviour for his people; namely, that they ſhould be ſaved by him from their enemies: from ſin, which wars againſt the ſoul, and threatens the deſtruction of it; from ſatan, the avowed and implacable adverſary of mankind; from the world, the ſeed of the ſerpent, which has always bore an enmity to the ſeed of the woman; from the law, the killing letter; and from death, the laſt enemy that is to be deſtroyed; *and from the hand of all that hate us*: which is only an illuſtration of the former ſentence, or a repetition of it in other words; and deſigns the ſame as before.

Ver. 72. *To perform the mercy* promiſed *to our fathers*, &c.] By *mercy* is meant ſalvation by Chriſt, which ſprings from the mercy of God; the promiſe of which was an inſtance of mercy to the *Jewiſh* fathers under the Old Teſtament, and alſo the performance of it; for they were ſaved by the grace of our Lord Jeſus, even as we: his blood was ſhed for the remiſſion of ſins that were paſt, and for the redemption of tranſgreſſions under the firſt Teſtament: *and to remember his holy covenant*; which was made between him and his Son from all eternity; and was, at various times, diſpenſed and manifeſted to the patriarchs, and eminent ſaints, as *Adam*, *Noah*, *Abraham*, &c. This is called an *holy* one; not only becauſe it was made by, and between holy perſons, and provided for the holineſs of the people of God, both here, and hereafter; but becauſe in the article of redemption and ſalvation by Chriſt, which is here more particularly regarded, care was taken to ſecure the glory of God's holineſs and juſtice, as well as to diſplay his grace and mercy. Now raiſing up, and ſending Jeſus a Saviour, ſhowed, that God was mindful of this covenant, and therefore ſent redemption to his people.

Ver. 73. *The oath which he ſwore to our father Abraham.*] When he ſwore by himſelf, becauſe he could ſwear by no greater, that in bleſſing he would bleſs him; that his ſeed ſhould poſſeſs the gates of his enemies, and in it all the nations of the earth ſhould be bleſſed: all which have been fulfilled in Jeſus the Meſſiah; ſee *Gen.* xxii. 16, 17, 18. *Heb.* vi. 13, 14.

Ver. 74. *That he would grant unto us*, &c.] What is ſaid in this and the following verſe, is the ſubſtance of the promiſed mercy, covenant, and oath: *that we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies*, as before, in ver. 71. *might ſerve him without fear*. One principal end of deliverance from ſpiritual enemies by Chriſt, is the ſervice of God; and nothing lays a greater obligation on men to ſerve the Lord, and glorify him, than redemption by Chriſt; nor is there any thing that makes men more zealous of good works: ſpiritual and evangelical ſervice, in diſtinction from the legal ſervice, and worſhip of God, is here meant; ſince it is ſaid to be *without fear*, which the threatenings and curſes of the law filled men with; but being delivered from it, they become free from that ſpirit of bondage unto fear, it genders to; as being delivered alſo from ſin and ſatan, they are without fear of hell and damnation; and from the world, they are without fear of men; and from death, they are without fear of that, through which many under the legal diſpenſation, were all their life-time ſubject to bondage. It is a ſaying of the *Jews*[y], that "greater is he that ſerves from love, than he that "ſerves from fear." But ſuch ſort of ſervice is not of a man's ſelf, or performed by his own power and ſtrength, but is a *grant* from God, and owing to the influence of his Spirit and grace.

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[x] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 34. 2. & Sabbat, fol. 6[illegible] 1. Maimon. Hilchot Teſhuva, c. 8. §. 7.

Ver. 75. *In holineſs and righteouſneſs*, &c.] Not in mere outward rites and legal ceremonies; but, as the ſaints ſerve, from principles of righteouſneſs and true holineſs; in which the new man is created, and of which the kingdom of God, or ſpiritual and internal religion conſiſts; ſo in acts of piety and devotion towards God, and juſtice among men, which is the ſubſtance of the perfect and acceptable will of God: *before him*; it is one thing to ſerve the Lord with an outward appearance of holineſs and righteouſneſs before men, and another thing to be righteous before God, and to walk in all his commandments and ordinances, as in his ſight: *all the days of our life*; which denotes the conſtancy and continuance of this ſervice; 'tis not for a day or two, or only on feſtivals and ſabbath-days, ſuch as were under the *Jewiſh* diſpenſation, but every day we live. In the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, and in two copies of *Beza*'s, and two of *Stephens*'s, and in the *Alexandrian* copy, it is only read, *all our days*; but the *Arabic* verſion reads, as the generality of copies, and as we render it.

Ver. 76. *And thou child ſhalt be called the prophet of the higheſt*, &c.] Here *Zacharias* turns himſelf to his ſon *John*, though an infant, and incapable of knowing what was ſaid to him; and for the ſake of thoſe that were preſent, deſcribes his office and work; and ſays, that he ſhould be *called*, that is, that he ſhould *be*, and be accounted a *prophet*: for he was not only a preacher of Chriſt and his Goſpel, but he alſo foretold the coming of the Meſſiah; and the vengeance that ſhould fall on the *Jewiſh* nation, for their unfruitfulneſs, impenitence, and unbelief: and the prophet *of the higheſt*; that is, of God; as the *Perſic* verſion renders it, of the moſt high God; and by whom is meant, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, whoſe prophet, harbinger, and forerunner *John* was; and ſo is a proof of Chriſt being the ſupreme, or moſt high God: *for thou ſhalt go before the face of the Lord, to prepare his ways*; as the angel had ſuggeſted in ver. 17. and as was propheſied of him in *Iſa*. xl. 3. *Mal*. iii. 1. ſee the note on *Matt*. iii. 3.

Ver. 77. *To give knowledge of ſalvation*, &c.] This is ſtill ſaid of *John*, and belongs to his work and office; though the *Syriac* and *Arabic* verſions read, *that he may give*; as if it was ſpoken of the Lord, before whoſe face *John* was to go, and whoſe ways he was to prepare: by *ſalvation* is meant, not a temporal ſalvation, or a deliverance from the *Roman* yoke, the *Jews* were expecting, for *John* gave no intimation of any ſuch ſalvation; but of a ſpiritual and eternal ſalvation, and of Chriſt himſelf, the author of it; who is often called ſalvation, becauſe he was appointed to this buſineſs, was fitted for it, and has effected it; and there is ſalvation in him, and in no other: the *knowledge* of this is, not merely notional and ſpeculative, but experimental, approbative, fiducial, appropriating, ſure, and certain; and is more excellent, than any other kind of knowledge whatever: and this is a *gift*; it is not what is attained unto, and acquired by application, diligence, and induſtry, as other ſort of knowledge; but is a gift of God, though in the uſe of means, and through the miniſtry of the word: and ſo *John* is ſaid to give it miniſterially, he being an inſtrument in the hand of God, whereby ſouls came to the knowledge of ſalvation by Chriſt, and believed in him: it was communicated by God through his miniſtry, *unto his people*: meaning not the people of *John* the *Baptiſt*, the *Jews*, though it was true of God's elect among them; but the people of Chriſt, and that not all mankind, who are his by creation; but a ſpecial people, whom the Father has given him, and he has purchaſed by his blood; whom he conquers by his grace, and makes a willing people, in the day of his power: to theſe, and only theſe, is the knowledge of ſalvation by Chriſt given; for none elſe are appointed to it, and for no other is it wrought out. It follows, *by the remiſſion of their ſins*; the ſenſe of which is, either that ſalvation is by the forgiveneſs of ſin, and lies in it, that being a principal part of it; ſee *Eph*. i. 7. Sins are debts, forgiving them is a remitting theſe debts, a looſing them, or the obligation to payment, which is done freely and fully, for Chriſt's ſake, and through his blood; and herein lies the bleſſedneſs and ſalvation of men; ſee *Rom*. iv. 6, 7. Or elſe that the knowledge of ſalvation was conveyed through the miniſtry of *John*, not by preaching the works of the law, but the doctrine of remiſſion of ſins, by Chriſt; ſee *Mark* i. 4. *John* i. 29. and which is the ſum and ſubſtance of the Goſpel, as it was ordered to be preached by Chriſt, and was preached by his apoſtles. The *Alexandrian* copy reads, *our ſins*.

Ver. 78. *Through the tender mercy of our God*, &c.] Or *bowels of mercy*, to which the forgiveneſs of ſin is owing; the ſource and ſpring of pardon, is the free-grace and abundant mercy of God; it takes its riſe from thence, though it is channelled in the blood and ſacrifice of Chriſt; and which no way derogates from, but rather heightens the riches of God's grace and mercy: for it was mercy, that moved God to enter into a covenant with his Son, in which forgiveneſs of ſin is promiſed; and it was mercy to ſet forth his Son, in his eternal purpoſes and decrees; and to ſend him forth in the fulneſs of time, to ſhed his blood for the remiſſion of ſins; it was the mercy of God to us, that provided a lamb for a burnt-offering, and then accepted of the ſacrifice and ſatisfaction of his Son, in our room and ſtead, and forgave all our ſins, for his ſake; and whatever the pardon of our ſins coſt God and Chriſt, it is all free-grace and mercy to us: it is owing not to the abſolute mercy of God, or to the mercy of God as an abſolute God, but to the mercy of *our God*; our God in Chriſt, our covenant God and Father, whoſe bowels earned towards us, and whoſe pity is that of a tender parent: *whereby the day-ſpring from on high hath viſited us*; the word ανατολη, here uſed, and is tranſlated *the day-ſpring*, is the ſame which the *Septuagint* uſe, in *Jer*. xxiii. 5. *Zech*. iii. 8. and vi. 12. where the

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[y] T. Bab. Sota, fol. 31. 1. Vid. Maimon. Hilch. Teſhuva, c. 10. §. 1, 2.

Meſſiah is ſpoken of, under the name of the *branch*: and undoubtedly the Meſſiah Jeſus, is intended here, who is the man, that branch, that has grown up out of his place; not from below, but from above; and who is the *phoſphorus*, or bringer of light, that bright and morning ſtar, that ſun of righteouſneſs, who has light in himſelf, and communicates light to others; even light natural, ſpiritual, and eternal; and with his rays and beams of light, life, and love, refreſhes, exhilarates, and warms, the hearts of his people: and by the *viſit* he has made in our *horizon*, is meant his aſſumption of human nature; which, like a friendly viſit, proceeded from pure love to the children of God; and was a drawing near unto them, for it was a taking on him their nature, in which he repreſented their perſons; and was done through much difficulty and great condeſcenſion, ſince he was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with him; and his ſtay on earth in this nature, was but for a little while; ſo that on all accounts, it may be truly called a *viſit*: and which, as the remiſſion of ſin is wholly owing to the tender mercy of our God, who put him upon it, called him to it, ſent him forth made of a woman, and in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh, to obtain eternal redemption, in which mercy and truth met together: the end and deſign of this viſit, are ſignified in the next verſe; for the following words belong to the day ſpring from on high, and not to *John* the prophet of the higheſt.

Ver. 79. *To give light to them that ſit in darkneſs*, &c.] God's elect among the *Jews*, who were not only in a ſtate of unregeneracy, which is a ſtate of darkneſs, ignorance, and unbelief; but in the darkneſs of the legal diſpenſation, and at this time under more than ordinary darkneſs and ignorance; having loſt the knowledge of the righteouſneſs of God, and of the ſpirituality of his law, the true ſenſe of the ſcriptures, and right notions of the Meſſiah; being led by blind guides, the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*: *and*, were as it were alſo, *in the ſhadow of death*; in a ſtate ſeemingly irrecoverable, when Chriſt, the great light aroſe, and ſhone upon them; and communicated ſpiritual light, life, and heat unto them; ſee *Iſa.* ix. 2. compared with *Matt.* iv. 13—16. though Chriſt is alſo a light, to lighten his choſen ones among the *Gentiles*, *Luke* ii. 32. but the *Jews* ſeem chiefly to be intended here: *to guide our feet into the way of peace*; which we knew not: not that he came to teach us how to make our peace with God, but to make peace for us, by the blood of his croſs; and ſo by his Spirit and word, lead us into the true way of enjoying ſpiritual peace here, and eternal peace hereafter.

Ver. 80. *And the child grew, and waxed ſtrong in ſpirit*, &c.] That is, *John*, the ſon of *Zacharias* and *Eliſabeth*, grew in ſtature of body, and increaſed in wiſdom and knowledge, and fortitude in his ſoul: *and was in the deſerts*; or *deſert*, as the *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read; not in the wilderneſs of *Judæa*, where he came preaching, but either of *Ziph* or *Maon*, which were near to *Hebron*; ſee 1 *Sam.* xxiii. 14, 24, 25. *Joſh.* xv. 54, 55. he was not brought up in the ſchools of the prophets, nor in the academies of the *Jews*, or at the feet of any of their Rabbins and doctors; that it might appear he was not taught and ſent of men, but of God: nor did he dwell in any of the cities, or larger towns, but in deſerts; partly that he might be fitted for that gravity and auſterity of life, he was to appear in; and that it might be clear he had no knowledge of, nor correſpondence with Jeſus, whoſe fore-runner he was, and of whom he was to bear teſtimony, till ſuch time he did it; and in this ſolitude he remained, *till the day of his ſhewing unto Iſrael*; either till the time came that he was to appear before, and be examined by the *Sanhedrim*, that judged of perſons fitneſs and qualifications for the prieſthood, in order to be admitted to it; which ſhould have been when he was thirty years of age, but that he was deſigned for other ſervice; or rather therefore till he appeared in his prophetic office, and ſhewed himſelf to the people of *Iſrael*; to whom he came preaching the doctrine of repentance and remiſſion of ſins, adminiſtring the ordinance of baptiſm, giving notice of the near approach of the Meſſiah, and pointing him out unto the people.

## CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. AND *it came to paſs in thoſe days*, &c.] When *John* the *Baptiſt* was born, and Chriſt was conceived, and his mother pregnant with him, and the time of his birth drew on. The *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *in that day*; as if it was the ſame day in which *John* was circumciſed, and *Zacharias* delivered the above ſong of praiſe: *that there went out a decree from Cæſar Auguſtus*; ſecond *Emperor* of *Rome*; the name *Cæſar* was common to all the Emperors, as *Pharaoh* to the *Egyptians*, and afterwards *Ptolemy*. His name *Auguſtus*, was not his original ſurname, but *Thurinus*; and was given him, after he became *Cæſar*, to expreſs his grandeur, majeſty, and reverence; and that by the advice of *Munatius Plancus*, when others would have had him called *Romulus*, as if he was the founder of the city of *Rome*[a]: by him a decree was made and publiſhed, *that all the world ſhould be taxed*; or *regiſtered*, or *enrolled*; for this was not levying a tax, or impoſing tribute upon them, but a taking an account of the names of perſons, and of their eſtates; and which might be, in order to lay a tax upon them, as afterwards was: for the payment of a tax, there was no need of the appearance of women and children; and ſo the *Arabic* verſion renders it, *that the names of the whole habitable world might be deſcribed, or written down*; ſuch an enrollment had been determined on by *Auguſtus*, when at *Tarracon* in *Spain*, twenty ſeven years before; but he was diverted from it by ſome diſturbances in the empire, ſo that it was deferred to this time, in which there was a remarkable interpoſition of divine providence; for had this enrollment been made then, in all likelihood it had not been done now, and *Joſeph* and *Mary* would not have had occaſion to have come to *Bethlehem*: but ſo it muſt be; and thus were things ordered by an infinite, and all-wiſe providence to effect it: nor did this enrollment reach to all the parts of the known world, but only to the *Roman* empire; which, becauſe it was ſo very large as it was, and in the boaſting language of the *Romans* was ſo called, as *Ptolomy Evergetes*[b] calls his kingdom, κοσμος, *the world*. Though ſome think only the land of *Judæa* is meant, which is called *the earth*, in *Luke* xxi. 26. and *all the world*, in *Acts* xi. 28. but the other ſenſe ſeems more agreeable; and ſo the *Syriac* verſion renders it, *that all the people of his empire might be enrolled*; and

[a] Suetonius in vita Octav. Auguſt. §. 7.

[b] Apud Fabricii Biblioth. Gr. Tom 2. p. 608.

and the *Perſic* verſion, *that they ſhould enroll all the ſubjects of his kingdom*; and is juſtified by the uſe of the phraſe for the *Roman* empire, in ſeveral paſſages of ſcripture, *Rom.* i. 8. and x. 18. *Rev.* iii. 10. and xiii. 3. Now at the time of this enrollment, and under this auguſt emperor, and when the whole world was in a profound peace, was the Meſſiah born, the king of kings, and the only potentate; the *Shiloh*, the peaceable and proſperous, the prince of peace, and Lord of life and glory; and that, in order to redeem men from that worſe ſubjection and bondage they were in to ſin, ſatan, the law, and death, than they were to the *Roman* Emperor. The *Jews* ſay [b], the ſon of *David* ſhall not come, until the kingdom (of *Edom*, or *Rome*, as ſome copies read, in others it is eraſed) ſhall be extended over all *Iſrael*, nine months, according to *Mic.* v. 3. The Gloſs on it is, that is, *all the world*, in which the *Iſraelites* are ſcattered.

Ver. 2. *And this taxing was firſt made*, &c.] Or *this was the firſt enrollment*, or *taxing* in the *Jewiſh* nation; for there was another afterwards, when *Judas* the *Galilean* aroſe, and drew many after him, *Acts* v. 38. *When Cyrenius was governour of Syria*; or *of Cyrenius governour of Syria*; that is, it was the firſt that he was concerned in; who not now, but afterwards, was governour of *Syria*; and becauſe he had been ſo before *Luke* wrote this hiſtory, and this being a title of honour, and what might diſtinguiſh him from others of that name, it is given him; for as *Tertullian* ſays [c], *Sentius Saturninus* was now governour of *Syria*, when *Cyrenius* was ſent into *Judea*, to make this regiſter, or taxing; and which is manifeſtly diſtinguiſhed from that, which was made during his being governour of *Syria*, when *Archelaus* was baniſhed from *Judea*, ten or eleven years after *Herod*'s death; which *Joſephus* [d] gives an account of, and *Luke* refers to, in *Acts* v. 38. Moreover, the words will bear to be rendered thus, *and this tax*, or enrollment, was *made before Cyrenius was governour of Syria*; πρωτη, being uſed for προτερα, as in *John* i. 15, 30. This *Cyrenius*, is the ſame whom the *Romans* call *Quirinius*, and *Quirinus*: a governour of *Syria* had great power in *Judea*, to which it was annexed, when *Cyrenius* was governour there. It is reported of *R. Gamaliel*, that he went to take a licence, מהגמון בסוריא, *from a governour of Syria* [e]; *i. e.* to intercalate the year: and *Syria* was in many things like to the land of *Judea*, particularly as to tithes, and the keeping of the ſeventh year [f].

Ver. 3. *And all went to be taxed*, &c.] Throughout *Judea*, *Galilee*, and *Syria*; men, women, and children: *every one into his own city*; where he was born, and had any eſtate, and to which he belonged.

Ver. 4. *And Joſeph alſo went up from Galilee*, &c.] Where he now lived, and worked at the trade of a carpenter; having for ſome reaſons, and by one providence or another, removed hither from his native place: *out of the city of Nazareth*; which was in *Galilee*, where he and *Mary* lived; and where he had eſpouſed her, and ſhe had conceived of the Holy Ghoſt: *into Judea*; which lay higher than *Galilee*, and therefore he is ſaid to go up to it: *unto the city of David*; not what was built by him, but where he was born and lived; ſee 1 *Sam.* xvii. 12. *which is called Bethlehem*; the place, where according to *Mic.* v. 2. the Meſſiah was to be born, and was born; and which ſignifies *the houſe of bread*; a very fit place for Chriſt, the bread which came down from heaven, and gives life to the world, to appear firſt in. This place was, as a *Jewiſh* chronologer ſays [g], a *parſa* and half, or ſix miles from *Jeruſalem*; though another of their writers, an hiſtorian and traveller ſays [h], it was two *parſa*'s, or eight miles; but *Juſtin Martyr* [i] ſays, it was but thirty-five furlongs diſtant from it, which is not five miles: hither *Joſeph* came from *Galilee*, *becauſe he was of the houſe and lineage of David*; he was of his family, and lineally deſcended from him, though he was ſo poor and mean; and this is the reaſon of his coming to *Bethlehem*, *David*'s city.

Ver. 5. *To be taxed with Mary his eſpouſed wife*, &c.] Whom alſo he had married, though he had not known her in a carnal way: ſhe came along with him to be taxed and enrolled alſo, becauſe ſhe was of the ſame family of *David*, and belonged to the ſame city: *being great with child*; very near her time, and yet, though in ſuch circumſtances, was obliged by this edict, to come to *Bethlehem*; and the providence in it was, that ſhe might lie-in there, and ſo the prophecy in *Mic.* v. 2. have its accompliſhment: this was an inſtance, and an example, of obedience to civil magiſtrates.

Ver. 6. *And ſo it was, that while they were there*, &c.] At *Bethlehem*, waiting to be called and enrolled in their turn: *the days were accompliſhed that ſhe ſhould be delivered*; her reckoning was up, the nine months of her going with child were ended, and her full time to bring forth was come.

Ver. 7. *And ſhe brought forth her firſt-born ſon*, &c.] At *Bethlehem*, as was predicted; and the *Jews* themſelves own, that the Meſſiah is already born, and born at *Bethlehem*. They have a tradition, that an *Arabian* ſhould ſay to a *Jew* [k], "Lo! the king Meſſiah is born; he ſaid to him, what is his name? *Menachem*: he aſked him, what is his father's name? he replied to him, *Hezekiah*: he ſaid unto him, from whence is he? he anſwered, from the palace of the king of *Bethlehem*." Which is elſewhere [l] reported, with ſome little variation; the *Arabian* ſaid to the *Jew*, "the redeemer of the *Jews* is born; he ſaid unto him, what's his name? he replied, *Menachem* is his name: and what's his father's name? he anſwered, *Hezekiah*: he ſaid unto him, and where do they dwell? he replied, in *Birath Arba*, in *Bethlehem*." And the *Jewiſh* chronologer affirms [m], that "Jeſus the *Nazarene*, was born at *Bethlehem Judah*, a *parſa* and a half from *Jeruſalem*." And even the author of the blaſphemous book of the life of Chriſt owns [n], that "*Bethlehem Judah*, was the place of his nativity." Jeſus is called *Mary*'s firſt-born, becauſe ſhe had none before him; though ſhe might not have any after him; for the firſt that opened the matrix, was called the firſt-born, though none followed after, and was holy to the Lord, *Exod.* xiii. 2. Chriſt, as to his human nature, was *Mary*'s firſt-born; and as to his divine nature, God's firſt-born: *and wrapped him in ſwaddling clothes*; which ſhews, that he was in all things made like unto us, ſin only excepted. This is one of the firſt things done to a new-born infant, after that it is waſhed, and its navel cut; ſee *Ezek.* xvi. 4. and which *Mary* did herſelf, having neither midwife nor nurſe with her; from whence it has been concluded, that the birth of Jeſus was eaſy, and that ſhe brought him forth without pain, and not in that ſorrow women uſually do: *and laid him in a manger*. The *Perſic* verſion ſerves for a comment; *ſhe put him into the middle of the manger, in the place in which they gave food to beaſts; becauſe in the place whither they came, they had no cradle*: this ſhows the meanneſs of our Lord's birth, and into what a low eſtate he came; and that now, as afterwards, though Lord of all, yet had not where to lay his head in a proper place; and expreſſes his amazing grace, in that he was rich, yet for our ſakes became poor: and the reaſon of his being here laid was, *becauſe there was no room for them in the inn*. It ſeems that *Joſeph* had no houſe of his own to go into, nor any relation and friend to receive him; and it may be, both his own father and *Mary*'s father, were dead, and therefore were obliged to put up at an inn; and in this there was no room for them, becauſe of the multitude that were come thither to be enrolled: and this ſhows their poverty and meanneſs, and the little account that was made of them; for had they been rich, and made any conſiderable figure, they would have been regarded, and room made for them; eſpecially ſince *Mary* was in the circumſtances ſhe was; and it was brutiſh in them to turn them into a ſtable, when ſuch was her caſe.

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[b] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 98. 2.

[c] Contr. Marcion, l. 4. c. 19.

[d] Antiqu. l. 18. c. 1.

[e] Miſn. Ediot, c. 7. §. 7.

[f] T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 8. 1.

[g] Ganz. Tzemach David, par. 2. fol. 14. 2.

[h] R. Benjamin Itin, p. 47.

[i] Apolog. 2. p. 75.

[k] T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 5. 1.

[l] Echa Rabbati, fol. 50. 1.

[m] David Ganz, ut ſupra.

[n] Toldos Jeſu, p. 7.

Ver. 8. *And there were in the ſame country ſhepherds*, &c.] For *Bethlehem* was a place of paſture: near to *Ephrata*, the ſame with *Bethlehem*, were the fields of the wood, *Pſal*. cxxxii. 6. and the tower of *Edar*, or the tower of the flock, *Gen*. xxxv. 21. *Mic*. iv. 8. and here *David* kept his father's ſheep, 1 *Sam*. xvii. 15. ſo that we need not wonder to hear of ſhepherds here, *abiding in the field, watching over their flock by night*: from whence it appears, that Chriſt was born in the night; and the [o] *Jews* ſay, that the future redemption ſhall be in the night; and *Jerom* ſays [p], it is a tradition of the *Jews*, that Chriſt will come in the middle of the night, as was the paſſover in *Egypt*: it is not likely that he was born, as is commonly received, at the latter end of *December*, in the depth of winter; ſince at this time, ſhepherds were out in the fields, where they lodged all night, watching their flocks: they were diligent men, that looked well to their flocks, and watched them by night, as well as by day, to preſerve them from beaſts of prey; they were, as it is in the *Greek* text, *keeping the watches of the night over their flock*. The night was divided into four watches, the even, midnight, cock-crowing, and morning; and theſe kept them, as the *Arabic* verſion adds, *alternately*: ſome kept the flock one watch, and ſome another, while the reſt ſlept in the tent, or tower, that was built in the fields for that purpoſe. There were two ſorts of cattle with the *Jews*; there was one ſort which they called, מדבריות, *the cattle of the wilderneſs*, that lay in the fields; and another ſort which they called, בייתות, *the cattle of the houſe*, that were brought up at home: concerning both which, they have this rule [q]; "they don't water nor ſlay the cattle "of the wilderneſs, but they water and ſlay the "cattle of the houſe: theſe are the cattle of the "houſe, that lie in the city; the cattle of the wilderneſs, are they that lie in the paſtures." On which, one of their commentators [r] obſerves, theſe "lie in the paſtures, which are in the villages, all "the days of cold and heat, and don't go into the "cities, until the rains deſcend." The firſt rain is in the month *Marcheſvan*, which anſwers to the latter part of our *October*, and the former part of *November*; and of this ſort, ſeem to be the flocks thoſe ſhepherds were keeping by night, the time not being yet come, of their being brought into the city: from whence it appears, that Chriſt muſt be born before the middle of *October*, ſince the firſt rain was not yet come: concerning this, the *Gemara* [s] is more large; "the *Rabbins* teach, that "theſe are they of the wilderneſs, or fields, and "theſe are they of the houſe; they of the field, "are they that go out on the paſſover, and feed "in the paſtures, and come in at the firſt rain; "and theſe are they of the houſe, all that go out "and feed without the border, and come and lie "within the border (fixed for a ſabbath-day's journey): *Rabbi* ſays, thoſe, and thoſe are of the "houſe; but theſe are they that are of the field, "all they that go out and feed in the paſtures, and "don't come in to remain, neither in the days of "the ſun, nor in the days of the rains." To the ſhepherds, the firſt notice of Chriſt's birth was given; not to the princes and chief-prieſts, and learned men at *Jeruſalem*, but to weak, mean, and illiterate men; whom God is pleaſed to chuſe and call, and reveal his ſecrets to; when he hides them from the wiſe and prudent, to their confuſion, and the glory of his grace: and this was a preſage of what the kingdom of Chriſt would be, and by, and to whom, the Goſpel would be preached.

Ver. 9. *And lo, the angel of the Lord*, &c.] It may be *Gabriel*, who had brought the tidings of the conception of the Meſſiah to the virgin, and now the birth of him to the ſhepherds: *came upon them*; on a ſudden, unexpectedly, at once, and ſtood by them, as ſome verſions read; or rather, ſtood over them, over their heads, juſt above them; ſo that he was eaſily and perfectly ſeen by them: *and the glory of the Lord ſhone round about them*; or a very glorious and extraordinary light, ſhone with ſurprizing luſtre and brightneſs, all around them; by which light, they could diſcern the illuſtrious form of the angel that was over them: *and they were ſore afraid*; at the ſight of ſuch a perſonage, and at ſuch unuſual light and glory about them: they were not uſed to ſuch appearances, and were awed with the majeſty of God, of which theſe were ſymbols, and were conſcious to themſelves of their own ſinfulneſs and frailty.

Ver. 10. *And the angel ſaid unto them, fear not*, &c.] For he was not a meſſenger of bad, but of good tidings: *for behold, I bring you good tidings*; tidings, that were both wonderful and amazing, and therefore a *behold*, is prefixed to them, as well as to excite to attention; and which were good news, and glad tidings, for ſuch the birth of Chriſt of a virgin is; in which the good-will, and amazing love of God to man, are diſplayed, and the promiſes and prophecies relating to him fulfilled; and the work of man's ſalvation, his peace, pardon, righteouſneſs, *&c.* about to be accompliſhed, and ſo matter *of great joy*: not carnal, but ſpiritual; not feigned, but real; not temporary, but laſting; even ſuch as cannot be taken away, nor intermeddled with; and not ſmall, but great, even joy unſpeakable, and full of glory: *which ſhall be to all people*; not to every individual of mankind; not to *Herod* and his courtiers, who were troubled at it; nor to the greater part of the *Jewiſh* nation, who when he came to them, received him not, but rejected him as the Meſſiah; particularly not to the chief-prieſts,

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[o] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 73. 3.

[p] In Matt. xxv. 6.

[q] Miſn. Betza, c. 5. §. 7.

[r] Maimon. in ib.

[s] T. Bab. Betza, fol. 40. 1. & Sabbat, fol. 45. 2. Vid. Maimon. Hilch. Yom Tob, c. 2. §. 2.

*Scribes* and *Phariſees*, who, when they ſaw him, ſaid, this is the heir, let's kill him, and ſeize on the inheritance; but to all that were waiting for him, and were looking for redemption in *Iſrael*; to all ſenſible ſinners who rejoice at his birth, and in his ſalvation; ſee *Iſ.* ix. 3, 6. to all the choſen people of God, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, whom God has taken to be his covenant-people, and has given to his Son, as ſuch, to redeem and ſave; to theſe the incarnation of Chriſt, with all the benefits reſulting from it, is the cauſe of great joy, when they are made a willing people in the day of Chriſt's power.

Ver. 11. *For unto you is born this day*, &c.] Day is here put for a natural day, conſiſting both of night and day; for it was night when Chriſt was born, and the angels brought the tidings of it to the ſhepherds. The particular day, and it may be, month and year, in which Chriſt was born, cannot be certainly known; but this we may be ſure of, it was in the fulneſs of time, and at the exact ſeaſon fixed upon between God and Chriſt in the council and covenant of peace; and that he was born, not unto, or for the good of angels; for the good angels ſtand in no need of his incarnation, ſufferings, and death, having never fell; and as for the evil angels, a Saviour was never deſigned and provided for them; nor did Chriſt take on him their nature, nor ſuffer in their ſtead: wherefore, the angel does not ſay, *unto us*, but *unto you*, unto you men; for he means not merely, and only the ſhepherds, or the *Jews* only, but the *Gentiles* alſo; all the children, all the ſpiritual ſeed of *Abraham*, all elect men; for their ſakes, and on their account, and for their good, he aſſumed human nature; ſee *Iſ.* ix. 6. *Heb.* ii. 14, 16. *in the city of David*; that is, *Bethlehem*, as in ver. 4. where the Meſſiah was to be born, as being, according to the fleſh, of the ſeed of *David*, his Son and offspring; as he is, according to his divine nature, his Lord and root. The characters of this new-born child follow, and which prove the tidings of his birth to be good, and matter of joy: *a Saviour*; whom God had provided and appointed from all eternity; and had been long promiſed, and much expected as ſuch in time, even from the beginning of the world; and is a great one, being God as well as man, and ſo able to work out a great ſalvation for great ſinners, which he has done; and he is as willing to ſave as he is able; and is a complete Saviour, and an only, and an everlaſting one: hence, his name is called Jeſus, becauſe he ſaves from ſin, from ſatan, from the law, from the world, from death, and hell, and wrath, to come, and from every enemy. *Which is Chriſt the Lord*; the Meſſiah ſpoken of by the prophets; the anointed of the Lord, with the Holy Ghoſt, without meaſure, to be a prophet, prieſt, and king in his church; and who is the true *Jehovah*, the Lord our righteouſneſs, the Lord of all creatures, the Lord of angels, good and bad, the Lord of all men, as Creator, the prince of the kings of the earth, the lord of lords, and king of kings; and who is particularly the Lord of ſaints by his father's gift, his own purchaſe, the eſpouſal of them to himſelf, and by the power of his grace upon them: and the birth of ſuch a perſon muſt needs be joyful, and is to be accounted good news, and glad tidings.

Ver. 12. *And this ſhall be a ſign unto you*, &c.] When they ſhould come to *Bethlehem*, and to the inn where *Joſeph* and *Mary* were: *ye ſhall find the babe wrapped in ſwadling clothes, lying in a manger*; for tho' there might be many other children in the inn, yet none elſe in ſwadling clothes, at leaſt lying in a manger: this ſign would diſtinguiſh the new-born Saviour from all others; had not the angel given them this direction, they would never have thought to have looked for, and found him in ſuch a place: and moreover, it might have been a ſtumbling to them, and an objection with them againſt his being Chriſt, the Lord, had they not been told before-hand where he was; but by this means this objection was prevented, and this ſtumbling-block was removed out of the way, and they were prepared to ſee him, embrace, and believe in him, in this mean condition.

Ver. 13. *And ſuddenly there was with the angel*, &c.] That brought the tidings of Chriſt's birth to the ſhepherds: *a multitude of the heavenly hoſt*; who being cauſed to fly ſwiftly, were at once with him, by his ſide, and about him; and which was a further confirmation of the truth of his meſſage to them: theſe were angels who are called an *hoſt*, or army, the militia of heaven, the miniſters of God, that wait upon him, and do his pleaſure; and are ſent forth to miniſter to his people, and encamp about them, preſerve, and defend them; ſee *Gen.* xxxii. 1, 2. Theſe are ſtiled an *heavenly* hoſt, becauſe they dwell in heaven; and to diſtinguiſh them from hoſts and armies on earth; and ſaid to be a *multitude*, for the angels are innumerable; there are thouſands, ten thouſands, and ten thouſand times ten thouſand of them: it may be rendered *the multitude*, and may intend the whole company of angels, who were all of them together to ſing the praiſes of God, and glorify him at the birth of the incarnate Saviour, as well as to adore him; ſince it is ſaid, *when he bringeth in the firſt-begotten into the world, he ſaith, and let all the angels of God worſhip him*, *Heb.* i. 6. and theſe were *praiſing God*; on account of the birth of Chriſt, and the redemption that was to be obtained by him, for elect men; which ſhows their friendly diſpoſition to them, and how much they rejoice at their ſpiritual and eternal welfare; ſee *Luke* xv. 10. And thus, as at the laying of the foundation of the earth, theſe *morning ſtars ſang together, and all* theſe *ſons of God ſhouted for joy*, *Job* xxxviii. 7. they did the ſame when the foundation of man's ſalvation was laid in the incarnation of the Son of God; *and ſaying*, as follows.

Ver. 14. *Glory to God in the higheſt*, &c.] Which, with the following words, are not to be conſidered as a wiſh, that ſo it might be, but as an affirmation, that ſo it was; for the glory of God is great in the ſalvation, peace, and reconciliation of his people by Jeſus Chriſt, even the glory of all his perfections; of his wiſdom and prudence in forming ſuch a ſcheme; of his love, grace and mercy, the glory of which is his main view, and is hereby anſwered; and of his holineſs, which is hereby honoured; and of his juſtice, which is fully ſatisfied; and of his power in the accompliſhment of it; and of his truth and faithfulneſs in fulfilling his covenant and oath, and all the promiſes and prophecies relating to it. Great glory from hence ariſes to God, who is in the higheſt heavens, and is given him by angels and ſaints that dwell there, and that in the higheſt ſtrains; and by ſaints on earth too in their meaſure, and as they are able: the ground and foundation of which is what follows: *and on earth peace*: by which is meant, not external peace, tho' at this time there was peace on earth all the world over; nor internal peace, as diſtinguiſhed from that eternal peace which the ſaints enjoy in heaven; nor even peace made by Chriſt; for this, as yet, was not done on earth, but was to be made by the blood of his croſs: rather Chriſt himſelf is here intended, who is called *the man, the peace*, *Mic*. v. 5. and *our peace*, *Eph*. ii. 14. and was now on earth, being juſt born, in order to make peace with God, and reconciliation for the ſins of the people: and he is ſo called, becauſe he is the author of peace between *Jew* and *Gentile*, which were at enmity with each other; by abrogating the ceremonial law, the cauſe of that enmity; by ſending the Goſpel to them, and converting ſome of each; and by granting the like privileges to them both; ſee *Eph*. ii. 14—20. and becauſe he is the author of peace between God and elect ſinners, who, thro' the fall, are at enmity againſt God, and enemies in their minds by wicked works unto him; nor can they make their peace with God; they know not the way of it; nor are they diſpoſed to it; nor can they approach to God to treat with him about terms of peace; nor can they do thoſe things that will make their peace with God, as ſatisfying his juſtice, and fulfilling his law: Chriſt only is their peace-maker; he only is fit for it, being God and man in one perſon, and ſo a day's man that can lay his hands on both, and has a concern in each, in things pertaining to God, and to make reconciliation for the ſins of the people: he only is able to do it, and he has done it by the blood of his croſs; and a very excellent peace it is he has made: it is made upon the moſt honourable terms, to the ſatisfaction of juſtice, and the magnifying of the law of God; and is therefore a laſting one, and attended with many bleſſings, ſuch as freedom of acceſs to God, and a right to all the privileges of his houſe; and the news of it are glad tidings of good things: and thoſe angels that firſt brought the tidings of it, may be truly called, as ſome of the angels are by the *Jews* [i], מלאכי שלום, *angels of peace*. Moreover, Chriſt may be ſaid to be *peace*, becauſe he is the donor of all true ſolid peace and real proſperity, both external, which his people have in the world, and with each other; and internal, which they have in their own breaſts, thro' believing in him, and attending on his ordinances; and eternal, which they ſhall have for ever with him in the world to come. And now Chriſt being the peace on earth, is owing to *good-will towards men*; that is, to the free favour, good-will, and pleaſure of God towards choſen men in Chriſt Jeſus: that Chriſt was on earth as the peace-maker, or giver, was owing to God's good-will; not to angels, for good angels needed him not as ſuch; and the angels that ſinned were not ſpared, nor was a Saviour provided for them; but to men, and not to all men; for tho' all men ſhare in the providential goodneſs of God, yet not in his ſpecial good-will, free grace, and favour: but to elect men, to whom a child was born, and a ſon given, even the prince of peace: it was from God's good-will to theſe perſons, whom he loved with an everlaſting love in Chriſt, laid up goodneſs for them in him, bleſſed them with all ſpiritual bleſſings in him, and made a covenant with him for them; that he provided and appointed his Son to be the ſaviour and peace-maker; that he ſent him into this world to be the propitiation for ſin; and that he ſpared him not, but delivered him up into the hands of men, juſtice, and death, in order to make peace for them. The *Vulgate Latin* verſion, and ſome copies, as the *Alexandrian*, and *Beza*'s moſt ancient one, read, *peace on earth to men of good-will*; and which muſt be underſtood, not of men that have a good-will of themſelves, for there are no ſuch men: no man has a will to that which is good, till God works in him both to will, and to do of his good pleaſure; wherefore peace, reconciliation, and ſalvation, are not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that ſheweth mercy: but of ſuch who are the objects of God's good-will, and pleaſure, whom he loves, becauſe he will love, and has mercy and compaſſion on them, and is gracious to them, becauſe he will be ſo; and therefore chuſes, redeems, and regenerates them of his own will, and becauſe it ſeems good in his ſight. The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read, *good hope to men*; as there is a foundation laid in Chriſt the peace, of a good hope of reconciliation, righteouſneſs, pardon, life, and ſalvation for ſinful men. The *Arabic* verſion renders it, *chearfulneſs in men*; as there is a great deal of reaſon for it, on account of the birth of the ſaviour and peace-maker, the ſalvation that comes by him to men, and the glory brought thereby to God.

Ver. 15. *And it came to paſs as the angels*, &c.] The *Perſic* verſion reads in the ſingular number, *the angel*: *were gone away from them into heaven*, from whence they came, and which was the place of their abode and reſidence; and therefore they are called the angels of heaven, where they always behold the face of God, hearken to the voice of his commandment, and go and come at his orders; and theſe having finiſhed their embaſſy, delivered their meſſage to the ſhepherds, and done all the work they came about, *departed from them*: and, as the *Ethiopic* verſion adds, *and aſcended up into heaven*; and as ſoon as they were gone, immediately, *the ſhepherds ſaid one to another, let us now go even to Bethlehem*, the place where the angel ſaid the Saviour was born, *and ſee this thing which is come to paſs, which the Lord hath made known to us*: from whence it appears, that it was not from diffidence of the matter, as queſtioning the truth of what the angel ſaid, that they moved one another to go to *Bethlehem*; for they firmly believed the thing was come to paſs, which the angel had told them of, and that what he ſaid was from the Lord; nor did they act any criminal part, or indulge a vain curioſity, in going to *Bethlehem* to ſee what was done; for it ſeems to be the will of God that they ſhould go, and for which they had a direction from the angel, and a ſign given them by which they might know the new-born Saviour from any other infant, ver. 12. and which would alſo be a further confirmation of their faith, and by which they would be qualified not only as ear, but as eye-witneſſes of the truth of this fact, to report it with greater certainty.

Ver. 16. *And they came with haſte*, &c.] In the night, leaving their flocks, to ſee their incarnate Lord, as *Zaccheus* haſtened down from the tree to receive the Saviour. The wonderfulneſs of the viſion, the importance of the thing related, the eagerneſs of their ſpirits to ſee the thing that was told them, put them on making quick diſpatch, and haſtening to the city with all ſpeed: *and found Mary and Joſeph*; as they had been directed by the angel, in the city of *Bethlehem*, in an inn there, and in a ſtable in the inn: *and the babe lying in a manger*; where *Mary* had put it as ſoon as born, and had wrapped it in ſwadling clothes; becauſe there was no room in the inn, and as the angel had told them they ſhould find it, ver. 12.

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[i] Zohar in Exod. fol. 8, 1. & 98. 4.

Ver. 17. *And when they had ſeen it*, &c.] Or *him*, as the *Arabic* verſion reads, the child Jeſus, or *them*, *Joſeph*, *Mary*, and the child; or this whole affair, as had been related to them: *they made known abroad*; not only in the inn, and among all the people there, but throughout the city of *Bethlehem*, *the ſaying which was told them concerning this child*: both what the angel had told them concerning his birth, and what he was, and where he lay; and what *Mary* had told them concerning the notice ſhe had from an angel of the conception of him, and the manner of it, and of what he ſhould be; and likewiſe what *Joſeph* had told them, how an angel had appeared to him, and had acquainted him, after the conception of him, that it was of the Holy Ghoſt; and was bid to call his name Jeſus; as *Mary* alſo was, becauſe he was to be the Saviour of his people from their ſins: for, no doubt, but they had a converſation with *Joſeph* and *Mary* about him; and as they could not fail of relating to them, what they had ſeen and heard that night in the fields, it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that *Joſeph* and *Mary* would give them ſome account of the above things; which all make up the ſaying, or report, they ſpread abroad: the *Perſic* verſion reads, *what they had heard of the angel*; but there is no reaſon to confine it to that.

Ver. 18. *And all they that heard it*, &c.] What the ſhepherds related of what they had heard from the angel, and from *Joſeph* and *Mary*, and what they had ſeen themſelves; *wondered at thoſe things that were told them by the ſhepherds*: for tho' they expected the Meſſiah, and that he would be born at *Bethlehem*, yet they did not imagine that he would be born of ſuch mean parents, and appear in ſuch mean circumſtances, and in ſo contemptible a place; and that ſhepherds, and not the princes of *Iſrael*, ſhould have the firſt notice of it; and yet the account which theſe ſhepherds, who were plain-hearted men, and could never be thought to invent ſuch a ſtory, and ſpread it, and impoſe on men, without any intereſt in it, was very ſurprizing; ſo that they knew not what to ſay to it, neither to deny, nor believe it: accordingly, the *Perſic* verſion renders the whole thus, *and whoever heard, wondring, ſtuck at it*; heſitated about it, and yet aſtoniſhed at the particulars of it; juſt as Chriſt's hearers were in *Luke* iv. 22. who wondred at his miniſtry, and the manner of it, and yet objected the meanneſs of his parentage and education.

Ver. 19. *But Mary kept all theſe things*, &c.] Which the ſhepherds had related to her: *and pondered* them *in her heart*; or compared them in her mind, with what had been ſaid to herſelf by the angel, and alſo by her huſband, as well as what was ſaid by *Elizabeth* at the time ſhe made her a viſit; but ſhe ſaid nothing of them to others, leſt ſhe ſhould be thought an enthuſiaſt, or a vain boaſter; and therefore left things, till time ſhould make a diſcovery of them in a proper way, and in the beſt ſeaſon.

Ver. 20. *And the ſhepherds returned*, &c.] From *Bethlehem*, to the fields, and to their flock there: *glorifying and praiſing God for all the things that they had heard*; from *Joſeph* and *Mary*: *and ſeen*; as the babe lying in the manger; *as it was told unto them*; by the angel: they glorified God on account of the birth of the Meſſiah; and praiſed him, wondring at his grace, and the high honour put upon them, that they ſhould be acquainted with it; and that there was ſuch an exact agreement between the things they had ſeen, and the angel's account of them.

Ver. 21. *And when eight days were accompliſhed for the circumciſing of the child*, &c.] According to the original inſtitution of circumciſion, *Gen*. xvii. 12. and which was ſtrictly obſerved by religious perſons, as by the parents of our Lord here, and by thoſe of *John* the *Baptiſt*, ch. i. 59. Hence the Apoſtle *Paul* reckons this among his privileges, that he could have boaſted of as well as other *Jews*, *Phil*. iii. 5. ſee the note there. But it may be aſked, why was Chriſt circumciſed, ſince he had no impurity of nature, which circumciſion ſuppoſed; nor needed any circumciſion of the heart, which that was a ſymbol of? To which it may be replied, though he needed it not himſelf, it was the duty of his parents to do it, ſince all the male ſeed of *Abraham* were obliged to it, and that law, or ordinance was now in force; and beſides, it was neceſſary that he might appear in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh, who was to bear, and atone for the ſins of his people; as alſo, that it might be manifeſt that he aſſumed true and real fleſh, and was a partaker of the ſame fleſh and blood with us; and that he was a Son of *Abraham*, and of his ſeed, as it was promiſed he ſhould; and that he was made under the law, and came to fulfil it, and was obliged to it, as every one that is circumciſed is; as well as to ſhew a regard to all divine, poſitive inſtitutions that are in being, and to ſet an example, that we ſhould tread in his ſteps; and likewiſe to cut off all excuſe from the *Jews*, that they might not have this to ſay, that he was an uncircumciſed perſon, and ſo not a Son of *Abraham*, nor the Meſſiah. *His name was called Jeſus, which was ſo named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb*, *Luke* i. 31. It appears from hence, and from the inſtance of *John* the *Baptiſt*, ch. i. 57. that at circumciſion it was uſual to give names to children; ſee the note there. The *Jews* obſerve [u], that "ſix perſons were called by their names before they were born; and theſe are *Iſaac*, *Iſhmael*, *Moſes*, *Solomon*, *Joſiah*, and the king Meſſiah:" the latter they prove from *Pſ*. lxxii. 17. which they render, *before the ſun his name was Yinnon*, or the Son, that is, the Son of God.

Ver. 22. *And when the days of her purification*, &c.] Of the virgin *Mary*, the mother of our Lord; tho' moſt copies read, *of their purification*: and ſo read the *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, including both *Mary* and *Jeſus*: and now, though *Mary* was not polluted by the conception, bearing, and bringing forth of Jeſus, that holy thing born of her; yet inaſmuch as ſhe was in the account of the law unclean; and tho' Jeſus had no impurity in his nature, yet ſeeing he was made ſin for his people, both came under this law of purification, which was for the ſake of the ſon or daughter, as well as for the mother; though our reading, and which is, according to the *Complutenſian* edition, beſt agrees with the *Hebrew* phraſe, ימי טהרה, *the days of her purifying*, or *purification*, in *Lev*. xii. 4, 6. *according to the law of Moſes*, in *Lev*. xii. *were accompliſhed*; which for a ſon were forty days: the ſeven firſt days of her lying-in ſhe was unclean; and then ſhe continued three and thirty days in the blood of her purifying, which made forty; ſee *Lev*. xii. 2, 4. but tho' the time of her purifying was upon the fortieth day, yet it was not till the day following that ſhe came to the temple with her offering: for ſo runs the *Jewiſh* canon [w]; "a lying-in

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[u] Pirke Eliezer, c. 32.

[w] Maimon. Hilch. Mechoſre Cappara, c. 1. §. 5.

" woman does not bring her offering on the fortieth " day for a male, nor on the eightieth day for a " female, but after her ſun is ſet; and ſhe brings " her offering on the morrow, which is the forty-" firſt for a male, and the eighty-firſt for a female: " and this is the day of which it is ſaid, *Lev.* xii. 6. " *and when the days of her purifying are fulfilled for* " *a ſon, or for a daughter, ſhe ſhall bring,* &c." And this was the time when *they, Joſeph* and *Mary, brought him,* the child Jeſus, *to Jeruſalem,* and to the temple there, *to preſent* him *to the Lord,* to the prieſt his repreſentative; and which was done in the eaſtern gate, called the gate of *Nicanor:* for here [x], " they made women, ſuſpected of adul-" tery, to drink, and purified lying-in women, and " cleanſed the lepers." And here *Mary* appeared with her firſt-born ſon, the true Meſſiah; and this was the firſt time of his coming into his temple, as was foretold, *Mal.* iii. 1.

Ver. 23. *As it is written in the law of the Lord,* &c] In *Exod.* xiii. 2. *Numb.* iii. 13. *every male that openeth the womb, ſhall be called holy to the Lord;* that is, devoted and conſecrated to him, and ſo to be redeemed. The reaſon of this law was this, when God ſmote all the firſt-born of *Egypt,* he ſaved the firſt-born of *Iſrael;* and therefore claimed a right to them, and obliged their parents, excepting the *Levites,* to redeem them at the price of five ſhekels, which were about twelve ſhillings and ſix-pence of our money, and which was given to the Levites; ſee *Exod.* xiii. 12,13,14,15. *Numb.* iii. 12, 13, 46, 47. and xviii. 15, 16. And this law our Lord came under as *Mary*'s firſt-born, and as one holy to the Lord; and ſuch a ſum of money was now paid for his redemption, who was the great Redeemer of his people; he being made under the law, and in all things ſubject to it, that he might redeem them from the bondage, curſe, and condemnation of it. Now as the tribe of *Levi* was excepted from this law, it is a clear caſe, that *Mary,* tho' allied to *Elizabeth,* was not of the tribe of *Levi,* otherwiſe her firſt-born would not have been ſubject to it [y]. "An *Iſraelite* that comes from " a prieſteſs, or from a ſhe *Levite,* is free, (*i. e.* " from the redemption of the firſt-born;) for the " thing does not depend on the father, but on the " mother, as it is ſaid, *that openeth the womb* in " *Iſrael.*"

Ver. 24. *And to offer a ſacrifice,* &c.] That is, when the time of purification came, the parents of our Lord brought him from *Bethlehem* to *Jeruſalem,* to preſent him in the temple to the Lord as his, and to redeem him; and not only ſo, but to offer the ſacrifice required of child-bed women: *according to that which is ſaid in the law of the Lord, Lev.* xii. 8. *a pair of turtle doves,* or *two young pigeons:* if the perſon was able, ſhe was to bring a lamb of the firſt year for a burnt-offering, and a young pigeon, or a turtle dove, for a ſin-offering; but in caſe of poverty, then the above ſufficed, and one of them was for a burnt-offering, and the other for a ſin-offering; which ſhows not only that the virgin offered for herſelf a ſin-offering, being ceremonially unclean, but alſo her mean eſtate and poverty, in that ſhe offered the offering of the poorer ſort; ſee *Lev.* xii. 6, 8.

Ver. 25. *And behold there was a man in Jeruſalem,* &c.] Not in *Nazareth,* or *Bethlehem,* but in *Jeruſalem,* the metropolis of the nation; one that lived there, was an inhabitant of that city, and a perſon of fame and note. So *Joſeph ben Jochanan,* is called [z], איש ירושלם, *a man of Jeruſalem,* an inhabitant of that place: *whoſe name was Simeon;* not *Simeon,* הצדיק, *the juſt,* the laſt of the men of the great ſynagogue, of whom the *Jews* often make mention [a]; tho' this *Simeon* bears the ſame character, yet could not be he; becauſe he was not only an high-prieſt, which, if this man had been, would doubtleſs have been mentioned; but alſo lived ſome years before this time. Many have thought, that this was *Rabban Simeon,* the ſon of *Hillell,* who was preſident of the *Sanhedrim* forty years; and in which office this his ſon ſucceeded him; and which *Simeon* was the father of *Gamaliel,* the maſter of the Apoſtle *Paul,* of whom the *Jewiſh* chronologer thus writes [b]: " *Rabban Simeon,* the " ſon of *Hillell* the old, received from his father, " and was appointed preſident after his father; but " the time of the beginning of his preſidentſhip I " do not find in any authors:" and a little after, " *Rabban Simeon,* the ſon of *Hillell,* is the firſt that " is called by the name of *Rabban.*" There are ſome things which ſeem to agree with, and favour this thought; for certain it is, that Chriſt was born in his time, whilſt he was living: ſo the above writer ſays [c], after he had obſerved, that " Jeſus " of *Nazareth* was born at *Bethlehem-Judah,* a " parſa and a half from *Jeruſalem,* in the year " 3761 of the creation, and in the 42d year of " *Cæſar Auguſtus;* that, according to this compu-" tation, his birth was in the days of *Rabban Si-* " *meon,* the ſon of *Hillell.*" And it is worthy of notice alſo, what another genealogical writer of theirs ſays [d], that " *Rabban Simeon,* the ſon of old " *Hillell,* the prince, or preſident of *Iſrael,* as his " father was, as it is in *Sabbat,* c. 1. is not *men-* " *tioned in the Miſna.*" Which looks as if he was not a favourer of the traditions of the elders, nor in great eſteem with the *Jews,* that they aſcribe none of them to him; yea, it may be obſerved, that he is entirely left out in the account of the ſucceſſion of the fathers of tradition, in the tract called *Pirke Abot;* which is ſomewhat extraordinary, when he was the ſon of one, and the father of another of ſo much note among them. One would be tempted to think, that ſuch a neglect of him, ſhould ſpring from ill will to him, on account of his profeſſing Jeſus of *Nazareth* to be the Meſſiah. But there are other things which don't ſo well accord, as that this *Simeon* lived ſome years after the birth of Chriſt; whereas our *Simeon* ſeems to be in the decline of life, and juſt ready to depart: as alſo, that he was prince of *Iſrael,* or preſident of the *Sanhedrim,* after this; which it is not likely he ſhould, after ſuch a confeſſion of Jeſus being the Meſſiah: likewiſe, ſeeing that his ſon *Gamaliel* was brought up a *Phariſee:* to which laſt Dr. *Lightfoot* replies, that holy fathers have ſometimes wicked children; and that it was thirty years from *Simeon*'s acknowledging Chriſt, to *Gamaliel*'s education of *Paul,* or little leſs; and ſo much time might wear out the notice of his father's action, if he had taken any notice of it, eſpecially his father dying ſhortly after he had made ſo glorious a confeſſion; but his laſt obſervation is an objection to him. Upon the whole, it muſt be left uncertain and undetermined who he was: *and the ſame man was juſt and devout;* he was a holy, good man in his life and converſation; he was one that feared God, and avoided evil; he was righteous before men, and devout towards

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[x] Miſn. Sota, c. 1. §. 5.

[y] Maimon. Hilch. Biccurim, c. 11. §. 10.

[z] Pirke Abot, c. 1. §. 4, 5.

[a] Ib. §. 2. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 69. 1. T. Hieroſ. Yoma, fol. 42. 3. & 43. 3.

[b] Gana. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 25. 1.

[c] Ib. par. 2. fol. 14. 2.

[d] Juchaſin, fol. 66. 2.

towards God, and exerciſed a conſcience void of offence to both: *waiting for the conſolation of Iſrael*; that is, the Meſſiah; for this was one of his names with the *Jews*, who ſometimes ſtile him, מנחם, *the comforter*: for ſo they report [e], that "there "are ſome that ſay his name is *Menachen* the com"forter; as it is ſaid, *becauſe the comforter that* "*ſhould relieve my ſoul is far from me, Lam.* i. 16." And again [f], it is obſerved, that "the name of the "Meſſiah is *Menachem*, the comforter; and *Mena*"*chem*, by *Gematry*, or numerically, is the ſame with "*Tzemach*, the branch, *Zech.* iii. 8." And ſo they often call him by the name of the *conſolation*: אראה בנחמה, which Dr. *Lightfoot* renders, *ſo let me ſee the conſolation*, but ſhould be rendered, *may I never ſee the conſolation*, was a common form of ſwearing among them; and uſed much by *R. Simeon ben Shetach*, who lived before the times of Chriſt, of which there are ſeveral inſtances [g]: "ſays *R.* "*Juda ben Tabai*, אראה בנחמה, *may I never ſee* "*the conſolation*, if I have not ſlain a falſe witneſs. "——Says *R. Simeon ben Shetach*, to him, *may I* "*never ſee the conſolation*, if thou haſt not ſhed in"nocent blood." The *Gloſs* [h] on it is, "it is a "light word, (the form) of an oath, in ſhort lan"guage; as if it was ſaid, may I never ſee the "conſolations of *Zion*, if he has not done this." Again [i], "ſays *R. Simeon ben Shetach*, אראה בנחמה, "*may I never ſee the conſolation*, if I did not ſee "one run after his companion, into a deſolate "place, *&c.*" Now they might eaſily collect this name of the Meſſiah, from ſeveral paſſages of ſcripture, which ſpeak of God's comforting his people, at the time of redemption by the Meſſiah; and particularly, from its being part of his work and office, to comfort them that mourn, for which he was anointed by the Spirit of the Lord, *Iſa.* lxi. 1, 2, 3. And when he is called here, *the conſolation of Iſrael*, it is not to be underſtood of the whole *Jewiſh* nation; for he was ſo far from being a comfort to them, as ſuch, that through their corruption and wickedneſs, he came not to ſend peace, but a ſword; and to ſet at variance, the neareſt relations and friends among themſelves; and through their unbelief and rejection of him, wrath came upon them to the uttermoſt: but of the true and ſpiritual *Iſrael* of God, whom he has choſen, redeemed, and calls, whether of *Jews* or *Gentiles*; his own ſpecial and peculiar people, the heirs of promiſe; and who are often mourners in *Zion*, and being frequently diſconſolate on account of ſin, the temptations of ſatan, and the hidings of God's face, ſtand in need of conſolation from him: and in him, there is what is always matter and ground of conſolation; as in his perſon, he being the mighty God, and ſo able to ſave to the uttermoſt; in his blood, which ſpeaks peace and pardon, and cleanſes from all ſin; in his righteouſneſs, which is pure and perfect, and juſtifies from all iniquity; in his ſacrifice, which expiates all the tranſgreſſions of his people; in his fulneſs, which is ſufficient to ſupply all their wants; and in his power, by which he is able to keep them from falling, and to preſent them faultleſs before God. And he does often comfort them by his Spirit, by his word, and ordinances, by the promiſes of his Goſpel, by the diſcoveries of pardoning grace, through his blood, and by his gracious preſence: nor are his conſolations ſmall, but large and abundant, ſtrong, ſolid, and everlaſting. Now for the Meſſiah under this character, *Simeon* was waiting, hoping in a little time to ſee him; ſince he knew, both by the prophecies of the Old Teſtament, particularly by *Daniel*'s weeks, and by divine revelation, that the time was juſt at hand for his coming: *and the Holy Ghoſt was upon him*; not in a common and ordinary way, as he is upon all that are called by grace, as a ſpirit of regeneration and ſanctification; and as he was upon many others, who at this time were waiting and looking for the Meſſiah, as well as he; but in an extraordinary way, as a ſpirit of prophecy: for though prophecy had ceaſed among the *Jews*, from the times of *Malachi*, yet upon the conception and birth of Chriſt, it now returned; as to *Zacharias*, *Elizabeth*, and the virgin *Mary*, and here to *Simeon*, as is clear from what follows.

Ver. 26. *And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghoſt*, &c.] Not in a dream, as the wiſe men were warned, nor by an angel, as *Joſeph*, nor by a voice from heaven, which the *Jews* call *Bath Kol*, but by the inſpiration of the Holy Ghoſt, enlightning his underſtanding, and impreſſing on his mind: *that he ſhould not ſee death*; an *Hebraiſm*, ſee it in *Pſal.* lxxxix. 48. the ſame with the phraſe, to *taſte death*, elſewhere uſed; and the ſenſe is, as the *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *that he ſhould not die*; or as the *Perſic* verſion, *that his death ſhould not be*; as yet: he ſhould live ſome time longer; nor ſhould that meſſenger be ſent to remove him, though a man in years, out of time into eternity, *before he had ſeen the Lords Chriſt*; with his bodily eyes: for he had ſeen him with an eye of faith already, and in the promiſe, as *Abraham* had; and in the types and ſacrifices of the law, as the reſt of believers under the Old Teſtament. The Meſſiah is called the *Lords Chriſt*, referring to *Pſal.* ii. 2. becauſe he was anointed by *Jehovah*, the Father, and with *Jehovah*, the Spirit; with the Holy Ghoſt, the oil of gladneſs, to be prophet, prieſt, and king, in the Lord's houſe. So the Meſſiah is by the *Targumiſt* called, the Meſſiah of *Jehovah*, or *Jehovah*'s Meſſiah; that is as here, the Lord's Chriſt: thus in the *Targum* on *Iſa.* iv. 2. 'tis ſaid, "in that "time, משיחא דיי, *Jehovah's Meſſiah*, ſhall be for "joy and for glory." And on *Iſa.* xxviii. 5. the paraphraſe is, "at that time, משיחא דיי, *the* "*Meſſiah of the Lord* of hoſts, ſhall be for a crown "of joy, and for a diadem of praiſe to the reſt of "his people." Compare theſe paraphraſes with what is ſaid of Chriſt, in ver. 32. *The glory of thy people Iſrael*; *Simeon*'s language, exactly agrees with the *Targumiſt*. The *Perſic* verſion adds, *and with this hope he paſſed his time*, or *age*, *and became very old and decrepit*.

Ver. 27. *And he came by the ſpirit into the temple*, &c.] By the ſame Spirit of God, that revealed the above to him. The *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *the Spirit brought him into the temple*; but *Simeon* was not brought thither, as this verſion ſeems to ſuggeſt, in ſuch manner as *Ezekiel* was brought by the Spirit to *Jeruſalem*, *Ezek.* viii. 3. or as Chriſt was brought by ſatan to the holy city, and ſet upon the pinacle of the temple; but the Spirit of God, who knows and ſearches all things, even the deep things of God, and could teſtify beforehand the ſufferings of Chriſt, and the glory that ſhould follow, knew the exact time when Jeſus would be brought into the temple; and ſuggeſted to *Simeon*, and moved upon him, and influenced and directed him, to go thither at that very time. The

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[e] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 98. 2. Echa Rabbati, fol. 50. 1. T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 5. 1.

[f] Kimchi in Zech. iii. 8.

[g] T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 16. 2. & Maccot, fol 5. 2.

[h] Toſaphot in Chagiga ib.

[i] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 37. 2. & Shebuot, fol. 34. 1. Vid. & Cetubot, fol. 67. 1. & Echa Rabbati, fol. 49. 2.

*Perſic* verſion renders the whole verſe thus, *when he heard that they brought Chriſt into the temple, that they might fulfil the law, Simeon went in*; which verſion ſpoils the glory of the text, making *Simeon*'s coming into the temple, to be upon a report heard, and not the motion of the Holy Ghoſt. *And when the parents brought in the child Jeſus*; when *Joſeph* and *Mary* brought Chriſt into the temple. The *Vulgate Latin*, *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read, *his parents*. *Mary* was his real parent, *Joſeph* is called ſo, as he is his *father*, in ver. 48. becauſe he was ſuppoſed, and generally thought to be ſo, *Luke* iii. 23. *To do for him after the cuſtom of the law*; as was uſed to be done in ſuch a caſe, according to the appointment of the law: or as the *Syriac* verſion renders it, *as is commanded in the law*; namely, to preſent him to the Lord, and to pay the redemption money for him.

Ver. 28. *Then took he him up in his arms*, &c.] That ſame Spirit that had revealed unto him that he ſhould not die, till he ſaw the Meſſiah with his bodily eyes; and who by a ſecret impulſe had moved him to go to the temple juſt at this time, made known unto him, that that child which *Joſeph* and *Mary* then brought into the temple, to preſent to the Lord, was the Meſſiah; wherefore, in a rapture of joy, he took him out of their arms into his own, embracing him with all affection and reſpect imaginable: though ſome think he was a prieſt, and it being his office to preſent the firſt-born to the Lord, he took him in his arms, and did it; but the former account ſeems more agreeable: *and bleſſed God*; praiſed him, and gave glory to him, for his great goodneſs, in ſending the promiſed Meſſiah, and long wiſhed for Saviour; for his grace and favour, in indulging him with a ſight of him; and for his truth and faithfulneſs, in making good his promiſe to him: *and ſaid*; as follows,

Ver. 29. *Lord, now letteſt thou thy ſervant*, &c.] He acknowledges him as his Lord, and to have a deſpotic power over him, with reſpect to life and death; and himſelf as his ſervant, which he was, both by creation and grace: and though it expreſſes humiliation, and a ſenſe of diſtance and unworthineſs, yet to be a ſervant of the moſt high God, is a very high and honourable character: what he requeſts of the Lord is, that he might *depart in peace*; ſignifying his hearty deſire to die, and with what chearfulneſs he ſhould meet death, having obtained all that he could wiſh for and deſire, in ſeeing and embracing the Saviour: he expreſſes his death, by a departure out of the world, as in *John* xiii. 1. *Phil.* i. 21. agreeable to the way of ſpeaking of it among the *Jews*, ſee the notes there; and by a word, which ſignifies a looſing of bonds; death being a diſſolving the bond of union, between ſoul and body, and a deliverance, as from priſon and bondage; the body being as it were, a priſon to the ſoul, in the preſent ſtate of things: and he alſo intimates, that whereas, though he had the ſtrongeſt aſſurances of the Meſſiah's coming, and of his coming before his death, by the revelation of the Holy Ghoſt, and ſo moſt firmly believed it, without fluctuation, and heſitation of mind; yet as hope deferred, makes the heart ſick, he was anxious and reſtleſs in his deſire, till it was accompliſhed; but now being come, he could take his leave of the world, and his diſmiſſion into eternity, with the greateſt calmneſs and tranquillity of mind, having nothing to diſturb him, nor more to deſire: he adds, *according to thy word*; for he ſeems to have underſtood by the revelation made to him, that as he ſhould not die before he ſaw the Meſſiah, ſo when he had ſeen him, that he ſhould immediately, or in a very ſhort time after, be removed by death; and which he greatly deſired, and in which he ſinned not, becauſe his requeſt was according to the word of God: whereas often, deſires of death are not only without the word of God, and due reſignation to his will, and any regard to his glory, but to be rid of ſome trouble, or gratify ſome luſt, as pride, revenge, *&c.*

Ver. 30. *For mine eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation*, &c.] The Meſſiah, who is often ſo called; ſee *Gen.* xlix. 18. *Iſa.* xlix. 6. and lii. 10. He goes by the name of *ſalvation*, becauſe the ſalvation of God's elect is put into his hands, and he has undertook it; and becauſe he is the author of it, he has fulfilled his engagements, and has accompliſhed what he promiſed to do; and becauſe ſalvation is in him, it is to be had in him; and in him, the true *Iſrael* of God are ſaved, with an everlaſting ſalvation: and he is called *God's ſalvation*, becauſe he is a Saviour of his chuſing, calling, and conſtituting; whom he promiſed under the Old Teſtament diſpenſation, and in the fulneſs of time ſent; and who now appeared in human nature, and whom good old *Simeon* now ſaw, with his bodily eyes; a ſight, which many kings and prophets had deſired, but were not favoured with; and alſo with the eyes of his underſtanding, with the ſpiritual eye of faith, as his Saviour and Redeemer; for without this, the former would not have been ſufficient, to have given ſuch peace and tranquillity of mind, in a departure out of this world: for many ſaw him in the days of his fleſh, who never ſaw his glory, as the Son of God, and Saviour of ſinners; but ſuch a ſight thoſe have, who have their underſtandings enlightened, and Chriſt, as God's ſalvation, ſet before them: they ſee him in the glory of his perſon, the fulneſs of his grace, the ſuitableneſs and excellency of his righteouſneſs, the efficacy of his blood, and the perfection of his ſacrifice; and as an able, willing, compleat, and only Saviour: and ſuch a ſight of him, puts them out of conceit with themſelves, and their own works of righteouſneſs, as ſaviours; makes the creature, and all it has and does, look mean and empty; fills the ſoul with love to Chriſt, and a high eſteem of him, and with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory; it transforms a ſoul, and makes it like to Chriſt; gives it inexpreſſible pleaſure and ſatisfaction; and makes it deſirous, as it did this good man, to depart and be with Chriſt, which is far better, than to live, in this (in ſome ſenſe) ſtate of abſence from him.

Ver. 31. *Which thou haſt prepared*, &c.] In his eternal purpoſes and decrees, having choſen and fore-ordained Chriſt, and appointed him to be his ſalvation, to the ends of the earth; in his counſel and covenant of grace, wherein it was agreed, determined, and concluded on, that he ſhould be the Saviour of his people; and in the promiſes and prophecies of the Old Teſtament, and in all the types, ſhadows, and ſacrifices, of that diſpenſation; in which he was exhibited, and held forth as the Saviour to the ſaints and believers of thoſe times; and now had ſent him in human nature, to work out that ſalvation, he had choſen and called him to, and he had undertook: *before the face of all people*; meaning not the congregation of *Iſrael*, that looked for redemption in *Jeruſalem*, and who were now together with *Simeon* and *Anna*, when the child Jeſus was preſented in the temple; nor the body of the *Jewiſh* nation only, to whom he was made manifeſt, had they not wilfully ſhut their eyes, by *John*'s miniſtry and baptiſm; and more ſo, by the miracles, wonders, and ſigns, which God did by Chriſt, in the midſt of them; but both *Jews* and *Gentiles*: for as he was provided and ſent as a Saviour, and a great one, he was to be lifted up on the croſs, as the ſerpent was lifted up by *Moſes*, in the wilderneſs, to draw all his elect to him, of every nation; and to be ſet up as an enſign to the people, in the public miniſtry of the word; to be the object of faith and hope, to look unto, for life and ſalvation.

Ver. 32. *A light to lighten the Gentiles*, &c.] Or *for the revelation of the Gentiles*; to reveal the love, grace, and mercy of God, an everlaſting righteouſneſs, and the way of life and ſalvation to them. Reference ſeems to be had to *Iſa*. xlii. 6. and xlix. 6. *Light*, is one of the names of the Meſſiah in the Old Teſtament, as in *Pſal*. xliii. 3. *Dan*. ii. 22. which paſſages are by the *Jews* [k] themſelves, interpreted of Chriſt; and is a name often uſed of him, in the New Teſtament: it is true of him as God, he is light itſelf, and in him is no darkneſs at all; and as the creator of mankind, he is that light which lightens every man, with the light of nature and reaſon; and as the Meſſiah, he is come a light into the world: the light of the Goſpel, in the clear ſhine of it, is from him; the light of grace in his people, who were in darkneſs itſelf, he is the author and donor of; as he is alſo of the light of glory and happineſs, in the world to come: and particularly, the *Gentiles* enjoy this benefit of light by him; who were, and as this ſuppoſes they were, in darkneſs, as they had been ſome hundreds of years before the Meſſiah's coming: they were in the dark about the being and perfections of God, about the unity of God, and the Trinity of perſons in the Godhead, and about God in Chriſt; about his worſhip, the rule and nature of it; and the manner of atonement, and reconciliation for ſin; the perſon, righteouſneſs, and ſacrifice of Chriſt; the Spirit of God, and his operations on the ſouls of men; the ſcriptures of truth, and both law and Goſpel; the reſurrection of the dead, and a future ſtate: now, though Chriſt, in his perſonal miniſtry, was ſent only to the *Jews*, yet after his reſurrection, he gave his diſciples a commiſſion to go into all the world, to preach the Goſpel to the *Gentiles*, in order to turn them from darkneſs to light; and hereby, multitudes were called out of darkneſs, into marvellous light: and this *Simeon* had knowledge of, and a few more beſides him; otherwiſe, the generality of the *Jewiſh* nation were of opinion, that when the Meſſiah came, the nations of the world would receive no benefit by him, no light, nor comfort, nor peace, or proſperity; but all the reverſe would befal them, as darkneſs, calamity, and miſery: and ſo they expreſs themſelves in a certain place [l]; "the *Iſraelites* look, or "wait for redemption; for the day of the Lord "ſhall be *light to them*; but the nations, why do "they wait for him? for he ſhall be *to them darkneſs, and not light*." But the contrary, *Simeon*, under divine inſpiration, declares, and bleſſed be God it has proved true: he adds, *and the glory of thy people Iſrael*; which is true of *Iſrael* in a literal ſenſe, inaſmuch as the Meſſiah was born of the *Jews*, and among them; and was firſt ſent and came to them, and lived and dwelled with them; taught in their ſtreets, and wrought his miracles in the midſt of them; though this was an aggravation of their ingratitude and unbelief, in rejecting him: the Goſpel was firſt preached to them, even after the commiſſion was enlarged to carry it among the *Gentiles*; and many of them were converted, and the firſt Goſpel church was planted among them; and an additional glory was made to them, by the calling of the *Gentiles*, and joining them to them, through the miniſtry of the apoſtles, who were all *Jews*; who went forth from *Zion*, and carried the word of the Lord from *Jeruſalem*, to the ſeveral parts of the world: and this alſo is more eſpecially true, of the myſtical, or ſpiritual *Iſrael* of God, whoſe glory Chriſt is; being made of God unto them, wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and redemption; they having ſuch an head, huſband, ſaviour, and redeemer, as he; and they being clothed with his righteouſneſs, and waſhed in his blood, ſanctified by his grace, and made meet for eternal glory; to which they have a right and claim, through the grace of God, and merits of Chriſt; and therefore glory not in themſelves, but in Chriſt, who is their all in all.

Ver. 33. *And Joſeph and his mother*, &c.] The *Vulgate Latin* reads, *and his father and mother*. The *Ethiopic* verſion retains both his name and his relation, and reads, *and Joſeph his father, and his mother*; but all the ancient copies read, only *Joſeph*, without the addition, *his father*; and ſo the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions: they *marvelled at thoſe things which were ſpoken of him*; the child Jeſus: not that thoſe things which *Simeon* ſaid, were new and ſtrange to them; for they not only knew that the ſame things were predicted of the Meſſiah, but they had heard and known, and believed the ſame concerning this child; but they wondered, that a ſtranger to them and the child, coming into the temple at this inſtant, ſhould have ſuch a revelation made to him, and be able to ſay the things he did. Moreover, there is no need to confine this paſſage to what were ſaid by *Simeon*, but it may reach to, and include every thing, that as yet had been ſpoken concerning Jeſus; either before, or ſince his birth; as by the angel to them both, to the one before his conception, to the other after; and by *Zacharias* and *Elizabeth*, and by the angel to the ſhepherds, who had reported the ſame to *Joſeph* and *Mary*, and now by *Simeon*; and they were aſtoniſhed, at the exact agreement there was between them.

Ver. 34. *And Simeon bleſſed them*, &c.] Pronounced them bleſſed perſons, on account of their relation to Chriſt, as man; and more eſpecially, becauſe of their intereſt in him, as the Saviour and Redeemer of them; and wiſhed them all happineſs and proſperity inward and outward, temporal, ſpiritual, and eternal; and ſo the *Arabic* verſion renders it, confining it to *Joſeph* and *Mary*: *and Simeon bleſſed them both*; though this bleſſing of his may take in alſo the young child Jeſus; whom he might pronounce bleſſed, as *Elizabeth* before had done, ch. i. 42. ſince he was the promiſed ſeed, in whom all nations of the earth ſhould be bleſſed; and to whom, and to whoſe undertakings, intereſt, and kingdom, he might wiſh all proſperous ſucceſs. The *Perſic* verſion reads, *old Simeon: and ſaid unto Mary his mother*: he directed his diſcourſe to her, becauſe ſhe was the only real parent of this child he had in his arms, and had ſaid ſo much of, and was about to ſay more; and becauſe part of what follows, perſonally concerned her: *behold, this child is ſet for the fall and riſing again of many in Iſrael*. The word *child*, is not in the original text; where 'tis only, *this is ſet*, &c. *Simeon* ſeeming to be, as it were, at a loſs, what name to call this great and illuſtrious perſon by, and therefore 'tis left to be ſupplied. The *Perſic* verſion ſupplies it thus, *behold, this* holy one *is ſet*, *&c.* The ſenſe is, that this child, who is the ſtone of *Iſrael*, is ſet, or put, or lies, both as a ſtone of ſtumbling, and rock of offence, for many of the *Jews* to ſtumble at, and fall and periſh; and as a precious corner and foundation ſtone, for the erection and elevation of others of them, to the higheſt honour and dignity, that ſhall believe on him: for theſe words are not to be underſtood of the ſame, but of different perſons among the *Jews*; though it may be true, that ſome, who firſt ſtumbled at him, might be raiſed up again, and brought to believe in him; and that many, who for his ſake, and the Goſpel, fell under great diſgrace and reproach, and into great afflictions and perſecutions, were raiſed up to the enjoyment of great comfort and honour: but they are not the ſame perſons that Chriſt is ſet for the fall of, that he is ſet for the riſing of; nor the ſame he is ſet for the riſing of, he is ſet for the fall of; the one deſigns the elect of God among the *Jews*, who became true believers in Chriſt; and the other, the reprobate, who died in impenitence and unbelief: the words, ſo far as they concern Chriſt, being *ſet for the fall of many* of the *Jews*, have a manifeſt reference to *Iſa.* viii. 14, 15. where the Meſſiah is ſpoken of as a ſtone, and as a ſtone of ſtumbling, and rock of offence; at which, many of the *Jews* ſhould ſtumble, and fall, and be broken. And ſo the text is applied in the *Talmud*[m], where it is ſaid, that "the ſon of *David* will not come, until both houſes of the fathers, fail out of *Iſrael*; and they are theſe, the head of the captivity in *Babylon*, and the prince in the land of *Iſrael*; as it is ſaid, *Iſa.* viii. 14. *And he ſhall be for a ſanctuary, but for a ſtone of ſtumbling, and rock of offence, to both the houſes of Iſrael.*" Accordingly the *Jews* did ſtumble at his birth, parentage, and education; at the meanneſs of his perſon, and the obſcurity of his kingdom; at the company he kept, and the audience that attended him; at his doctrine and miracles, and at his ſufferings and death: they fell, through their unbelief and rejection of him, as the Meſſiah; and not only from their outward privileges, civil, and religious; the Goſpel was taken away from them, the national covenant between God and them, was broken, and they ceaſed to be his people, their temple and city were deſtroyed, and wrath came upon their nation to the uttermoſt; but they alſo fell into everlaſting perdition, dying in their ſins, through their diſbelief of Jeſus as the Meſſiah: this indeed was not the caſe of all of them; there was a ſeed, a remnant, according to the election of grace; but it was the caſe of many, and of the far greater part: but then this ſame ſtone that was laid in *Zion*, was alſo *ſet for the riſing again of many* of them; meaning not for their reſurrection in a literal ſenſe, though this is a truth: for as all God's elect, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, roſe in him repreſentatively, when he roſe from the dead; ſo many of them roſe perſonally after his reſurrection, and all of them at the laſt day, will riſe again, in conſequence of their union to him; and indeed, all the wicked will be raiſed again, by virtue of his power: but not this, but their reſurrection in a ſpiritual ſenſe, is here meant; and it ſuppoſes the perſons raiſed, to have been in a low eſtate, as all God's elect by nature are: they are in a hopeleſs and helpleſs condition in themſelves; they are in a ſtate of thraldom and bondage, to ſin, ſatan, and the law; they are filled with diſeaſes, nauſeous, mortal, and incurable; they are cloathed in rags, and are beggars on the dunghill; they are deep in debt, and have nothing to pay; and are dead in treſpaſſes and ſins. Chriſt is now provided and appointed, for the raiſing them up out of their low eſtate, and he does do it; he is the reſurrection and the life unto them; he raiſes from the death of ſin, to a life of grace and holineſs from him, to a life of faith on him, and communion with him here, and to eternal life hereafter: he pays all their debts, clothes them with his righteouſneſs, heals all their diſeaſes, redeems them from the ſlavery of ſin, the captivity of ſatan, and the bondage and curſe of the law; brings them into a hopeful and comfortable condition; raiſes them to the poſſeſſion of a large eſtate, an eternal inheritance; and gives them both a right unto it, and meetneſs for it; ſets them among princes, makes them kings, places them on a throne of glory, yea, on his own throne, and ſets a crown of righteouſneſs, life, and glory, on their heads; and will cauſe them to reign with him, firſt on earth, for a thouſand years, and then in heaven to all eternity: and this was to be the caſe of many in *Iſrael*, though not of all; for all did not obey the Goſpel, ſome did, three thouſand under one ſermon; and more will in the latter day, when all *Iſrael* ſhall be ſaved. This privilege of riſing again, in this ſenſe, by Chriſt, though it is here ſpoken of with reſpect to many of the *Jews*, yet not to the excluſion of the *Gentiles*; for this honour have all the ſaints, be they of what nation they will. Now when Chriſt is ſaid to be *ſet* for theſe different things, the meaning is; that he was fore-appointed, pre-ordained, and ſet forth in God's counſel, purpoſes, and decrees, as a ſtone at which ſome ſhould ſtumble, through their own wickedneſs and unbelief, and fall and periſh, and be eternally loſt; and as a foundation ſtone for others, to build their faith and hope upon, which ſhould be given them, and ſo riſe up to everlaſting life; and that he was ſet forth in the prophecies of the Old Teſtament, as in that here referred to, for the ſame ends; and that he was now exhibited in human nature with the ſame views, and ſhould be held forth in the everlaſting Goſpel, for the like purpoſes; and which eventually is the ſavour of life unto life to ſome, and the ſavour of death unto death to others: to all this, a *behold* is prefixed, as expreſſing what is wonderful and ſurprizing, and not to be accounted for, but to be reſolved into the ſecret and ſovereign will of God: 'tis added, that he is alſo ſet *for a ſign which ſhall be ſpoken againſt*; referring to *Iſa.* viii. 18. Chriſt is the ſign of God's everlaſting love to his people, the great proof, evidence, and demonſtration of it; and in this reſpect, is ſpoken againſt by many: and he is ſet up in the Goſpel, as an enſign of the people to look at, and gather to, for comfort, peace, righteouſneſs, ſalvation, and eternal life; but is by many contradicted, oppoſed, and treated with contempt and abhorrence; ſo that he appears rather to be ſet as a mark and butt to ſhoot at: he was ſpoken againſt by the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, and the greater part of the people of the *Jews*, and contradicted, as the Meſſiah, becauſe of his mean appearance among them; his proper deity was denied, his divine ſonſhip was gainſayed; he was contemned in all his offices, kingly, prieſtly, and prophetic; his works of mercy, both to the bodies and ſouls of men, his miracles, and the whole ſeries of his life and actions, were traduced as ſinful and criminal:

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[k] Jarchi in Pſal xliii. 3. Bereſhit Rabba, fol. 1. 3. Echa Rabbati, fol. 50. 2.

[l] Gloſſ. in T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 98. 2.

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[m] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 38. 1.

this was the contradiction of ſinners againſt himſelf, which he endured, *Heb.* xii. 3. and for which he was ſet and appointed; and ſtill the contradiction continues, and will, as long as the Goſpel is preached.

Ver. 35. *Yea, a ſword ſhall pierce thro' thy own ſoul alſo,* &c.] Meaning either the ſword, or *ſpear of ſcandal,* as the *Arabic* verſion renders it; ſo the calumny, and reproach of the tongues of men, is compared to a ſharp ſword, *Pſ.* lvii. 4. and ſuch the virgin might meet with on account of her conception in an unmarried ſtate, which might greatly wound her ſoul; or elſe the ſorrows ſhe met with, on account of her ſon: as he was a man of ſorrows, ſo was ſhe a woman of ſorrows, from his cradle to his croſs; and his ſorrows like ſo many darts, or javelins, rebounded from him to her, and pierced her ſoul through; as when *Herod* ſought his life, *Matt.* ii. 13, 14. when ſhe had loſt him for a whole day, *Luke* ii. 48. and when he was frequently expoſed to danger among the ſpiteful and malicious *Jews*; but never more than when ſhe ſtood at his croſs, and ſaw him in his agonies, extended on the tree, bleeding, gaſping, and dying, *John* xix. 25. Some think this refers to martyrdom, which ſhe was to ſuffer by the ſword, of which the ſcripture is ſilent. *Epiphanius,* an ancient writer, ſeems to hint at it[n]. *That the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed*; that is, all this offence was to be taken at Chriſt, and he to be ſpoken againſt; and all theſe afflictions, reproaches, and perſecutions, he and his were to endure for this end; that the ſecret thoughts of men might be diſcovered, and they be known to be what they were, whether hypocrites, or good men, foes, or friends of Chriſt: ſo on the one hand, what were the *Scribes* and *Phariſees,* who talked of a Meſſiah, and pretended to righteouſneſs and holineſs, and yet when the Meſſiah came, rejected him; and ſo all ſuch who followed Chriſt with worldly views, and expected a temporal kingdom, but left him when they found it otherwiſe, and *Judas,* one of his diſciples; and, on the other hand, who were ſincere and hearty, as the reſt of his diſciples, *Joſeph* of *Arimathea,* and others, who abode by him, notwithſtanding the croſs; and the ſame uſe have all perſecutions, errors, and hereſies, the oppoſition and contradiction of men in every ſhape now, and the ſame end is anſwered; wicked men, and hypocrites, are known to be what they are; and good men are made manifeſt; and what each think of Chriſt, and his Goſpel, is diſcovered hereby; ſee 1 *Cor.* xi. 19.

Ver. 36. *And there was one Anna,* &c.] The name is the ſame with *Hannah:* ſo *Hannah,* the mother of *Samuel,* is by the *Septuagint* called *Anna,* in 1 *Sam.* i. 2, 5, 8, 9, 15, 19, 22, 25. and it ſignifies *grace,* or *gracious*; and as was her name, ſo was ſhe, a gracious woman; one that had the grace of God herſelf, and was a publiſher of the glad tidings of grace and redemption by Chriſt, to others; and ſhe was *a propheteſs:* for tho' prophecy had ceaſed among the *Jews* for ſome hundreds of years, it now revived upon the coming of the Meſſiah; and tho' inſtances of women-prophets were rare, yet ſome there were, both before, and after the coming of Chriſt; as *Miriam,* the ſiſter of *Moſes* and *Aaron, Deborah,* the wife of *Lapidoth,* and *Huldah,* the wife of *Shallum*; and this *Anna,* at the time of Chriſt's birth, and afterwards four daughters of *Philip* the Evangeliſt, who were virgins. This woman was *the daughter of Phanuel*; 'tis the ſame name with *Penuel*; and which, by the *Septuagint,* in 1 *Chron.* iv. 4. and viii. 25. is called *Phanuel,* as here. This man might be a perſon of ſome note, or he may be mentioned for the ſake of his name, which ſignifies the face of God, and is the name *Jacob* gave to a certain place where he had ſeen God face to face, *Gen.* xxxii. 30, 31. And now *Phanuel*'s daughter both ſaw and gave the light of the knowledge of God, in the face of Jeſus Chriſt, and now beheld his face in the fleſh, who is God over all, bleſſed for ever. *Of the tribe of Aſer*; the ſame with *Aſher*; for ſo *Aſher* is called, as here, by the *Septuagint,* in *Gen.* xxx. 13. and xlix. 20. and elſewhere: and tho' this tribe was carried captive with the reſt of the ten tribes; yet there were ſome of the ten tribes that returned along with *Judah* and *Benjamin,* and were diſperſed among them. This tribe had its ſeat in *Galilee*; ſo that tho' the *Jews* denied that any prophet came from thence, yet it ſeems a propheteſs did. *She was of a great age:* the phraſe is the ſame with that in ch. i. 7. there rendered, *ſtricken in years*; ſee the note there. Her age will appear to be great, if it be obſerved, that ſhe was ſeven years a married woman, and fourſcore and four years a widow, which make ninety-one; and if ſhe was married at twelve years and a half, at which time the *Jews*[o] reckoned females marriageable, ſhe muſt be an hundred and three years old; and perhaps her age might be eight or ten years more: *and had lived with her huſband ſeven years from her virginity:* this is mentioned to obſerve her chaſtity, that ſhe was in her virginity, or a chaſte virgin, when ſhe became a wife; ſuch an one as the high-prieſt was obliged to have, *Lev.* xxi. 13. and that the tokens of her virginity, were brought, which the *Jewiſh* laws obliged to, *Deut.* xxii. 15, 17, 20. and that ſhe lived honeſtly, and honourably, with her huſband, during the term of her marriage-ſtate.

Ver. 37. *And ſhe was a widow of about fourſcore and four years,* &c.] Which is not the date of her whole age, as ſome have thought, but of her widowhood-ſtate, as diſtinct from her marriage-ſtate, and the time of her virginity. And this ſenſe all the verſions favour. *Which departed not from the temple:* that is, ſhe was conſtant in her devotion there, at the time of divine ſervice, whether by night or day; not that ſhe was in it, for ſhe had been out of it now; otherwiſe it could not, with propriety, be ſaid of her, that *ſhe coming in that inſtant,* as in the next verſe; but that ſhe always was there when there was any worſhip performed, in which women might be concerned, and which is pointed out in the next clauſe: *but ſerved* God *with faſtings and prayers, night and day:* ſhe attended to the uſual faſts of twice a week, and to ſuch as were enjoined the whole congregation, and to the ſeveral ſet times of prayer, and to every act of devotion, private or public, by night or day. In *Exod.* xxxviii. 8. we read of women that aſſembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: both the *Targums* of *Onkelos* and *Ben Uzziel,* render it, *who came to pray*; and the *Septuagint* verſion, *that faſted: Anna* did both.

Ver. 38. *And ſhe coming in that inſtant,* &c.] That the parents of Chriſt brought him into the temple; juſt as *Simeon* was embracing him in his arms, and bleſſing God for him, and ſaying the things concerning him he had done; and who alſo came at that juncture, as he did, under the impulſe, and by the direction of the Spirit of God; *gave thanks likewiſe unto the Lord:* praiſed him, as he had done, that he had ſent the promiſed, and long looked-for

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[n] Contr. Hæreſ. hæreſ. 78.

[o] Maimon. Hilchot Iſhot, c. 2. §. 2.

Meſſiah and Saviour; and that ſhe had lived to ſee his bleſſed face, and this happy day; and that ſhe ſhould be directed to come in at this inſtant, and be favoured with this ſingular mercy of ſeeing the new-born Saviour, and his honoured parents: *and ſpake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jeruſalem*; this ſhe either did at this time; they in *Jeruſalem* that looked, and diligently waited for, and earneſtly deſired the Meſſiah, and ſpiritual redemption and ſalvation by him, being now aſſembled together in the temple; or afterwards, as ſhe had opportunity of converſing with them, when ſhe acquainted them with what ſhe had heard and ſeen. By *the redemption* they were looking for, is meant, the Redeemer; as by ſalvation, the Saviour, in ver. 30. Some verſions, as the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic* read, *the redemption of Jeruſalem*; not literally, but ſpiritually underſtood, even the redemption of the church of Chriſt, which is often ſo called: and others, as the *Perſic* verſion, *the redemption of Iſrael*; that is, of ſpiritual *Iſrael*: ſome read in *Iſrael*; ſo one copy of *Stephens*'s.

Ver. 39. *And when they had performed all things*, &c.] Relating to the purification of *Mary*, and the preſentation and redemption of her firſt-born, and the ſacrifices and ceremonies belonging thereunto: *according to the law of the Lord*; which that directed to, and enjoined: *they returned into Galilee*; not that they came from thence to *Jeruſalem*, but from *Bethlehem*, where *Mary* lay in, and her time for purification was now juſt expired: nor did they go now directly to *Galilee*; or, if they did, they ſoon came back again to *Bethlehem*, ſince here the wiſe men found them two years after; when, by a divine warning, they went into *Egypt*, where they remained till *Herod*'s death, and after came into the land of *Iſrael*, into the parts of *Galilee*, and dwelt at *Nazareth*; for which reaſon it is here called their own city; *to their own city Nazareth*: *Bethlehem* was their native city, the place of their birth, at leaſt of their family; and *Nazareth* was the city of their habitation.

Ver. 40. *And the child grew*, &c.] In body, in ſtrength, and in ſtature; which ſhows that it was a true body Chriſt aſſumed, and like ours, which did not come to its maturity at once, but by degrees: *and waxed ſtrong in ſpirit*, or in his ſoul; for as he had a true body, he had alſo a reaſonable ſoul; the faculties of which were far from being weak, they were exceeding ſtrong, and appeared ſtronger and ſtronger every day; his underſtanding was clear, his judgment ſolid, and his memory ſtrong and retentive, his will, and the deſires of it, were to that which is good, and his affections cleaved unto it. The *Perſic* and *Ethiopic* verſions read, *was ſtrengthened in*, or *by the Holy Spirit*; with the grace and gifts of it; but the former ſenſe is beſt. *Filled with wiſdom*; and knowledge as man; for this is to be underſtood, not of his eſſential wiſdom, as God, nor of thoſe treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge, which were hid in him as mediator, to be diſpenſed to his church; but of his created and natural wiſdom, as man; in which he increaſed gradually, as his body grew, and the faculties of his ſoul opened under the influences of his Deity, and the power of his Spirit: *and the grace of God was upon him*; which deſigns not the fulneſs of grace that was in him, as mediator, for the ſupply of his people; but either that internal grace which was beſtowed on his human nature, even the various graces of the Spirit of God, and which flowed from the grace of union of the two natures in him; or rather the love and favour of God, which in various inſtances was in a very ſingular manner manifeſted to him.

Ver. 41. *Now his parents went to Jeruſalem every year*, &c.] *Joſeph* was obliged to go three times a year, as were all the males in *Iſrael*, at the feaſts of the paſſover, pentecoſt, and tabernacles, *Deut.* xvi. 16. The firſt of theſe is expreſſed here, *at the feaſt of the paſſover*; but the women were not obliged to go up: for ſo it is ſaid by the *Jews*[p], פסחן של נשים רשות, *the paſſover of women is arbitrary*, or in their own power; they might go up to the feaſt, or not, as they pleaſed. 'Tis indeed ſaid of *Hillell*, who was now alive, that he obliged the women to the firſt, but not to a ſecond paſſover: to which the *Karaites* object; the account they give, is as follows[q]; "truly the women were " obliged, by the ſchool of *Hillell*, to the offering " of the paſſover; but if they were hindered from " the firſt paſſover, the ſecond was in their power; " that is, the thing depended upon their will and " pleaſure, whether they would offer or no, which " may be juſtly wondred at; for why ſhould they " be obliged to the firſt, and not the ſecond? for " behold, as to the obligation of the paſſover, " there is no difference between the firſt paſſover, " and the ſecond. The ſum of the matter is, our " wiſe men, on whom be peace, have determined, " and ſay, that there is no obligation but to males, " who are arrived to maturity." So that this was a voluntary thing in *Mary*; which diſcovers her piety and religion, and her great regard to the ordinances and appointments of God.

Ver. 42. *And when he was twelve years old*, &c.] Not that he was now, בר מצוה, *a ſon of the commandment*[r], to uſe the *Jewiſh* phraſe; or now came under the yoke of the law; or was obliged to the duties of adult church memberſhip, as is aſſerted by ſome; nor particularly to go to *Jeruſalem* to make his appearance at the feaſt of the paſſover, or any other feaſt: for, according to the maxims of the *Jews*, perſons were not obliged to the duties of the law, or ſubject to the penalties of it in caſe of non-performance, until they were, a female, at the age of twelve years, and one day, and a male, at the age of thirteen years, and one day; but then they uſed to train up their children, and inure them to religious exerciſes before: as for inſtance, tho' they were not obliged to faſt on the day of atonement, until they were at the age before-mentioned; yet they uſed them to it two or three years before, as they were able to endure it: a ſon of nine, or ten years old they train him up by hours; they make him faſt ſo many hours; and one of eleven, or *twelve years old*, they make him faſt a whole day: but then this was not law, but cuſtom; and which they obſerved, that they might be uſed to the commandments[s], and be expert in them, and ready to perform them, when required. 'Tis ſaid[t], that "there was a good cuſtom in *Jeruſalem* to " make their little ſons and daughters faſt on a " faſt-day; the ſon of a year, till the very day he " is *twelve years old*, when he faſts the whole " day; and after that they carry him, and bring " him before every ancient man, that he may " bleſs him, and confirm him, and pray over him, " that he may be worthy in the law, and in good " works; and every one that is greater than he in " the

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[p] T. Hieroſ. Kidduſhin, fol. 61. 3.

[q] Eliahu Adderet, p. 39. apud Trigland. de Sect. Karæorum, p. 28.

[r] Aben Ezra in Gen. xvii. 14.

[s] Miſn. Yoma, c. 8. § 4. & Maimon. & Bartenora in ib. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 82. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Shebitat Aſur, c. 2. §. 10, 11.

[t] Maſſechet Sopherim, c. 18. §. 5.

“ the city, he ſtands up from his place, and goes before him, and bows to him, to pray for him: and this is to learn him, that they are beautiful, and their works beautiful and acceptable to God; and they did not uſe to leave their little children behind them, but brought them to the ſynagues, כדי לזרים במצות, *that they might be ready in the commandments.*” That they might be inured to them, and expert in them, when they were under obligation to them; for they were not properly under the law, until they were arrived to the age above-mentioned; nor were they reckoned adult church-members till then, nor then neither, unleſs worthy perſons: for ſo it is ſaid[u], “ he that is worthy, at thirteen years of age, is called בן לכי, *a ſon of the congregation of Iſrael*;” that is, a member of the church. When therefore *Joſeph* and *Mary* took Jeſus along with them, at this age, when *they went up to Jeruſalem after the cuſtom of the feaſt* of the paſſover, it ſhows their religious regard to him; and may be an inſtruction to parents, to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, after their example.

Ver. 43. *And when they had fulfilled the days*, &c.] The ſeven days of the feaſt of unleavened bread, for ſo many days that feaſt was obſerved; and tho' it was not abſolutely neceſſary, and obligatory upon them to ſtay all that time at *Jeruſalem*, yet *Mary* and *Joſeph* ſeem ſo to have done, as did the more religious and devout perſons: *as they returned*; at the time when they were going from *Jeruſalem* home again: *the child Jeſus tarried behind in Jeruſalem*; being deſirous of hearing the diſcourſes of the doctors about the ſenſe of the ſcriptures, the meaning of the laws, and the traditions of the elders, and of converſing with them: *and Joſeph, and his mother, knew not* of it; of his intention to tarry longer, nor of his deſign in ſo doing: he did not aſk leave of them, ſince his ſtay was about an affair of his heavenly father's; and therefore this action of Chriſt is not to be drawn into an example, or precedent for children, to act without conſulting, or aſking leave of their parents. They had no notion at all of his ſtaying behind them, nor any ſuſpicion of it; nor did they miſs him for a conſiderable time; which might be owing to the large numbers that went in company together, ſo that they could not tell but that he was in the croud, tho' they did not ſee him; or to the men and women travelling in ſeparate companies, as is thought; ſo that *Joſeph* might think he was with *Mary*, and *Mary* might conclude he was with *Joſeph*, till they came to the end of their firſt day's journey, when they came together, and then miſſed him.

Ver. 44. *But they ſuppoſing him to have been in the company*, &c.] That travelled together into the ſame parts, having been, as they, at *Jeruſalem* to keep the feaſt: *went a day's journey*; either before they miſſed him; or if they miſſed him ſooner, yet they went on enquiring for him in the company, until they were come a day's journey before they thought, or, at leaſt, determined on going back to *Jeruſalem*. The bounds of a day's journey from *Jeruſalem* are ſaid to be[w] *Elath* on the ſouth, and *Akrabba* on the north; elſewhere[x] it is, *Elath* on the north, and *Akrabba* on the ſouth, *Lud*, or *Lydda*, on the weſt, and *Jordan* on the eaſt; wherefore, as *Galilee* lay north of *Jeruſalem*, the bound of this day's journey muſt be, according to the *Miſna*, *Akrabba*, and, according to the *Talmud*, *Elath*. *Nazareth* was three day's journey from *Jeruſalem*[y]: according to the *Jewiſh* writers[z], a day's journey was ten *parſa's*, or large miles, which were forty leſſer miles; and which, they ſay, is a middling man's walk on a middling day, as in the months of *Tiſri*, or *Niſan*, when days and nights were alike: and it was in the latter of thoſe months, on the twenty-ſecond day of it, that *Joſeph* and *Mary* ſet out on their journey; ſee *Exod.* xii. 18. but it can't be thought that women and children ſhould be able to travel ſo many miles a day, and therefore this day's journey, very likely, was ſhorter: *and they ſought him among their kinsfolks and acquaintance*; when they came to the end of their day's journey, where they took up their lodging for that night: and as the company was large, they doubtleſs lay at different houſes; wherefore they enquired in every houſe, where their relations and acquaintance lay, after their child Jeſus, where they might moſt reaſonably expect he would be: and ſo, in a ſpiritual ſenſe, when ſouls have loſt ſight of Chriſt, of whom ſhould they enquire concerning him? and where ſhould they expect to hear of him, but among their ſpiritual kindred and friends, and who alſo are related to Chriſt? ſee *Cant.* v. 9.

Ver. 45. *And when they found him not*, &c.] In the company that came from *Jeruſalem* with them, nor among any of their relations and friends, with whom they ſuppoſed he was: *they turned back again to Jeruſalem*; that is, the next morning, for it can hardly be thought they would ſet out that night, after they had travelled all day, without taking ſome repoſe: *ſeeking him*; at *Jeruſalem*, in the ſtreets and broad places of it; a figure of the church and ordinances, where ſouls look for, and enquire after their beloved, when they have loſt him, *Cant.* iii. 1, 2, 3.

Ver. 46. *And it came to paſs, that after three days*, &c.] From their firſt ſetting out from *Jeruſalem*, when Jeſus tarried behind; or on the third day, which may be reckoned thus; the firſt day was ſpent in journeying, and the ſecond in coming back the ſame journey, and the third day they ſought all *Jeruſalem* for him, when *they found him in the temple*; his father's houſe, the houſe of God, a figure of a Goſpel-church, where the word and ordinances are duly adminiſtred, and where Chriſt is to be found. What part of the temple Chriſt was in is not eaſy to ſay; it was not in the holy of holies, for none but the high-prieſt went into that, and that only on the day of atonement; nor in the court of the prieſts, for he was not among them, but the doctors; nor in the court of the *Iſraelites*, where the common people worſhipped; it may be beſt judged of, by obſerving where their ſeveral conſiſtories, or courts of judicature were[a]; the grand *Sanhedrim* ſat in the ſanctuary, in the room *Gazith*; the leſſer *Sanhedrim*, which conſiſted of twenty-three perſons, and the bench of three; the one ſat in the gate of the court (of the *Iſraelites*); and the other in the gate of the mountain of the houſe (or court of the *Gentiles*): it ſeems moſt likely, that he was in the room *Gazith*, where the grand *Sanhedrim* ſat; for here was the largeſt number of doctors; and it was the more amazing to his parents to find him here; unleſs it ſhould be rather thought, that he was in the ſynagogue in the temple, for ſuch an one there [b] was there; where, after ſervice was over, he might be admitted to a converſation with the learned doctors that belonged to it: it follows, *ſitting in the midſt of the doctors:* the principal doctors in being at this time, were *Hillell* and *Shammai*, the one the preſident, and the other vice-preſident of the council; and *Rabban Simeon*, the ſon of *Hillell*, who ſucceeded him in his office; and *R. Judah*, and *R. Joſhua*, the ſons of *Bethira*; *Jonathan ben Uzziel*, the author of the *Chaldee* paraphraſe; and *R. Jochanan ben Zaccai*. The *Sanhedrim* ſat in a ſemi-circular form, like the half of a round corn-floor; ſo that they could ſee one another, and the prince, and the father of the court, could ſee them all; and before them ſat three rows of the diſciples of the wiſe men, or ſcholars; and in each row there were three and twenty men: the firſt row was next to the *Sanhedrim*, and the ſecond row below that, and the third row below that; and in every row they ſat according to their ſuperiority in wiſdom [c]: on a ſeat, in one of theſe rows, I think, Chriſt ſat among the ſcholars; and this may be called ſitting among the doctors, becauſe theſe ſeats were juſt before them, and were in a ſemi-circular form; at leaſt he might be here at firſt; when upon the queſtions he put, and the anſwers he made, he was taken particular notice of by the doctors, who might call him up, and place him between them; for this, in ſome caſes, was done to ſcholars. Thus, 'tis ſaid [d], "if one of the diſciples, or ſcholars, ſay, I have ſomething to ſay in favour of him, (one that is on his trial) they bring him up, and *cauſe him to ſit in the midſt of them*; and he does not go down from thence all the whole day." *Both hearing them*; their debates and deciſions about points in the law of *Moſes*; *and aſking them queſtions*; upon thoſe points. Had this been a *Midraſh*, or ſchool, there would be no difficulty of producing inſtances of putting queſtions to the doctors there; but there was no ſuch place in the temple, or ſynagogue, where teachers were interrogated by their hearers; for which reaſon I think the paſſages, produced by Dr. *Lightfoot*, are not ſo pertinent, ſince they refer to ſuch a place: it is very likely, ſince there were ſuch a number of ſcholars admitted to ſit before the *Sanhedrim* to hear their controverſies and determinations, and were allowed, in ſome caſes, to ſpeak; ſo they might be ſuffered to put queſtions, in order to gain knowledge.

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[u] Zohar in Exod. fol. 39. 4.

[w] Miſn. Maaſer Sheni, c. 3. §. 2.

[x] T. Bab. Betza, fol. 5. 1.

[y] David e Pomis Lex. Heb. p. 141.

[z] T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 2. 3. T. Bab. Peſachim, fol. 93. 2. & 94. 1. & Toſaphta in ib. ol. 11. 2. Seder Tephillot, fol. 144. 1. Ed. Baſil.

[a] Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 10. §. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, 1. §. 3.

Ver. 47. *And all that heard him were aſtoniſhed*, &c.] All in the *Sanhedrim*, both the doctors, and their diſciples, were amazed, *at his underſtanding*; in the knowledge of the law, and of the ſcriptures: *and his anſwers*; which he returned to the queſtions the doctors put to him, which were made with ſo much wiſdom and judgment, that it was ſurprizing in one of his years.

Ver. 48. *And when they ſaw him they were amazed*, &c.] That is, when *Joſeph* and *Mary* ſaw him amidſt the doctors, they were aſtoniſhed that he was admitted among them, and had in ſuch eſteem by them: *and his mother ſaid unto him*; ſhe being his own, and only parent, and not *Joſeph*; and therefore he ſaid nothing, but left it to her; who upon ſight of him, at leaſt as ſoon as ſhe had a proper opportunity, after he had left the doctors, began to chide, or rather to expoſtulate with him after this manner: *ſon, why haſt thou thus dealt with us?* which was ſaid with great tenderneſs of affection, and in much mildneſs; and may be a pattern to parents, who ſhould not provoke their children to anger, but deal gently and tenderly with them: *behold, thy father and I have ſought thee ſorrowing*; with great grief, anxiety, and ſolicitude, fearing leſt ſome evil had befallen him. *Mary* calls *Joſeph* his father, tho' ſhe knew he was not, in a proper ſenſe; but becauſe he was ſuppoſed to be ſo, and was his father by the law of marriage; and eſpecially, ſhe might call him ſo becauſe of his paternal care of him in his education, and bringing him up: for it is a maxim with the *Jews* [e], that "not he that begets, but he that brings up, is the father."

Ver. 49. *And he ſaid unto them, how is it that ye ſought me?* &c.] That is, with ſo much uneaſineſs and diſtreſs of mind, not truſting in the power and providence of God, to take care of him; and in other places, beſides the temple, where they had been enquiring for him: *wiſt ye not that I muſt be about my father's buſineſs?* or *in my father's houſe*, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions render it; where, as ſoon as you miſſed me, you might, at once, have concluded I was, and not have put yourſelves to ſo much trouble and pains in ſeeking for me. Chriſt ſeems to tax them with ignorance, or, at leaſt, forgetfulneſs of his having a father in heaven, whoſe buſineſs he came to do on earth; and which they ſhould have thought in their own minds he was now about, and ſo have made themſelves eaſy. The buſineſs that Chriſt came about was to preach the Goſpel, and which he afterwards performed with great clearneſs and fulneſs, with much power, majeſty, and authority, with great conſtancy and diligence, with much concern for the ſouls of men, and with great awfulneſs; and in which he took great delight, tho' he went thro' many dangers and riſques of life; as alſo to work miracles in proof of his Deity and Meſſiahſhip, and for the good of the bodies of men, and in which he was very aſſiduous, going about every where doing good this way: but the main, and principal part of his buſineſs was, to work out ſalvation for his people, by fulfilling the law, making reconciliation and atonement for their ſins, and obtaining eternal redemption: this was a buſineſs, which neither angels nor men could do; was very toilſome and laborious, and yet he delighted in it; nor did he deſiſt from it until it was accompliſhed: and this is called his father's buſineſs, becauſe he contrived and aſſigned it to him; he called him to it, and ſent him to perform it; he enjoined it him as man and mediator, and the glory of his perfections was concerned in it, and ſecured by it: and it was a buſineſs that Chriſt muſt be about, be concerned in, and perform, becauſe he engaged to do it from all eternity; and becauſe it was the will of his father which muſt be done, and was neceſſary in order to ſhew himſelf dutiful and obedient; and becauſe it was foretold in prophecy again and again, and promiſed that it ſhould be done; and becauſe it could not be done by another. Now our Lord's converſing with the doctors, and which was a branch of his prophetic office, and was, no doubt, with a view to the good of the ſouls of men, and nothing leſs than miraculous, was a ſhew, a prelude of, and a ſort of an entrance upon the buſineſs he came about.

Ver. 50. *And they underſtood not the ſaying*, &c.] What he meant by his father's houſe, or his father's buſineſs, and the neceſſity of his being there, and abou about that: *which he ſpake unto them*; at that time, and as above related.

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[b] Jarchi in Miſn. Yoma, c. 7. §. 1.

[c] Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 4. §. 3, 4. Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 1. §. 7

[d] Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 5. §. 4.

[e] Shemot Rabba, §. 46. fol. 143. 1.

Ver. 51. *And he went down with them*, &c.] From the temple, and from *Jeruſalem*, which were on high ground: *and came to Nazareth*; where he, and his parents, had lived ever ſince their return from *Egypt*: *and was ſubject unto* them; for tho' he thought fit to let them know, or, at leaſt, put them in mind, that he had a father in heaven, whoſe buſineſs he came about, and muſt do, and therefore did not judge it neceſſary to aſk their leave to ſtay at *Jeruſalem* on that account; yet, as man, and willing to ſet an example of filial ſubjection to parents, he went along with them, and ſhewed all dutiful reſpect unto them, yielding a ready and chearful obedience to their commands, living with them, and working under them, and for them; and ſo he continued till he was about thirty years of age: *but his mother kept all theſe ſayings*, or things; for this relates not only to the words of Chriſt, but to the whole hiſtory of his ſtaying behind them at *Jeruſalem*, of his ſitting among the doctors, hearing them, and aſking them queſtions, to the aſtoniſhment of all. Theſe things ſhe treaſured up, and preſerved, *in her heart*; that is, in her memory; ſo the word is uſed in *Jewiſh* writings. It is reported of *R. Meir* [f], that "he went to intercalate the year in *Aſia*, and there was no *Megilla* (the book of *Eſther*) there, and he wrote it, מלבו, *out of his heart*, (*i. e.* out of his memory) and read it."

Ver. 52. *And Jeſus increaſed in wiſdom*, &c.] As man; for neither his divine wiſdom, nor the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge in him, as mediator, could admit of any increaſe; but as he grew in body, the faculties of his ſoul opened, and received gradually large meaſures of wiſdom and knowledge, in things natural and ſpiritual, thro' the in-dwelling of his divine nature in him, and the Holy Spirit that was, without meaſure, on him: *and ſtature*; the word ſignifies age alſo; and ſo the *Vulgate Latin* has rendered it: but that is not the meaning of it here, ſince it would have been entirely unneceſſary to have obſerved, that he increaſed in age, which muſt be unavoidable: but the ſenſe is, that as he increaſed in the wiſdom and knowledge of his human ſoul, ſo he likewiſe increaſed in the ſtature of his body; *and in favour with God and man*: he appeared by the grace that was in him, and the gifts beſtowed on him, to be high in the love and favour of God; and had a large ſhare in the eſteem and affections of all good men, who had the honour and happineſs of knowing him, and of being acquainted with him.

## CHAP. III.

Ver. 1. NOW *in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæſar*, &c.] Emperor of *Rome*, and the third of the *Cæſars*; *Julius* was the firſt, and *Auguſtus* the ſecond, in whoſe time Chriſt was born, and this *Tiberius* the third; he was the ſon of *Livia*, the wife of *Auguſtus*, but not by him; but was adopted by him, into the Empire: his name was *Claudius Tiberius Nero*, and for his intemperance was called, *Caldius Biberius Mero*; the whole of his reign was upwards of twenty-two years, for he died in the twenty-third year of his reign [g]; and in the fifteenth of it, *John* began to preach, Chriſt was baptized, and began to preach alſo; ſo that this year may be truly called, *the acceptable year of the Lord*. *Pontius Pilate being governour of Judea*; under the Emperor *Tiberius*, in whoſe reign the *Jewiſh* chronologer [h] places him, and the hiſtorian [i] alſo, and make mention of him as ſent by him to *Jeruſalem*: he was not the firſt governour of *Judea* for the *Romans*; there were before him *Coponius*, *Marcus Ambivius*, *Annius Rufus*, and *Valerius Gratus*: *and Herod being Tetrarch of Galilee*; this was *Herod Antipas*, the ſon of *Herod* the great, and brother of *Archelaus*; the above chronologer [k] calls him alſo a Tetrarch, and places him under *Tiberius Cæſar*: he is ſometimes called a king, and ſo he is by the *Ethiopic* verſion here called, *king of Galilee*; and in the *Arabic* verſion, *prince over the fourth part of Galilee*; beſides *Galilee*, he had alſo *Peræa*, or the country beyond *Jordan*, as *Joſephus* [l] ſays, and which ſeems here to be included in *Galilee*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xiv. 1. *And his brother Philip Tetrarch of Iturea, and of the region of Trachonitis*: *Pliny* [m] makes mention of the nation of the *Itureans*, as belonging to *Cœle Syria*; perhaps *Iturea* is the ſame with *Batanea*, or *Auranitis*, or both; ſince theſe with *Trachon*, the ſame with *Trachonitis* here, are alloted to *Philip* by *Joſephus* [n]: it ſeems to take its name from *Jetur*, one of the ſons of *Iſhmael*, *Gen.* xxv. 15. *Trachonitis* is mentioned by *Pliny* [o], as near to *Decapolis*, and as a region and tetrarchy, as here: *Ptolemy* [p] ſpeaks of the *Trachonite Arabians*, on the eaſt of *Batanea*, or *Baſhan*: the region of *Trachona*, or *Trachonitis*, with the *Targumiſts* [q], anſwers to the country of *Argob*. This *Philip*, who as before by *Joſephus*, ſo by *Egeſippus* [r], is ſaid, in agreement with *Luke*, to be *Tetrarch* of *Trachonitis*, was brother to *Herod Antipas*, by the father's, but not by the mother's ſide. *Philip* was born of *Cleopatra*, of *Jeruſalem*, and *Herod* of *Malthace*, a *Samaritan* [s]: he died in the twentieth year of *Tiberius* [t], five years after this: *and Lyſanias the Tetrarch of Abilene*: mention is made of *Abila* by *Pliny* [u], as in *Cœle Syria*, from whence this tetrarchy might have its name; and by *Ptolemy* [w], it is called *Abila* of *Lyſanius*, from this, or ſome other governour of it, of that name; and the phraſe, *from Abilene to Jeruſalem*, is to be met with in the *Talmud* [x], which doubtleſs deſigns this ſame place: who this *Lyſanias* was, is not certain; he was not the ſon of *Herod* the great, as *Euſebius* ſuggeſts [y], nor that *Lyſanias*, the ſon of *Ptolemy Minnaeus*, whom *Joſephus* [z] ſpeaks of, though very probably he might be a deſcendant of his: however, when *Tiberius Cæſar* reigned at *Rome*, and *Pontius Pilate* governed in *Judea*, and *Herod Antipas* in *Galilee*, and *Philip* his brother, in *Iturea* and *Trachonitis*, and *Lyſanias* in *Abilene*, *John the Baptiſt* began to preach and baptize; to fix the æra of whoſe miniſtry and baptiſm, all this is ſaid.

Ver. 2. *Annas and Caiaphas being the high-prieſts*, &c.] Some difficulty here ariſes, how theſe two could be both high-prieſts; when according to the law of God, and the uſages of the *Jewiſh* nation, there was to be, and was but one high-prieſt at a time: many things are obſerved by writers, to ſolve this difficulty: ſome go this way; that though according to the divine inſtitution, and the practice of former times, there was but one high-prieſt at a time; yet now, through the corruption of the preſent age, there were two high-prieſts; or at leaſt, which officiated alternately in the ſame year: but of ſuch a corruption, no inſtance can be given, even in thoſe corrupt times; and as *Maimonides* ſays [a], there can be but *one high-prieſt*, בכל העולם, *in all the world*; and beſides, is contrary to their canons, which were then in being, and ſtill remain; one [b] of which runs thus, אין ממנין שני כהנים גדולים כאחת, *they don't appoint two high-prieſts at once.* Others ſuppoſe, that theſe two annually performed the office of high-prieſts by turns; that *Caiaphas* was high-prieſt one year, and *Annas* another: 'tis true indeed, that through the corruption of thoſe times, this office became venal; hence 'tis ſaid in the *Talmud* [c], "becauſe they gave money for the prieſthood, they changed it every twelve months." And which is more largely expreſſed by one of their commentators [d]; "becauſe the high-prieſts, who were under the ſecond temple, after *Simeon* the juſt, gave money to miniſter in the high-prieſt's office, and becauſe they were wicked, they did not fill up their years, therefore they changed every year." But though it is certain, that there were frequent, and ſometimes annual changes in the prieſtood, hence 'tis ſaid of *Caiaphas*, *John* xi. 49. and xviii. 13. that he was *high-prieſt the ſame year*, yet it does not appear that he and *Annas*, took it yearly by turns; for *Caiaphas* continued in that office ſome years, even till after the death of Chriſt: and beſides, had this been the caſe, as one of them could be but high-prieſt for the year being, both in one year as here, could not with propriety be ſaid to be high-prieſts. Others take another method, and ſuppoſe *Caiaphas* to be properly the high-prieſt, as he certainly was; and *Annas* ſo called, becauſe he had been one formerly, the ſame with *Ananus*, the ſon of *Seth*; who was put into the prieſthood by *Quirinius*, in the room of *Joazar*, and was depoſed by *Valerius Gratus*, and *Iſhmael ben Phabi*, was put into his room: but though there may be inſtances of perſons being called high-prieſts, who had been in that office, after they were removed from it, yet no reaſon can be given, why *Annas* ſhould be peculiarly called ſo, when there were in all probability ſeveral alive, who had been in that office as well as he; as *Joazar* his predeceſſor, and *Iſhmael ben Phabi*, who ſucceeded *Joazar*, and after him *Eleazar*, the ſon of *Annas*, and then *Simeon ben Cambith*; nor why he ſhould be put in the annals of the high-prieſts, in a year in which he was not one. It ſeems moſt likely therefore, that he was the *Sagan* of the prieſts, of which office mention is frequently made, in the *Jewiſh* writings [e]; yea, we often read of *Chanina*, or *Chananiah*, or *Ananias*, perhaps the ſame with this *Annas*, who is called, סגן כהנים, *the Sagan of the prieſts* [f]. This officer was not a deputy high-prieſt, or one that was ſubſtituted to officiate occaſionally, in the room of the high-prieſt, when any thing hindered him, or rendered him unfit for his office; as on the day of atonement, if the high-prieſt contracted any pollution, they ſubſtituted another to miniſter [g]; which was not the *Sagan*, but another prieſt; and even ſuch an one was called an high-prieſt, as appears from the following ſtory [h]. "It happened to *Simeon ben Cambith* (a predeceſſor of *Caiaphas*) that he went out to ſpeak with the king, on the evening of the day of atonement, and the ſpittle was ſcattered from his mouth, upon his garments, and he was unclean; and his brother *Judah* went in, and miniſtered in his ſtead in the high prieſthood; and their mother ſaw her *two ſons*, כהנים גדולים ביום אחד, *high-prieſts in one day.*" But the *Sagan* was not an officer *pro tempore*, or ſo much under the high-prieſt, and one in his ſtead, as a ruler and governour over other prieſts. *Maimonides* ſays of him thus [i]; "they appoint one prieſt, who is to the high-prieſt as a ſecond to the king, and he is called *Sagan*; and he is called a ruler; and he ſtands at the right hand of the high-prieſt continually; and this is an honour to him, and all the prieſts are under the hand of the *Sagan*." The account given of him in the *Talmud* [k], is this; "in five things the *Sagan* miniſters; the *Sagan* ſays to him, my lord, high-prieſt, lift up thy right hand (*i. e.* when he took the lots out of the veſſel for the goats, on the day of atonement [l], which ſhould be ſlain;) the *Sagan* is on his right hand, and the father of the *Sanhedrim* on his left (*i. e.* when he went to the eaſt of the court and the north of the altar [m], where were the two goats, and the veſſel in which were the lots;) the *Sagan* waved with the vails, or linen clothes; the *Sagan* held him by his right hand, and cauſed him to aſcend (by the ſteps to the altar;) and no man was appointed an high-prieſt, before he was a *Sagan*." Now theſe might be as *Seraiah* and *Zephaniah*, the one chief prieſt, and the other ſecond prieſt, *Jer.* lii. 24. where the *Targum* and *Jarchi* interpret the text, the *Sagan* of the prieſts. And this being an office of ſuch dignity and authority, ſuppoſing *Annas* in it, though he was not *the* high-prieſt, yet being the head of all the other prieſts, he might be called one, and be joined with *Caiaphas*, and ſet before him; not only becauſe he had been an high-prieſt, but becauſe he was his father-in-law: *the word of God came to John the ſon of Zachariah*; a prieſt of the order of *Abia*; and of *Elizabeth*, a daughter of *Aaron*, and couſin of *Mary*, the mother of *Jeſus*; as it had come formerly to the prophets, and particularly to *Jeremy*, who was ſanctified from the womb, as the *Baptiſt* was: he was bleſſed with a prophetic ſpirit, and with the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghoſt, and with a wonderful revelation of the Meſſiah, and of the Goſpel diſpenſation; and was abundantly qualified for the work he was called to, and ſent to perform: and this befel him *in the wilderneſs*; that is, of *Judea*; where he had been brought up and lived, and from whence and where he came, preaching: he had lived a ſolitary life, and had not learnt his doctrine from men, but had his miſſion, miniſtry, and baptiſm, from heaven.

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[f] T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 18. 2.
[g] Sueton. Octav. Aug. c. 62, 63. & Tiberius Nero, c. 21, 42, 73.
[h] R. David Ganz, par. 2. fol. 15. 1.
[i] Joſeph. de Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 9. §. 2, 3.
[k] Par. 1. fol. 25. 2.
[l] De Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 6. §. 5.
[m] Nat. Hiſt. l. 5. c. 23.
[n] Ib. ut ſupra.
[o] Nat. Hiſt. l. 5. c. 18.
[p] Lib. 5. c. 15.
[q] Targum Jon. in Deut. iii. 4. 14. 1 Kings iv. 13. & T. Hieroſ. in Deut. iii. 14. & Numb. xxxiv. 15.
[r] De Excid. l. 1. c. 46. & 3. 26.
[s] Joſeph de Bello Jud. l. 1. c. 28.
[t] Ib. Antiqu. l. 18. c. 6.
[u] Lib. 5. c. 18.
[w] Lib. 5. c. 15.
[x] T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 59. 2.
[y] Hiſt. Eccl. l. 1. c. 9, 10.
[z] De Bello Jud. l. 1. c. 13. §. 1.

Ver. 3. *And he came into all the country about Jordan*, &c.] He came out of the wilderneſs of *Judea*, where he firſt began his miniſtry, to ſome parts of the country that bordered on *Jordan*, and was near unto it, on either ſide the river; ſometimes he was at *Bethabara*, and ſometimes at *Ænon*

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[a] In Miſn. Menachot, c. 13. §. 10.

[b] T. Hieroſ. Sanhedrin, fol. 29. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Cele Hamikdaſh, c. 4. §. 15

[c] T. Bab. Yoma, fol 8. 2.

[d] Bartenora in Miſn. Yoma, c. 1. §. 1.

[e] Targum in 2 Kings xxiii. 4. & xxv. 18. & in Jer
xx. 1. & xxix. 26. & lii. 24.

[f] Miſn. Shekalim, c. 6. §. 1. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 8. 1. Juchaſin, fol. 57. 1.

[g] Miſn. Yoma
c. 1. §. 1.

[h] T. Hieroſ. Yoma, fol. 38. 4. Megilla, fol. 72. 1. Horayot, fol. 47. 4. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 47. 1. Bemid
bar Rabba, §. 2. fol. 180. 3.

[i] Hilch. Cele Hamikdaſh, c. 4. §. 16.

[k] T. Hieroſ. Yoma, fol. 41. 1.

[l] Miſn. Yoma
c. 4. §. 1.

[m] Miſn. Yoma, c. 3. §. 9.

near *Salim*; for he did not take a tour round about all the country that encompaſſed *Jordan*, but being at it, or in places adjacent to it, all the country round about came to him; ſee *Matt.* iii. 5. *Preaching the baptiſm of repentance for the remiſſion of ſins:* this was the work and office of *John*, as ſignified by *Elias*, in *Mal.* iv. 5, 6. the *Jews* ſay [n], “the *Iſraelites* will “not repent, till *Elias* comes; as it is ſaid, *Mal.* “iv. 5, 6. in the land of *Iſrael* repentance delights.” *John* came into this land, preaching this doctrine; ſee the note on *Mark* i. 4.

Ver. 4. *As it is written in the book of the words of Eſaias the prophet*, &c.] Ch. xl. 3. *ſaying, the voice of one crying in the wilderneſs, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths ſtraight*; ſee the note on *Matt.* iii. 3.

Ver. 5. *Every valley ſhall be filled*, &c.] *Luke* cites more out of the ſame prophecy, as relating to the times of *John* the *Baptiſt*, and the *Meſſiah*, than the other Evangeliſts *Matthew* and *Mark* do: in the prophet it is, *every valley ſhall be exalted*; which is done, by filling it up: the metaphor is perſiſted in, of preparing and clearing the way, for the coming of the Meſſiah, done by the miniſtry of *John*; under which, ſuch ſouls as were lowly and humble, and depreſſed with the ſenſe of ſin, ſhould be raiſed and directed to believe in Chriſt, and be filled with divine conſolation from him. Theſe words are owned by the *Jews* [o], to belong to the world to come; that is, the times of the Meſſiah; though they underſtand them, of making way for the return of the *Iſraelites* from captivity, by the *Meſſiah*: juſt as they ſuppoſe ſuch things were done by the miraculous cloud, for the children of *Iſrael*, as they paſſed through the wilderneſs; of which they ſay [p], “that it went before them, “ſmote the ſerpents and ſcorpions, and fiery ſerpents, and the rock; and if there was any low “place, it raiſed it up; or high place, it made “it low, and cauſed them to be plain; as it is “ſaid, *Iſa.* xl. 3. *And every valley ſhall be exalted*, “&c.” But what they ſay of this cloud literally, as preparing the way for the *Iſraelites*, is in a ſpiritual ſenſe true, of the miniſtry of *John*; whereby many of the children of *Iſrael*, had the way prepared for them, for the reception of the Meſſiah; when as every humble ſoul had its expectation raiſed, and its faith encouraged, and its heart filled with ſpiritual joy; ſo ſuch as were proud and haughty, were humbled: *and every mountain and hill ſhall be brought low*; all ſuch as are elated with their own abilities, and boaſt of their righteouſneſs, truſt in themſelves, and look with diſdain and contempt on others, their loftineſs ſhall be bowed down, and their haughtineſs made low; and the Meſſiah alone, in his perſon, grace, and righteouſneſs, be exalted: *and the crooked ſhall be made ſtraight*; ſuch as are of a crooked ſpirit, and walk in crooked ways, with the workers of iniquity, ſhall have new ſpirits given them, and be directed to right ways, and be led in the paths of righteouſneſs and truth: *and the rough ways ſhall be made ſmooth*; and men of rough tempers, comparable to lions and bears, ſhall become quiet and peaceable, ſmooth and eaſy; and moreover, whatever difficulties were in the minds of men concerning the Meſſiah, the end of his coming, and the nature of his kingdom; and whatever impediments were in the way of embracing him when come, ſhould now be removed at leaſt from many perſons. *R. David Kimchi*, a very noted *Jewiſh* commentator [q], acknowledges that the whole of this paſſage is to be underſtood, דרך משל, *by way of parable*, in a myſtical and figurative ſenſe.

Ver. 6. *And all fleſh ſhall ſee the ſalvation of God.*] By *the ſalvation of God* is meant, the Meſſiah, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Saviour of God's appointing and ſending; and who is the author of that ſalvation which God reſolved on, contrived, and approved of; and is his ordinance for ſalvation, unto the ends of the earth, for all his elect; ſee ch. ii. 30. whom a great number among the *Jews* ſhould, and did ſee, with their bodily eyes; and whom not only God's elect among them, but alſo all of them among the *Gentiles*, ſhould behold with an eye of faith, for themſelves, as their Saviour and Redeemer. It is matter of queſtion, what paſſage is here referred to; whether *Iſa.* xl. 5. or *Iſa.* lii. 10. the latter comes neareſt to the words, and the former ſtands cloſely connected with the expreſſions before cited; though it is uſual with the New Teſtament writers, to join together paſſages, which ſtand in different places of the ſame prophet, and even which are in different books; ſee *Rom.* ix. 33. compared with *Iſa.* viii. 14. and xxviii. 16. and *Matt.* xxi. 5. compared with *Iſa.* lxii. 11. and *Zech.* ix. 9. and that agreeable to the method uſed by *Jewiſh* writers [r].

Ver. 7. *Then ſaid he to the multitude*, &c.] That is, *John*, as the *Ethiopic* verſion reads; and the multitude to whom he ſpake the following words, were many of the *Phariſees* and *Sadducees*, as appears from *Matt.* iii. 7. *That came forth to be baptized of him*; who came out of their houſes, towns, and cities, round about, to the place where *John* was; and hearing and ſeeing what he was about, deſired to be admitted to his baptiſm: not that they *were baptized of him*, as the *Arabic* verſion renders it; but they came with a view of being baptized, were it thought fit and proper they ſhould: but *John* refuſed them, ſaying to them, *O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?* ſee the note on *Matt.* iii. 7.

Ver. 8. *Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance*, &c.] Or *meet* for it, ſuch as will ſhew it to be true and genuine: *and begin not to ſay within yourſelves:* in one of *Beza*'s copies, and in another of *Stephens*'s, it was read, *think not*, as in *Matt.* iii. 9. the ſenſe is the ſame. The *Vulgate Latin* and *Ethiopic* verſions, leave out the phraſe, *within yourſelves:* what they are forbid to ſay follows, *we have Abraham to our father, for I ſay unto you, God is able of theſe ſtones, to raiſe up children unto Abraham*; which need not be thought ſtrange, when the creation of *Adam* out of the earth, and the production of ſuch a numerous offspring, as the *Iſraelites* were, from *Abraham* and *Sarah*, when paſt all hope of children, and are ſignified by the rock and pit in *Iſa.* li. 1, 2. are conſidered; ſee the note on *Matt.* iii. 9.

Ver. 9. *And now alſo the ax is laid unto the root of the trees*, &c.] Not only to *Jeſſe*'s family, which was as a root in a dry ground, and to *Jeruſalem*, the metropolis of the nation; but to the root of the vain boaſting of every *Jew*; their deſcent from *Abraham*, the covenant made with him, their eccleſiaſtical ſtate and civil polity, all which would quickly be at an end: the *Romans* were now among them, the ax in God's hand; by means of whom, utter ruin and deſtruction would be brought upon their nation, city, and temple: *every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and caſt into the fire*; ſee the note on *Matt.* iii. 10.

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[n] Pirke Eliezer, c. 44.

[o] T. Hieroſ. Erubin, fol. 25. 2.

[p] Bemidbar Rabba, §. 1. fol. 177. 1, 2. Vid. Targ. in Cant. ii. 6. & Jarchi in Cant. iii. 6.

[q] In Iſa. xl. 4.

[r] Vid. Surenhuſ. Biblos Katallages, de modis Allegandi, &c. Theſ. 7. p. 45, 46, 319.

Ver. 10. *And the people aſked him*, &c.] Not the ſame as in ver. 7. the *Sadducees* and *Phariſees*, for they ſeemed not to be at all affected with, and wrought upon, by the miniſtry of *John*; but rather were diſpleaſed with him, and turned their backs on him, and rejected him and his baptiſm; but the common people, that ſtood by; who hearing *John* ſpeak of wrath to come, and of repentance, and fruits worthy of it, were filled with concern about theſe things, and enquire, *ſaying, what ſhall we do?* either to eſcape the wrath and vengeance coming on the nation, and alſo eternal ruin and deſtruction; and *Beza* ſays, that in two of his copies, and one of them his moſt ancient one, 'tis added, *to be ſaved*, and ſo in two of *Stephens*'s; which confirms the above ſenſe, and makes their enquiry to be the ſame with the jailor's, *Acts* xvi. 30. Or elſe their meaning is, what are the things we are to do, or the fruits we are to bring forth, the duties we are to perform, in order to teſtify the truth and genuineneſs of our repentance? which latter ſeems moſt agreeable.

Ver. 11. *He anſwereth and ſaith unto them*, &c.] By telling them what they ſhould do; and he does not put them upon ceremonial obſervances, nor ſevere exerciſes of religion, nor even the duties of the firſt table of the law, and others of the ſecond, though neceſſary to be done; but upon acts of beneficence and kindneſs, to fellow-creatures in diſtreſs; and are what may be called love of our neighbour, and which involvates the love of God, and ſo the whole law; for the one cannot be rightly exerciſed without the other: *he that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none*; not both of them, but one of them: a man is not obliged to go naked himſelf, in order to clothe another; and ſo the *Perſic* and *Ethiopic* verſions read, *let him give one to him that has not*; that has not a garment to wear. This is not to be underſtood ſtrictly and literally, that a man is obliged to give one of his coats, if he has more than one, to a perſon in want of cloathing; it will be ſufficient to anſwer the intent of this exhortation, if he ſupplies his want another way, by furniſhing him with money to buy one: the meaning is, that perſons according to their abilities, and of what they can ſpare, ſhould communicate to thoſe that are in diſtreſs: much leſs is it to be concluded from hence, that it is not lawful for a man to have more coats than one: *and he that hath meat*, or *meats*, *let him do likewiſe*; that is, he that has a ſufficiency of food, and more than enough for himſelf and family, let him give it freely and chearfully to the poor and needy, for with ſuch ſacrifices God is well pleaſed: and when ſuch acts of kindneſs are done in faith, from a principle of love, and with a view to the glory of God, they are the fruits of grace, and ſuch as are meet for repentance, and ſhew it to be genuine. *John* inſtances in theſe two articles, food and raiment, as containing the neceſſaries of human life, and including every thing, by which one may be ſerviceable to another.

Ver. 12. *Then came alſo publicans to be baptized*, &c.] Being convinced under *John*'s miniſtry of the evils of their paſt life, and deſirous of being admitted to baptiſm, to which they underſtood repentance, and fruits meet for the ſame, were prerequiſite: theſe came nearer to *John*, *and ſaid unto him, maſter, what ſhall we do?* we have been very wicked perſons, what ſhall we do to eſcape divine vengeance? or what are the particular duties we are to perform? or the fruits meet for repentance, we are to bring forth; that ſo we may be admitted to the ordinance of baptiſm, which requires, as previous to it, a true and hearty repentance? of theſe men, ſee the note on *Matt.* vi. 46. and ix. 9, 10, 11.

Ver. 13. *And he ſaid unto them*, &c.] Not by adviſing them to quit their employments, as if it was a thing unlawful to impoſe, pay, and collect taxes, but by directing them to perform their office aright: *exact no more than that which is appointed you*; by the government: there were two ſorts of publicans; there were ſome that exacted more than what they were ordered, and ſettled the tax at their own pleaſure, and collected what they would themſelves; and theſe were very odious to the people, and were reckoned with the worſt of ſinners, as thieves and robbers; but there were others, who behaved according to the orders of the government, and theſe were ſubmitted to, as appears from the *Jewiſh* canons: "ſays [s] *Samuel*, the judgment of a "kingdom, is judgment (*i. e.* the orders of a go"vernment ought to be regarded;) *R. Chanina* "*bar Cahana* ſays, that *Samuel* ſays it of a pub"lican, שאין לו קציבה, *who has nothing appointed* "*for him*: the houſe of *R. Jannai* ſay, of a pub"lican that ſtands of himſelf." The Gloſs is, "*the judgment of a kingdom is judgment*; this is he "that receives from a king, a tax (to gather) in a "thing, קצוב, *that is fixed*, ſo and ſo for the "year, and he is no robber: *who has nothing ap*"*pointed for him*, but takes according to his whole "will and pleaſure." *Maimonides* expreſſes this in plainer language [t], "in what things is it ſaid that "a publican is as thieves? when a *Gentile* publican, "or a *Gentile* that ſtands of himſelf, or a publican "that ſtands for the king, and hath nothing *fixed* "*for him*, but he takes what he pleaſes, and leaves "what he pleaſes: but a publican with whom the "king agrees, and orders that he ſhould take a "third or a fourth, or, דבר קצוב, *any thing that* "*is appointed*; and he conſtitutes an *Iſraelitiſh* pub"lican to collect that part for the king, and it is "known that the man is faithful, and does not "add any thing to what the king has decreed; he "is not in the claſs of robbers, for the judgment "of a king is judgment.——And ſo a king that "lays a tax upon citizens, or upon every man and "man, *a thing fixed*; or decrees, that whoever "tranſgreſſes this thing, they ſhall take all his "goods into the king's houſe; or that whatever "ſhall be found in the field in the time of the barn "(*i. e.* when it ſhould be there) ſhould pay tribute "for it, whether he is the owner of the field or "not: and ſo with reſpect to any thing elſe of this "kind, it is not a robbery; and an *Iſraelite* that "collects them for the king, is not in the number "of robbers; for lo! he is right, and he does "not add nor alter, nor take any thing to him"ſelf."——Now ſuch publicans as theſe, were received and ſubmitted to, but others were rejected; ſo *Moſes Kotſenſis* ſays [u], that "publicans that take, "יותר מדבר הקצוב להן, *more than what is ap*"*pointed for them*, are rejected." From all which we may learn, what publicans theſe were, that came to *John*'s baptiſm, and put the above queſtion to him; that they were *Jewiſh* publicans, and not *Gentiles*; and therefore *John* ſays nothing to them, but what concerned their employment; which he doubtleſs would have done, if they had been ignorant *Gentiles*: and alſo we ſee the reaſon of his expreſſing himſelf in this manner, ſince publicans were very apt to go beyond their orders, and require more than was fixed for them to collect; and likewiſe that *John*, in this advice, ſpoke the ſenſe of the *Jews* themſelves; who did not refuſe to pay tribute, excepting ſome few; provided no more was exacted, than the government appointed; and as temptations to ſuch evils were very great, and it lay in the power of theſe men to impoſe on the people, and extort from them, to abſtain from ſuch practices, was an argument of the fear of God, of the truth of grace, and of the ſincerity of repentance.

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[s] T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 113. 1. Sanhedrin, fol. 25. 2. & Gloſſ. in ib.

[t] Hilch. Gezala, c. 5. §. 11, 12.

[u] Mitzvot Tora, pr. neg. 214. Vid. T. Bab.

Ver. 14. *And the ſoldiers likewiſe demanded of him*, &c.] Or *aſked him*: why our tranſlators have rendered it, *demanded of him*, I know not, unleſs they thought that ſuch language beſt ſuited perſons of a military character. Some think theſe were *Gentile* ſoldiers, ſince it does not look ſo likely that the *Romans* would employ *Jews* as ſoldiers in their own country; tho' it is more probable that they were *Jews*, in the pay of the *Romans*, who belonged to *Herod*, tetrarch of *Galilee*, or to *Philip* of *Iturea*, whoſe dominions lay near the place where *John* was; ſince it is certain, that there were many of the *Jews* that betook themſelves to a military life; and ſeeing *John* inſtructed them in no part of natural or revealed religion, but what was ſuitable to their character and employment: for upon theſe men *ſaying, what ſhall we do?* to avoid the threatened ruin, and to prove the truth of our repentance, that ſo we may be admitted to the holy ordinance of baptiſm? *John* replied, *do violence to no man*; or *ſhake* him, or put him into bodily fear, by threatening, hectoring, and bullying him, and drawing the ſword upon him, which is uſual, upon the leaſt offence, for ſuch perſons to do: *neither accuſe any falſly*, or *play the ſycophant*; who, in order to flatter ſome, bring malicious accuſations againſt others; and which was a vice that too much prevailed among the *Jewiſh* ſoldiery; who either to curry favour with the *Roman* officers and governours, would wrongfully accuſe their fellow ſoldiers, or countrymen, to them; or in order to extort ſums of money from them, that they might live in a more luxurious manner than their common pay would admit of: wherefore, it follows, *and be content with your wages*; allowed by the government, and don't ſeek to increaſe them by any unlawful methods, as by mutiny and ſedition, by rebelling againſt your officers, or by ill uſage of the people. The *Jewiſh Rabbins* have adopted this word, אפסניא, into their language in the *Miſnic* and *Talmudic* writings[w]; and their *Gloſs* explains it by the money, for the ſoldiers, and the hire of ſoldiers, as here; and it includes every thing which by the *Romans* were given to their ſoldiers for pay, and which was food as well as money.

Ver. 15. *And as the people were in expectation*, &c.] Of the coming of the Meſſiah; *Daniel*'s ſeventy weeks being now accompliſhed, the ſceptre being departed from *Judah*, and the *Romans* having the government in their hands, from whom they hoped for a deliverance by Chriſt: *and all men muſed in their hearts of John, whether he were the Chriſt, or no*; about which they had many reaſonings and debates; ſome doubting of it, others ready to believe it, from his extraordinary birth, the ſingular holineſs of his life, the power and efficacy of his doctrine, the new ordinance he adminiſtred, the reſtoration of religion by him, the freedom he took in reproving the vices of men, and the apt anſwers he gave to the queſtions now put to him. And that the Meſſiah was born, though he was not, as yet, made manifeſt, they might conclude, not only from the fulfilment of ſeveral propheſies, but from the ſong of *Zacharias*, the declaration of *Simeon* and *Anna* in the temple, and of the wiſe men that came from the eaſt; and *John* appearing in ſuch an uſual manner, they were ready to hope that he was the perſon; tho' they did not conſider that he was of the tribe of *Levi*, and not of *Judah*; from which latter the Meſſiah was to ſpring; but this might be unattended to by them, and ſatan might have an hand in it to hide the true *Meſſiah* from them.

Ver. 16. *John anſwered, ſaying unto them all*, &c.] For ſome of them might not only ſo think in their hearts, but expreſs with their mouths the apprehenſion they had of him; and might put the queſtion to him, as the prieſts and *Levites* from *Jeruſalem* afterwards did; or he might know the ſecret thoughts of their hearts by divine revelation; or be apprized by his diſciples of the private ſentiments of the people concerning him: and therefore, to put them out of doubt, and that he might not have an honour conferred on him, which did not belong to him, he addreſſed himſelf, in a very public manner, to the whole multitude, in the hearing of them all; tho' the word *all* is left out in the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions, but rightly retained in others, being in all copies, and having a conſiderable emphaſis on it: and ſaid the following words, *I indeed baptize you with water*. *Matthew* adds, *unto repentance*; upon the profeſſion of repentance: *but one mightier than I cometh*; that is, *after me*, as *Matthew* records it; *the latchet of whoſe ſhoes I am not worthy to unlooſe*; neither to *bear* his *ſhoes* after him, as *Matthew* ſays, nor to untie his ſhoe-ſtring, or unbuckle his ſhoe, both which were menial actions with the *Jews*: *he ſhall baptize you with the Holy Ghoſt, and with fire*; as he did ſome of their nation, his own diſciples, on the day of *pentecoſt*; ſee the note on *Matt*. iii. 11.

Ver. 17. *Whoſe fan is in his hand*, &c.] See the note on *Matt*. iii. 12.

Ver. 18. *And many other things*, &c.] Relating to the perſon and office of the Meſſiah, to the nature of his kingdom, the Goſpel-diſpenſation, and to faith in him; for he pointed him out to the people, and exhorted them to believe in him, and expreſſed much joy and pleaſure on the hearing of his ſucceſs and increaſe; and theſe, with others beſide, in his *exhortation*, or whilſt he was *exhorting*, or *comforting*, *preached he unto the people*; publiſhing the Goſpel, the good news, and glad tidings of the Meſſiah's being come, and of life, righteouſneſs, and ſalvation by him.

Ver. 19. *But Herod the tetrarch being reproved by him*, &c.] By *John*, as the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions add: *for Herodias his brother Philip's wife*; for taking her to wife, whilſt his brother *Philip* was living. The account, which the *Jewiſh* chronologer[x] gives, of this *Herod*, and of this fact of his, and *John*'s reproving him for it, and the conſequence of it, perfectly agrees with this of the Evangeliſt. "*Herod Antipater*, and there are ſome "that call him, טיסרקי, *the Tetrarch*, was a ſon "of *Herod* the firſt, and brother of *Archelaus*; and "he was the third king of the family of *Herod*; "and he was very wicked, and a deſtroying man: "many of the wiſe men of *Iſrael* he ſlew with the

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[w] Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 2. §. 4. T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 18. 2. & 21. 2.

[x] Ganz. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 25. 2.

“ ſword; and he took the wife of his brother *Philip*, whilſt he was alive, to himſelf for wife; and “ *John*, the high-prieſt, becauſe הוכיחו, *be reproved* “ *him* for this, he ſlew him with the ſword, with “ many of the wiſe men of *Iſrael*.” And *John* reproved him not only for this ſin, but others: *and for all the evils which Herod had done*; his revellings, debaucheries, murders, *&c.* all which *John*, in great faithfulneſs, and with much freedom, told him of, and rebuked him for; for *Herod* had had a particular reſpect for him, and often had him with him, and heard him gladly, when *John* had an opportunity of ſpeaking perſonally to him.

Ver. 20. *Added yet this above all*, &c.] This ſin to all other ſins, and which was of a more flagitious nature, and attended with more aggravating circumſtances, eſpecially in the iſſue of it: *that he ſhut up John in priſon*; in the caſtle of *Macherus*, by the inſtigation of *Herodias*; ſee *Matt*. xiv. 3.

Ver. 21. *Now when all the people were baptized*, &c.] That came from ſeveral parts to *John* for this purpoſe, even as many as he judged to be proper ſubjects of that ordinance, as many of the common people, publicans, ſoldiers, *&c. it came to paſs that Jeſus alſo being baptized*; of *John* in *Jordan*, he coming from *Galilee* thither on that account: *and praying*; after he was baptized, for the coming down of the Spirit upon him, as man, to anoint, and qualify him for his office he was now about to enter on publickly; and for ſucceſs in it, and for a teſtimony from heaven, that he was the Son of God, and true Meſſiah: *the heaven was opened*; ſee the note on *Matt*. iii. 16.

Ver. 22. *And the Holy Ghoſt deſcended in a bodily ſhape*, &c.] In a corporeal form, in a viſible manner, and was ſeen with bodily eyes, at leaſt by *John* the adminiſtrator; to whom this was a ſignal of his being the Meſſiah, and a freſh confirmation of it: *like a dove upon him*; either in the form of a dove, or this corporeal form, whatever it was, deſcended and hovered on him as a dove does: *and a voice came from heaven*; at the ſame time the Holy Ghoſt came down upon him; *which ſaid, thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleaſed*: and was the voice of the father; and the whole of this was an anſwer of Chriſt's prayer; ſee the note on *Matt*. iii. 16, 17. and *Mark* i. 11.

Ver. 23. *And Jeſus himſelf began to be about thirty years of age*, &c.] Or Jeſus, when he was baptized, and *began* his public miniſtry, was about thirty years of age; an age at which the prieſts, under the law, who were typical of Chriſt, entered on their work, *Numb*. iv. 23. 1 *Chron*. xxiii. 3. The word, *began*, is left out in the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions; and is often indeed redundant, as in ver. 8. and frequently in *Mark*'s Goſpel. The *Arabic* verſion renders it, *Jeſus began to enter into the thirtieth year*, which carries the ſenſe the ſame with our tranſlation: *being, as was ſuppoſed, the ſon of Joſeph*; who had eſpouſed *Mary* before ſhe was with child of the Holy Ghoſt, and afterwards took her to wife, and brought up her ſon; ſo that it was not known but that he was the ſon of *Joſeph*. Whether or no the *Jewiſh* notion of the Meſſiah, the ſon of *Joſeph*[y], may not take its riſe from hence, may be conſidered: however, *Joſeph* might very rightly be called, as he was ſuppoſed to be, the father of Jeſus, by a rule which obtains with the *Jews*[z], “ that he that brings “ up, and not he that begets, is called the father, or parent; of which they give various inſtances[a] in *Joſeph*, in *Michal*, and in *Pharaoh*'s daughter. *Which was the ſon of Eli*; meaning, not that *Joſeph* was the ſon of *Eli*; for he was the ſon of *Jacob*, according to *Matt*. i. 16. but *Jeſus* was the ſon of *Eli*; and which muſt be underſtood, and carried thro' the whole genealogy, as thus; Jeſus the ſon of *Matthat*, Jeſus the ſon of *Levi*, Jeſus the ſon of *Melchi*, &c. till you come to Jeſus the ſon of *Adam*, and Jeſus the ſon of God: tho' it is true indeed that *Joſeph* was the ſon of *Eli*, having married his daughter; for *Mary* was the daughter of *Eli*: and ſo the *Jews* ſpeak of one *Mary*, the daughter of *Eli*, by whom they ſeem to deſign the mother of our Lord: for they tell[b] us of one, “ that ſaw, מרים בת עלי, *Mary the daughter of* “ *Eli*, in the ſhades, hanging by the fibres of her “ breaſts; and there are that ſay, the gate, or, as “ elſewhere[c], the bar of the gate of hell is fixed “ to her ear.” By the horrible malice, in the words, you may know who is meant: however, this we gain by it, that by their own confeſſion, *Mary* is the daughter of *Eli*; which accords with this genealogy of the *Evangeliſt*, who traces it from *Mary*, under her huſband *Joſeph*; tho' ſhe is not mentioned, becauſe of a rule with the *Jews*[d], that “ the family of the mother is not called a family.”

Ver. 24. *Which was* the ſon *of Matthat, which was* the ſon *of Levi*, &c.] Theſe two *Grotius* ſays are omitted in the ancient exemplars; and he thinks they ought to be left out; and for which he mentions the authorities of *Irenæus*, *Africanus*, *Euſebius*, *Nazianzen*, *Jerom*, and *Auguſtin*: but not only the *Vulgate Latin*, but all the *Oriental* verſions, retain them: *which was* the ſon *of Melchi*; and who, he thinks, was the immediate father of *Eli*: *which was* the ſon *of Janna*: frequent mention is made, in the *Jewiſh* writings[e], of ינאי מלכא, *king Jannai*, who is ſaid to be the ſame with king *Jochanan*, or *John*, the ſon of *Simeon*, the ſon of *Mattathiah*, that was called *Hyrcanus*; and his ſon *Alexander*, that reigned after him, was alſo called *Jannai*[f]; but whether either of theſe is the ſame with this *Janna*, is not certain: but this may be obſerved, that they were both before the times of *Herod*, and the birth of *Jeſus*, ſome years. And *Jannai* is called, in the chronicle of *Jedidiah* of *Alexandria*, or *Philo* the *Jew*[g], *Hyrcanus* the ſecond, who reigned ſixteen years: *which was* the ſon *of Joſeph*. This *Joſeph*, according to the ſame chronicle, is called *Joſeph* the ſecond, and ſurnamed *Arſis*, and was greatly honoured by *Ptolemy*, and governed ſixty years; and accordingly we ſhall meet with another *Joſeph* anon.

Ver. 25. *Which was* the ſon *of Mattathias*, &c.] Surnamed *Siloah*, by the ſame *Philo*, who governed ten years: *which was the ſon of Amos*; whoſe ſurname, according to the ſame author, was *Sirag*; or, as ſome, *Syrach*, or *Shyrach*, who governed fourteen years: *which was* the ſon *of Naum*; who was called *Meſalut*, or *Maſlot*, who governed ſeven years: *which was* the ſon *of Eſli*; or *Eli*, ſurnamed *Haggai*, who governed eight years; *which was* the ſon *of Nagge*: with *Philo* he is called *Nagid Artaſat*, or *Artaxat*, and ſaid to govern ten years.

Ver. 26. *Which was* the ſon *of Maath*, &c.] Surnamed *Aſer*, who governed nine years: *which was* the ſon *of Mattathias*; called *Eli Matathias*, who

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[y] T. Bab. Succa, fol. 52. 1. Jarchi & Aben Ezra in Zech. xii. 10. & xiii. 7.

[z] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 19. 2. Vid. T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 13. 1.

[a] Shemot Rabba, §. 46. fol. 143. 1

[b] T. Hieroſ. Sanhedrin, fol. 23. 3.

[c] Ib. Chagiga, fol. 77. 4.

[d] Juchaſin, fol. 55. 2.

[e] T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 11. 2. & paſſim.

[f] Juchaſin, fol. 15. 1 & 16. 2.

[g] Apud Vorſt. Not. ad Chronol. R. David Ganz. p. 311.

who governed twelve years: *which was* the ſon *of Semei*; and named *Abner Semei*, who governed eleven years: *which was* the ſon *of Joſeph*; called *Joſeph* the firſt, who governed ſeven years: *which was* the ſon of *Juda*; who, according to the ſame writer, muſt be *Judas*, ſurnamed *Hyrcanus* the firſt, who governed fourteen years.

Ver. 27. *Which was* the ſon *of Joanna*, &c.] *Johannes*, or *John*, the ſon of *Rheſa Meſullam*, who governed fifty-three years: *which was* the ſon *of Rheſa*; called, by the above writer, *Rheſa Meſullam*; ſee 1 *Chron*. iii. 19. and ſaid, by him, to govern ſixty-ſix years: *which was* the ſon of *Zorobabel*; who governed fifty-eight years: *which was* the ſon *of Salathiel*; the ſame with *Shealthiel*; ſee the note on *Matt*. i. 12. *which was* the ſon *of Neri*; the ſame with *Jechonias*, according to the *Alexandrian* chronicle; ſee the note on *Matt*. i. 12.

Ver. 28, 29, 30, 31. *Which was* the ſon *of Melchi*, &c.] This, with the following, *Addi*, *Coſam*, *Elmodam*, *Er*, *Joſe*, *Eliezer*, *Jorim*, *Matthat*, *Levi*, *Simeon*, *Juda*, *Joſeph*, *Jonan*, *Eliakim*, *Melea*, *Menan*, and *Mattatha*, all lived before the captivity, and were of the houſe of *David*, in the line of *Nathan*; for it follows, *which was* the ſon *of Nathan*; of which perſons no mention is made in the Old Teſtament, nor even of *Mattatha*, the ſon of *Nathan*: his ſons that are mentioned are *Azariah*, *Zabud*, and *Abiſhar*, 1 *Kings* iv. 5, 6. which laſt is thought to be the ſame with *Mattatha*: that *Nathan* was the ſon of *David*, as the order of things here directs, *which was* the ſon *of David*, is clear from 1 *Sam*. v. 14. 1 *Chron*. iii. 5. and xiv. 4.

Ver. 32, 33, 34. *Which was* the ſon *of Jeſſe*, &c.] The order of the perſons from *Jeſſe* to *Abraham*, as *Obed*, *Booz*, *Salmon*, *Naaſſon*, *Aminadab*, *Aram*, or *Ram*, *Eſrom*, (for *Joram*, which the *Arabic* verſion here inſerts, is to be rejected) *Phares*, *Judah*, *Jacob*, *Iſaac*, *Abraham*, perfectly agrees with the genealogy of *Matthew*, and the accounts of the Old Teſtament: *which was* the ſon *of Thara*; the ſame with *Terah*, *Gen*. xi. 26, 27. called by the *Septuagint*, *Tharra*: *which was* the ſon *of Nachor*; the ſame with *Nahor*, *Gen*. xi. 24, 25. called there, by the *Septuagint*, as here.

Ver. 35. *Which was* the ſon *of Saruch*, &c.] The *Septuagint* call him *Serouch*, the ſame with *Serug*, *Gen*. xi. 22, 23. *which was* the ſon *of Ragau*; ſo the *Septuagint*, the ſame with *Reu*, *Gen*. xi. 20, 21. *which was* the ſon *of Phaleg*; the ſame with *Peleg*, *Gen*. xi. 18, 19. the *Septuagint* reads as here: *which was* the ſon *of Heber*, or *Eber*, *Gen*. xi. 16, 17. *which was* the ſon *of Sala*, or *Salah*, *Gen*. xi. 14, 15. the *Septuagint* there call him *Sala*.

Ver. 36. *Which was* the ſon *of Cainan*, &c.] This *Cainan* is not mentioned by *Moſes* in *Gen*. xi. 12. nor has he ever appeared in any *Hebrew* copy of the Old Teſtament, nor in the *Samaritan* verſion, nor in the *Targums*; nor is he mentioned by *Joſephus*, nor in 1 *Chron*. i. 24. where the genealogy is repeated; nor is it in *Beza*'s moſt ancient *Greek* copy of *Luke*: it indeed ſtands in the preſent copies of the *Septuagint*, but was not originally there; and therefore could not be taken by *Luke* from thence, but ſeems to be owing to ſome early negligent tranſcriber of *Luke*'s Goſpel, and ſince put into the *Septuagint* to give it authority: I ſay *early*, becauſe it is in many *Greek* copies, and in the *Vulgate Latin*, and all the *Oriental* verſions, even in the *Syriac*, the oldeſt of them; but ought not to ſtand neither in the text, nor in any verſion: for certain it is, there never was ſuch a *Cainan*, the ſon of *Arphaxad*, for *Salah* was his ſon; and with him the next words ſhould be connected, *which was* the ſon *of Arphaxad*; ſee *Gen*. xi. 12, 13. *which was* the ſon *of Sem*, or *Shem*, *Gen*. xi. 10, 11. *which was* the ſon *of Noe*, or *Noah*, *Gen*. v. 32. *which was* the ſon *of Lamech*, *Gen*. v. 28, 29.

Ver. 37. *Which was* the ſon *of Mathuſala*, &c.] The ſame with *Methuſelah*; and ſo he is called by the *Septuagint* in *Gen*. v. 25, 26, 27. *which was* the ſon *of Enoch*, *Gen*. v. 21, 22. *which was* the ſon *of Jared*, *Gen*. v. 18, 19. *which was* the ſon *of Maleleel*; the ſame with *Mahalaleel*; who is alſo ſo called by the ſeventy interpreters, in *Gen*. v. 15, 16. as here; *which was* the ſon *of Cainan*, *Gen*. v. 12, 13.

Ver. 38. *Which was* the ſon *of Enos*, &c.] *Gen*. v. 9, 10. *which was* the ſon *of Seth*, *Gen*. v. 6, 7. *which was* the ſon *of Adam*, *Gen*. v. 3, 4. *which was* the ſon *of God*; not begotten, as all the reſt were, by their immediate parents, but created by God, in a ſupernatural manner, out of the duſt of the earth, and quickened with the breath of God: ſo *Adam* is, by the *Jews* [h], called, בן אלהים, *the ſon of God*: tho' this may be underſtood of Jeſus, the ſon of *Joſeph*, of *Heli*, &c. and ſo on to this clauſe, *the ſon of God*; being ſo as a divine perſon, to whom the human nature was united, and on that account ſo called; ſee *Luke* i. 35. Thus, as *Matthew* gives us the regal line of Chriſt, ſhewing him to be heir to the throne of his father *David*, *Luke* gives the natural line of Chriſt; and as *Matthew* traces his genealogy down from *Abraham*, in a deſcending line, to *Joſeph*, the huſband of *Mary*, the mother of Jeſus, *Luke* traces it upwards, in an aſcending line, from *Mary* by *Joſeph*, even up to *Adam*; to whom the Meſſiah was firſt promiſed, and who was a type of the ſecond *Adam*, from whom he deſcended, tho' not by ordinary generation; nay, even to God himſelf: Chriſt, according to his divine nature, was the only-begotten of the Father; and as to his human nature, had a body prepared by him, and in the fulneſs of time was God manifeſt in the fleſh.

## CHAP. IV.

Ver. 1. AND *Jeſus being full of the Holy Ghoſt*, &c.] The Spirit of God having deſcended on him at his baptiſm, and afreſh anointed, and filled his human nature with his gifts, whereby, as man, he was abundantly furniſhed for the great work of the public miniſtry, he was juſt about to enter upon; yet muſt firſt go thro' a ſeries of temptations, and which, thro' the fulneſs of the Holy Spirit in him, he was ſufficiently fortified againſt. *Returned from Jordan*; where he came, and had been with *John*, and was baptized by him; which, when over, he went back from the ſame ſide of *Jordan*, to which he came: *and was led by the Spirit*; the ſame Spirit, or Holy Ghoſt he was full of; ſee the note on *Matt*. iv. 1. *into the wilderneſs*; of *Judea*, which lay near *Jordan*, and where *John* had been preaching and baptizing, namely, in the habitable part of it: but this was that part which was uninhabited by men, and was infeſted with wild beaſts, and where Chriſt could neither have the comfort and benefit of human ſociety, nor any thing for the ſuſtenance of life, and where he was expoſed to the utmoſt danger; and ſo in circumſtances very opportune and favourable for ſatan to ply him with his temptations, for which purpoſe he was led thither.

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[h] Sepher Coſri, orat. 2. Sig. 14. fol. 68. 1.

Ver. 2. *Being forty days tempted of the devil*, &c.] The *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read the phraſe, *forty days*, in connection with the latter part of the preceding verſe; according to which the ſenſe is, that Jeſus was led by the Spirit forty days in the wilderneſs, before he was tempted by ſatan, and in order to it: but our reading is confirmed by *Mark*, ch. i. 13. who affirms, as here, that he was ſo long tempted by ſatan; as he might be inviſibly, and, by internal ſuggeſtions, before he appeared viſibly, and attacked him openly, with the following temptations. The *Ethiopic* verſion adds, *and forty nights:* and ſuch were theſe days in which Chriſt was in the wilderneſs, and faſted, and was tempted there: they were ſuch as included nights, as well as days; ſee *Matt*. iv. 2. *and in thoſe days he did eat nothing:* not any ſort of food whatever; he taſted of no kind of eatables or drinkables, during the whole ſpace of forty days; nor in the nights neither, in which the *Jews* allowed perſons to eat in times of faſting; ſee the note on *Matt*. iv. 2. And this entire abſtinence, as it ſhews the power of Chriſt in the ſupporting of his human nature, without food, for ſuch a time, and the diſadvantages under which he, as man, combated with ſatan; ſo, that this faſt was never deſigned as an example to his followers, and to be imitated by them: *and when they were ended*; the forty days, and forty nights: *he afterward hungred*; which he did not before; and which ſhews the truth of his human nature; and is mentioned to obſerve the occaſion of the following temptation, and the advantage on the tempter's ſide.

Ver. 3. *And the devil ſaid unto him*, &c.] Who now viſibly appeared, and ſpoke unto him with an articulate voice: *if thou be the Son of God*; as has been juſt now declared by a voice from heaven; or ſeeing thou art in ſuch a relation to God, and ſo equal to him, and poſſeſſed of all divine perfections, and among the reſt, of almighty power; wherefore, ſince thou art hungry, and in a wilderneſs, where no food is to be had, *command this ſtone that it be made bread*; ſay but the word, and this ſtone, which he held out to him, or pointed at, as lying before them, or any one of the ſtones, which were in ſight, for *Matthew* ſpeaks of them in the plural number, will immediately be converted into bread, if he was what he was ſaid to be: this he ſuggeſts might eaſily be effected by him, and he had no need to continue hungry.

Ver. 4. *And Jeſus anſwered him, ſaying, it is written*, &c.] In *Deut*. viii. 3. *that man ſhall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God*; ſuggeſting hereby, that when it is the will of God, human nature may be maintained by the influence of divine power, without the uſe of ordinary means; and that bread itſelf, without a divine bleſſing, would not ſupport life; and ſo not this ſtone, or ſtones, if turned into it: wherefore, it became him, as man, to depend upon God, ſubmit to his will, and wait the iſſue of providence, who had brought him thither, and not take any ſuch ſteps to remove his hunger; and eſpecially at his ſolicitations, who had no other end, but to have him, if he could, at his beck and will. By *every word of God*, is not meant all ſcripture, and every part of it, which is given by inſpiration of God, and may be ſaid to proceed out of his mouth; neither the law, and the precepts of it, as the *Jews* interpret it, by obedience to which the *Iſraelites* lived in the land of *Canaan*; nor the Goſpel, and the truths of it, which are the wholeſome words of Chriſt, and the words of faith and good doctrine, with which believers are nouriſhed, and are that to the ſoul, as bread, or any other wholeſome food, is to the body; for of ſpiritual living, and the means of that, the text is not to be underſtood; but either of the word of God's power, by which he upholds and ſuſtains all things in being, which he has created; and with which he could, if he would, ſupport the bodies of men without the uſe of any ſort of food; as the bodies of *Moſes* and *Elijah*, and now the body of Chriſt, were for many days; and as the bodies of the ſaints will be after the reſurrection, to all eternity: or elſe the bleſſing of God, which he commands on bread, and other food, and the virtue and ſtrength which he puts into them, and conveys by them are meant, without which not any ſort of food is nouriſhing; or rather every thing which God declares and orders to be eat, even every creature of his which is good, and not to be refuſed, but received, with thankſgiving, being ſanctified by the word of God, and prayer, as well as bread; ſo manna, which is mentioned in the text in *Deuteronomy*; and likewiſe any other food, as pulſe and water, he is pleaſed to direct to. Some little difference there is between *Matthew* and *Luke*, in citing this paſſage; in the latter it is, *by every word of God*; and in the former it is nearer the *Hebrew* text in *Deut*. viii. 3. *by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God*; and ſo ſome copies read here, as do alſo the *Arabic* and *Ethiopic* verſions: but neither of them have the words exactly as in the original text, where it is added, *doth man live*; which doubtleſs, were not produced by our Lord, as being unneceſſary, and therefore not mentioned by any of the Evangeliſts.

Ver. 5. *And the devil taking him up into an high mountain*, &c.] Some where near *Jeruſalem*, but what mountain is not certain. The Evangeliſt *Luke* makes this to be the ſecond temptation, which, with *Matthew*, is the third and laſt; and whoſe order ſeems to be more proper and natural than this, and to be the true and genuine one, which *Luke* neglects, tho' he does not contradict it: he relates matters of fact, without attending to the ſtrict order of them; whereas *Matthew* ſtrictly regards it, obſerving, that after the firſt temptation, *then the devil taketh him*, &c. and that being finiſhed, ſays, *again the devil taketh him*, &c. and upon thoſe words, *get thee hence*, with what follows, remarks, that *then the devil leaveth him:* all which ſhow, that his order is the moſt accurate, and to be followed. But to go on with the account; the devil having taken him from the pinnacle of the temple, and carried him to ſome high mountain, as *Lebanon*, or *Piſgah*, or ſome other near *Jeruſalem*, *ſhewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world*; not of the *Roman* empire only, tho' that conſiſted of many kingdoms, and is called the whole world, *Luke* ii. 1. where the ſame word is uſed, as here; but of the whole univerſe, every kingdom that was under the heavens; which he repreſented to Chriſt, not in a map, ſince the glory of them could not be deſcribed in that way: for he ſhewed him *all the glory of them*, as *Matthew* adds; and for this a mountain was no more a proper place, than any other; nor was it any real object he preſented to his bodily ſight, or any real proſpect he gave him of the kingdoms of the world, which are not to be ſeen from any one place, no not one of them, not even from the higheſt mountain in the world, and ſtill leſs to be ſeen together at once in a moment: but this was a mere phantaſm, a deception of the ſight, with which he endeavoured to impoſe on Chriſt, but could not; nor did Chriſt, who is the maker of the world, and the governour among the nations, need any repreſentation of the kingdoms of the world from him; ſee the note on *Matt.* iv. 8. and this he did *in a moment of time*; in the twinkling of an eye, not by ſucceſſion, and in proceſs of time, as one kingdom after another, but all at once, and in an inſtant: what a moment of time is, ſee the note, as before.

Ver. 6. *And the devil ſaid unto him, all this power will I give thee,* &c.] That is, all the kingdoms of the world, and all the government and juriſdiction over them: *and the glory of them*; the riches, honours, and grandeur belonging to them: *for that is delivered unto me:* ſo far he ſpoke modeſtly, in that he owned an original, ſuperior governour of them, by whom he pretended they were transferred to him; but lyed, in that he ſuggeſted they were put into his hands by him, who had the ſupreme power over them; and that he acted by his conſtitution and appointment, as a deputy under him; when what power he had, as the God of the world, was by uſurpation, and not by deſignation of God; and at moſt only by permiſſion: and leaſt of all was it true what follows; *and to whomſoever I will I give it*; or *theſe*, as the *Vulgate Latin* reads; that is, theſe kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; when ſo to do is the peculiar and ſole prerogative of God: nor can ſatan diſpoſe of the goods of a ſingle man, nor of a herd of ſwine, nor enter into them without leave from God.

Ver. 7. *If thou therefore wilt worſhip me,* &c.] Or *before me*; that is, fall down before him, and give him divine worſhip and homage. A wide difference there is between a good angel and a fallen angel; a good angel will not ſuffer himſelf to be worſhipped by men, but directs to the worſhip of God only, *Rev.* xix. 10. and xxii. 9. but a fallen angel not only ſeeks to be worſhipped by men, but by the Son of God himſelf, even by him whom all the holy angels worſhip, *Heb.* i. 6. This was what ſatan at firſt aſpired after, and by which he fell: he affected deity, and ſought to have divine worſhip given him; and in this ſin he ſtill perſiſted, and grew worſe and worſe, more daring and inſolent, deſiring worſhip of him who is God over all, bleſſed for ever. *All ſhall be thine:* he promiſes to give him a title to all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, on condition of homage done him, by which he ſhould hold the tenure of them under him; theſe being delivered up ſolely to him, by the author of them; and he having them in his power, to diſpoſe of them at pleaſure. O horrid impudence, arrogance, and inſolence!

Ver. 8. *Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto him,* &c.] The following words, with indignation at him, and deteſtation of his propoſals: *get thee behind me, ſatan*; which are omitted in the *Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Perſic,* and *Ethiopic* verſions, and in three ancient copies of *Beza*'s, and in his moſt ancient one; but ſtand in other copies, and in the *Arabic* verſion. *For it is written, thou ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy God, and him only ſhalt thou ſerve.* This paſſage ſtands in *Deut.* vi. 13. where the words are, *thou ſhalt fear the Lord thy God, and ſerve him, and thou ſhalt ſwear by his name:* the laſt clauſe is not cited by Chriſt at all, ſwearing being only a ſpecies, or part of religious worſhip; and the other two clauſes are ſomewhat different from the original text, as here cited, and may be accounted for: inſtead of *fear the Lord*, it is *worſhip the Lord*; and the one well explains the other; the fear of God being often, in ſcripture, put for the whole worſhip of God, both internal, and external: and in the next clauſe, the word *only* is added by Chriſt, as expreſſing the true ſenſe of it, and agreeable to other places of ſcripture, particularly 1 *Sam.* vii. 3. ſee the note on *Matt.* iv. 10.

Ver. 9. *And he brought him to Jeruſalem,* &c.] The holy city, as *Matthew* calls it, from the wilderneſs thither; where he found him, and firſt attacked him, and perhaps he brought him thro' the air: *and ſet him on a pinnacle of the temple*; which was in *Jeruſalem*; ſee the note on *Matt.* iv. 5. *And ſaid unto him, if thou be the Son of God, caſt thyſelf down from hence*; from the pinnacle of the temple, on which he was ſet; ſee the note on *Matt.* iv. 6.

Ver. 10, 11. *For it is written,* &c.] In *Pſal.* xci. 11, 12. *He ſhall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee; and in their hands they ſhall bear thee up, leſt at any time thou daſh thy foot againſt a ſtone.* It is an obſervation made long ago by *Jerom*, on *Pſal.* xci. 11, 12. that ſatan, in citing this text, has left out the middle clauſe, *to keep thee in all thy ways*, which he knew was againſt him, and has only taken that which made for him; and on *Matt.* iv. 6. he obſerves, that this prophecy is not concerning Chriſt, but any holy man; therefore the devil wrongly interpreted ſcripture; and that had he certainly known, that this is written concerning the Saviour, he ought to have cited what follows, *thou ſhalt tread upon the lion and adder, the young lion and the dragon ſhalt thou trample under feet:* and in theſe obſervations, he has been followed by many interpreters; but *Surenhuſius*[1] is not ſatisfied with them, eſpecially with what reſpects the manner of citation, leaving out ſome words, and not mentioning others that follow; ſince ſuch a way of citing, perfectly agrees with the method of the *Jewiſh* doctors; who reckon one word of a paſſage being cited, all that follows, if it makes to the purpoſe, all one as if it was cited, and to be ſo accounted; and ſince, if ſuch a method is blame worthy, Chriſt, the Evangeliſts, and Apoſtles, muſt be blamed alſo, ſeeing they frequently uſe the ſame, which can never be allowed of: beſides, ſuppoſing the clauſe omitted was added, he aſks of what advantage it would be? ſince the two verſes being connected together as they are, the ſenſe with reſpect to God's providence and preſervation, is clear enough and compleat: and I muſt confeſs, though I have purſued the above obſervation in the note on *Matt.* iv. 6. yet by comparing the Evangeliſts together, it is not a clear caſe to me, what ſatan did leave out, or whether any thing at all; but it ſeems rather, that the words are put, as the Evangeliſts themſelves thought fit to tranſcribe them, in which they are not exactly alike; more is left out by one, than by another; *Matthew* leaves out the whole clauſe, *to keep thee in all thy ways*; but *Luke* only omits theſe words, *in all thy ways:* but I am ſtill of opinion, that the paſſage is applicable to Chriſt, as to any holy good man, yet it appears that ſatan failed not, neither in the manner of citing it, nor in the application of it to Chriſt; but by wreſting it to a wicked purpoſe, to countenance an action unwarrantable and criminal, being a tempting God; when the text only regards the preſervation of good men in the way of duty, truſting in the Lord; and which is confirmed by the anſwer of Chriſt, who takes no notice of any faulty citation of the paſſage, or miſapplication of it, as to his perſon; only ſuggeſts, by oppoſing another ſcripture to him, that what he had produced, was to a wrong and wicked purpoſe; and to take it in his ſenſe, would be to tempt God; ſee the note on *Matt.* iv. 6.

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[1] Biblos Katallages, p. 210, 211.

Ver. 12. *And Jeſus anſwering ſaid unto him, it is ſaid,* &c.] In *Deut.* vi. 16. *Thou ſhalt not tempt the Lord thy God:* in the text in *Deuteronomy* the words are, *ye ſhall not tempt the Lord your God.* The ſecond perſon plural, is here changed into the ſecond perſon ſingular, to accommodate the words to ſatan; whom Chriſt ſingly addreſſes, and makes anſwer to, and who was under this ſame general law as other rational creatures: and Jehovah may be called the Lord his God, as he is his creator and governour; by whom he is upheld in his being, and to whom he is ſubject, whether he will or no; though not his covenant God: and even if our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is intended by the Lord God, as ſome think; he is God over all; over all principalities and powers, good and bad, by whom all are created, and in whom all conſiſt; and whoſe power and authority over ſatan and his angels, have abundantly appeared, in diſpoſſeſſing devils out of men, ſending them where he pleaſed, and in ſpoiling the powers of darkneſs, and in deſtroying him that had the power of death, the devil; and great inſolence and wickedneſs it muſt be in a creature, to tempt the Lord his God, in any way, or form whatever; ſee the note on *Matt.* iv. 7.

Ver. 13. *And when the devil had ended all the temptation,* &c.] Or *all his temptations,* as the *Syriac* verſion reads; not only the laſt mentioned, but all the reſt, whether inward or outward, in a viſible or in an inviſible manner; whether during his forty days faſt, or after he was an hungred, when he had tried every way, and all ſorts of temptations with him; and when he had done this, *in,* or *with all his power,* as the *Ethiopic* verſion reads; when he had done his utmoſt, and his beſt; and as the *Perſic* verſion adds, *and profited nothing*; could not ſucceed, or get any advantage over him: *he departed from him for a ſeaſon*; till another opportunity ſhould offer, or till that time ſhould come, when would be the hour and power of darkneſs; and by means of one of his diſciples, he ſhould bruiſe his heel, and bring him to an accurſed death; ſee *John* xiv. 30. *Luke* xxii. 53.

Ver. 14. *And Jeſus returned in the power of the ſpirit,* &c.] Of which he was full, and by which he was led into the wilderneſs, and had combated with ſatan, and had got the victory over him; and by virtue of which, he entered on his publick miniſtry, wrought miracles, and taught with authority. A like way of ſpeaking is uſed by the *Targumiſt,* on *Mic.* iii. 8. I am filled, בתקוף רוח נבואה, *with the power of the ſpirit of prophecy,* from before the Lord. Moreover, this phraſe is uſed, to ſhew that his return *into Galilee,* where he had been brought up, and from whence he came to *John* at *Jordan,* did not ariſe from a natural love to his country, and a fond deſire of being there again; but was owing to the powerful impulſe of the Holy Spirit, which was in him, and moved him to return thither; where he was to begin his miniſtry, and work his miracles, and ſo fulfil a prophecy of him, in *Iſa.* ix. 1, 2. ſee *Matt.* iv. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16. *And there went out a fame of him through all the region round about*; throughout all *Galilee* and *Syria,* *Decapolis* and *Judea*; ſee *Matt.* iv. 23, 24, 25. the report of his doctrines and miracles, was ſpread far and near; and on account of them, he became the ſubject of the common talk of people every where, who highly applauded and commended him for them.

Ver. 15. *And he taught in their ſynagogues,* &c.] In the publick places of worſhip uſed by the *Galileans,* where they met on ſabbath-days and week-days, to read and pray, and hear the ſcriptures expounded; and Chriſt engaging here as a publick teacher, was the reaſon of his fame being ſpread around the country: *being glorified of all*; that heard him: they were aſtoniſhed at his doctrine; they wondered at his gracious words; they praiſed him as a preacher; and glorified him, and God for him, becauſe of the mighty works which were done by him.

Ver. 16. *And he came to Nazareth,* &c.] After ſome length of time, when he had gone through all *Galilee,* and had acquired great credit and reputation by his miniſtry and miracles; he came to the place, *where he had been brought up:* where he was conceived, though not born; and where he had his education, and wrought at a trade, and was well known to the inhabitants; and therefore it was proper that he ſhould firſt exerciſe his miniſtry, and obtain a character in other places, which would prepare him a reception among his townſmen, who otherwiſe, in all likelihood, would have treated him at once with neglect and contempt: *and as his cuſtom was, he went into the ſynagogue on the ſabbath-day.* This was either his cuſtom from his youth, when he dwelt at *Nazareth,* while a private perſon, and before he was engaged in publick ſervice, whither he had uſed to repair as an inhabitant of the city, and a member of the congregation, to attend ſynagogue-worſhip, as he now did; or it refers to his cuſtom, ſince he became a publick preacher, who at *Capernaum,* or any other city of *Galilee,* where there was a ſynagogue, uſed to frequent it, whether on ſabbath-days, or any other, and ſo he did here: *and ſtood up for to read:* by riſing and ſtanding up, and perhaps by ſome other geſture he ſignified his inclination to read a portion of ſcripture, if liberty was given, and a book delivered him, for, as yet, he had no book to read in; nor might any read in publick, unleſs he had an order from the congregation, or the chief of it; for ſo runs the *Jewiſh* canon[k]: "a reader may not "read until the chief of the congregation bids him "read; yea, even a miniſter of the congregation, "or a ruler of the ſynagogue, may not read of "himſelf, until the congregation, or the chief "among them, bids him read." This cuſtom of reading the ſcriptures publickly, was an appointment of *Moſes,* according to the account of the *Jews*; who ſay[l], "*Moſes* our maſter, ordered the "*Iſraelites* to read in the law publickly, on the "ſabbath, and on the ſecond and fifth days of the "week, in the morning; ſo that they might not "be three days without hearing the law: and *Ezra* "ordered, that they ſhould read ſo at the evening "ſacrifice, every ſabbath, on account of thoſe that "ſit in the corners of ſtreets; and alſo he ordered, "that three men ſhould read on the ſecond and "fifth days of the week, and that they ſhould not "read leſs than twenty verſes." It was alſo the cuſtom to ſtand at reading the law and the prophets: with regard to the book of *Eſther,* the rule is[m] this; "he that reads the *Megilla,* or book of "*Eſther,* ſtands or ſits." That is, as their commentators [n] explain it, if he will he may ſtand, and if he will he may ſit, he may do as he pleaſes; but ſo he might not in reading the law: hence it is aſked [o], "why is it not ſo in the law? *R. Abbu* re-"plies, becauſe the ſcripture ſays, *Deut.* v. 3. "*Stand thou here by me.*" Wherefore they ſay [p], the law muſt be read ſtanding, and it is even forbidden to lean on any thing. Chriſt conformed to theſe rules; he went into the ſynagogue to read on the ſabbath-day, and ſtood up when he read, and waited for order, and a book to be given him to read: it may be aſked, how he came to be admitted to read publickly in the ſynagogue, when he was not of the tribe of *Levi*, nor was he brought up in the ſchools and academies of the *Jews*, and was known to be a mechanic? It may be obſerved, that common *Iſraelites*, as well as prieſts and *Levites*, were allowed to read the ſcriptures publickly; every ſabbath-day, ſeven perſons read, a prieſt, a *Levite*, and five *Iſraelites:* the order was this; the prieſt read firſt, and after him the *Levite*, and after him an *Iſraelite:* and it is ſaid to be a known cuſtom to this day, that even an unlearned prieſt read before the greateſt wiſe man in *Iſrael*; and he that was greater than his companion in wiſdom, read firſt [q]. Now Chriſt, on account of the great fame he was in for his wiſdom and mighty works, was admitted to this publick ſervice, though he was no *Levite*, and known by the inhabitants of this place, to have been brought up to a trade.

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[k] Maimon. Hilchot Tephilla, c. 12. §. 7.

[l] Ib. §. 1.

[m] Miſn. Megilla, c. 4. 1.

Ver. 17. *And there was delivered unto him*, &c.] By the *Chazan*, or miniſter, to whom he gave it again, ver. 20. for the *Chazan* of the ſynagogue, was, שמש, *the miniſter* [r]; one part of whoſe buſineſs was, to deliver the book of the law to, and take it from him that read: when an high-prieſt read, the method taken was this [s]; "the *Chazan*, "or miniſter of the ſynagogue, took the book of "the law, and gave it to the ruler of the ſyna-"gogue, and the ruler of the ſynagogue gave it to "the *Sagan*, and the *Sagan* gave it to the high-"prieſt, and the high-prieſt ſtood and received, "*and read ſtanding.*" The ſame method was obſerved, when a king read in the book of the law [t]; but when a common prieſt, or an inferior perſon read, ſo much ceremony was not uſed, as to hand the book from one to another: the manner in their ſynagogues and ſchools, was this [u]; "the *Chazan* "brought out the book of the law, and the prieſt "read, and after him a *Levite*; then the *Chazan* "of the ſynagogue, brought the book of the law "down to the head of the captivity, and all the "people ſtood; and he took the book of the law "into his hands, and *ſtood and read* in it; and the "heads of the ſchools ſtood with him, and the "head of the univerſity of *Sora* interpreted it; "and returned the book of the law to the *Chazan*, "and he returned it to the cheſt." That part of the ſacred volume which was delivered unto Jeſus at this time, was *the book of the prophet Eſaias*; it is very likely, that the leſſon out of the prophets for that day, was to be read out of the prophecy of *Iſaiah*; and it ſeems probable, that it was the ſingle book of *Iſaiah*, or that prophecy rolled up by itſelf, in one volume, that was delivered to Chriſt; as the law was divided into five parts, each fifth part was ſometimes in a book, or volume by itſelf: hence a fifth part of the law, is by the *Jews* interpreted [w], ספר, *a book* of the law, in which there is but one fifth part; ſo might the prophets be in ſeparate and diſtinct books, and it looks as if they ſometimes were, by the following account [x]: "a man may join together the law, the prophets, "and the holy writings, as one, the words of "*R. Meir. R. Juda* ſays, the law by itſelf, the "prophets by themſelves, and the holy writings "by themſelves; and the wiſe men ſay, each by "themſelves (*i. e.* each book by itſelf;) and ſays "*R. Judah*, it happened to *Baithus ben Zunin*, "that he had eight prophets joined together as "one; and there are that ſay, that he had not, "but, אחד אחד בפני עצמו, *every one by itſelf.*" *And when he had opened the book*; or *unrolled* it, for books formerly were written in rolls of paper and parchment; and in this form, is the book of the law with the *Jews*, in their ſynagogues, to this day: "all books they ſay [y], are rolled from the "beginning to the end of them, but the book of "the law is rolled to the middle of it, and a pil-"lar, or column, is made for it here and there; "ſays *R. Eliezer* with *R. Zadok*, ſo the writers of "books in *Jeruſalem* made their books: the Rab-"bins teach, that they do not make the book of "the law its length, more than its circumference, "nor its circumference more than its length." Such a roll, or volume, of the prophet *Iſaiah*, Chriſt unrolled, till he came to the place he intended to read: it is a rule with the *Jews* [z], that "they "do not unroll the book of the law in the con-"gregation, becauſe of the glory of the congre-"gation." It may therefore be aſked, whether Chriſt did not break this rule, ſince he unrolled the book that was given him, publickly in the ſynagogue? To which it may be replied, that it was lawful to unroll the book of the prophets, which was what Chriſt did, but not the law; for ſo runs another of their rules [a], "they ſkip in "the prophets, but not in the law, becauſe, "שגוללין נביא ברבים, *that they unroll a pro-"phet publickly*, but they do not unroll the law "publickly." Chriſt having thus unrolled the volume of the prophet *Iſaiah*, which was put into his hands by the *Chazan*, or miniſter, *he found the place where it was written*; as is expreſſed in the following verſe, and which is to be ſeen in *Iſa.* lxi. 1. and which was either the leſſon of the day, or what Chriſt particularly ſought for, and looked out; or was providentially directed to, as what was pertinent to himſelf, and proper to read and inſiſt on at this time; for it was not by chance that he hit on this place, and read it, but it was according to purpoſe, and with deſign. Before the reading of the prophets, a bleſſing uſed to be ſaid, which was in this form [b]; "bleſſed art thou, O Lord our "God, the king of the world, who hath choſen "the good prophets, and art well pleaſed with "their words, which are ſaid in truth; bleſſed art "thou, O Lord, who haſt choſen the law, *Moſes* "his ſervant, and *Iſrael* his people, and the pro-"phets of truth and righteouſneſs." Whether this was delivered by Chriſt, is not certain; however, he read the following paſſage.

Ver. 18. *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me*, &c.] By whom is meant, the third perſon in the Trinity;

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[n] Jarchi & Bartenora in ib. [o] T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 21. 1. [p] Rabbenu Aſher in T. Megill. c. 3. §. 1. & Piſke Haroſh in ib. [q] Maimon. Hilch. Tephilla, c. 12. §. 16, 18. [r] Jarchi & Bartenora in Miſn. Sota, c. 7. §. 7. & Yoma, c. 7. 1. [s] Miſn. Yoma, c. 7. §. 1. Maimon. Yom haccippurim, c. 3. §. 10. [t] Miſn. Sota, c. 7. §. 8. [u] Juchaſin, fol. 123. 1. [w] Gloſſ. in T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 27. 1. [x] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 13. 2. & Maſſechet Sopherim, c. 3. §. 1, 5. [y] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 14. 1. [z] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 70. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Tephilla, c. 12. §. 23. [a] Maſſecheth Sopherim, c. 11. §. 2. [b] Seder Tephillot, fol. 127. 2. Ed. Baſil.

ſo called, to diſtinguiſh him from all other ſpirits; and who was given to Chriſt as man, without meaſure, whereby he was qualified for his great work: and intends the Spirit of Jehovah, with all his gifts and graces, who was, and abode on Chriſt, as a ſpirit of wiſdom and of underſtanding, of counſel and of might, of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord; he was upon him, and in him, the firſt moment of his conception, which was by his power; and he viſibly deſcended on him at his baptiſm; and the phraſe denotes the permanency and continuance of him with him: *becauſe he hath anointed me*; or *that he might anoint me*: the *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *by whom he hath anointed me*; for it was with the Holy Ghoſt he was anointed, as to be king and prieſt, ſo likewiſe to be a prophet: hence he has the name Meſſiah, which ſignifies anointed: and this unction he had, in order *to preach the Goſpel to the poor*: in *Iſaiah* it is, *to the meek*; which deſign the ſame perſons, and mean ſuch as are poor in ſpirit, and are ſenſible of their ſpiritual poverty; have low and humble thoughts of themſelves, and of their own righteouſneſs; and ſeek to Chriſt for durable riches and true righteouſneſs, and frankly acknowledge that all they have and are, is owing to the grace of God: and generally ſpeaking, theſe are the poor of this world, and poor in their intellectuals, who have but a ſmall degree of natural wiſdom and knowledge: to theſe the Goſpel, or glad tidings of the love, grace, and mercy of God in Chriſt, of peace, pardon, righteouſneſs, life, and ſalvation by Chriſt, were preached by him; and that in ſo clear a manner, and with ſuch power and authority, as never was before, or ſince; and for this purpoſe was he anointed with the oil of gladneſs above his fellows: *he hath ſent me to heal the broken-hearted*; whoſe hearts are broken, and made contrite by the word of God, under the influence of the Spirit of God, and with a ſenſe of ſin; and are wounded with it, and are humbled for it; and are in great pain and diſtreſs, and even inconſolable, and ready to faint and die; for a wounded ſpirit who can bear? now Chriſt was ſent to heal ſuch perſons by his own ſtripes, by binding up their wounds, by the application of his blood to them, which is a ſovereign balm for every wound; by the diſcoveries of pardoning grace to their ſouls, and by opening and applying the comfortable promiſes of the Goſpel, by his Spirit, to them: *to preach deliverance to the captives*; who are captives to ſin, ſatan, and the law; from which, there is only deliverance by him; who ſaves his people from their ſins, redeems them from the law, and leads captivity captive; and which liberty and deliverance are preached and publiſhed in the Goſpel, and by Chriſt the author of them: *and recovering of ſight to the blind*; which in the prophet is, *and the opening of the priſon to them that are bound*; and which the *Septuagint* render, as here in *Luke*, and the *Chaldee paraphraſe* in part agrees with it, interpreting it thus, *to the priſoners*, אתגלו לנהור, *be ye revealed to the light*: now becauſe perſons in priſon are in darkneſs, and ſee no light, therefore they are repreſented as blind; and both are the caſe of ſinners, they are in the priſon of ſin and of the law, and are blind, ignorant, and inſenſible of their ſtate; until Chriſt both opens the priſon, and ſets them free, and opens their eyes, and gives them ſpiritual ſight; when he ſays *to the priſoners go forth, to them that are in darkneſs ſhew yourſelves*, *Iſa*. xlix. 9. *To ſet at liberty them that are bruiſed*: theſe words are not in *Iſa*. lxi. 1. but in the *Septuagint* verſion of *Iſa*. lviii. 6. from whence they ſeem to be taken, or elſe from *Iſa*. xlii. 7. it being allowable for a reader in the prophets, to ſkip from place to place, which our Lord here did, in order to explain this paſſage more fully.

Ver. 19. *To preach the acceptable year of the Lord*.] The time which he willed and fixed for the redemption of his people, and in which he ſhewed his good-will and pleaſure unto ſinful men, in the gift of his Son to them, and for them; and which, as the *Arabic* and *Syriac* verſions render it, was a time *acceptable to the Lord*: the ſufferings of Chriſt were according to his will; his ſacrifice was of a ſweet-ſmelling ſavour to him; his righteouſneſs he was well pleaſed with; and the ſatisfaction and atonement for ſin he made was a plenary and complete one: all Chriſt did, and ſuffered, were grateful to God, becauſe hereby his perfections were glorified, his purpoſes, counſel, and covenant were accompliſhed, and his people ſaved. The *Perſic* verſion renders it, *to preach the law acceptable to God*, neither agreeable to the original text, nor its ſenſe; for Chriſt was ſent to preach the Goſpel, and not the law. In the *Vulgate Latin*, and *Arabic* verſions is added, *and the day of vengeance*, out of the prophecy in *Iſ*. lxi. 2. but is not in any of the copies, or other verſions. Our Lord did not read thro' all the three verſes in the prophet, as it might be thought he would, and which was agreeable to the *Jewiſh* canon[c]: "he that reads in the law may "not read leſs than three verſes, and he may not "read to an interpreter more than one verſe, and in "a prophet three; and if thoſe three are three "ſections, they read every one; they ſkip in a "prophet, but they do not ſkip in the law." This laſt our Lord did, tho' he did not ſtrictly attend to the former. Indeed, their rule, as elſewhere[d] given, obliged to read one and twenty verſes; but this was not always obſerved: for "if on a ſabbath-"day there was an interpreter, or a preacher, they "read in a prophet three verſes, or five, or ſe-"ven, and were not ſolicitous about twenty and "one[e]."

Ver. 20. *And he cloſed the book*, &c.] Or *rolled it up*; and ſo the high-prieſt did, after he read in the book of the law, on the day of atonement, all that was neceſſary to be read, גולל ספר תורה, *he rolled the book of the law*, and put it in his boſom[f]: *and he gave it again to the miniſter*; the *Chazan*[g], who was the miniſter, or ſervant of the congregation, who had the affairs of it upon him, to let in, and bring out, and to order all things; and particularly to take care of the book of the law, and the cheſt, or ark in which it was. If the ſame rule was obſerved in giving and taking the book of any prophet, as the book of the law; then Chriſt gave it to the miniſter, and he received it with his right hand: for ſo it is ſaid[h], "he that gives the "book of the law to his friend, may not give it "but with the right hand; and he that receives it "may not receive it but with the right hand; for "ſo was the giving of it on mount *Sinai*, according "to *Deut*. xxxiii. 2." *And ſat down*; as was the manner of the *Jews*, when they taught, or preached; ſee the note on *Matt*. v. 1. *and the eyes of all them that were in the ſynagogue were faſtened on him*: they looked very wiſhly at him, and were very attentive to what he ſhould ſay, upon ſuch a paſſage of ſcripture, which they knew referred to the Meſſiah; and the rather, as they had known him formerly,

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[c] Miſn. Megilla, c. 4. §. 4. Maſſechet Sopherim, c. 11. §. 1.

[d] Piſke Haroſh Megilla, c. 3. art. 6.

[e] Maſſechet Sopherim, c. 12. §. 7.

[f] Miſn. Yoma, c. 7. §. 1.

[g] Bartenora in Miſn. Sota, c. 7. §. 7.

[h] Maſſechet Sopherim, c. 3. §. 10.

merly, and had heard that he was ſaid to be the Meſſiah.

Ver. 21. *And he began to ſay unto them*, &c.] To preach from thoſe words; the explanation of which he gave, tho' not here recorded, and applied them to himſelf, to whom they belonged, ſaying: *this day is this ſcripture fulfilled in your ears*; which is as if he ſhould ſay, I am the perſon here ſpoken of; and at this preſent time the Spirit of God is upon me; I am anointed with the Holy Ghoſt, and now preach glad tidings to you, and all the good things here mentioned, and for the ſeveral ends propoſed; and this ſcripture has its full accompliſhment which has been read unto you, and you have heard this day. So the *Syriac* verſion renders it, דבאדניכון, *which is in your ears*; that is, which you have now heard. The *Jews* themſelves acknowledge, that theſe words are ſpoken of the Meſſiah. One of their writers [i] ſays, "theſe "are the words of the prophet with reſpect to the "Meſſiah; for the Meſſiah ſhall ſay ſo, *becauſe* "*the Lord hath anointed me*, &c." And ſo ſaid the true Meſſiah Jeſus. Another of them expreſſes himſelf thus [k]: "theſe are the words of the pro-"phet with reſpect to the Meſſiah; for the Meſ-"ſiah ſhall ſay thus, *becauſe the Lord hath anointed* "*me*, &c. or they are the words of the prophet "concerning himſelf." And elſewhere 'tis ſaid by them [l], "the holy, bleſſed God will ſend his Meſ-"ſiah to us, and he ſhall be worthy of this, (*i. e.* "the character of a meek perſon) as it is ſaid, "*Iſ.* lxi. 1. *he hath ſent me to preach glad tidings to* "*the meek*."

Ver. 22. *And all bare him witneſs*, &c.] That he was right in applying the words to the Meſſiah; but not that he himſelf was the Meſſiah, and that he was right in applying them to himſelf; for they did not believe in him, as appears from what follows: *and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth*; not ſo much at the matter, the ſum, and ſubſtance of them, as expreſſive of the love, grace, and favour of God ſhewn in the miſſion and unction of the Meſſiah, and in that liberty, deliverance, and ſalvation he was ſent to effect and proclaim; as at the graceful manner in which he delivered himſelf, and the aptneſs of his words, the propriety of his diction, and the majeſty, power, and authority, with which his expreſſions were clothed; and they were more amazed at all this, ſince they knew his parentage and education, and in what manner he had been brought up among them; and therefore it was aſtoniſhing to them, where he had his learning, knowledge, and wiſdom: *and they ſaid, is not this Joſeph's ſon?* the carpenter, and who was brought up, by him, to his trade, and never learned letters; from whom had he this doctrine? of whom has he learned this way of addreſs, and to ſpeak with ſo much eloquence and propriety, ſince his education was ſo mean, and he has never been at the feet of any of the doctors, or has been brought up in any of the academies and ſchools of learning?

Ver. 23. *And he ſaid unto them, ye will ſurely ſay unto me this proverb*, &c.] Or *parable*; for any pithy ſentence, or proverbial expreſſion, was, by the *Jews*, called a parable: *phyſician heal thyſelf*; and which was a proverb in uſe with the *Jews*; and which is ſometimes expreſſed thus, זיל אסי נפשך, *go heal thyſelf* [m]; and ſometimes in this form, אסיא אסי חגרתך, *phyſician, heal thy lameneſs* [n]: the meaning of which is, that a man ought to look at home, and take care of himſelf, and of thoſe that belonged to him; and Chriſt was aware that his townſmen would object this to him, that if he was the perſon he was ſaid to be, and could do the miracles and cures which were aſcribed to him, he ought to do ſomething of this kind, at home, among them, who were his townſmen, neighbours, relations, and acquaintance; that is, heal their ſick, lame, blind, leprous, deaf, and dumb: and that this is the ſenſe of it, is manifeſt from what follows, *whatſoever we have heard done in Capernaum*: a place where Chriſt often was, and where he cured the centurion's ſervant of the palſy, and *Peter*'s wife's mother of a fever, and another man ſick of a palſy, and the woman of her bloody iſſue, and a man that had a withered hand, and where he raiſed *Jairus*'s daughter from the dead: *do alſo here in thy country*; or *city*, as the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions render it: hence it appears, that this was not the firſt of our Lord's miniſtry; he had preached elſewhere, and wrought miracles before he came to *Nazareth*, and of which his townſmen had heard; and therefore were deſirous that he would do the like among them, if he was able, for they ſeem to be very incredulous, and to queſtion the reports of him, and his ability to perform ſuch things; however, if he could, they thought they had as good a right to his favours and benefits, as any, this being his native place.

Ver. 24. *And he ſaid, verily I ſay unto you*, &c.] Another proverb in uſe among them, the meaning of which was well known to them, and was very appoſite to the preſent caſe: *no prophet is accepted in his own country*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xiii. 57.

Ver. 25. *But I tell you of a truth*, &c.] Or *in truth*; it anſwers to באמת, a phraſe often uſed by the *Jewiſh* writers [o]; and which they ſay [p], whereever, and of whatſoever it is ſpoken, it ſignifies a tradition of *Moſes* from mount *Sinai*, and ſo that which is moſt true, ſure, and firm, and to be depended on; and ſuch is what our Lord hereafter delivers; yea, the word, הימנותא, *truth*, or *of a truth*, and which is the ſame as *in truth*, is uſed by the *Jews* [q], as לשון שבועה, *the form of an oath*: ſo that theſe words of Chriſt are a ſtrong aſſeveration, and amount to a ſolemn oath with reſpect to what follows: *many widows were in Iſrael in the days of Elias*; or *Elijah* the prophet; that is, there were many that were not only widows, but poor widows, and in very famiſhing circumſtances in the land of *Iſrael*, when *Elijah* was the prophet of the Lord to that people: *and when the heaven was ſhut up three years and ſix months*; ſo that no rain deſcended all that time: the ſame is obſerved by *James*, ch. v. 17. and though the ſpace of time, in which there was no rain, is not ſo clear from the hiſtory of it in the book of *Kings*; yet, as this is fixed by Chriſt, and his Apoſtle, and there is nothing in the hiſtory that contradicts it, it is to be received without ſcruple: *when great famine was throughout all the land of Iſrael*; and which ſo long a drought muſt needs bring.

Ver. 26. *But unto none of them was Elias ſent*, &c.] That is, to none of the poor widows in the land of *Iſrael* was the prophet ſent, to ſupply them with food, and relieve them in their famiſhing circumſtances,

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[i] Kimchi in Sepher Shoraſh. rad. משח.

[k] R. Sol. Hamelec in Miclol Yophi in loc.

[l] Juchaſin, fol. 69. 1.

[m] Zohar in Exod. fol. 31. 2.

[n] Bereſhit Rabba, §. 23. fol. 20. 4.

[o] Miſn. Sabbat, c 1. §. 3. Trumot, c. 2. §. 1.

[p] T. Hieroſ. Sabbat, fol. 3. 2. & 12. 3. Maimon. & Bartenora in Miſn. Trumot, c. 3. §. 1.

[q] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 55. 1. & Gloſſ. in ib.

cumſtances, as might moſt reaſonably have been expected: *ſave unto Sarepta*, a city *of Sidon*; which in 1 *Kings* xvii. 10. is called *Zarephath*; and by the *Septuagint* there, *Sarepta* of *Sidon*, as here. *Pliny*[r] ſpeaks of it by the ſame name, and reckons it to *Sidon: unto a woman that was a widow:* ſhe is ſaid, by the *Jews*[s], to be the mother of *Jonah* the prophet. Our Lord meant to obſerve, by this inſtance, as by the following, that God beſtows his favours on perſons in a ſovereign way, and ſometimes upon the moſt unlikely; as in a time of famine, he overlooked the poor widows in *Iſrael*, his peculiar people, and ſent his prophet to a *Gentile* woman in one of the cities of *Sidon*; and therefore they ſhould ceaſe to wonder if he wrought his miracles in other places, and not in his own country; ſince this was agreeable to the divine procedure in other caſes, eſpecially ſince they were a cavilling and unbelieving people. The *Jews* ſay[t], that in all that generation there was not found any one that was worthy, as this woman.

Ver. 27. *And many lepers were in Iſrael*, &c.] The leproſy was a diſeaſe very common among the *Jews*; hence thoſe laws concerning it in *Lev.* xiii. and xiv. and it ſeems, by this account, that it was very prevalent, *in the time of Eliſeus the prophet*; that is, the prophet *Eliſha*; who, by the *Septuagint*, in 1 *Kings* xix. 16. and, in other places, is called *Eliſaie: and none of them was cleanſed*; from their leproſy, by any direction of the prophet, *ſaving Naaman the Syrian*; or but *Naaman*, who was not an *Iſraelite*, but a *Syrian:* he was cleanſed and cured of his leproſy, being ordered by *Eliſha* to dip himſelf ſeven times in *Jordan*, which he did, and was healed, 2 *Kings* v. 14.

Ver. 28. *And all they in the ſynagogue*, &c.] The ruler and miniſter, and the whole multitude of the common people that were met together there for worſhip; and who before were amazed at his eloquence, and the gracefulneſs of his delivery; and could not but approve of his miniſtry, tho' they could not account for it, how he ſhould come by his qualifications for it: *when they heard thoſe things*; theſe two inſtances of *Elijah* and *Eliſha*, the one ſupplying the wants of a *Sidonian* woman, and the other healing a *Syrian* leper, when no notice were taken by them of poor widows and lepers in *Iſrael: were filled with wrath*; for by theſe inſtances they perceived, that they were compared to the *Iſraelites* in the times of wicked *Ahab* and *Jezebel*; and that no miracles were to be wrought among them, or benefits conferr'd on them, tho' they were his townſmen; yea, that the *Gentiles* were preferr'd unto them: and indeed, the calling of the *Gentiles* was here plainly intimated, which was always ungrateful and provoking to the *Jews*; and it was ſuggeſted, that the favours of God, and grace of the Meſſiah, are diſpenſed in a ſovereign and diſcriminating way, than which nothing is more offenſive to carnal minds.

Ver. 29. *And roſe up*, &c.] In great wrath, and in a noiſy and tumultuous manner, before the ſervice was well over, and without being regularly diſmiſſed: *and thruſt him out of the city*; firſt out of the ſynagogue, and then out of their city, as unworthy to be in it, tho' an inhabitant of it; and as if he had done ſomething deſerving of death, and therefore to be puniſhed as a malefactor without the city: *and led him unto the brow of the hill*; the edge of it, where it run out, and hung over the precipice: *whereon their city was built*; ſo that it was a city upon an hill, and very viſible, to which Chriſt may allude in *Matt.* v. 14. *That they might caſt him down headlong*; and break him to pieces: in this manner ten thouſand *Edomites* were deſtroyed by the *Jews*, in the times of *Amaziah*, 2 *Chron.* xxv. 12. though this was not an uſual way with the *Jews* of putting perſons to death, as with ſome other nations[u]: their four capital puniſhments were ſtoning, ſtrangling, burning, and killing with the ſword[w]: nor did the inhabitants of *Nazareth* proceed in any *judicial* manner with Chriſt, but hurried him away, in order to deſtroy him, without any formal proceſs, in the manner the zealots did: though to put any man to death, or to inflict any puniſhment on a perſon on the ſabbath-day, as this was, was contrary to their own canon, which runs thus[x]; "they don't inflict puniſhment "on the ſabbath-day, even though it is the puniſhment of an affirmative precept; they don't beat "one that is guilty, nor put to death, as it is ſaid, "*Exod.* xxxv. 3. *ye ſhall kindle no fire thoroughout "your habitations upon the ſabbath-day:* this is a "caution to the *Sanhedrim*, that they do not burn "on the ſabbath-day he that is condemned to burning; and this is the law with reſpect to any one "that is liable to the other puniſhments." But theſe men, without any regard to the place where they were, and the worſhip they were concerned in, and the day of the ſabbath which then was, riſe up in great wrath and fury, and without any ſhew of juſtice, and in the moſt brutiſh and barbarous manner attempt to take away the life of Chriſt.

Ver. 30. *But he paſſing through the midſt of them*, &c.] Either in ſo ſtrong and powerful a manner, and with ſo much ſwiftneſs, that being once out of their hands, they could not lay hold on him again; or elſe he put on another form, or made himſelf inviſible to them; or he held their eyes that they could not ſee him, or know him, as in *Luke* xxiv. 16. however it was, he made uſe of, and ſhewed his divine power; and which he did, becauſe his time to die was not yet come, nor was he to die ſuch a death: and this alſo ſhows, that when he did die, he laid down his life freely and voluntarily, ſince he could then have exerted his power, and delivered himſelf out of the hands of his enemies, as now: and *went his way*; from *Nazareth* elſewhere; nor do we read of his returning there any more.

Ver. 31. *And came down to Capernaum*, &c.] Which was, as Dr. *Lightfoot* thinks, ſixteen miles or more from *Nazareth*; and Chriſt may be ſaid to *come down* to it, becauſe of the ſituation of *Nazareth*, which was upon an hill: *a city of Galilee*; of lower *Galilee*, near the ſea of *Galilee: and taught them on the ſabbath-days*; that is, he went into the ſynagogue at *Capernaum*, on the ſabbath-days, whenever he was there, and taught the inhabitants, explained ſome paſſage or other in the Old Teſtament, as he had done at *Nazareth*, and inſtructed them in the doctrines of the Goſpel.

Ver. 32. *And they were aſtoniſhed at his doctrine*, &c.] At the matter of it, as well as the manner in which it was delivered, it being ſo different from the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, they had been uſed to: *for his word was with power*; he ſpake with great fervency, majeſty, and authority, and not with coldneſs and indifference, and dependance on the ſenſe and authority of others, as their teachers did; and beſides, ſuch power went along with the word, that it reached their hearts; and as the *Perſic* verſion

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[r] L. 5. c. 19.

[s] Pirke Eliezer, c. 33.

[t] Zohar in Exod. fol. 89. 2.

[u] Vid. Rycquium de Capitol. Rom. c. 4.

[w] Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 7. §. 1.

[x] Moſes Kotſenſis Mitzvot Tora, pr. neg. 67.

ſion renders it, he *penetrated them with* it; and he alſo confirmed it by powerful operations, by miraculous works, ſuch as caſting out devils, and healing diſeaſes, of which an account follows.

Ver. 33. *And in the ſynagogue there was a man,* &c.] That is, in the ſynagogue, at *Capernaum*, as Chriſt was there teaching, on one of the ſabbath-days before-mentioned; there was a certain man, *which had a ſpirit of an unclean devil:* who was poſſeſſed with the devil, who is by nature and practice unclean; and was filled with the ſpirit of the devil, with a ſpirit of divination, and was acted by him, to impoſe upon the people; he influenced his mind as an enthuſiaſt, as well as poſſeſſed his body: and this was on the ſabbath-day; whereas the *Jews* ſay [y], that "ſatan and the evil dæmon, flee on the ſabbath-day to the mountains of darkneſs, and don't appear all the ſabbath-day, becauſe that day is holy, and they are *unclean*; but in the evening of the ſabbath, they prepare themſelves, and meet the children of men, and hurt them." *And cried out with a loud voice*; ſee the note on *Mark* i. 23.

Ver. 34. *Saying, let us alone,* &c.] Not that there were more ſpirits in him than one, as the whole account ſhows; but he includes the reſt of the devils in that country; ſee the note on *Mark* i. 24.

Ver. 35. *And Jeſus rebuked him,* &c.] Not the man, but the unclean ſpirit; or *that dæmon*, as the *Perſic* verſion reads it: *ſaying, hold thy peace*, or *be thou muzzled*, as the word ſignifies, *and come out of him*; ſee the note on *Matt.* i. 25. *and when the devil had thrown him in the midſt*; in the midſt *of them*, as the *Arabic* verſion adds; that is, in the midſt of the people that were in the ſynagogue; or, as the *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *in the midſt of the ſynagogue*, where he threw him into convulſive fits, and left him: *he came out of him, and hurt him not*; tho' he ſadly convulſed him, and put him to great pain, yet he did not wound him in any part of his body, or take away the uſe of any of his limbs; and much leſs hurt his ſoul, ſo as to deſtroy it; all which was deſired and intended by him, but was hindered by Chriſt; ſee the note on *Mark* i. 26.

Ver. 36. *And they were all amazed,* &c.] The people in the ſynagogue; they were aſtoniſhed at his doctrine before, and now at his miracles: *and ſpake among themſelves*; as they were in the ſynagogue, *what a word is this?* meaning, either what ſort of doctrine is this which is attended with ſuch power and miracles; or what a word of command is this, *hold thy peace, and come out of him?* and ſo the *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *what is this mandatory, or commanding word?* to which agrees the *Syriac* verſion, rendering it with the following clauſe thus; *what is this word,* that *with authority and power it commands the unclean ſpirits, and they come out?* ſee the note on *Mark* i. 27.

Ver. 37. *And the fame of him went out,* &c.] From hence, on account of his diſpoſſeſſing this unclean ſpirit, which ſeems to be the firſt inſtance of this kind: *into every place of the country round about*; into every city, town, and village in *Galilee*, and even into all places round about *Galilee*; ſee *Mark* i. 28.

Ver. 38. *And he aroſe out of the ſynagogue,* &c.] That is, when he had diſpoſſeſſed the unclean ſpirit, he roſe up, and went out of the ſynagogue: *and entered into Simon's houſe*; the houſe of *Simon Peter*, and which was alſo *Andrew*'s; and in *Beza*'s ancient copy, and in one of *Stephens*'s, it is added, *and of Andrew*; who, tho' they were both natives of *Bethſaida*, yet, it ſeems, had an houſe at *Capernaum*, whither Chriſt went of his own accord, or by an invitation given him: *and Simon's wife's mother was taken with a great fever.* The *Vulgate Latin* verſion reads, *with great fevers.* The fever is "a diſeaſe, or rather claſs of diſeaſes, whoſe characteriſtic is a preternatural heat felt thro' the whole body, or, at leaſt, the principal parts thereof, attended with other ſymptoms.——*One* defines a fever, a ſtrenuous endeavour, or effort of nature to throw off ſome morbific matter, that greatly incommodes the body.——*Another*, an augmented velocity of the blood; others, a fermentation of the blood, accompanied with a quick pulſe, and exceſſive heat.——The cauſes of fevers are innumerable, and the diſeaſe even often ariſes in the ſoundeſt bodies, where there was no previous morbific apparatus, as cachochymia, plethora, &c. but merely from a change of air, food, or other alteration in the non-naturals.——A fever, *one* obſerves, is an inſeparable companion of an inflammation. The ſymptoms are many: every fever, ariſing from any internal cauſe, is attended with a quick pulſe, and unuſual heat at different times, and in different degrees. Where theſe are intenſe, the fever is acute, where remiſs, ſlow. The diſeaſe begins almoſt always with a ſenſe of chillneſs, and in its progreſs is chiefly diſtinguiſhed by the velocity of the pulſe: ſo that a too quick contraction of the heart, with an increaſed reſiſtance, or impulſe againſt the capillaries, furniſhes the proper idea of a fever [z]." The fever *Peter*'s wife's mother lay ill of, is ſaid to be a *great* one; which circumſtance is the rather mentioned, to illuſtrate the miraculous cure of it by Chriſt; ſee the note on *Matt.* viii. 14. *And they beſought him for her*; either his diſciples *Peter*, *Andrew*, *James*, and *John*, who were all preſent, or the other relations and friends of the ſick perſon, which were in the houſe; who having heard of his caſting out the unclean ſpirit in the ſynagogue, believed that he had power to heal this diſeaſe; and therefore intreat him, for her ſake, and upon her account, that he would reſtore her health.

Ver. 39. *And he ſtood over her,* &c.] *At her head*, as the *Perſic* verſion reads: he inclined himſelf towards her, to ſee how ſhe did, and to take her by the hand, and lift her up; *and rebuked the fever.* The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read, *her fever*, that which was upon her: *and it left her*, as *Mark* ſays, *immediately*; as ſoon as ever he had touched her hand, and rebuked the fever, and bid it be gone: *and immediately ſhe aroſe, and miniſtred unto them*; ſee the note on *Matt.* viii. 15.

Ver. 40. *Now when the ſun was ſetting,* &c.] And ſo the ſabbath was over; ſee the note on *Matt.* viii. 16. *all they that had any ſick, with divers diſeaſes, brought them unto him*; that is, as many of the inhabitants of *Capernaum* as had ſick perſons in their houſes, let their diſeaſes be what they would, brought them to Chriſt in *Simon*'s houſe; which ſabbath being over, they might do conſiſtent with their laws, and the traditions of the elders, and without any juſt offence to the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, who were tenacious of them; and they were encouraged to do ſo, partly thro' the diſpoſſeſſing the unclean ſpirit in their ſynagogue that day, which many of them had been witneſſes of; and partly thro' the cure of *Peter*'s wife's mother, which they had heard of: *and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them*; without the uſe of medicine, by the mere impoſition of his hands; which was accompanied with ſuch power and virtue from him, as to remove, at once, every diſeaſe; nor did he refuſe any perſon, how unworthy ſoever they might be in themſelves, and how obſtinate their diſeaſe might be.

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[y] Moſes Kotſenſis Mitzvot Tora, pr. affirm. 29.

[z] See Chambers's Cyclopædia in the word *fever*.

Ver. 41. *And devils alſo came out of many*, &c.] Not willingly, nor of themſelves, but at the word and command of Chriſt, who ordered them to depart: *crying out, and ſaying*; as they left the bodies of men, and not with any good-will to Chriſt: *thou art Chriſt*; the true Meſſiah, that was of old promiſed and propheſied of, and has been long expected to come: *the Son of God*; the only-begotten Son of God, poſſeſſed of the ſame perfections with God his Father; and particularly of almighty power, of which they were convinced by his diſpoſſeſſing them: *and he rebuking them, ſuffered them not to ſpeak*; for he needed not their teſtimony, nor did he chuſe to be made known by them: *for they knew that he was Chriſt*, or *that they knew that he was Chriſt*; ſo the *Syriac* verſion: they certainly did know that he was the Meſſiah, partly by the voice from heaven at his baptiſm, and partly by his power over them: but Chriſt would not ſuffer them to ſay that he was the Meſſiah, or that they knew him to be ſo; either becauſe the time was not come for ſuch a declaration to be made, or they were not the proper perſons to make it; and leſt ſuch a publication, by them, ſhould be made a handle of by the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, to ſay that he had ſociety with devils, and by them caſt them out.

Ver. 42. *And when it was day*, &c.] The *day after*, as the *Perſic* verſion renders it; *at the dawning*, or *break of day*, as the *Syriac*. He roſe a great while before it was day, as *Mark* ſays, ch. i. 35. but did not go out till it was day, or till day was coming on, when *he departed* from *Peter*'s houſe, and from *Capernaum*: *and went into a deſert place*; for the ſake of ſolitude, that he might be retired from company, and have an opportunity of privately praying to God: *and the people ſought, and came unto him*: they firſt went to *Simon*'s houſe, and not finding him there, ſought for him elſewhere: and when they underſtood where he was, they came to him, *and ſtayed him that he ſhould not depart from them*; they laid hold on him, and held him, and did all they could to perſuade him to abide with them conſtantly, and not think of removing from them: tho' perhaps this was not ſo much from love to Chriſt's perſon and preſence, or any regard to his miniſtry, and the good and welfare of their immortal ſouls, as on account of the miracles he wrought, and the corporal benefits he beſtowed on them.

Ver. 43. *And he ſaid unto them*, &c.] In anſwer to their importunate requeſts: *I muſt preach the kingdom of God to other cities alſo*; as well as to *Capernaum*; and tho' they did not expreſs their deſire of his continuance with them, in order to preach the Goſpel to them; yet Chriſt ſignifies, that a principal part of his work lay in preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, the Goſpel-diſpenſation on earth, the doctrines and ordinances of it, as well as the things which relate to the kingdom of glory; as what is the ſaints meetneſs for it, their regeneration, and their right unto it, which lies in his righteouſneſs; and that as he had preached theſe things at *Capernaum*, there was a neceſſity upon him to preach them in other cities of *Galilee* and *Judea*: *for therefore am I ſent*; as he was by his heavenly father, and had himſelf alſo undertook and engaged to do it.

Ver. 44. *And he preached in the ſynagogues of Galilee.*] In the ſeveral ſynagogues that were in different cities and towns throughout all *Galilee*.

## CHAP. V.

Ver. 1. AND *it came to paſs, that as the people preſſed upon him*, &c.] As Chriſt went thro' *Galilee*, and preached in the ſynagogues there, great crouds of people attended on him, and they followed him wherever he went; and ſo large were their numbers, and ſo very eager were they to ſee him, and hear him, that they were even troubleſome to him, and bore hard upon him, and were ready to preſs him down, tho' they had no ill deſign upon him, but only *to hear the word of God*; the ſcriptures of the Old Teſtament explained, and the doctrines of the Goſpel preached; and which were preached by him, as never were before or ſince, and in ſuch a manner as were not by the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*; and both the matter and manner of his miniſtry drew a vaſt concourſe of people after him: *he ſtood by the lake of Genneſareth*; the ſame with the ſea of *Chinnereth*, *Numb.* xxxiv. 11. *Joſh.* xii. 3. and xiii. 27. where the *Targums* of *Onkelos*, *Jonathan*, and the *Jeruſalem*, call it, ימא דגינוסר, *the ſea of Genuſar*, or *Genneſareth*: and ſo it is elſewhere called [a], and is the ſame which is called the ſea of *Galilee*, and of *Tiberias*, *John* vi. 1. and xxi. 1. and is, by other writers [b], as here, called the lake of *Genneſareth*, and ſaid to be ſixteen miles long, and ſix broad. *Joſephus* ſays [c], 'tis forty furlongs broad, and an hundred long. The *Jews* ſay [d], that "the "holy, bleſſed God created ſeven ſeas, but choſe "none of them all, but the ſea of *Genneſareth*." And indeed, it was a place choſen by Chriſt, and honoured, and made famous by him, by his preaching at it, his miracles upon it, and ſhewing himſelf there after his reſurrection.

Ver. 2. *And ſaw two ſhips ſtanding by the lake*, &c.] Or two fiſhing-boats; which were, as the *Arabic* verſion renders it, *detained by anchors at the ſhore of the lake*; the one belonging to *Peter* and *Andrew*, and the other to *Zebedee*, and his two ſons, *James* and *John*: *but the fiſhermen were gone out of them*; that is, either the above perſons, or their ſervants: *and were waſhing their nets*; on ſhore; they having gathered a great deal of ſoil and filthineſs, but had caught no fiſh; and therefore were cleanſing their nets, in order to lay them up, finding it to be in vain to make any further attempts with them at preſent; and which conſidered, makes the following miracle the more illuſtrious.

Ver. 3. *And he entered into one of the ſhips which was Simon's*, &c.] *Simon Peter's*, and *Andrew* his brother's, who were both together at this time, tho' the laſt not is here mentioned: *and prayed him*

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[a] Targum in Ezek. xxxix. 11. Zohar in Gen. fol. 8. 2. & 17. 2. & in Exod. fol. 52. 4. & 61. 4.

[b] Plin. l. 5. c. 15. Solin, c. 48. Ptolom. l. 5. c. 15.

[c] De Bello Jud. l. 3. c. 18.

[d] Pirke Eliezer, c. 18.

*that he would thruſt out a little from the land:* as *Simon* was the owner of the veſſel, Chriſt deſired him; he aſked the favour of him to put off a little way from ſhore; tho' the *Arabic* and *Ethiopic* verſions render it, *he commanded him*, being his Lord and maſter. To which the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions agree; only they make the orders to be given not to *Simon* ſingly, but to others, to all in the boat; the former rendering it, *and he ſaid*, or ordered, *that they ſhould carry him a little way from the dry land to the waters*; and the latter thus, *and ſaid, carry ye the ſhip from dry land a little into the ſea.* And which adds, agreeable to the ſenſe enough, tho' it is not in the text, *when they had executed his command*; had done as he intreated, or ordered, and put off the veſſel a little way from the ſhore: *he ſat down and taught the people out of the ſhip*; for the boat was not carried neither out of ſight, nor beyond the hearing of the people: this method Chriſt took at another time, and that for conveniency, as now; ſee *Matt.* xiii. 1, 2, 3. and whereas he ſat while he taught, this was according to the then cuſtom of the times with the *Jews*; ſee the note on *Matt.* v. 1.

Ver. 4. *Now when he had left ſpeaking*, &c.] Teaching the people, and preaching the word of God unto them out of the ſhip, as they ſtood on the ſhore before him. *He ſaid unto Simon, launch out into the deep*; he ſpoke to *Simon Peter*, being the maſter of the veſſel, to thruſt it out, or put it off further into deep water, more convenient for fiſhing; *and let down your nets for a draught*; of fiſhes: his meaning is, that he would give orders to his ſervants, to put out the veſſel to ſea, to take their nets and caſt them into the ſea, in order to take and draw up a quantity of fiſh, which was their buſineſs.

Ver. 5. *And Simon anſwering ſaid unto him, maſter*, &c.] Or *Rabbi*, as the *Syriac* verſion renders it: he knew him to be the Meſſiah, the king of *Iſrael*, and a teacher ſent from God: *we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing*; which carries in it an objection to what Chriſt adviſed and directed to: they had been fiſhing that *night*, which was the beſt time for catching fiſh; and they had been at it *all* the night, and had *laboured* hard; and were even *fatigued*, and quite wearied out, and what was moſt diſcouraging of all, their labour was in vain; they had catched *nothing: nevertheleſs at thy word I will let down the net*; which ſhewed faith in Chriſt, and obedience to him: thus the faithful preachers of the Goſpel, ſometimes labour and toil in the miniſtry of the word a great while, with little or no ſucceſs; and are diſcouraged from going on, and would be tempted to leave off, were it not for the commiſſion and word of command they have received from Chriſt, which they dare not be diſobedient to; and for the word of promiſe he has given them, to be with them, on which they depend.

Ver. 6. *And when they had done this*, &c.] Had put the ſhip out further to ſea, and had let down their net: *they incloſed a great multitude of fiſh*; in their net, which by the ſecret divine power of Chriſt, were gathered together juſt in that place, where by his order they caſt the net: *and their net brake*; with the weight and number of the fiſhes, yet not ſo as to let the fiſh out; the *Arabic* verſion reads, *it was within a little that their nets were broke:* they were juſt upon breaking, the draught was ſo numerous, the ſtruggling ſo great, and the weight ſo heavy.

Ver. 7. *And they beckened unto their partners*, &c.] *Zebedee*, and his two ſons, *James* and *John*; ſee ver. 10. who were at ſome diſtance from them, probably lay at anchor near the ſhore, not having put out to ſea when the other veſſel did, and ſo were not within call; but they were obliged to make ſigns to them, and becken with their hands to come to them: *which were in the other ſhip*; mentioned in ver. 2. which lay by the ſhore: *that they ſhould come and help them*; take up the net, and take the fiſh out of it: *and they came and filled both the ſhips*; with the fiſhes they took out of the net, as full as they could hold, and which they were not well able to carry: *ſo that they began to ſink*; or *were almoſt immerſed*, as *Beza*'s ancient copy, and another manuſcript, with the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions read; the veſſels were ſo heavy laden, with the vaſt quantity of fiſh that was taken, that they were juſt ready to ſink with their burden.

Ver. 8. *When Simon Peter ſaw it*, &c.] The multitude of fiſh that was taken, and both veſſels filled with them, and the danger they were in of ſinking, *he fell down at Jeſus knees.* The *Arabic* and *Perſic* verſions read, *at his feet*; he fell on his knees before him, and threw himſelf proſtrate at his feet, as a worſhipper of him, and a ſupplicant unto him: *ſaying, depart from me, for I am a ſinful man, O Lord*; this he ſaid, not as though the preſence of Chriſt was burdenſome, or diſagreeable to him; but as one amazed at the greatneſs of the miracle wrought, and ſtruck with the ſenſe of the power of Chriſt, put forth therein; and with the greatneſs of his majeſty ſo near him; and as conſcious to himſelf of his own vileneſs and unworthineſs to be in his preſence; and ſo the *Perſic* verſion adds, and which may ſerve as a comment, *and am not worthy that thou ſhouldſt be with me:* he had much the ſame ſenſe of things as the centurion had, *Matt.* viii. 8. and when it is conſidered how gracious perſons have been ſtruck with awe and fear, and a conſciouſneſs of ſin, weakneſs, and unworthineſs, at the appearance of an angel, as *Zacharias*, *Luke* i. 12. and the ſhepherds, ch. ii. 9. yea, at the preſence of an holy man of God, as the widow of *Sarepta* at *Elijah*, ſaying much the ſame as *Peter* does here, 1 *Kings* xvii. 18. it need not be wondered at, that *Peter* ſhould ſo expreſs himſelf, in theſe circumſtances.

Ver. 9. *For he was aſtoniſhed, and all that were with him*, &c.] His brother *Andrew*, and the ſervants they had with them to manage the veſſel, and caſt the nets: *at the draught of the fiſhes they had taken*; being ſo large and numerous, as the like was never ſeen, nor known by them before.

Ver. 10. *And ſo was alſo James and John the ſons of Zebedee*, &c.] Who were in the other ſhip, and had been beckened to them to come and help them, and did come, and were witneſſes of the miracle: *which were partners with Simon*; were ſharers with him in loſs and gain in the fiſhing-trade; theſe were equally aſtoniſhed at the miracle, as *Simon* and his brother, and the men that were in the boat with them, where Jeſus was: *and Jeſus ſaid unto Simon*; who was at his knees, and expreſſed his dread of his majeſty, and the conſternation of mind he was in particularly: *fear not*; don't be afraid of me, I ſhall do thee no harm, nor ſhall the boats ſink, or any damage come to any perſon, or to the veſſels, nor be ſo much amazed and affrighted, at the multitude of the fiſh taken: *from henceforth thou ſhalt catch men*; alive, as the word ſignifies, or *unto life*, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions render it; thou ſhalt caſt the net of the Goſpel, and be the happy inſtrument of drawing many perſons out of the depths of ſin and miſery, in which they are plunged, into the

the way of life and ſalvation; and which was greatly verified, in the converſion of three thouſand at one caſt, under one ſermon of his, *Acts* ii. 41.

Ver. 11. *And when they had brought their ſhips to land*, &c.] Both *Simon Peter*'s, and the other in which his partners were, and which were laden with fiſh: *they forſook all*; even all their fiſh, which they doubtleſs might have made much money of, and their nets, and their ſhips, and their ſervants, and their relations, and friends: *and followed him*; Chriſt; and became his diſciples, even all four of them, *Peter*, *Andrew*, *James*, and *John*.

Ver. 12. *And it came to paſs when he was in a certain city*, &c.] Or near it, hard by it, very probably *Capernaum*; ſee *Matt*. viii. 1, 2, 5. *Behold a man full of leproſy*; a diſeaſe to which the *Jews* were very incident, and concerning which, many laws and rules are given, in *Levit*. xiii. and xiv. The ſymptoms of the ancient *lepra*, as laid down by *Galen*, *Aretæus*, *Pontanus*, *Ægineta*, *Cardan*, *Varanda*, *Gordon*, *Pharæus*, and others, are as follows. The patient's voice is hoarſe, and comes rather through the noſe than the mouth; the blood full of little white ſhining bodies, like grains of millet, which upon filtration, ſeparate themſelves from it; the ſerum is ſcabious, and deſtitute of its natural humidity, inſomuch that ſalt applied to it, does not diſſolve; it is ſo dry, that vinegar poured on it boils; and is ſo ſtrongly bound together by little imperceptible threads, that calcined lead thrown into it ſwims. The face reſembles a coal half extinct, unctuous, ſhining, and bloated, with frequent hard knobs, green at bottom, and white at top. The hair is ſhort, ſtiff, and brinded; and not to be torn off, without bringing away ſome of the rotten fleſh, to which it adheres; if it grows again, either on the head or chin, it is always white: athwart the forehead, run large wrinkles or furrows, from one temple to the other; the eyes red and inflamed, and ſhine like thoſe of a cat; the ears ſwoln and red, eaten with ulcers towards the bottom, and encompaſſed with little glands; the noſe ſunk, becauſe of the rotting of the cartilage; the tongue dry and black, ſwollen, ulcerated, divided with furrows, and ſpotted with grains of white; the ſkin covered with ulcers, that die and revive on each other, or with white ſpots, or ſcales like a fiſh; it is rough and inſenſible, and when cut, inſtead of blood, yields a ſanious liquor: it arrives in time, to ſuch a degree of inſenſibility, that the wriſt, feet, or even the large tendon, may be pierced with a needle, without the patient's feeling any pain; at laſt the noſe, fingers, toes, and even privy members, fall off entire; and by a death peculiar to each of them, anticipate that of the patient: it is added, that the body is ſo hot, that a freſh apple held in the hand an hour, will be dried and wrinkled, as if expoſed to the ſun for a week[*]. Think now what a miſerable deplorable object this man was, ſaid to be full of it. Between this diſeaſe and ſin, there is a very great likeneſs. This diſeaſe is a very filthy one, and of a defiling nature, by the ceremonial law; under which it was conſidered rather as an uncleanneſs, than as a diſeaſe; the perſon attended with it, was pronounced unclean by the prieſt, and was put out of the camp, and out of the cities and walled towns, that he might not defile others; and was obliged to put a covering on his upper lip, and cry unclean, unclean, to acknowledge his pollution, and that others might ſhun him: all mankind, by reaſon of ſin, are by the Lord pronounced filthy; and by their evil actions, not only defile themſelves, but others; evil communications, corrupt good manners; and when they are made ſenſible, freely own that their righteouſneſſes are as filthy rags, and they themſelves as an unclean thing: it is a very nauſeous and loathſome diſeaſe, as is ſin; it is abominable to God, and renders men abominable in his ſight; it cauſes the ſinner himſelf, when convinced of it, to loath and abhor himſelf: *David* calls his ſin a loathſome diſeaſe, *Pſal*. xxxviii. 7. it is of a ſpreading nature: this was a ſign of it, if it did not ſpread, it was only a ſcab; if it ſpread, it was a leproſy, *Lev*. xiii. 5, 6, 7, 8. Sin has ſpread itſelf over all mankind, and over all the powers and faculties of the ſoul, and members of the body; there's no place free of it: and as the leproſy is of a conſuming nature, it eats and waſtes the fleſh, ſee *Numb*. xii. 12. 2 *Kings* v. 10. ſo ſin eats like a canker, and brings ruin and deſtruction upon men, both in ſoul and body. This diſeaſe was incurable by medicine; perſons that had it were never ſent to a phyſician, but to a prieſt; and what he did was only this, he looked upon it, and if it was a clear caſe, he declared the perſon unclean; and if it was doubtful, he ſhut him up for ſeven days, and then inſpected him again; and after all he could not cure him; this was the work of God, 2 *Kings* v. 7. All which ſhews the nature and uſe of the law, which ſhuts men up, concludes them under ſin, and by which they have knowledge of it, but no healing: the law heals none, it is the killing letter, the miniſtration of condemnation and death; Chriſt only, by his blood and ſtripes, heals the diſeaſe of ſin, and cleanſes from it. There is one thing in the law of the leproſy very ſurprizing, and that is, that if there was any quick raw fleſh, or any ſound fleſh in the place where the leproſy was, the man was pronounced unclean; but if the leproſy covered all his ſkin, and all his fleſh, then he was pronounced clean: this intimates, that he that thinks he has ſome good thing in him, and fancies himſelf ſound and well, and truſts to his own works of righteouſneſs, he is not juſtified in the ſight of God; but if a man acknowledges that there is no ſoundneſs in his fleſh, that in him, that is, in his fleſh, dwells no good thing, but that his ſalvation is alone, by the grace and mercy of God, ſuch a man is juſtified by faith in Chriſt Jeſus: the parable of the *Phariſee* and publican, will illuſtrate this, *Luke* xviii. 10—14. *Who ſeeing Jeſus, fell on his face, and beſought him, ſaying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canſt make me clean*; ſee the note on *Matt*. viii. 2. Chriſt could cure lepers, and did; and which was a proof of his Meſſiahſhip, and is given among the ſigns of it, to *John*'s diſciples, *Matt*. xi. 5. and as there is a likeneſs between the leproſy and ſin, ſo between the cleanſing of a leper under the law, and the healing of a ſinner by Chriſt: for the cleanſing of a leper, two birds were to be taken clean and alive, which were both typical of Chriſt, and pointed at the meekneſs of his human nature, his innocence, harmleſſneſs, and purity, and that he had a life to lay down; one of theſe was to be killed, in an earthen veſſel over running water, ſhewing that Chriſt muſt be killed, his blood muſt be ſhed for the cleanſing of leprous ſinners; the earthen veſſel denoted his human nature, his fleſh, in which he was put to death; and the running water, ſignified the purifying nature of his blood, and the continued virtue of it, to cleanſe from all ſin; and the blood and the water being mixed together, may put us in mind of the blood and water which flowed from the ſide of Chriſt, when pierced with the ſpear; which was an emblem of our juſtification and ſanctification being both from him, on account of which, he is ſaid to come both by water and by blood, 1 *John* v. 6. The other bird after it was dipped with the cedar wood, ſcarlet and hyſſop in the blood of the ſlain bird, was let go alive; which typified the reſurrection of Chriſt, who was put to death in the fleſh, and quickened in the ſpirit; and who roſe again, for the juſtification of his people from all ſin: the cedar wood, ſcarlet, and hyſſop, which were uſed in the cleanſing of the leper, may either relate to the ſufferings, and death, and blood of Chriſt; the ſcarlet wool may denote the bloody ſufferings of Chriſt, thro' which he was red in his apparel; the cedar wood, may ſignify the incorruptibleneſs and preciouſneſs of the blood of Chriſt, and the hyſſop the purging virtue of it; or elſe theſe three may have regard to the three principal graces of the Spirit of God, which have to do with, and are influenced by the ſin-cleanſing blood of Chriſt: the cedar wood may ſignify the incorruptible and precious grace of faith; the green hyſſop, the lively grace of hope; and the ſcarlet, the flaming grace of love, when it is in its full exerciſe: or elſe the grace of faith, by which dealing with the blood of Chriſt, the heart is purified, is only meant; ſignified by cedar wood, for its permanency; by ſcarlet, for its concern with the crimſon blood of Chriſt; by which ſins, though as ſcarlet, are made white as wool; and by hyſſop, for its being an humble and lowly grace: now the cedar ſtick, with the ſcarlet wool, and bunch of hyſſop bound unto it, was uſed to ſprinkle the blood of the bird upon the leper ſeven times, when he was pronounced clean; and expreſſes the inſtrumentality of faith, in the application of the blood of Chriſt for cleanſing: though after this, the leper was to ſhave off all his hair, and waſh himſelf and cloaths in water; ſuggeſting to us, that holineſs of life and converſation which ſhould follow, upon cleanſing through faith in the blood of Chriſt.

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[*] Chambers's Cyclopædia in the word *leproſy*.

Ver. 13. *And he put forth his hand and touched him*, &c.] Having compaſſion on him, and commiſerating his ſad caſe: *ſaying*, *I will*, *be thou clean*; *and immediately the leproſy departed from him*; ſee the note on *Matt.* viii. 3.

Ver. 14. *And he charged him to tell no man*, &c.] Of his cure, and by whom he received it; *but go nd ſhew thyſelf to the prieſt*. The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read, *to the prieſts*: *and offer for thy cleanſing, according as Moſes has commanded, for a teſtimony unto them*; ſee the note on *Matt.* viii. 4.

Ver. 15. *But ſo much the more went there a fame abroad of him*, &c.] For the more he charged the man to keep ſilence, the more he blazed it abroad, being elated with the cure he received, and filled with gratitude to his benefactor; ſee *Mark* i. 45. *And great multitudes came together to hear*; him, or from him, as the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions add; to hear the doctrines of the Goſpel preached by him: *and to be healed by him of their infirmities*; their bodily weakneſſes and diſorders.

Ver. 16. *And he withdrew himſelf into the wilderneſs*, &c.] Into a deſart place, that he might have reſt from the fatigues of preaching and healing diſeaſes; and being alone, and free from company, might have an opportunity for private prayer to God, r ſo it follows: *and prayed*; this is to be underſtood of Chriſt, as man: as God, he is the object prayer, and petitions are often addreſſed unto him; and as mediator, he offers up the prayers of l ſaints, and preſents them to his Father; which are acceptable to him, through the incenſe of his mediation; and as man, he prayed himſelf: what he now prayed for, is not known; ſometimes he prayed for his diſciples, and for all that ſhould believe; for their converſion, ſanctification, union, perſeverance, and glorification; and ſometimes for himſelf, that the cup might paſs from him, and he be ſaved from death; but always with ſubmiſſion to the will of his Father.

Ver. 17. *And it came to paſs on a certain day*, &c.] When he was at *Capernaum*, as appears from *Mark* ii. 1. *As he was teaching*; in the houſe where ſuch numbers were gathered together, to hear the word of God preached by him, that there was not room for them, neither within the houſe, nor about the door, *Mark* ii. 2. *That there were Phariſees and doctors of the law ſitting by*; who were ſometimes called *Scribes*, and ſometimes lawyers, and were generally of the ſect of the *Phariſees*: *which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judea, and Jeruſalem*: having heard much of his doctrine and miracles, they came from all parts to watch and obſerve him, and to take all opportunities and advantages againſt him, that they might expoſe him to the people: *and the power of the Lord was preſent to heal them*; not the *Phariſees* and doctors of the law, who did not come to be healed by him, either in body or mind; but the multitude, ſome of whom came to hear his doctrine, and others to be healed of their infirmities, ver. 15. The *Perſic* verſion reads the words thus, *and from all the villages of Galilee, and from Judea, and from Jeruſalem, multitudes came, and the power of God was preſent to heal them*.

Ver. 18. *And behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palſy*, &c.] Four men brought him, as *Mark* ſays, ch. ii. 3. and which the *Ethiopic* verſion expreſſes here: *and they ſought means to bring him in*; into the houſe where Jeſus was: *and to lay him before him*; at his feet, in hope of moving his compaſſion, and to obtain a cure of him: of the nature of this diſeaſe, and of the ſort which this man's ſeems to be, ſee the note on *Mark* ii. 3.

Ver. 19. *And when they could not find by what way*, &c.] As by the door, or in at a window of the houſe: *they might bring him in*; to Jeſus, in the houſe: *becauſe of the multitude*; which was about the door, and all the fore part of the houſe: *they went upon the houſe top*; by a ladder, or pair of ſtairs, which uſually were on the outſide of houſes; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 17. the houſes of the *Jews* being flat roofed: *and let him down through the tiling with his couch, into the midſt before Jeſus*; that is, they untiled the roof, or took away the tiles which were about the trap-door, or paſſage, into the inſide of the houſe; and ſo making it wider, let down the man upon his couch, or bed, into the middle of the room and of the people, juſt before Jeſus, where he was ſitting; ſee the note on *Mark* ii. 4.

Ver. 20. *And when he ſaw their faith*, &c.] That is, *Jeſus*, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions expreſs it; when he ſaw the faith both of the paralytic man, and of the men that brought him, which was ſhewn in the pains they took, and trouble they were at, in getting him to him; *he ſaid unto him*. The *Vulgate Latin* only reads, *he ſaid*; but the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions, ſtill more fully expreſs the ſenſe, rendering it, *he ſaid to the paralytic man*; and the *Ethiopic* verſion, *he ſaid to the infirm man*; as follows: *man, thy ſins are forgiven thee*. The other Evangeliſts ſay, he ſaid *ſon*; perhaps he uſed both words: however, all agree that he pronounced the forgiveneſs of ſins, which were the cauſe of his diſeaſe; and which being removed, the effect muſt ceaſe; ſo that he had healing both for ſoul and body; ſee the note on *Matt.* ix. 2.

Ver. 21. *And the Scribes and the Phariſees began to reaſon,* &c.] To think and ſay within themſelves, and it may be to one another, in a private manner: *ſaying, who is this which ſpeaketh blaſphemies?* what vain boaſter, and blaſpheming creature is this, who aſſumes that to himſelf, which is the prerogative of God? *Who can forgive ſins but God alone?* Againſt whom they are committed, whoſe law is tranſgreſſed, and his will diſobeyed, and his juſtice injured and affronted. Certain it is, that none can forgive ſins but God; not any of the angels in heaven, or men on earth; not holy good men, nor miniſters of the Goſpel; and if Chriſt had been a mere man, though ever ſo good a man, even a ſinleſs one, or ever ſo great a prophet, he could not have forgiven ſin; but he is truly and properly God, as his being a diſcerner of the thoughts of theſe men, and his healing the paralytic man in the manner he did, are ſufficient proofs. The *Scribes* and *Phariſees* therefore, though they rightly aſcribe forgiveneſs of ſin to God alone, yet grievouſly ſinned, in imputing blaſphemy to Chriſt: they had wrong notions of Chriſt, concluding him to be but a mere man, againſt the light and evidence of his works and miracles; and alſo of his office as a Redeemer, who came to ſave his people from their ſins; and ſeem to reſtrain the power of forgiving ſin to God the Father, whereas the Son of God, being equal with him, had the ſame power, and that even on earth, to forgive ſin; ſee the note on *Mark* ii. 7.

Ver. 22. *But when Jeſus perceived their thoughts,* &c.] Being God omniſcient; *he anſwering ſaid unto them, what reaſon ye in your hearts?* This he ſaid, not as being ignorant what their reaſonings were, for it is before ſaid he perceived their thoughts, but to expoſe the wickedneſs of them; in one exemplar of *Beza*'s 'tis added, *evil things,* as in *Matt.* ix. 4. ſee the note there.

Ver. 23. *Whether is it eaſier to ſay,* &c.] *Mark* adds, *to the ſick of the palſy;* to whom Chriſt had ſaid that his ſins were forgiven him, which had given offence to the *Scribes* and *Phariſees,* imagining that he had aſſumed too much to himſelf: wherefore he propoſes the following caſe to them, which they thought was moſt eaſy for man, or more proper and peculiar to God to ſay, *thy ſins be forgiven thee, or to ſay, riſe up and walk?* Neither of them could be ſaid by a mere man, with effect, ſo as that ſins would be really remitted on ſo ſaying; or that a man ſick of a palſy, by ſuch a word ſpeaking, would be able to ſtand upon his feet and walk; but both of them were equally eaſy to him, that is truly God; and he that could ſay the one effectually, could alſo ſay the other: or in other words, he that could cure a man of a palſy with a word ſpeaking, ought not to be charged with blaſphemy, for taking upon him to forgive ſin: our Lord meant, by putting this queſtion, and acting upon it, to prove himſelf to be God, and to remove the imputation of blaſphemy from him; ſee the notes on *Matt.* ix. 5. and *Mark* ii. 9.

Ver. 24. *But that ye may know, that the ſon of man,* &c.] Whom the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* took for a mere man, in which they were miſtaken; for tho' he was really a man, and the ſon of man, yet he was God as well as man; he was God manifeſt in the fleſh: *hath power upon earth to forgive ſins;* even in the days of his fleſh, whilſt he was in his humble form on earth; for he did not ceaſe to be God by becoming man, nor loſe any branch of his power, not this of forgiving ſin, by appearing in the form of a ſervant; and, that it might be manifeſt, *he ſaid unto the ſick of the palſy:* theſe are the words of the Evangeliſt, ſignifying, that Chriſt turned himſelf from the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* to the paralytic man, and thus addreſſed him: *I ſay unto thee, ariſe, and take up thy couch, and go into thine houſe.*

Ver. 25. *And immediately he roſe up before them,* &c.] As ſoon as ever theſe words were ſpoken by Chriſt, the man, before ſick of the palſy, finding himſelf perfectly well, got off of his couch, and ſtood up on his feet before the *Scribes* and *Phariſees,* and all the people: *and took up that whereon he lay;* his couch, or bed: *and departed to his own houſe;* with it upon his back; *and went to his buſineſs,* as the *Perſic* verſion renders it: *glorifying God;* both for the healing of his body, and for the pardon of his ſins; each of which he knew none but God could do. This circumſtance is only mentioned by *Luke,* and ſhews the ſenſe the man had of the great favours beſtowed upon him: he glorified God, by aſcribing them to his goodneſs and power; by offering the ſacrifice of praiſe, or giving thanks unto him for them; by publiſhing them among his neighbours, to the honour of his name; and by living a holy life and converſation, to his glory, under a grateful ſenſe of his kindneſs: yea, he glorified Jeſus Chriſt as God, who he knew muſt be God, by forgiving his ſins, and curing his diſeaſe; he proclaimed his divine power, and aſcribed greatneſs to him; he confeſſed him as the Meſſiah, and owned him as his Saviour, and became ſubject to him as his Lord.

Ver. 26. *And they were all amazed, and they glorified God,* &c.] Not the *Phariſees,* and doctors of the law, but the common people: *and were filled with fear;* of the divine being, whoſe preſence and power they were ſenſible muſt be in this caſe: *ſaying, we have ſeen ſtrange things to-day;* paradoxes, things wonderful, unthought of, unexpected, and incredible by carnal reaſon, and what were never ſeen, nor known before; as that a man, who was ſo enfeebled by the palſy, that he was obliged to be carried on a bed by four men, yet, on a ſudden, by a word ſpeaking, roſe up, and carried his bed, on his back, home.

Ver. 27. *And after theſe things he went forth,* &c.] After his diſcourſe with the *Scribes* and *Phariſees,* and his healing of the man ſick with the palſy, he went forth from the city of *Capernaum,* to the ſea-ſide; not only for retirement and recreation, after the work of the day hitherto, but in order to meet with, and call one that was to be a diſciple of his: *and ſaw a publican named Levi;* who is ſaid to be the ſon of *Alpheus, Mark* ii. 14. and ſo it is ſaid to be in *Beza*'s ancient copy here; and who was alſo called *Matthew,* ſee *Matt.* ix. 9. *ſitting at the receit of cuſtom;* at the place where cuſtom was received, and toll taken, near the ſea-ſide, of ſuch that went over. The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read, *ſitting among publicans,* of which buſineſs he himſelf was; and theſe might be his ſervants under him, or partners with him; ſee the note on *Mark* ii. 14. *and he ſaid unto him, follow me:* of all the publicans that were there, he ſingled out *Levi,* or *Matthew,* and directed his diſcourſe to him, and called him to be a follower of him: an inſtance of powerful, ſpecial, and diſtinguiſhing grace this; ſee the note on *Matt.* ix. 9.

Ver. 28. *And he left all*, &c.] His company, his buſineſs, and all the profits of it: *roſe up*; directly; ſuch power went along with the words of Chriſt, that he could not withſtand it: *and followed him*; not only in a literal, but in a ſpiritual ſenſe, and became a diſciple of his.

Ver. 29. *And Levi made him a great feaſt in his own houſe*, &c.] At *Capernaum*, which, very likely, was made ſome time after his call, tho' recorded here; for it is not reaſonable to think there could be time enough that day to get ready ſo great a feaſt, as this is ſaid to be. *Levi*, it ſhould ſeem, was a rich man, and in gratitude to Chriſt for his ſpecial grace and favour beſtowed on him, made this entertainment for him; and he ſeems to have had alſo another view in it, to bring him into the company of his fellow-publicans, hoping he might be uſeful to them, as he had been to him; for of this nature is true grace, to wiſh for, and deſire the ſalvation of the ſouls of others, as well as a man's own: *and there was a great company of publicans, and of others*; אחרים, which word is ſometimes uſed in *Talmudic* writings for *Gentiles*; ſo אשת אחרים, *the wife of others*, is interpreted the wife of the *Cuthites*, or *Samaritans*[f]: and thus the *Jews* explain the text in *Deut.* xxiv. 14. *thou ſhalt not oppreſs an hired ſervant that is poor and needy*, whether he be *of thy brethren*, on which they make this remark, פרט לאחרים *this excepts others*; that is, as the Gloſs interprets it, it excepts the nations of the world, or the *Gentiles*: they go on to expound the text, *or of thy ſtrangers that* are *in thy land*; theſe are the proſelytes of righteouſneſs: *within thy gates*; theſe are they that eat things that are torn[g]: ſo that the *others* are diſtinguiſhed from the *Jews*, and from both the proſelytes of righteouſneſs, and of the gate; and it is eaſy to obſerve, that publicans and heathens are ſometimes mentioned together: here it means ſinners, as appears from *Matt.* ix. 10. *Mark* ii. 15. ſuch the *Gentiles* were reckoned: *that ſat down with them*; being invited by *Matthew*.

Ver. 30. *But their Scribes and Phariſees*, &c.] Not the *Scribes* of the publicans and ſinners that ſat down, but the *Scribes* of the people in general; the *Scribes* of the *Jewiſh* nation: all the eaſtern verſions leave out the word *their*: *murmured againſt his diſciples, ſaying*; or, *murmured, and ſaid unto his diſciples*, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions render it: that is, they either murmured at the publicans and ſinners ſitting down at meat; or *againſt him*, as the *Ethiopic* verſion reads: either againſt *Matthew* for inviting them; or rather againſt Chriſt for ſitting down with them: and not caring to ſpeak to him, addreſs themſelves to his diſciples in theſe words, *why do ye eat and drink with publicans and ſinners?* The other Evangeliſts repreſent theſe as ſaying, why does he, or your maſter, eat with ſuch? doubtleſs, they included both Chriſt, and his diſciples; tho' they chiefly deſigned him, and to bring an accuſation againſt him, and fix a charge upon him, in order to render him odious to the people.

Ver. 31. *And Jeſus anſwering ſaid unto them*, &c.] Knowing that they aimed at him; though, according to this Evangeliſt, they only mentioned his diſciples: however, he takes up the cauſe, and vindicates both himſelf and them, by obſerving to them the following proverb; *they that are whole need not a phyſician, but they that are ſick*: ſuggeſting hereby, that as ſuch who are in good health, who are free from all diſeaſes, wounds, bruiſes, and putrifying ſores, ſtand in no need of the advice and aſſiſtance of a phyſician, or chirurgeon, but ſuch who have either diſtempers or ſores on their bodies; ſo they, the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, who, in their own opinion, were free from the diſeaſe of ſin, original and actual, and touching the righteouſneſs of the law, were blameleſs, ſtood not in any need of him, the phyſician, who came to cure the maladies of the ſouls, as well as of the bodies of men; but ſuch perſons, who not only are ſick with ſin, but ſick of it, who are ſenſible of it, and deſire healing: and therefore this was the reaſon of his conduct, why he converſed with ſinners, and not with the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*; his buſineſs, as a phyſician, lying among the one, and not the other; ſee the notes on *Matt.* ix. 12. and *Mark* ii. 17.

Ver. 32. *I came not to call the righteous*, &c.] Such as the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* were in their own apprehenſion, and in the eſteem of others, who truſted in themſelves, that they were righteous, and ſubmitted not to the righteouſneſs of Chriſt: theſe Chriſt came not to call by his grace, and therefore did not aſſociate himſelf with them: *but ſinners to repentance*; ſuch as the publicans, and others, with them, were; and therefore he was chiefly with ſuch, and choſe to be among them: theſe he not only called to repentance by the outward miniſtry of the word, but brought them to it; he having power to beſtow the grace of repentance, as well as to call to the duty of it; ſee the notes on *Matt.* ix. 13. and *Mark* ii. 17.

Ver. 33. *And they ſay unto him*, &c.] The *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, or the diſciples of *John*; ſee *Matt.* ix. 14. *why do the diſciples of John faſt often, and make prayers?* ſet times apart frequently for faſting and prayer. The *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *why do the diſciples of John baptize frequently, faſt, and make prayers?* in which the former clauſe is added; and as without any authority, ſo without judgment, ſince it muſt ſuppoſe that the *Phariſees* did ſo likewiſe, whereas they rejected the baptiſm of *John*; for it follows, *and likewiſe* the diſciples *of the Phariſees*; who faſted often, at leaſt twice in the week, and made frequent prayers in the ſynagogues, and corners of the ſtreets, and in widows houſes. *But thine eat and drink?* inſtead of faſting and praying; ſee the note on *Matt.* ix. 14.

Ver. 34. *And he ſaid unto them*, &c.] The diſciples of *John*, or the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*: *can ye make the children of the bride-chamber faſt, while the bridegroom is with them?* ſignifying, that he was the bridegroom, and his diſciples the children of the bride-chamber; and that as it is unreaſonable to expect, and morally impoſſible, that perſons, attending the feſtivals of a nuptial ſolemnity, ſhould be engaged in ſevere faſtings; ſo it was not to be thought, that whilſt Chriſt was corporally preſent with his diſciples, that they ſhould be prevailed upon to live ſuch an auſtere and mortified life.

Ver. 35. *But the days will come*, &c.] And that in a very little time, as they did: *when the bridegroom ſhall be taken away from them*; as their maſter, *John*, was taken away from them, and now in priſon, and therefore it was no wonder they mourned and faſted; ſignifying, that in a ſhort time he, the bridegroom of his church and people, ſhould be taken away by death: *and then they ſhall faſt in thoſe days*; or mourn, and be humbled, of which faſting was a ſign, for the death of their Lord, and on account of the many afflictions and perſecutions they ſhould endure for his ſake; ſee the note on *Matt.* ix. 15.

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[f] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 52. 2. & Gloſſ. in ib.

[g] T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 111. 2. & Gloſſ. in ib.

Ver. 36. *And he ſpake alſo a parable unto them,* &c.] The *Scribes* and *Phariſees*; illuſtrating what he had juſt now ſaid: *no man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old*; by *a piece of a new garment*, meaning the new and upſtart notions and traditions of the elders, which were ſo in compariſon of the law of *Moſes*; and by the *old*, the robe of their own righteouſneſs, wrought out in obedience to the moral and ceremonial law: and Chriſt ſuggeſts, that to join theſe together, in order to patch up a garment of righteouſneſs, to appear in before God, was equally as weak and ridiculous, as to put a piece of new and undreſſed cloth into a garment that was old, and wore thread-bare. *If otherwiſe, then both the new maketh the rent*; that is, much worſe than it was, as it is expreſſed both in *Matthew* and *Mark*; the old and new cloth being unſuitable, and not of equal ſtrength to hold together: by this Chriſt intimates, that the *Jews*, by being directed to the obſervance of the traditions of the elders, were drawn off from a regard to the commandments of God; ſo that inſtead of having a better righteouſneſs, they had one much the worſe, a ragged, and a rent one. *And the piece that was taken out of the new, agreeth not with the old*; and ſo the ſtatutes of men, and the ordinances of God, or the traditions of the elders, and the commands of God, are no more like one another, than the piece of a new and an old garment, and as unlike is obedience to the one, and to the other; ſee the notes on *Matt.* ix. 16, 17. and *Mark* ii. 21, 22. where this, and the following parable, are more largely explained.

Ver. 37. *And no man putteth new wine into old bottles,* &c.] To which the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* are here compared, into whoſe hearts the new wine of Goſpel-grace was not put; or to whom was not made known the love of God comparable to new wine; nor the bleſſings of the new covenant of grace, now exhibited; nor the truths of the Goſpel now more clearly and newly revealed. *Elſe the new wine will burſt the bottles, and be ſpilled*; they not being able to receive and bear theſe things, no, not the relation of them: theſe were hard ſayings to them, of which they ſaid, who can hear them? they could not hear them with patience, much leſs receive them in the love of them; but were at once filled with wrath, and indignation, and rejected them. *And the bottles ſhall periſh*; their condemnation ſhall be the greater.

Ver. 38. *But new wine muſt be put into new bottles,* &c.] Such as the diſciples of Chriſt were, and ſinners called to repentance are, who are renewed by the Spirit and grace of God: and theſe are filled with ſpiritual joy and comfort, as with new wine, ariſing from diſcoveries of the love of God, a view of intereſt in the bleſſings of the covenant, and an application of Goſpel-truths and promiſes. *And both are preſerved*; both theſe renewed ones, who are preſerved unto the kingdom and glory of Chriſt; and the grace that is put into them, which is a well of living water, ſpringing up to everlaſting life; as well as the Goſpel, and its bleſſings.

Ver. 39. *No man alſo having drunk old* wine, &c.] *Wine*, though not in the text, is rightly ſupplied by our tranſlators, as it is by the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions: *ſtraightway deſireth new*; new wine: *for he ſaith, the old is better*; old wine is more grateful, more generous, and more reviving to the ſpirits, than new wine is. This is a proverbial expreſſion, and which *Luke* only records; which may be applied to natural men, who having drunk the old wine of their carnal luſts and pleaſures, do not deſire the new wine of the Goſpel, and of the grace of God, and of ſpiritual things, but prefer their old ſins and luſts unto them: carnal luſts may be ſignified by old wine, both for the antiquity of them, being as old as men themſelves, and therefore called the old man, and for the gratefulneſs of them to them; and who may be ſaid to drink of them, as they do drink iniquity like water; which is expreſſive of their great deſire and thirſt after it, and delight in it: now whilſt they are ſuch, they can't deſire the new wine of the Goſpel, which is inſipid and ungrateful to them; nor the grace of God, to which their carnal minds are enmity; nor any thing that is evangelical and ſpiritual, at leaſt not ſtraightway, or immediately; not until they are regenerated by the Spirit of God, and their taſte is changed, but will prefer their old luſts and former courſe of life unto them: or it may be accommodated to legaliſts, and men of a *phariſaical* ſpirit, to whom ſpiritual and evangelical things are very diſagreeable: *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, who have drank of the old wine of the law, and the traditions of the elders, do not deſire the new wine of the Goſpel, but prefer the former to it: the ceremonial law may be expreſſed by old wine, being originally inſtituted of God, and acceptable to him; and one part of which lay in libations of wine, and was of long ſtanding, but now waxen old, and ready to vaniſh away; and likewiſe the traditions of the elders, which were highly pleaſing to the *Phariſees*, and which pretended to great antiquity: and of theſe they might be ſaid to drink, being inured to them from their youth, and therefore could not like the new diſpenſation of the Goſpel, neither its doctrines, nor its ordinances; but preferred their old laws and traditions to them: or rather this proverb, as uſed by Chriſt here, may be conſidered, as intimating the reaſon why the diſciples did not give into the practices of the *Phariſees*, becauſe they had drank of the old wine of the Goſpel; which, as upon ſome account it may be called new, becauſe of the new diſpenſation, freſh diſcovery, and clearer revelation of it; in other reſpects it may be ſaid to be old, being what was prepared and ordained before the world began; and what *Adam* drank of, in the firſt hint and promiſe of the Meſſiah; and after him *Noah*, the preacher of righteouſneſs; and *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, to whom the Goſpel was preached before; and even *Moſes*, who wrote and teſtified of Chriſt, and *David*, and *Solomon*, and *Iſaiah*, and all the prophets of the former diſpenſation: and now the diſciples having more largely drank of it, under the miniſtry of Chriſt, could not eaſily deſire the new wine of the faſtings and prayers of the *Phariſees*, and *John*'s diſciples; for the old wine of the Goſpel was much better in their eſteem, more grateful to the taſte, more refreſhing to their ſpirits, and more ſalutary and healthful, being the wholeſome words of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Old wine, with the *Jews*[h], was wine of three years old, and was always by them preferred to new: ſo they deſcant on thoſe words in *Deut.* xv. 16. *becauſe he is well with thee*[i], (*i.e.* the ſervant) "with thee in food, "with thee in drink; for thou ſhalt not eat bread "of fine flour, and he eat bread of bran; or thou "drink, ישן, *old wine*, and he drink, ין חדש", *new* "*wine*." And ſometimes they uſe this diſtinction of old and new wine proverbially and parabolically, as here [k]. “ *Rabbi Joſe bar Juda*, a man of a “ village in *Babylon*, uſed to ſay, he that learns “ of young men, to what is he like? to him that “ eateth unripe grapes, and drinks wine out of the “ fat: but he that learns of old men, to what is “ he like? to him that eats ripe grapes, and drinks, “ יין ישן, *old wine*:” ſignifying, that the knowledge of old men is more ſolid, and mature, and unmixed, and free from dregs of ignorance, than that of young men: though it follows, that “ *Ribbi* had uſed to ſay, don't look upon the “ tankard, but on what is in it; for ſometimes “ there is a new tankard full of old wine, and an “ old one in which there is not ſo much as new “ in it:” ſignifying, that ſometimes young men are full of wiſdom and knowledge, when old men are entirely devoid of them.

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[h] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 51. 1. & Gloſſ. in ib. & Bava Bathra, fol. 98. 1. & Maimon. Hilch. Mecira, c. 17. §. 6.

[i] T. Bab. Kidduſhin, fol. 22. 1.

## CHAP. VI.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to paſs on the ſecond ſabbath-day after the firſt*, &c.] Or *ſecond firſt ſabbath*, concerning which interpreters are greatly divided. Some think, that it was either the ſeventh day of the feaſt of unleavened bread, or the eighth day of the feaſt of tabernacles. Others, that it was the ſabbath which fell that year on the day of *Pentecoſt*; and that as there were three grand feſtivals among the *Jews*, the feaſts of paſſover, *Pentecoſt*, and tabernacles; ſo when the ſabbath-day fell on the feaſt of the paſſover, it was called the firſt prime ſabbath, when on the feaſt of *Pentecoſt*, it was called the ſecond prime ſabbath, and when on the feaſt of tabernacles, the third prime ſabbath. Others have been of opinion, that as the *Jews* had two beginnings of their year, the one on civil accounts in *Tiſri*, the other on eccleſiaſtical accounts in *Niſan*; ſo the firſt ſabbath in *Tiſri* was called the firſt firſt ſabbath, and that in *Niſan*, which was this, the ſecond firſt ſabbath: but what ſeems moſt likely is, that this ſabbath was, as it may be rendered, the *firſt ſabbath after the ſecond*; that is, the firſt ſabbath after the ſecond day of the paſſover, when the ſheaf of the firſt fruits was offered, and harveſt might be begun; which ſuits well with ears of corn being ripe at this time, which the diſciples rubbed. So the *Jews* reckoned the ſeven weeks from thence to *Pentecoſt* by ſabbaths; the firſt after the ſecond day they called the ſecond firſt, or the firſt after the ſecond day; the ſecond they called the ſecond ſecond; and the third was named the ſecond third; and ſo on, the ſecond fourth, the ſecond fifth, the ſecond ſixth, and ſecond ſeventh, which brought on *Pentecoſt*, when the harveſt was ended. So in the *Jewiſh* liturgies, there are collects for the firſt ſabbath after the paſſover, and for the ſecond ſabbath after the paſſover, and ſo on to the ſabbath before *Pentecoſt*. The eaſtern verſions, *Syriac*, *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic*, not knowing what ſhould be meant by it, have only rendered it, *on the ſabbath-day*, as in *Matt*. xii. 1. ſee the note there. *That he went thro' the corn fields*; that is, *Jeſus*, as the *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions: *and his diſciples plucked the ears of corn, and did eat, rubbing* them *in* their *hands*: after they had plucked them they rubbed them in their hands to get clean off the huſk or beard, that were on them, and then eat the grains. And as plucking of the ears of corn was forbidden on a ſabbath-day, ſee the note on *Matt*. xii. 2. ſo was rubbing them; tho' if they were rubbed before, the chaff might be blown off from them in the hand, and eat on the ſabbath-day: the rule is this [l]; “ he that rubs ears of corn on “ the evening of the ſabbath, (*i. e.* on the ſixth “ day) may blow them from hand to hand on the “ morrow, and eat.” But the diſciples both plucked them, and rubbed them, and blew away the chaff from them on the ſabbath-day, and therefore were complained of by the *Phariſees*.

Ver. 2. *And certain of the Phariſees ſaid unto them*, &c.] Unto the diſciples. The Evangeliſts *Matthew* and *Mark* ſay, that they ſaid this to Jeſus: no doubt but they ſaid it to both, firſt to one, and then to the other; probably laſt of all to Chriſt, who returned an anſwer to it: *why do ye that which is not lawful on the ſabbath-day*; as to pluck ears of corn, and rub them, and eat them; ſee the note on *Matt*. xii. 2.

Ver. 3, 4. *And Jeſus anſwering them, ſaid*, &c.] For they brought the charge againſt the diſciples to him, being deſirous to know what he would ſay, and that they might have ſomething to accuſe him of; and who, at once, took up the cauſe of his diſciples, and vindicated them, by obſerving what *David* did, when he, and his men, were an hungry; how that he went into the tabernacle, and took the ſhew-bread, and eat of it, and gave it to his men, who alſo eat of it; which, according to the law, was only allowed to prieſts; and by taking notice of another inſtance, which this Evangeliſt does not relate; namely, how on the ſabbath-days the prieſts, by doing various ſervile works, profaned the ſabbath-day, and yet were not charged with any blame; ſee the notes on *Matt*. xii. 3, 4, 5.

Ver. 5. *And he ſaid unto them*, &c.] He adds this at the cloſe of the inſtances he gave, at the end of his vindication of his diſciples, and diſcourſe with the *Phariſees*, as a full anſwer to their cavils: *that the ſon of man is Lord alſo of the ſabbath*; and may do what he will, and ſuffer his diſciples to do whatever he pleaſes on that day; ſee the note on *Matt*. xii. 8.

Ver. 6. *And it came to paſs alſo on another ſabbath*, &c.] Whether the following ſabbath, or ſome time after, is not certain, *that he entered into the ſynagogue*. The *Arabic* verſion reads, *into their ſynagogue*, as in *Matt*. xii. 9. the ſynagogue of the *Jews*; in what place, whether at *Capernaum*, or ſome other city of *Galilee*, is not ſo clear: *and taught*; explained the ſcriptures to the people, and inſtructed them in the doctrines of the Goſpel: *and there was a man whoſe right hand was withered*; who was in the ſynagogue, and one of his hearers; ſee the note on *Matt*. xii. 10.

Ver. 7. *And the Scribes and Phariſees watched him*, &c.] See the note on *Mark* iii. 2. *whether he would heal on the ſabbath-day*; there being ſuch an object before him: *that they might find an accuſation againſt him*; as they had before againſt his diſciples.

Ver. 8. *But he knew their thoughts*, &c.] Being the omniſcient God; tho' they had ſaid nothing of their intentions, he knew what they deſigned, ſhould he heal the man with his withered hand, as they expected he would: *and ſaid to the man which had the withered hand, riſe up, and ſtand forth in the midſt*. The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions add, *of the ſynagogue*, and which is the true ſenſe; ſee the note on *Mark* iii. 3. *and he aroſe and ſtood forth*; he roſe up from his ſeat, and ſtood up in the midſt of the ſynagogue, and of the people, that he might be ſeen of all.

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[k] Pirke Abot, c. 4. §. 20.

[l] T. Bab. Betza, fol. 12. 2. & 13. 2. Vid. Maimon. Hilch. Sabbat, c. 21. §. 14, 17.

Ver. 9. *Then ſaid Jeſus unto them*, &c.] The *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, who were watching him, and whoſe thoughts, and the reaſonings of their minds, purpoſes, and intentions, he full well knew: *I will aſk you one thing*; or queſtion, as they had aſked him one before; ſee *Matt.* xii. 10. *is it lawful on the ſabbath-days to do good, or to do evil? to ſave life, or to deſtroy it?* ſee the note on *Mark* iii. 4. to which may be added, that to ſave life on the ſabbath-day was agreeable to their own canons: there were many things which they allowed might be done on the ſabbath-day, when life was in danger, which otherwiſe were not lawful; ſee the note on *Matt.* xii. 8.

Ver. 10. *And looking round about upon them all*, &c.] The *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, and the reſt of the people in the ſynagogue; ſee the note on *Mark* iii. 5. *he ſaid to the man*; who had the withered hand, *ſtretch forth thy hand, and he did ſo*: he ſtretched it out, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions render it, which he was not able to do before: *and his hand was reſtored well as the other*; the phraſe, *well as the other*, is left out in one copy, and in the *Vulgate Latin* verſion; and ſo is the word *well* in the *Syriac* and *Arabic* verſions; and the word *immediately* is added in the *Ethiopic* verſion. And certain it is, that his withered hand was reſtored ſound and well as the other, directly.

Ver. 11. *And they were filled with madneſs*, &c.] Both at the cure, and becauſe they could not anſwer him; nor properly fix a charge upon him, or accuſe him before the people, without bringing their reſentments on them: *and communed one with another what they might do with Jeſus*: this they did after they came out of the ſynagogue, and when with the *Herodians*, as in *Mark* iii. 6. ſee the note there.

Ver. 12. *And it came to paſs in thoſe days*, &c.] When Chriſt was teaching by the lake of *Genneſareth*, or in one or other of the cities of *Galilee* near that place: *that he went out*; of the ſynagogue and city where he had been: *into a mountain to pray*; for the ſake of ſolitude, and which lay near the ſea of *Tiberias*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xiv. 23. *and continued all night in prayer to God*; or *with God*, as the *Ethiopic* verſion renders it; or *in the prayer of God*, as the phraſe may be literally rendered; not in a prayer of God's making; tho' the *Jews*[m] ſometimes ſpeak of the prayer of God, and give us a form of it: but either this reſpects the object of his prayer; it was made to God, as our tranſlation ſuggeſts; or the nature, matter, and manner of it: it was a divine prayer, it regarded divine things, and was put up in a very fervent manner, and with great vehemence: ſo the coals of love or jealouſy are ſaid to be *coals of fire, which hath* שלהבת יה, *the flame of Jehovah*; that is, as we render it, *a moſt vehement flame*, *Cant.* viii. 6. In like manner, *prayer of God* is a moſt vehement prayer; ſtrong cries ſent up to God with great eagerneſs and importunity, fervency and devotion; and ſuch was Chriſt's prayer, and in which he continued all night: unleſs by the prayer of God ſhould be meant, as is thought by many, an houſe of prayer to God, in which Chriſt lodged all night, and ſpent it in prayer to God in it. Certain it is, the *Jews* had their *proſeuchæ*, or prayer-houſes. *Philo* the *Jew*[n] often ſpeaks of them, and ſo does *Joſephus*[o]; and there ſeems to be mention made of them in the *Talmudic* writings: when *R. Jochanan ben Zaccai* came to *Veſpaſian*, in his camp before *Jeruſalem*, *Veſpaſian* aſked him, what he ſhould give him; he replied[p], "I deſire nothing of thee "but this *Jabneh*, (a famous univerſity) that I "may teach in it the diſciples, and fix in it, תפלה, "*an oratory*, or *prayer-houſe*, and do in it all the "commandments ſaid in the law." And in another place[q], "*R. Judah* ſays, that *Samuel* ſaid it "is free for a man to make water within four cubits, של תפילה; which I ſhould chuſe to render, "*of the proſeucha*, or *prayer-houſe*:" though the *Gemariſts* afterwards, and ſo the *Gloſs* ſeem to explain it of the time after prayer, in which a man ſhould wait before he evacuates, even as long as he might go the length of four cubits. *Juvenal*[r] has reference to one of theſe oratories, when he ſays, *in qua te quæro proſeucha?* and in one of theſe, 'tis very likely, Chriſt was in prayer all night long; for by the ſea-ſide, and by the ſide of rivers, theſe oratories were uſed to be; ſee *Acts* xvi. 13, 16.

Ver. 13. *And when it was day*, &c.] Or morning; having ſpent the whole night in prayer to God, no doubt for his diſciples, whom he was about to ſend forth as his apoſtles, to preach his Goſpel, and work miracles, and for their ſucceſs therein: *he called unto him his diſciples*; the whole company of them, as in ver. 17. all that were his followers, and profeſſed to believe in him, or as many as he pleaſed; ſee *Mark* iii. 13. *And of them he choſe twelve*; and ordained them, and ſent them out to preach, heal ſickneſſes, and caſt out devils: *whom he alſo named apoſtles*; or *meſſengers*, from their being ſent by him on ſuch important buſineſs; and their names are as follow.

Ver. 14. *Simon, whom he alſo named Peter*, &c.] Which ſignifies a rock, or ſtone, as *Cephas* alſo does, ſee *John* i. 42. from his conſtancy, ſtedfaſtneſs, and ſolidity: *and Andrew his brother*; who was called at the ſame time with him, and were brethren, both in nature and grace: *James* and *John*; the two ſons of *Zebedee*, who were called next: *Philip and Bartholomew*; the latter of theſe, is by ſome thought to be *Nathanael*.

Ver. 15. *Matthew* and *Thomas*, &c.] The firſt of theſe was a publican, and who alſo was called *Levi*; and the latter had beſides, the name of *Didymus*, and was he that was ſo unbelieving of Chriſt's reſurrection: *James* the ſon *of Alpheus*; ſometimes called *James* the leſs, and the brother of our Lord: *and Simon called Zelotes*; or the *Canaanite*; ſee the note on *Matt.* x. 4.

Ver. 16. *And Judas* the brother *of James*, &c.] Of that *James*, that was the ſon of *Alpheus*; though the *Syriac* and *Arabic* verſions call him *the ſon of James*, very wrongly: this *Judas* was alſo called *Thaddæus* and *Lebbæus*, and is the writer of the epiſtle that bears his name: *and Judas Iſcariot, which alſo was the traitor*; both his ſurname and his character are mentioned, to diſtinguiſh him from the other *Judas*: it is eaſy to obſerve, that theſe twelve are mentioned by pairs, or couples, and ſo they were ſent out, two by two; ſee *Mark* vi. 7. as were alſo the ſeventy diſciples afterwards; ſee *Luke* x. 1 There ſeems to be an alluſion to the pairs and couples of the *Jewiſh* fathers and doctors, who in their ſucceſſion are thus paired: *Joſe ben Joezer*, and *Joſeph ben Jochanan*; *Joſhua ben Perachia*,

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[m] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 7. 1. Bereſhit Rabba, §. 56, fol. 50. 2.

[n] De Vita Moſis, l. 3. p. 685. in Flaccum, p. 971, 972, 982. leg. ad Caium, p. 1011, 1012, 1013, 1014, 1016, 1040, 1043.

[o] In Vita.

[p] Abot R. Nathan, c. 4. fol. 2. 4.

[q] T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 27. 2.

[r] Satyr. 3. l. 295.

*chia*, and *Nathan* the *Arbelite*; *Simeon ben Shetach*, and *Judah ben Tabai*; *Shemaia* and *Abtalion*; the two ſons of *Bethira*, whoſe names were *Judah* and *Joſhua*; *Hillell* and *Shammai* [s]: all before Chriſt's time.

Ver. 17. *And he came down with them*, &c.] With the twelve apoſtles, from the top of the mountain, where he had been praying all night, and where he had been that morning, ordaining and giving inſtructions to, the twelve he had choſen: *and ſtood in the plain*; in a lower part of the mountain, in a plain place on it; which was large, and capable of holding a great number of people; for it was ſtill upon the mount, that Chriſt taught his diſciples, and ſaid many of the things hereafter mentioned in this chapter; ſee *Matt.* v. 1. *And the company of his diſciples*; not only the twelve, but the large number out of which he had choſen twelve: *and a great multitude of people*; who were hearers of him, and attendants on him, and who had a great eſteem for him, tho' they were not as yet of the number of his diſciples; who came *out of all Judea, and Jeruſalem, and from the ſea-coaſt of Tyre and Sidon*: drawn from theſe ſeveral parts by the fame of him, ſome for one thing, and ſome another; ſome of *which came to hear him*: to hear him preach, and that they might know what manner of doctrine he taught: *and* others of them, *to be healed of their diſeaſes*; their bodily diſeaſes, and ſome came perhaps for both.

Ver. 18. *And they that were vexed with unclean ſpirits*, &c.] Were poſſeſſed with devils, and ſadly tormented and afflicted by them: *and they were healed*; both ſuch that had bodily diſeaſes, and were under diabolical poſſeſſions.

Ver. 19. *And the whole multitude ſought to touch him*, &c.] That is, the multitude of thoſe that were ſick and poſſeſſed; for they were perſuaded, and they found it true by experience, that if they could but touch any part of his body, or his garments, they ſhould be cured of their diſeaſes: *for there went virtue out of him*; in great abundance, as water from a fountain; without his ſpeaking a word, or uſing any geſture, ſuch as laying his hands on them: *and they were healed*; in this ſecret and private way, of whatſoever diſeaſe they were afflicted with.

Ver. 20. *And he lifted up his eyes on his diſciples*, &c.] Either the whole company of them, or rather the twelve apoſtles, whom he ſaw coming to him, and fixing his eyes on them, he ſat, *and ſaid*; what follows, with many other things recorded by *Matthew*: *bleſſed be ye poor*; not only in the things of this world, having left all for Chriſt, but poor in ſpirit, as in *Matt.* v. 3. ſee the note there: *for yours is the kingdom of God*; or *heaven*, ſo in *Matt.* v. 3.

Ver. 21. *Bleſſed are ye that hunger now*, &c.] Not only ſuffer hunger and thirſt in a literal ſenſe, in this preſent life, but who have hunger and thirſt in a ſpiritual ſenſe, after righteouſneſs and eternal life, as in *Matt.* v. 6. where it is alſo ſaid as here: *for ye ſhall be filled*; with righteouſneſs and life; ſee the note there: *bleſſed are ye that weep now*; under afflictions and preſſures of life, and mourn for ſin, their own, and others: *for ye ſhall laugh*; be filled with ſpiritual joy and pleaſure, and be comforted with the conſolations of the Spirit; ſee the note on *Matt.* v. 4.

Ver. 22. *Bleſſed are ye when men ſhall hate you*, &c.] For the ſake of Chriſt, and his Goſpel: *and when they ſhall ſeparate you*; from their company, either from civil converſation with them, as if they were *Gentiles* and uncircumciſed perſons; or from their religious aſſemblies, and ſo may have reſpect to that ſort of excommunication in uſe among the *Jews*, called, נדוי, or *ſeparation*; by which perſons were not only excluded from the congregation, but from all civil ſociety and commerce: ſuch a perſon might not ſit nearer to another, than four cubits, and this continued for thirty days; and if not diſcharged then, he continued thirty more [t]: *and ſhall reproach you*; as hereticks, apoſtates, and enemies to the law of *Moſes*, as the *Jews* did reproach the chriſtians; *and caſt out your name as evil*; or *as of evil men*, as the *Syriac* and *Arabic* verſions render it: this may have reſpect to the greater ſorts of excommunication uſed among them, called *Shammatha* and *Cherem*, by which a perſon was accurſed, and devoted to deſtruction; ſo that our Lord's meaning is, that they ſhould be eſteemed and treated as the worſt of men, and ſtigmatized in the vileſt manner they were capable of: *for the Son of man's ſake*; not for any immorality committed by them, but only for profeſſing and preaching, that the Meſſiah was come in the fleſh, and that Jeſus of *Nazareth* was he; and that he who was the Son of man, according to his human nature, was the Son of God according to his divine nature.

Ver. 23. *Rejoice ye in that day*, &c.] When they ſhould be hated, diſcarded, reproached, and anathematized: *and leap for joy*; as if the greateſt honour and happineſs imaginable, had been conferred on them; and as perſons do, when in the greateſt rapture: *for behold, your reward is great in heaven, for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets*; ſee the note on *Matt.* v. 12.

Ver. 24. *But wo unto you that are rich*, &c.] Not in worldly riches and ſubſtance, for ſome of theſe have been, and are happy perſons in a ſpiritual ſenſe; and at moſt, it can only mean ſuch, who truſt in their riches, and place their happineſs in them; but it chiefly regards ſuch, as are rich in their own opinion, and ſtand in need of nothing; who place their confidence in their own righteouſneſs, and do not apply to Chriſt, in whom alone are durable riches and righteouſneſs: *for ye have received your conſolation*; which they take from their own works, and a very unſtable and ſhort lived one it is; for while they are crying peace, peace, to themſelves, from their own ſervices, ſudden deſtruction comes upon them, and all their comforts vaniſh away: for there is no true ſolid comfort, but in Chriſt, and in his righteouſneſs; that adminiſters conſolation now, and lays a foundation for everlaſting comfort hereafter.

Ver. 25. *Wo unto you that are full*, &c.] Not ſo much with the plenty and affluence of the things of this life, as of themſelves, and their own righteouſneſs; and ſo with conceit, vanity, and pride, and have no appetite for ſpiritual things; nor do they hunger and thirſt after Chriſt, and the grace that is in him: *for ye ſhall hunger*: not that they ſhall truly and ſpiritually deſire an intereſt in Chriſt, and his righteouſneſs, or heaven and eternal life hereafter; but they ſhall be in ſtarving and famiſhing circumſtances; and whilſt the ſaints are feeding upon the joys and glories of the other world, compared to a banquet, they ſhall be without, and have no ſhare in theſe things; ſee *Iſa.* lxv. 13, 14. *Wo unto you that laugh now*; at ſin, rejoice in iniquity, make a mock at it, inſtead of mourning for it; or that glory in themſelves, and in their righteouſneſs, and rejoice in their boaſtings: *for ye ſhall mourn and weep*;

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[s] Pirke Abot, c. 1.

[t] Vid. Maimon. Talmud Tora, c. 7. §. 4, 5, 6.

*weep*; ſhall be caſt into outer darkneſs, where are weeping, wailing, and gnaſhing of teeth; and for all the fire they have kindled, and ſparks they have encompaſſed themſelves with, and danced in and about, this they ſhall have at the hand of God, they ſhall lie down in ſorrow, and ever continue in it.

Ver. 26. *Wo unto you when all men ſhall ſpeak well of you*, &c.] The word *all*, is left out in the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, and is wanting in many copies, though it is in the *Alexandrian* copy; and the meaning is, it looks ill in perſons, when the men of the world, wicked men, all of them, or the greater part of them, applaud and commend them; for this can never be, if they are truly religious perſons, and are faithful to their principles, and upright in their practices; and do not connive at, or comply with the errors and evil ways of wicked men; for it is no bad ſign, to have the good word of good men, and therefore theſe muſt be excepted, and the paſſage muſt be limited to bad men; *for ſo did their fathers to the falſe prophets*; they ſpoke well of them, and heaped favours, riches, and honours upon them, that they might propheſy unto them ſmooth things; ſee 1 *Kings* xxii. 6, 12, 27. *Iſa.* xxx. 10.

Ver. 27. *But I ſay unto you which hear*, &c.] The *Ethiopic* verſion adds *me*, and the generality of interpreters underſtand the paſſage of the hearers of Chriſt, as diſtinct from the diſciples, or together with them, and of the better ſort of them; and of ſuch as had ears to hear, and who heard with a deſire of underſtanding, and of putting into practice what they heard: but I rather think it regards the hearers of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, then preſent, who had heard and received the traditions of the elders, to which the following rules of Chriſt are oppoſed; and to each of which, with others in *Matthew*, theſe words are prefixed; *ye have heard that it was ſaid by them of old time——but I ſay unto you*, &c. *Matt.* v. 21, 27, 33, 38, 43. with which compare this phraſe, and the ſenſe will appear to be this; to you that hear day by day, the traditions of the elders urged upon you, and the falſe gloſſes the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* put upon the word of God; in oppoſition to them, I ſay to you what follows: *love your enemies*; whereas you have heard them ſay, hate your enemies, keep enmity in your hearts to them, and revenge yourſelves on them: *do good to them that hate you*; whereas you have heard it ſaid, that you ſhould only do good to your friends, and ſhould keep anger in your boſoms to ſuch who hate you, and do you an injury; ſee the notes on *Matt.* v. 43, 44.

Ver. 28. *Bleſs them that curſe you*, &c.] In common diſcourſe, or anathematize you in their ſynagogues: *and pray for them which deſpitefully uſe you*: ſo Chriſt himſelf did; ſee the note on *Matt.* v. 44.

Ver. 29. *And unto him that ſmiteth thee on the one cheek*, &c.] The right cheek: *offer alſo the other*; the left cheek, by turning it to him, that he may ſmite that likewiſe, if he thinks fit: by which proverbial expreſſion, Chriſt teaches patience in bearing injuries and affronts, and not to ſeek private revenge; but rather ſuffer more, than indulge ſuch a temper; and for the ſame purpoſe, is what follows urged: *and him that taketh away thy cloak, forbid not* to take thy *coat alſo*; the phraſe is inverted in *Matthew*; ſee the notes on *Matt.* v. 39, 40.

Ver. 30. *And give to every man that aſketh*, &c.] See the note on *Matt.* v. 42. *And of him that taketh away thy goods*; not by force, but by conſent, having either lent them, or ſold them to him: for if they were taken away by force, the perſon ſo taking them, was to be deemed a thief and a robber, and to be treated as ſuch; but one that takes them by agreement, and is not able to make a return of them, or to give a valuable conſideration for them, of ſuch an one *aſk* them *not again*; don't exact or demand them, but give him a releaſe, as the law requires, in *Deut.* xv. 2. which ſeems to be reſpected here; and where the ſame word is uſed by the *Septuagint*, as here.

Ver. 31. *And as ye would that men ſhould do to you*, &c.] In matters of juſtice and beneficence, were they in your caſe, and you in theirs; *do ye alſo to them likewiſe*: a golden rule this, agreeable to the light of nature, and divine revelation, and is the ſum and ſubſtance of the law and prophets; ſee the note on *Matt.* vii. 12.

Ver. 32. *For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye?* &c.] Or, *what grace have ye?* this is no fruit, nor evidence of grace, nor any exerciſe of the true grace of love; nor is it any favour conferr'd upon the object loved, which deſerves the reſpect ſhown, nor can any reward be expected for ſuch treatment: and thus it is expreſſed in *Matthew*, *what reward have ye?* and the *Arabic* verſion renders it ſo here; *for ſinners alſo love thoſe who love them*: men that are deſtitute of the grace of God, profligate ſinners, even the worſt of them, ſuch as publicans, do this; ſee the note on *Matt.* v. 46.

Ver. 33. *And if ye do good to them which do good to you*, &c.] As one good turn deſerves another: *what thank have ye?* what grace or goodneſs is there in ſuch an action? what glory or merit is there in it? *for ſinners alſo do even the ſame*; wherefore no man ſhould conclude himſelf a righteous man, or better than ſinners, on ſuch an account: this is to be found among the worſt of men, and is natural to them, unleſs they are brutes indeed, to be kind to ſuch as are kind to them. And yet, this was the whole of the doctrine of the *Jews* about doing good to men: for ſo they ſay [u], "an *Iſraelite* is obliged to do good to an *Iſraelite* his companion, and to lend without uſury: this is kindneſs and goodneſs, and a greater good it is than a gift; for many men are aſhamed to take a gift, and are not aſhamed to take a loan: but not ſo an *Iſraelite* to a *Gentile*; for he is not bound to do good, or ſhew kindneſs to him, or to lend him his money freely; for many of them hate the *Iſraelites*; but it muſt be owned, that if a *Gentile* does a kindneſs, or good, to an *Iſraelite*; the *Iſraelite* is alſo bound to ſhew kindneſs to him, and do him good." In direct oppoſition to ſuch narrow ſentiments does our Lord deliver himſelf in this, and the following verſes.

Ver. 34. *And if ye lend them of whom ye hope to receive*, &c.] The ſame again, as from their brethren the *Jews*; or uſury, as from the *Gentiles*: *what thank have ye?* and yet they looked upon this, in the firſt inſtance of it, as a very great kindneſs, and act of goodneſs, as appears from the above citation: *for ſinners alſo lend to ſinners, to receive as much again*; or *what is equal*, and anſwerable to what they have lent them; that is, the ſame, or what is equivalent to it.

Ver. 35. *But love ye your enemies*, &c.] As before urged in ver. 27. *and do good and lend*; no to your friends only, but to your enemies: *hoping for nothing again*; either principal or intereſt, deſpairing of ſeeing either; lending to ſuch perſons, from whom, in all appearance, it is never to be expected again. The *Perſic* verſion renders it, *that ye may not cauſe any to deſpair*; and the *Syriac* verſion, *that ye may not cut off*, or *cauſe to ceaſe the hope of men*; and the *Arabic* verſion, *that ye do not deceive the hope of any*; that is, by ſending ſuch away, without lending to them, who come big with expectations of ſucceeding: *and your reward ſhall be great*: God will bleſs you in your worldly ſubſtance here, and will not forget your beneficence hereafter: *and ye ſhall be the children of the higheſt*; that is, of God; one of whoſe names is, עליון, *the moſt high*; ſee *Pſal.* lxxxii. 6. the meaning is, that ſuch who from principles of grace, and with right views, do ſuch acts of kindneſs and beneficence to their fellow creatures and chriſtians, ſhall be made manifeſt, and declared to be the children of God; ſince they will appear to be born of him, and made partakers of the divine nature, and bear a reſemblance to him, by their imitating him: *for he is kind to the unthankful, and to the evil*; by cauſing his ſun to riſe, and his rain to fall on them, as on the righteous and the good; for as *Jews* [w] obſerve, "there is no difference with him, whether on the right hand or the left; for, he is gracious, and does good, even to the ungodly." And elſewhere they ſay [x], that "he does good, and feeds the righteous and the ungodly."

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[u] Kimchi in Pſal. xv. apud Hulſ. Theolog. Jud. par. 1. p. 420.

Ver. 36. *Be ye therefore merciful*, &c.] Tender hearted, kind, beneficent to all men, friends and foes: *as your Father alſo is merciful*; that is, your Father which is in heaven; who is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works: nothing is more common in *Zohar* [y], and the *Talmud* [z], than to expreſs the divine being by no other name, than *the merciful*; as, רחמנא אמר, *the merciful ſaid* ſo, and ſo; that is, God: and ſo the *Arabians* generally begin their books and chapters with theſe words, *in the name of God, exceeding merciful*, or *the merciful commiſerator*: a ſaying much like to this in the text, is in the *Targum* of *Jonathan*, on *Lev.* xxii. 28. "O my people, the children of *Iſrael* *as your Father*, רחמן, *is merciful* in heaven, ſo be ye merciful on earth."

Ver. 37. *Judge not, and ye ſhall not be judged*, &c.] See the note on *Matt.* vii. 1. *Condemn not, and ye ſhall not be condemned*; cenſure not men's perſons, and judge not their ſtate, or adjudge them to condemnation, for every offence in practice, or becauſe they differ in principle, leſt you ſhould be treated in like manner by others; and eſpecially, leſt you ſhould fall under the righteous cenſure, judgment, and condemnation of God: *forgive*; offences and treſpaſſes committed againſt you, bear with, and paſs by injuries and affronts: *and ye ſhall be forgiven*; of God; ſee the note on *Matt.* vi. 14.

Ver. 38. *Give, and it ſhall be given unto you*, &c.] Give liberally of your worldly ſubſtance to indigent perſons, as you have an opportunity, according to your ability, and as caſes require; and it ſhall be returned again to great advantage, with great recompence, either in temporals or ſpirituals, or both: *good meaſure, preſſed down, and ſhaken together, and running over, ſhall men give into your boſom*. The alluſion is to dry meaſure among the *Jews*, for to liquids, the terms uſed will not agree; and which, though right and full, which is here called good meaſure, they thruſt and preſſed to make it hold more; and ſhook it alſo for the ſame purpoſe, and then heaped it up as much as they could, till it fell over: of all theſe methods uſed in meaſuring, we have inſtances in their writings, which may ſerve to illuſtrate this paſſage: it is ſaid of [a] one, that "he meaſured, במדה כפושה, *with meaſure preſſed down*; and therefore they meaſured to him, with meaſure preſſed down." Some of their meaſures they heaped, and ſome they did not: they ſay [b], "all the meaſures which were in the ſanctuary, נגדושות, *were heaped*, except the high-prieſt's, and his heap was contained in it." And elſewhere they obſerve [c], that "there were two decimaries (or tithing veſſels) in the ſanctuary, one was, גדוש, *heaped*, and the other was, מחוק, *ſtricken*: with that which was heaped they meaſured all the fine flour for the meat-offerings, and with the ſtricken, that which was for the cakes of the high-prieſt." With reſpect to this diſtinction of meaſures, they ſay 'tis a tradition of the *Rabbins* [d], "that they don't *ſtrike* in the place where they *heap*, nor heap in the place where they ſtrike." Between theſe two meaſures there was another, which was full meaſure and juſt, and right, without heaping, or ſtriking [e]. "*R. Papa* enquired, whether the handful (of ſweet incenſe the high-prieſt took on the day of atonement) which is ſpoken of *Lev.* xvi. 12. was of *ſtricken*, or *heaped* meaſure; *R. Abba* ſaid to *R. Aſe*, come, hear, the handful ſpoken of, is neither of ſtricken nor heaped meaſure, אלא טפיפות, *but of equal meaſure*;" ſufficiently full, and no more. Dr. *Lightfoot* reads it, מצופות, *flowing over*; by what authority I cannot ſay; though the *Gloſs* ſays, the word ſignifies, "flowing over, by reaſon of its heighth." But flowing or running over meaſure, was the ſame with that which was heaped, as appears from the following inſtance [f]: "all thoſe that, המשפיעין במדה גסה, *cauſe to abound*, or *run over with the great meaſure*, it is lawful for them to ſell that, of which it is doubted whether it has been tithed or no; and theſe are they, that *cauſe to run over*, or *heap* with the great meaſure, as cornfactors and fruiterers." Who buy corn and fruits to ſell again, and which they buy by the large meaſure, and fill it up, add unto it, and heap it up; and ſo get more than what is properly due unto them, as the commentators obſerve [g]: would you know the quantity of the heap, or that which ran over, or the difference between even meaſure, and that which was heaped, learn it from hence: in 1 *Kings* vii. 26. 'tis ſaid, the molten ſea held two thouſand baths, and in 2 *Chron.* iv. 5. three thouſand baths; which difficulty the *Jewiſh* writers ſolve this way, by obſerving, that the former text is to be underſtood of liquid meaſure, and the latter of dry meaſure, which was heaped: hence ſays *R. Abai*, we learn that, גודשא תלתא הוי, *the heap is the third part* of the meaſure [h]: now to this ſuperabundant meaſure, Chriſt here refers; and ſignifies, that a large compenſation ſhould be made to ſuch, who give liberally and generouſly to needy perſons; that as they abounded in their acts of beneficence, ſo an overflowing plenty of good things ſhould be returned to them: and, when he ſays, that this ſhould be *given into* their *boſom*, he alludes to the long and large garments the *Jews* wore, into which they were capable of receiving large lapfulls of good things: the words may be read imperſonally, *ſhall be given into your boſom*; or if perſonally, they may be underſtood of God, angels, and men, in different ſenſes: the phraſe *ſhaken together*, is not in the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions: *for with the ſame meaſure that ye mete withal, it ſhall be meaſured to you again*; a common proverb with the *Jews*; ſee the note on *Matt.* vii. 2.

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[w] R. Abraham ben Dior in Sepher Jetzira, p. 19.

[x] Zohar in Exod. fol. 69. 2, 3.

[y] Zohar in Lev. fol. 2. 2. & 9. 4. & 20. 1. & 22. 1.

[z] T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 15. 2.

[a] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 107. 2. T. Hieroſ. Yebamot, fol. 13. 3.

[b] Miſn. Menachot, c. 9. §. 5.

[c] T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 87. 1, 2.

[d] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 89. 1.

[e] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 48. 1.

[f] Miſn. Demai, c. 2. §. 4.

[g] Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

[h] T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 14. 2. Vid Targum, Jarchi, Kimchi, & R. Levi ben Gerſhom, in 1 Kings vii. 26. Bemidbar Rabba, §. 11. fol. 204. 3.

Ver. 39. *And he ſpake a parable unto them*, &c.] The *Vulgate Latin* reads, *he ſpake alſo a parable unto them*; beſides what he had ſaid; and the *Arabic* verſion renders it, *another ſimilitude*, parable, or proverb, diſtinct from the compariſons, alluſions, and proverbial expreſſions in the preceding verſes. Tho' it ſhould be obſerved, that theſe words were not ſpoken at the ſame time, nor on the mount, as the foregoing were; but this, and what follow, are a collection of various expreſſions of Chriſt at different times, ſome delivered on the mount, and others elſewhere; unleſs it ſhould be rather thought, that theſe proverbs and ſentences were repeated at different places and times, which is not improbable: *can the blind lead the blind?* they may do ſo, as the blind *Scribes* and *Phariſees* led the blind people of the *Jews*, which is what our Lord intends: but if they do, as they did, *ſhall they not both fall into the ditch?* yes, verily, what elſe can be expected? ſee the note on *Matt.* xv. 14.

Ver. 40. *The diſciple is not above his maſter*, &c.] Or *more excellent*, as the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions render it; that is, in learning and knowledge; if the maſter is ignorant, the ſcholar will be ſo too: and thus it is with teachers, and their people under their care; if the leaders are blind and ignorant, thoſe under their inſtructions will remain ſo likewiſe. Theſe words are an illuſtration of the preceding parable, and are uſed to another purpoſe here then in *Matt.* x. 24. ſee the note there: *but every one that is perfect ſhall be as his maſter*. The *Vulgate Latin* reads it, *every one ſhall be perfect if he is as his maſter*; that is, if his maſter is a man of general learning, and a complete ſcholar, if he is like him, he will be ſo too: the *Perſic* verſion renders it, *every diſciple that deſires perfection ſhall be as his maſter:* whoever is ambitious of being a thorough ſcholar, and is diligent and induſtrious, by all ways and means, to obtain ſuch a character, ſhall be even as good an one as his maſter, under whom he learns, and better he can't well expect to be; and this is ſufficient; and ſo the *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *is it not enough that every one be as his maſter?* agreeable to *Matt.* x. 25. ſee the note there. *Maimonides*[i] has an expreſſion much like this: "he "that learns ſhall not be greater than he of whom he learns, but ſhall be, כמותו, *as he*." Chriſt, in this laſt clauſe, ſeems to deſign his own diſciples, who, when perfect in knowledge, which is not to be expected in this ſtate, unleſs in a comparative ſenſe, will be like himſelf.

Ver. 41. *And why beholdeſt thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye*, &c.] A leſſer ſin in compariſon of others; for all ſins are not alike, as the *Stoicks* aſſerted: and tho' none are to be countenanced and indulged, yet ſome are not ſo ſeverely to be animadverted upon as others, the nature, occaſions, circumſtances, and aggravations conſidered; for no man is perfect, or wholly free from ſin; nor are the words preceding to be underſtood of ſuch a perfection; for which reaſon perhaps theſe words, with what follow, are mentioned: *but perceiveſt not the beam that is in thine own eye*; meaning a greater ſin, ſuch are guilty of, who are inquiſitive ſearchers into the faults of others, and ſevere animadverters on them; and yet are blind to their own iniquities, and take no notice of them. Theſe proverbial expreſſions were delivered by Chriſt on the mount, and are the ſame with thoſe in *Matt.* vii. 3, 4, 5. ſee the notes there.

Ver. 42. *Either how canſt thou ſay to thy brother*, &c.] Guilty of the leſſer ſin; *brother*, *let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye*; that is, ſuffer me to reprove thee for thy ſin: the word *brother* is omitted in the *Cambridge* copy of *Beza*'s, and in the *Perſic* verſion; nor is it in *Matthew*; but in the *Syriac* and *Ethiopic* verſions it is read, *my brother*; pretending great affection and ſincerity: *when thou thyſelf beholdeſt not the beam that is in thine own eye*; that is, takeſt no notice of, and doſt not refrain from a greater iniquity continued in: *thou hypocrite*; as ſuch an one muſt be, that bears hard upon his brother, and ſeverely cenſures him for a ſmall crime, when he indulges in himſelf a far more abominable ſin: *caſt out firſt the beam out of thine own eye, and then ſhalt thou ſee clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye:* the ſenſe is, that a man ſhould firſt reform himſelf, and then others.

Ver. 43. *For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit*, &c.] The particle *for* is left out in the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions; and ſo it is in *Beza*'s ancient copy: nor do theſe words ſtand in cloſe connexion with the preceding in *Matthew*'s Goſpel, tho' they may be very well conſidered as an illuſtration of them; for as that cannot be called a good tree, which brings forth bad fruit; ſo ſuch men cannot be accounted good men, let them make ever ſo large pretenſions to ſuch a character, who are very buſy in eſpying, diſcovering, and cenſuring the faults of their brethren; when they take no notice of, nor refrain from, nor relinquiſh their own. Theſe words, with what follow in this, and the next verſe, and the ſimilies in them, are uſed by our Lord in *Matthew*, on account of falſe prophets or teachers; where he ſuggeſts, that as good and faithful miniſters of the Goſpel cannot, and do not bring forth, and publiſh corrupt notions, and falſe doctrines, uſually and knowingly; even as it is not uſual, nor can it be, that a good tree ſhould bring forth corrupt fruit; ſo, *neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit*; or men of corrupt minds deliver good and ſound doctrine, or the wholeſome words of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt: but here they ſeem to be applicable to other perſons, even tru believers and hypocrites: the former are comparable to good trees, and are called trees of righteouſneſs, which being planted by the river of th love of God, and rooted in Chriſt, and filled wit the fruits of righteouſneſs by him, do not brin forth the evil fruit of ſin, as the common and co ſtant courſe of their lives and converſations; f that they never commit ſin, or are entirely witho it, cannot be ſaid; but ſin is not their uſual a common practice, or they do not live in ſin: a the latter, hypocrites, who pretend to a great d of religion, and have none that is true and re theſe are comparable to corrupt trees; which, t they may make a fair ſhew, yet do not bring fo good fruit, or perform works of righteouſ which are truly ſuch; what they do have only the peara pearance of good works, and are not properly ſo; ſee the notes on *Matt.* vii. 16, 17, 18.

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[i] In Miſn. Bava Kama, c. 2. §. 5.

Ver. 44. *For every tree is known by its own fruit,* &c.] Good and bad preachers are known by their doctrines, the one being agreeable, the other diſagreeable to the word of God; and good and bad men are known by their lives and converſations: the grace of God revealed to good men, and wrought in them, teaches them to live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly; a holy life is the fruit of grace, and an evidence of it; and the wickedneſs that is in the heart of unregenerate men, and even the hypocriſy of formal profeſſors, will ſhew themſelves in the common and ordinary courſe of their converſations: *for of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble-buſh gather they grapes*; nor can they be expected from them: and no more can an unregenerate man perform good works, or bring forth fruits of righteouſneſs acceptable unto God; for theſe require a knowledge of his will, obedience to it, a principle of grace, love to God, faith in Chriſt, and a view to the glory of God; all which are wanting in ſuch a perſon.

Ver. 45. *A good man out of the good treaſure of his heart,* &c.] This, becauſe of its ſuitableneſs and agreement with what goes before, is placed by *Luke* here; though, according to *Matthew*, it was ſpoken at another time and place, unleſs it ſhould be a repetition there; ſee the note on *Matt.* xii. 35. *for of the abundance of the heart his mouth ſpeaketh.* The *Vulgate Latin*, *Arabic*, *Ethiopic*, *Syriac*, and *Perſic* verſions, leave out the word *his*; and the two latter read *lips*, inſtead of *mouth*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xii. 34.

Ver. 46. *And why call ye me Lord, Lord,* &c.] Or, *my Lord, my Lord*, as the *Syriac* verſion renders it; acknowledging, in words, his government over them; claiming an intereſt in him, and making uſe of his name and authority: *and do not the things which I ſay*, or *command*; and therefore ſuch words in their mouths would be of no uſe to them, ſince they neither did his father's will, which he taught them, nor obſerved his commands and ordinances which he enjoined them; and therefore ſhould not enter into the kingdom of heaven, nor be owned by him another day, but ſhould be bid to depart from him; ſee the notes on *Matt.* vii. 21, 22, 23.

Ver. 47. *Whoſoever cometh to me,* &c.] To be a diſciple and follower: *and heareth my ſayings, and doth them*; ſee the note on *Matt.* vii. 24. *I will ſhew you to whom he is like*; or *to what thing he is like*; ſo the *Syriac* and *Arabic* verſions; tho' what follows ſeems better to agree with perſon than thing.

Ver. 48. *He is like a man which built an houſe,* &c.] That is, intended to build one, having drawn the ſcheme of it in his mind, and provided materials, and fixed upon the ſpot of ground: *and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock*; that is, he dug deep in the earth, till he came at a rock, and there, and then, he laid the foundation of his houſe; in which he acted the part of a wiſe man, as he is called in *Matthew*: ſo a ſenſible ſinner, deſirous of building his ſoul, and the ſalvation of it, on a ſure bottom, digs deep into the ſcriptures, diligently ſearches them, till he finds out the ſcheme of ſalvation by Chriſt; which lies deep in God's counſel and covenant, was ordained before the world began, and was hid in God till revealed in the Goſpel: and finding Chriſt to be the rock of ages, in whom is everlaſting ſtrength, and the foundation which God has laid, nor is there another; he makes uſe of him as ſuch, and builds the hope of his eternal ſalvation on him: *and when the flood aroſe*; an inundation, a multitude of waters, the ſwelling of the ſea; or rather *when it was tide*, as the word here uſed ſignifies[k]: *the ſtream beat vehemently upon the houſe*; or the river, up which the tide came, daſhed and broke againſt it; by which may be ſignified the temptations of ſatan, the perſecutions of the world, the corruptions of mens hearts, and the errors and hereſies of falſe teachers: *and could not ſhake it*; as none of theſe can ſo ſhake as to move a ſoul, thus built on Chriſt, off of him the foundation: *for it was founded upon a rock*; ſee the notes on *Matt.* vii. 24, 25.

Ver. 49. *But he that heareth, and doth not,* &c.] Hears Chriſt's ſayings externally, but does not obey his commands: *is like a man that without a foundation built upon the earth*; that is, without digging for a foundation, built his houſe upon the ſurface of the earth; *upon the duſt* of it, as the *Syriac* verſion renders it; or *upon the ſand*, as *Matthew* ſays: *againſt which the ſtream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell, and the ruin of that houſe was great*; ſee the notes on *Matt.* vii. 26, 27.

# CHAP. VII.

Ver. 1. NOW *when he had ended all his ſayings,* &c.] That is, when *Jeſus*, as the *Perſic* verſion expreſſes it, had finiſhed all the above ſayings, doctrines, and inſtructions; not all that he had to ſay, for he ſaid many things after this: *in the audience of the people*; of the common people, the multitude beſides the diſciples; and that openly, and publickly, and with a loud and clear voice, that all might hear: *he entered into Capernaum*; Jeſus entered, as the *Syriac* verſion reads, into his own city, and where he had been before, and wrought miracles.

Ver. 2. *And a certain centurion's ſervant,* &c.] The ſame that *Matthew* makes mention of, ch. viii. 5, 6. ſee the notes there: *who was dear unto him*; to the centurion, being an honeſt, upright, faithful, and obliging ſervant; as *Tabi* was to *Rabban Gamaliel*, of whom his maſter ſaid[l], "*Tabi* my ſervant, is not as other ſervants, כשר היה he is upright." *Was ſick*; of a palſy; ſee *Matt.* viii. 6. *and ready to die*; in all appearance his caſe was deſperate, and there was no help for him by any human means, which makes the following cure the more remarkable.

Ver. 3. *And when he heard of Jeſus,* &c.] That he was come, as the *Ethiopic* verſion adds, into the city of *Capernaum*; or of his miracles, which he had done there, and elſewhere: *he ſent unto him the elders of the Jews*; in whom he had an intereſt, judging himſelf, being a *Gentile*, very unworthy and unfit to go himſelf, and aſk a favour of ſo great a perſon as Chriſt was, ſuch was his modeſty and humility. Theſe elders he ſent, were not the more ancient inhabitants of the city, called, זקני עם הארץ, *the elders of*, or *among the common people*, as diſtinguiſhed from, זקני תורה, *the elders of the law*, or thoſe that were old in knowledge; of both which it is ſaid by *R. Simeon ben Achaſia*,

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[k] Vid. Rivinum de Venilia Salacia, &c. p. 681, 682.

[l] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 16. 2.

*Achaſia*[m], that "*the elders of the common people*, when they grow old, their knowledge fails in them, as it is ſaid, *Job* xii. 20. but ſo it is not with *the elders of the law*; but when they grow old, their knowledge reſts in them, as it is ſaid, *Job* xii. 12." But theſe were either ſome principal officers of the city, called the elders of the people elſewhere; particularly, who were members of the *Sanhedrim*; for as elders, when they deſign the elders in *Jeruſalem*, mean the great *Sanhedrim*[n] there; ſo elders in other places, intend the *Sanhedrim*, conſiſting of twenty-one perſons, or the bench of three; and ſuch were theſe, the centurion ſent to Chriſt: *beſeeching him that he would come and heal his ſervant*: he beſought him moſt earneſtly by theſe meſſengers, that he would come to his houſe, and cure his ſervant of the palſy, by laying his hands on him, or commanding the diſtemper off, by a word ſpeaking; or in what way he ſhould think fit, for he made no doubt that he was able to heal him.

Ver. 4. *And when they came to Jeſus*, &c.] To that part of the city where he was; either at *Peter*'s houſe, where he uſed to be when in this place; or rather it might be as he was paſſing along the ſtreets, that they came up to him: *they beſought him inſtantly*; or with great vehemence and importunity; very ſtudiouſly and carefully they urged the caſe, and preſſed him much to it: *ſaying, he was worthy for whom he ſhould do this*; or *for whom thou ſhouldſt do this*, as the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read, and ſome copies; and which reading connects the words beſt. This ſpeech of theirs, ſavours of their *pharaſaic* tenet and notion of merit, and is very different from the ſenſe the poor centurion had of himſelf.

Ver. 5. *For he loveth our nation*, &c.] The *Jewiſh* nation, which was Chriſt's nation, as well as theirs, he being a *Jew*; ſee *John* xviii. 35. This they mention, as an argument to induce him to have a regard to the centurion, though he was a *Gentile*; ſince he was a friend of the *Jews*, and well affected and diſpoſed to them, which was very rare: it was not common for the *Gentiles* to love the *Jews*, any more than the *Jews* the *Gentiles*; there was an hatred, yea, an enmity between them; but this man very likely, was a proſelyte to their religion, as the following inſtance ſeems to ſhow: *and he hath built us a ſynagogue*; at his own private charge, and by the aſſiſtance of his ſoldiers under him, whom he might employ in this work: ſometimes a ſingle perſon built a ſynagogue at his own expence, and gave it to the citizens; of which the *Jews* ſay[o], "if a man builds an houſe, and afterwards devotes it to a ſynagogue, it is as a ſynagogue."

Ver. 6. *Then Jeſus went with them*, &c.] The elders of the *Jews*, towards the centurion's houſe, after hearing their requeſt, and their reaſons for it; and that without any reluctancy, he at once complied, made no heſitation, or difficulty about it, but went with them very freely: *and when he was now not far from the houſe*; of the centurion, where his ſervant lay ſick; he having ſome notice of his coming, and of his being near his houſe, in his great humility, and being conſcious to himſelf of his unworthineſs to have ſuch a perſon under his roof, ſent meſſengers to prevent him: *the centurion ſent friends to him, ſaying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyſelf*; or do not fatigue thyſelf by coming to the houſe, ſtop, go no further; *for I am not worthy that thou ſhouldſt enter under my roof*: he might know full well the law of the *Jews*, that it was not lawful for a *Jew* to go into the houſe of an uncircumciſed *Gentile*; and tho' he might be a proſelyte of righteouſneſs, and ſo his houſe was free of entrance; yet conſidering his own meanneſs, and the greatneſs of Chriſt, who was become ſo famous for his doctrines and miracles, he thought it too great a ſtoop for Chriſt to come into his houſe, and too high a favour for him to enjoy.

Ver. 7. *Wherefore neither thought I myſelf worthy to come unto thee*, &c.] In perſon; therefore he ſent the elders of the *Jews* to him firſt, and now ſome of his friends, who delivered theſe words in his name: *but ſay in a word, and my ſervant ſhall be healed*; ſpeak but the word only, rebuke the diſtemper, command it off, and it will be gone; ſo great was his faith in the power of Chriſt.

Ver. 8. *For I alſo am a man ſet under authority*, &c.] Of the *Roman* ſenate; or *belonging to the emperor*, as the *Arabic* verſion renders it; and under the command of a tribune, as a centurion was: ſo that this is not an amplification, but a diminution of his office; and his ſenſe is, that even he who was but an inferior officer, yet had ſuch power as after related: *having under me ſoldiers*; an hundred, or more: *and I ſay unto one go, and he goeth, and to another come, and he cometh, and to my ſervant, do this, and he doth it*; as this his ſervant uſed to do, and whom he may intend, who now lay ſick, and therefore was dear unto him. His meaning is, that Chriſt could as eaſily command, and call off a diſtemper, and it would obey him, as he could command obedience from his ſoldiers and ſervant, and have it, and more ſo.

Ver. 9. *When Jeſus heard theſe things*, &c.] Which the friends of the centurion related from him, and in his name; or which he himſelf delivered, coming up to Chriſt after them: *he marvelled at him*; at his great humility and modeſty, and the ſtrength of his faith, and his manner of reaſoning: *and turned him about*; from him, and his friends: *and ſaid unto the people that followed him*; from the mount to *Capernaum*, and as he was paſſing along the ſtreets: *I ſay unto you, I have not found ſo great faith, no, not in Iſrael*; or *among the Iſraelites*, as the *Syriac*; or *among the children of Iſrael*, as the *Perſic*; or *in all Iſrael*, as the *Arabic* verſions read, as he did in this ſingle *Gentile*; ſee the note on *Matt.* viii. 10.

Ver. 10. *And they that were ſent*, &c.] Both the elders of the *Jews*, and the friends of the centurion: *returning to the houſe*; of the centurion, where his ſervant lay, and from whence they came: *found the ſervant whole that had been ſick*; for he was healed directly, as ſoon as the centurion had expreſſed his faith, and Chriſt had declared that it ſhould be according to it, *Matt.* viii. 13.

Ver. 11. *And it came to paſs the day after*, &c.] The *Vulgate Latin* reads *afterward*, not expreſſing any day, as in ch. viii. 1. but the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, read to the ſame ſenſe as we, the day after, the next day, on the morrow, after he had cured the centurion's ſervant in *Capernaum*, where he ſtaid all night: *that he went into a city called Naim*; which *Jerom*[p] places near mount *Tabor*, and the river *Kiſon*. The[q] *Jews* ſpeak of a *Naim* in the tribe of *Iſſachar*, ſo called from its pleaſantneſs, and which ſeems to be the ſame place with this. The *Perſic* verſion reads it, *Nabetis*, or *Neapolis*, the ſame with *Sychem* in *Samaria*, but without reaſon: *and many of his diſciples went with him*; not only the twelve, but many others: *and much people*; from *Capernaum*, and other parts, that followed him to ſee his miracles, or for one end or another, though they did not believe in him; at leaſt theſe were only hearers, and had not entered themſelves among the diſciples.

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[m] Miſn. Kenim, c. 3. §. 6.

[n] T. Hieroſ. Sota, fol. 23 3.

[o] Piſke Haroſh Megilla, c. 4. art. 1.

[p] Tom. 1. ad Marcellum, fol. 44. B. & Epitaph. Paulæ, fol. 60. A.

[q] Bereſhit Rabba, §. 98. fol. 86. 1.

Ver. 12. *Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city*, &c.] Of *Naim*: *behold there was a dead man carried out*; of the city; for they uſed not to bury in cities, but in places without, and at ſome diſtance: the burying-places of the *Jews* were not near their cities [r]; and they had different ways of carrying them out to be buried, according to their different ages: a child under a month old was carried out in the boſom of a perſon; if a full month old, in a little coffin, which they carried in their arms; one of a twelve month old was carried in a little coffin on the ſhoulder; and one of three years old on a bier or bed [s], and ſo upwards; and in this manner was this corps carried out: who was *the only ſon of his mother*; hence the ſorrow and mourning were the greater; ſee *Zech.* xii. 10. *and ſhe was a widow*; and if ſhe had been ſupported by her ſon, her loſs was very conſiderable; and having neither huſband, nor ſon, to do for her, her caſe was very affecting: *and much people of the city was with her*; according to the age of perſons was the company that attended them to the grave: if it was an infant, not a month old, it was buried by one woman, and two men, but not by one man, and two women; if a month old, by men and women; and whoever was carried out on a bier or bed, many mourned for him; and whoever was known to many, many accompanied him [t]; and which was the caſe of this dead man: he ſeems to have been well known and reſpected by the company that attended him to his grave; of theſe ſome were bearers, and theſe had their deputies, and theſe again theirs; for as they carried their dead a great way, they were obliged often to change their bearers; and of the company, ſome went before the bier, and others went after it [u]: beſides, what ſerved to increaſe company at a funeral was, that it was looked upon as an act of kindneſs and mercy to follow a corps to the grave [w]; to which may be added, and what muſt always tend to increaſe the number at ſuch a time, that, according to the *Jewiſh* canons [x], "it was forbidden to do "any work at the time a dead man was buried, "even one of the common people."

Ver. 13. *And when the Lord ſaw her, he had compaſſion on her*, &c.] Knowing her caſe, that ſhe was a widow, and had loſt her only ſon: *and ſaid unto her, weep not*; ſignifying, that he would help her, which he did without being aſked to do it, as uſual in other caſes.

Ver. 14. *And he came and touched the bier*, &c.] Or *bed*, as the *Syriac* verſion renders it; and ſuch was מטה, *the bier*, or bed, on which one of three years old, and upward, was carried as above mentioned: ſo that on which *Herod* was carried to his grave is called κλινη, *a bed*, by *Joſephus* [y]. As for the bed, or bier, of what ſort it was that they carried out their dead upon, take the following account [z]: "formerly the rich carried out (their dead) "upon a bed called *Dargaſh*, (which is ſaid [a] to "be a bed that was not platted with ropes, and is "called a bed of fortune [b]) and the poor carried "out (their dead) upon one that was called *Celicah* (or *Celibah*, as ſometimes read; and this was "made in the form of an iron horn, on which they "bound the corps, that it might not fall; and it "was called ſo, becauſe it was made like a coup "of birds [c], as the word is uſed in *Jer.* v. 27.) "and the poor were made aſhamed; and therefore "they ordered that all ſhould carry out (their "dead) on a *Celicah*, for the honour of the poor." To this Chriſt came near and touched: not that by his touching of that, the dead ſhould be raiſed; but this he did as a ſignal, that the bearers ſhould ſtop. The *Jews* [d] ſay, one of the charges that *Jacob* gave to his ſons before his death, was, to "take "care, ſays he, that no uncircumciſed perſon, "יגע במטתי, *touch my bed*, or *bier*, leſt the *Shekinah* remove from me; but, according to this "order, do unto me, carry me, three on the "north, three on the ſouth, three on the eaſt, and "three on the weſt, *&c.*" From whence it ſhould ſeem, that a circumciſed perſon, as Chriſt was, might touch a bier without offence, or hurt, and without contracting any ceremonial pollution: to touch a dead body, or the bone of man, or a grave, was forbidden by the law, *Numb.* xix. 16. and ſo, according to the traditions of the elders [e], the ſtone that was rolled at the mouth of the ſepulchre, and the ſide of the ſepulchre, defiled by touching; but I don't find that touching a bier was ever forbidden. *And they that bare him ſtood ſtill*: theſe are they that are called נושאי המטה, *the bearers of the bed*, or *bier*: and *Maimonides* [f] ſays, "they carry the "dead upon their ſhoulders to the grave; and *the* "*bearers of the bier* are forbidden to put on their "ſandals, leſt the latchet of any one of them ſhould "fail, and ſhould be found to hinder him doing "his duty." And elſewhere 'tis ſaid [g], "*the* "*bearers of the bed*, or *bier*, and their deputies, "and their deputy's deputies, both before the bier "and after it, and whoever the bier ſtood in need "of were free;" *i. e.* from reading the *Shema*, or, *hear, O Iſrael*, &c. and from prayer: the reaſon of their having ſo many bearers was, becauſe they carried the dead a great way to be buried. King *Herod* was carried after this manner two hundred furlongs from *Jeruſalem* to the caſtle of *Herodion* [h]: *and he ſaid, young man, I ſay unto thee, ariſe.* The *Ethiopic* verſion adds, *and he aroſe*: Chriſt ſpoke as one that had the keys of death and the grave; and divine power went along with his words, which raiſed the dead man to life; and full proof this is of the true and proper deity of Chriſt.

Ver. 15. *And he that was dead*, &c.] That had been dead, (for he was now alive) as it was a clear caſe to all his relations and friends, or they would never have brought him out to bury him: *ſat up*; upon the bed, or bier: *and began to ſpeak*; both which, his ſitting up and ſpeaking, were plain proofs of his being brought to life: *and he delivered him to his mother*; for whoſe ſake he raiſed him from the dead, commiſerating her caſe: wherefore as Chriſt ſhewed his power in raiſing the dead man, he diſcovered great humanity, kindneſs, and tenderneſs in delivering him alive to his mother; which might be done after he came off of the bier, by taking him by the hand, and leading him to his mother, and giving him up into her arms: think what an affecting ſcene this muſt be!

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[r] T. Bab. Kidduſhin, fol. 80. 2. Gloſſ.

[s] T. Moed Katon, fol. 24. 1, 2. & Kidduſhin, fol. 80. 2. Maſſech. Semachot, c. 3. §. 2, 3. Maimon. Hilch. Ebel, c. 12. §. 10, 11.

[t] Ut in locis ſupra citatis.

[u] Vid. Miſn. Beracot, c. 3. §. 1.

[w] Maimon. in Miſn. Peah, c. 1. §. 1.

[x] Piſke Toſaphot Megilla, art. 106. T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 27. 2.

[y] De Bello Jud. l. 1. c. 33. §. 11.

[z] T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 27. 1, 2.

[a] T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 5. 4.

[b] T. Bab. Nedarim, fol. 56. 2.

[c] R. Sampſon & Bartenora in Miſn. Para, c. 12. §. 9.

[d] Bereſhit Rabba, §. 100. fol. 87. 4.

[e] Miſn. Oholot, c. 2. §. 4.

[f] Hilchot. Ebel, c. 4. §. 2, 3.

[g] Miſn. Beracot, c. 3. §. 1.

[h] Joſephus, ut ſupra.

Ver. 16. *And there came a fear on all*, &c.] That were there preſent, and heard, and ſaw what was done. Not a fear of dread, and terror, and of puniſhment, as in devils and wicked men; but a fear and reverence of the divine majeſty, whoſe power and preſence they were ſenſible muſt be there at that time: *and they glorified God*; they praiſed him, and gave thanks to him, aſcribing this amazing action to divine power, and gave God the glory of it; and bleſſed him for the Meſſiah, who was ſent unto them, as they concluded Jeſus to be, from this wonderful inſtance: *ſaying, that a great prophet is riſen up among us*; even that great prophet *Moſes* wrote of, and, ſaid ſhould be raiſed up from among the children of *Iſrael*, *Deut.* xviii. 15, 18. *and that God hath viſited his people.* The *Arabic* verſion adds, *for good.* For God ſometimes viſits for evil, in a way of wrath and ſore diſpleaſure; but this was a viſitation for good: they concluded that God had looked upon them with a look of love, and had a gracious regard to them, and had ſent them the Meſſiah, who, they hoped, would deliver them from the *Roman* yoke; as he had formerly looked upon, and viſited their fathers, and ſent a redeemer to them, to deliver them from *Egyptian* bondage. The *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *and God hath mercy on his people*; and the *Perſic* verſion, *God hath looked upon his people, and hath taken care of them.*

Ver. 17. *And this rumour of him*, &c.] Or the report of this ſurprizing miracle in raiſing a dead man to life, that was carrying to his grave, *went forth throughout all Judea, and throughout all the region round about*; not only *Judea*, and the ſeveral cities, towns, and villages in it, but all the country round about it, eſpecially *Galilee.* The *Perſic* verſion reads, *all countries which are round about Jordan*; ſee *Matt.* iii. 5.

Ver. 18. *And the diſciples of John ſhewed him of all theſe things.*] The miracles that were wrought by Chriſt; particularly the healing of the centurion's ſervant, and the raiſing from the dead the widow of *Naim*'s ſon, and what fame and reputation Chriſt got every where by his doctrine, and mighty works. *John* was now in priſon, when theſe his diſciples came and related theſe things to him; ſee *Matt.* xi. 2. and they ſpoke of them, not as commending Chriſt for them; but as envying, grieving, and complaining, that he carried away all the honour and glory from *John* their maſter, for whom they had the greateſt regard.

Ver. 19. *And John calling unto him two of his diſciples*, &c.] Which were a ſufficient number to be ſent on an errand, to aſk a queſtion, and report the anſwer, or bear witneſs to any fact they ſhould ſee, or hear done. *Sent them unto Jeſus, ſaying, art thou he that ſhould come, or look we for another?* not that he doubted that Jeſus was the Meſſiah; nor was it for his own ſatisfaction ſo much that he ſent theſe diſciples of his, with this queſtion, but for theirs; and to remove all doubt and heſitation from them about Chriſt.

Ver. 20. *When the men were come to him*, &c.] To Jeſus; *thoſe two men*, as the *Arabic* verſion reads; *the diſciples*, as the *Perſic* verſion; the ſame that *John* ſent from the caſtle of *Machærus*, where he was now a priſoner, to Chriſt, who was teaching in ſome city or town of *Galilee*: *they ſaid, John the Baptiſt*; ſo well known by his being the adminiſtrator of the ordinance of baptiſm: *hath ſent us unto thee, ſaying, art thou he that ſhould come, or look we for another?* ſee the note on *Matt.* xi. 3.

Ver. 21. *And in that ſame hour*, &c.] Or at that ſame time, for a preciſe hour is not intended: one exemplar reads, *in that day*, in which theſe men came to Chriſt, *he*, Jeſus, as the *Perſic* verſion expreſſes it, *cured many of their infirmities*; bodily weakneſſes and diſorders: *and plagues*; which were inflicted on them as ſcourges and corrections for ſin, very ſevere diſeaſes, as epilepſies, leproſies, palſies, &c. *and of evil ſpirits*; or devils, which he diſpoſſeſſed and commanded out of the bodies of men; tho' ſometimes evil ſpirits with the *Jews* ſignify ſome kinds of bodily diſeaſes: as when it is ſaid [1], "whoever puts out a lamp becauſe he is afraid of *Gentiles*, or of thieves, or of רוח רעה, *an evil ſpirit*, or becauſe of a ſick man that is aſleep, he is free." Upon which *Maimonides* obſerves, "*an evil ſpirit* they call all kinds of diſeaſes, which, in the *Arabic* language, go by the name of *melancholy*; for it is one kind of the diſeaſes mentioned, which makes a ſick man to fly, and ſeparate himſelf from mankind, as if he was afraid of the light, or of coming into the company of men:" *and unto many that were blind he gave ſight*; freely, as an act of grace and kindneſs, as the word ſignifies, without any merit, or motive in them.

Ver. 22. *Then Jeſus anſwering ſaid unto them*, &c.] *To the diſciples*, as the *Perſic*; *to both*, as the *Arabic*: when he had wrought theſe cures he turned himſelf to the diſciples of *John*, and made anſwer to their queſtion. The *Vulgate Latin* leaves out the word, *Jeſus*, rendering it, *and he anſwering*; in the following words: *go your way, and tell John what things ye have ſeen and heard.* They had juſt ſeen many cured of infirmities, plagues, and evil ſpirits, and they had heard the doctrines of the Goſpel preached by him; and the former were in confirmation of the latter, and both were proofs of his being the Meſſiah: the particulars of which follow, *how that the blind ſee*; that is, they that had been blind, and ſome that were born blind, received their ſight, which was what was never heard of before, from the beginning of the world; and which, as it is an inſtance of Chriſt's almighty power, ſhewing him to be God; ſo it was a fulfilment of a prophecy concerning him as the Meſſiah, who, when he came, was to open the eyes of the blind, *Iſ.* xxxv. 5. and this was true, not only in a corporal, but in a ſpiritual ſenſe: and generally ſo it was, that when the blind received their bodily ſight, they alſo received their ſpiritual ſight; and both were evidences of the true Meſſiahſhip of our Lord Jeſus. *The lame walk*: theſe were among thoſe who were cured of their infirmities; and this alſo was propheſied of the Meſſiah, and was now accompliſhed by Jeſus, that *the lame man* ſhould *leap as an hart*, *Iſ.* xxxv. 6. and ſo was to be conſidered by *John*, and his diſciples, as another proof of his being the true Meſſiah: *the lepers are cleanſed*; of this ſort were they who were cured of their plagues; the leproſy was called a plague; hence the treatiſe of leproſy, in the *Miſna*, is, by the *Jews*, called *Negaim*, or *plagues*. *The deaf hear*; ſo in the above prophecy in *Iſaiah*, it is predicted, that *the ears of the deaf* ſhould *be unſtopped* in the days of the Meſſiah; and which therefore muſt be conſidered as a further confirmation of Jeſus being
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[1] Miſh. Sabbat, c. 2. §. 5. Vid. Maimon. Hilchot Geruſhin, c. 2. §. 14.

he that was to come, and that another was not to be looked for. *The dead are raiſed:* whether there were any raiſed at this time, or no, is not certain; but certain it is, that there had been one raiſed from the dead, if not in the preſence of theſe diſciples, yet juſt before they came to Chriſt, of which *John* had been informed by ſome of his diſciples, if not theſe; and of which an account is given before in this chapter, and which is what none but the mighty God can do. *To the poor the Goſpel is preached:* it was preached both by the poor, the diſciples of Chriſt, and to the poor, mean, baſe, and illiterate among the *Jews*; and alſo to the poor, meek, and lowly in heart, as was propheſied ſhould be, by the Meſſiah, *Iſ.* lxi. 1. ſo that put all together, here were undoubted proofs, and a full demonſtration, that Jeſus was the Meſſiah; ſee the notes on *Matt.* xi. 4, 5.

Ver. 23. *And bleſſed is he whoſoever ſhall not be offended in me.*] The *Arabic* verſion renders it, *bleſſed is he that doubts not of me.* The *Perſic* and *Ethiopic* verſions both add to the text, the former rendering the words thus, *bleſſed is he that is not* brought *into offence and doubt concerning me*; and the latter thus, *bleſſed are they who do not deny me, and are not offended in me:* particular regard is had to the diſciples of *John*, who both doubted of Chriſt as the Meſſiah, and were offended at his popularity and ſucceſs; ſee the note on *Matt.* xi. 6.

Ver. 24. *And when the meſſengers of John were departed,* &c.] The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read, *the diſciples of John*; and the *Arabic* verſion, *the two diſciples of John*; the two that he ſent, when they were gone back with the anſwer of Chriſt; *he,* Jeſus, as the *Perſic* verſion expreſſes it, *began to ſpeak unto the people concerning John*; not caring to ſay any thing about him to the meſſengers, or whilſt they were preſent, leſt he ſhould be charged with flattery; ſee the note on *Matt.* xi. 7. *What went ye out into the wilderneſs for to ſee? a reed ſhaken with the wind?* an inconſiſtent, wavering, and unſtable man? if ſo, they were greatly miſtaken; or the motions and geſture of the man? ſee the note as above.

Ver. 25. *But what went you out for to ſee?* &c.] If not his air and action, what was it? was it his apparel and dreſs? was it to ſee *a man cloathed in ſoft raiment?* If this was the caſe, their labour was in vain, and they had their walk for nothing; for *John* was cloathed with camel's hair, rough and undreſſed, and was girt with a leathern girdle; there was nothing in his perſon, mien, and garb, that was attractive: *they which are gorgeouſly apparelled*; or richly cloathed, as *John* was not: *and live delicately*; in the moſt elegant manner, and on the richeſt dainties, as *John* did not, his food being locuſts and wild honey: *are in king's courts*; and not in a wilderneſs, where *John* came preaching.

Ver. 26. *But what went ye out for to ſee?* &c.] What led your curioſity to go into the wilderneſs after him, ſince it could not be any of the above things? was it to ſee *a prophet?* which was the caſe; for *John* was a prophet, and was known to be one; and the fame of him, as ſuch, drew vaſt numbers to ſee and hear him, there not having been a prophet among the *Jews*, for ſome hundreds of years: *yea, I ſay unto you, and much more than a prophet*; not that he was the prophet *Moſes* did ſay ſhould come; nor was he the prieſt that ſhould riſe with the *Urim* and *Thummim*, that the *Tirſhatha, Nehemiah* ſpoke of; nor was he the king Meſſiah; but he was his fore-runner, he ſaw him and baptized him, and ſo was greater than any of the prophets that went before him.

Ver. 27. *This is he of whom it is written,* &c.] In *Mal.* iii. 1. ſee the notes on *Matt.* xi. 10. and *Mark* i. 2.

Ver. 28. *For I ſay unto you—there is not a greater prophet,* &c.] The word *prophet*, is left out in the *Arabic* and *Ethiopic* verſions, as in *Matt.* xi. 11. ſee the note there.

Ver. 29. *And all the people that heard* him, &c.] Either Chriſt ſaying theſe things in commendation of *John*, and gave their aſſent to them, and ſhewed their approbation of them, having been baptized by him; or rather, the people that had heard *John* preach the doctrines of repentance and faith, and of baptiſm; for theſe words ſeem rather to be the words of Chriſt, relating the ſucceſs of *John*'s miniſtry among different perſons: *and the publicans juſtified God*; even thoſe wicked men, who were before profligate and abandoned ſinners, when they came under *John*'s miniſtry, were ſo wrought upon by the power and grace of God through it, that they approved of, and applauded the wiſdom, goodneſs, and grace of God, in ſending ſuch a prophet as *John*; in qualifying him in the manner he did, and in giving him a commiſſion to preach ſuch doctrines, and adminiſter ſuch an ordinance as he did: and this their approbation of the divine conduct, and their thankfulneſs for the ſame, they teſtified by their *being baptized with the baptiſm of John*; they expreſſed their ſentiments, by their obedience; they declared it was right in God to inſtitute ſuch an ordinance, and for *John* to adminiſter it; and that it became them to ſubmit to it, as a part of righteouſneſs to be fulfilled; they hereby ſignified, that they thought that it was agreeable to the nature of God, who is holy, juſt, and good, ſuitable to the Goſpel diſpenſation, and very fit and proper for them.

Ver. 30. *But the Phariſees and lawyers,* &c.] Or *Scribes*, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read; for the *Scribes* and lawyers were the ſame ſort of perſons. The *Ethiopic* verſion calls them, *the Scribes of the city:* theſe *rejected the counſel of God againſt themſelves*; againſt their own advantage, to their hurt and detriment; ſince by their impenitence and unbelief, and through their rejection of Chriſt and his fore-runner, and the Goſpel and the ordinances of it, they brought ruin and deſtruction, both temporal and eternal, upon themſelves: or *towards themſelves*, or *unto them*; that is, they *rejected the command of God unto them*, as the *Arabic* verſion renders it: for by *the counſel of God* here, is not meant his purpoſe, intention, and deſign, with reſpect to theſe perſons, which was not, nor never is fruſtrated; but the precept of God, and ſo the *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *they deſpiſed the command of God:* that is, the ordinance of baptiſm, which was of God, and the produce of his counſel and wiſdom, as the whole ſcheme, and all the ordinances of the Goſpel are, and not the invention of men: or they rejected this *in themſelves*, as it may be rendered, and is by the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions; not openly and publickly, for they were afraid of the people, but inwardly and privately, and which their actions and conduct declared: *being not baptized of him*; of *John:* by their neglect of this ordinance, they teſtified their averſion to it, and rejection of it.

Ver. 31. *And the Lord ſaid,* &c.] This clauſe is not in the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, nor in ſome copies, nor in *Beza*'s moſt ancient copy; and being omitted, more clearly ſhews, that the two former verſes are the words of Chriſt, and not an obſervation the Evangeliſt makes, on the different behaviour of Chriſt's hearers, upon the commendation he had given of *John: whereunto then ſhall I liken the men of this generation*; or *to what men ſhall I liken* them, as the *Perſic* verſion: the phraſe *men of this generation*, is *Rabbinical*; ſo אנשי דרא ההוא, the men of that *generation*, are more beautiful in work than theſe, ſays the *Targumiſt* on *Eccl.* vii. 11. *And to what are they like?* To that which follows.

Ver. 32. *They are like to children*, &c.] The *Phariſees* and lawyers, who rejected the counſel of God, and the baptiſm of *John*, were like to *children*; not for innocence, ſimplicity, meekneſs, and humility; their characters were the reverſe; but rather, for their ignorance, and want of underſtanding, their folly and weakneſs; nor are they here compared to the children that piped and mourned, but to thoſe ſurly and ill-natured ones, who made no anſwer to thoſe that did. They, together with Chriſt, and *John* the *Baptiſt*, are in general likened to children, *ſitting in the market-place*; where children were wont to be, there being a variety of perſons and things to be ſeen; and which may deſign the temple, or the ſynagogues, or any place of concourſe, where the *Phariſees* met, with *John*, Chriſt, and their diſciples: *and calling one to another, and ſaying*; they that were good natured, and more diſpoſed to mirth and innocent diverſions: *we have piped unto you, and ye have not danced, we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept*: they imitated the pipers at weddings, expecting their companions would have danced, as was uſually done by the others; when the pipe was played upon; and they mimicked the mourning women at funerals, expecting their fellows would have made as though they had wept; whereas they would do neither, ſhewing a diſlike both to the one and to the other. The children that imitated the pipers, repreſent Chriſt and his diſciples, who delivered the joyful ſound of the Goſpel; and the children that acted the part of the mourners, ſignify *John* the *Baptiſt*, and his diſciples, who preached the doctrine of repentance; and the children that would not join with, nor make any anſwer to the one, or the other, intend the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, who were not pleaſed with either of them, as the following words ſhow; ſee the notes on *Matt.* xi. 16, 17.

Ver. 33. *For John the Baptiſt*, &c.] Who is deſigned by the children that mourned in the above ſimilie, with whom his character and conduct agree; he preached very mournful doctrine, delivered it in a very ſolemn and awful manner, and lived a very auſtere life, and faſted much, as did alſo his diſciples. The word *Baptiſt* is here added by *Luke*, which *Matthew* has not, to diſtinguiſh him from others; and it may be, becauſe he had juſt ſpoke of his baptiſm. The *Perſic* verſion only reads, *the Baptiſt*; of him our Lord ſays, that he *came neither eating bread, nor drinking wine*; which were the common food and drink of men, but his diet were locuſts and wild honey, and from this he often abſtained; nor would he attend feſtivals and entertainments, or be free and ſociable with men: *bread* and *wine* are here mentioned, which are not in *Matthew: and ye ſay, he hath a devil*; is mad, or melancholy; for madneſs and melancholy, or the hypocondriac diſorder, was by them ſometimes imputed to a diabolical poſſeſſion, and influence, as the cauſe of it; and though theſe men pretended to great auſterity of life, and frequent faſtings, yet *John* was too abſtemious for them, and they could not agree with his doctrine, nor method of living; ſee the note on *Matt.* xi. 18.

Ver. 34. *The Son of man is come eating and drinking*, &c.] That is, eating bread and drinking wine, as other people do; and ſhuns no man's company, goes to a wedding, dines with a *Phariſee*, and eats with publicans and ſinners, and carries it freely and courteouſly to all men: *and ye ſay, behold a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber*; an epicure, a drunkard, a mere ſot, one that gives up himſelf to ſenſual pleaſures: *a friend of publicans and ſinners*; a good fellow, a boon companion, that ſits with them, and encourages them in their revellings and drunkenneſs: ſuch an ill uſe did the *Jews* make of our Lord's free, harmleſs, and innocent converſation with men; and in ſuch a horrid manner did they traduce and vilify him, who was holy in his nature, harmleſs in his life, ſeparate from ſinners, knew no ſin, nor ever committed any.

Ver. 35. *But wiſdom is juſtified of all her children.*] That is, Chriſt, who is the wiſdom of God, and who acted the wiſe part, in behaving in ſuch a free manner with all ſorts of men, and even with publicans and ſinners, whereby he became uſeful to their ſouls, called them to repentance, converted and ſaved them: and theſe are his children, which were given him by the Father; for whoſe ſake he partook of fleſh and blood, and whom he redeemed, that they might receive the adoption of children; and to whom, believing in him, he gives power to become the children of God: and theſe juſtify him from all ſuch ſcandalous imputations, and by their lives and converſations ſhew, that the doctrine of Chriſt is not a licentious one, or leads to libertiniſm, and indulges men in their carnal, ſenſual luſts and pleaſures; but on the contrary, teaches them to deny ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, and to live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly: the word *all*, is inſerted by *Luke*, which is not in *Matthew*; ſignifying, that this is the univerſal ſenſe and practice of all the real offspring of Chriſt, the ſons of wiſdom, who are wiſe to do good.

Ver. 36. *And one of the Phariſees*, &c.] Whoſe name was *Simon*, ver. 40, 43, 44. *Deſired that he would eat with him*; take a meal with him, either a dinner or a ſupper: this he did under a diſguiſe of reſpect, and ſhew of affection to him; though very likely with a deſign upon him to enſnare him, or take ſome advantage againſt him i he could; for it is certain, that he did not trea him with thoſe civilities and ceremonies commonl uſed to gueſts; ſee ver. 44, 45, 46. *And he wen into the Phariſees houſe, and ſat down to meat*: h made no heſitation about it, but at once accepte of his invitation, though he knew both the ma and his intentions; having nothing to fear fro him, and being willing to carry it courteouſly t all men, and give proof of what he had juſt no ſaid of himſelf, ver. 34.

Ver. 37. *And behold, a woman in the city*, &c Not *Mary Magdalene*, ſpoken of in the next cha ter, ver. 2. under another character; and is a di ferent perſon, who had not been taken notice of the Evangeliſt before; nor *Mary* the ſiſter of *Laz rus*, who is ſaid to anoint the feet of Chriſt, a wipe them with her hair, *John* xii. 3. The c racter given of this woman, does not ſeem ſo w to agree with her; at leaſt, the fact here record cannot be the ſame with that; for this was in *G lee*, and that in *Bethany*; this in the houſe of *Si* the *Phariſee*, that in the houſe of *Lazarus*; was ſome time before Chriſt's death, for after he went a circuit through every city and villa that was but ſix days before his death, and after which he never went from thoſe parts; nor is this account the ſame with the hiſtory, recorded in *Matt.* xxvi. 6, 7. *Mark* xiv. 3. for that fact was done in *Bethany* alſo, this in *Galilee*; that in the houſe of *Simon* the leper, this in the houſe of *Simon* the *Phariſee*; that was but two days before the death of Chriſt, this a conſiderable time before; the ointment that woman poured, was poured upon his head, this upon his feet: who this woman was, is not certain, nor in what city ſhe dwelt; it ſeems to be the ſame in which the *Phariſees* houſe was; and was no doubt one of the cities of *Galilee*, as *Naim*, *Capernaum*, or ſome other at no great diſtance from theſe: *which was a ſinner*; a notorious ſinner, one that was known by all to have been a perſon of a wicked life and converſation; a lewd woman, a vile proſtitute, an harlot, commonly reputed ſo: the *Arabic* word here uſed, ſignifies both a ſinner and a whore[k]; and ſo the word, *ſinners*, ſeem to be uſed elſewhere by *Luke*; ſee ch. xv. 1, 2. compared with *Matt.* xxi. 31, 32. Some think ſhe was a *Gentile*, *Gentiles* being reckoned by the *Jews* ſinners, and the worſt of ſinners; but this does not appear: *when ſhe knew that Jeſus ſat at meat in the Phariſees houſe*; having obſerved it herſelf that he was invited by him, and went with him, or being informed of it by others, *brought an alabaſter box of ointment:* ointment was uſed to be put in veſſels made of *alabaſter*, which kept it pure and incorrupt; and this ſtone was found about *Damaſcus*[l], ſo that there might be plenty of it in *Judea*; at leaſt it might be eaſily had, and ſuch boxes might be common; and as this woman appears to have been a lewd perſon, ſhe might have this box of ointment by her to anoint herſelf with, that ſhe might recommend herſelf to her gallants. The hiſtorian[m] reports, that "*Venus* gave to *Phaon* "an alabaſter box with ointment, with which *Phaon* "being anointed, became the moſt beautiful of "men, and the women of *Mitylene* were taken "with the love of him." If this box had been provided with ſuch a view, it was now uſed to another and different purpoſe.

Ver. 38. *And ſtood at his feet behind him*, &c.] Chriſt lay upon a bed, or couch, as was the cuſtom of the ancients, both *Jews* and others, at meals, with his feet put out behind; and between the couches and the walls of the room, there was a ſpace for ſervants to wait and ſerve, and ſuch are therefore ſaid to *ſtand at the feet*; and the phraſe is uſed, as deſcriptive of ſervants in waiting[n]; and in ſuch a ſituation this woman put herſelf, as being alſo aſhamed and afraid to come before Chriſt, and look him in the face; and here ſhe ſtood weeping for her ſins, and melted down with the love of Chriſt to her ſoul, and at his diſcourſe: *and began to waſh his feet with tears*; which fell from her eyes in ſuch abundance upon his feet, as ſhe ſtood by him, that they were like a ſhower of rain, as the word ſignifies, with which his feet were as it were bathed and waſhed; his ſhoes or ſandals being off, as was the cuſtom at eating ſo to do, leſt they ſhould daub the couch or bed, on which they lay[o]. Her tears ſhe uſed inſtead of water; for it was the cuſtom firſt to waſh the feet before they were anointed with oil, which ſhe intended to do; and for which purpoſe ſhe had brought with her an alabaſter box of ointment: it is ſaid[p] of one, "when he came home, "that his maid brought him a pot of hot water, "and he waſhed his hands and his feet in it; then "ſhe brought him a golden baſon full of oil, and "he dipped his hands and his feet in it, to fulfil "what is ſaid, *Deut.* xxxiii. 24. and after they "had eaten and drank, he meaſured out oil, *&c.*" And it is a general rule with the *Jews*[q], "that "whoever anoints his feet, is obliged to waſhing "or dipping." *And did wipe them with the hairs of her head*; which were long, and hung looſe about her ſhoulders, it being uſual and comely for women to wear long hair, 1 *Cor.* xi. 15. That which was her ornament and pride, and which ſhe took great care of to nouriſh and put in proper form, to render her deſireable, ſhe uſes inſtead of a towel, to wipe her Lord's feet, and her tears off of them. A like phraſe is uſed of one by *Apuleius*, "*his verbis & amplexibus mollibus decantatus maritus*, "*lachrymaſque ejus ſuis crinibus detergens*, &c.[r]:" *and kiſſed his feet.* This was no unuſual practice with the *Jews*; we often read of it[s]: "*R. Jonathan* and *R. Jannai*, were ſitting together, there "came a certain man, ונשק רגלוי, *and kiſſed the* "*feet* of *R. Jonathan.*" Again[t], "*R. Meir* "ſtood up, and *Bar Chama*, נשקיה אכרעיה, "*kiſſed his knees*, or *feet*." This cuſtom was alſo uſed by the *Greeks* and *Romans* among their civilities, and in their ſalutations[u]: *and anointed* them *with the ointment*; which ſhe brought with her.

Ver. 39. *Now when the Phariſee which had bidden him, ſaw it*, &c.] *Simon*, who had invited Chriſt to eat with him, when he ſaw what was done by the woman, how ſhe ſtood at his feet, and waſhed them with her tears, and wiped them with her hairs, and then kiſſed and anointed them: *he ſpake within himſelf*; not openly and publickly, being in good manners, though not in real reſpect to Chriſt, unwilling to affront his gueſt; but turned theſe things over in his mind, and reaſoned upon them within himſelf: *ſaying, this man, if he were a prophet*; as he was ſaid, and believed to be by many, but queſtioned by this *Phariſee: would have known who, and what manner of woman* this is, *that toucheth him*; he took it for granted, that Chriſt did not know this woman perſonally, that ſhe was one of the city; nor her character, or *what was her fame*, as the *Syriac* verſion renders it, which was very ill; or *her condition*, as the *Arabic* verſion, ſhe being not a religious perſon, but a notorious lewd one: this he concluded, from his admitting her to ſuch nearneſs to him, and familiarity with him; and from hence argues within himſelf, that he could not be a prophet; ſince, according to his notion of a prophet, he muſt know perſons and their characters; though this was not always requiſite in a prophet, nor did the prophetic gift at all times, ſhew itſelf in this way: however, this man reaſoned upon the commonly received notions of the *Phariſees*, both of the Meſſiah, the prophet that *Moſes* ſaid ſhould come, and of their own conduct, and of all religious men: their notion with reſpect to the Meſſiah was, that he ſhould be of ſo quick an underſtanding, or ſmell, as in *Iſa.* xi. 3. that he ſhould know at once who was a wicked perſon, and who not. "*Bar Coziba* they "ſay[w], reigned two years and a half; he ſaid to "the *Rabbans*, I am the *Meſſiah*; they replied to

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[k] Vid. Caſtell. Lex. Heptaglott. col. 1195.

[l] Plin. Nat. Hiſt. l. 36. c. 8.

[m] Ælian. var. Hiſt. l. 12. c. 8.

[n] Vid. Alſtorphium de lectis veterum, p. 106, 107.

[o] Ib. p. 123, 124.

[p] T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 85. 2.

[q] T. Bab. Zebachim, fol 26. 2. Maimon. Hilchot Biath Hamikdaſh, c. 5. §. 5.

[r] Metamorph. l. 5.

[s] T. Hieroſ. Peah, fol. 15. 4. & Kidduſhin, fol. 61. 3. T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 49. 2. Vid. ib. fol. 63. 1.

[t] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 27. 2

[u] Vid. Ariſtophanem in veſpis, p. 473. Arrian. Epictet. l. 3. c. 26. & Alex. ab Alex. Gen. Dier. l. 3. c. 19.

[w] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 93. 2.

“ him, it is written of the Meſſiah, *Iſa.* xi. 3. “ that he ſmells, or is of quick underſtanding and “ judges (the *Gloſs* on it is, he ſmells on a man, “ and judges and knows, מי הח״יב, *who is a* “ *wicked man*:) let us ſee whether he ſmells and “ judges; and when they ſaw that he did not ſmell “ and judge, they killed him.” But Jeſus the true Meſſiah, could do ſo; he knew who were ſinners, he knew this woman to be one, as the following account ſhews: and their notion with reſpect to the conduct of religious perſons towards the common people, and thoſe of a bad character, and which the *Phariſee* here ſuggeſts, was, that the touch of ſuch perſons was defiling, and therefore to be avoided: for they ſay [x], that “ the “ *Phariſees*, if they touched the garments of the “ common people, they were defiled.” And therefore when they walked in the ſtreets, “ they “ walked in the ſides (of the ways) that they “ might not be defiled, במגע, *by the touch* of the “ common people [y].” *For ſhe is a ſinner*; a notorious one; or *that ſhe is a ſinner*; and the ſenſe is, Chriſt, had he been a prophet, the *Phariſee* intimates, would have known that this woman was a vile creature; and he would have ſhewn it, by his abhorrence and rejection of her; or as the *Perſic* verſion adds, *would have declared her ſins*.

Ver. 40. *And Jeſus anſwering ſaid unto him*, &c.] Chriſt being God omniſcient, knew not only the character and converſation of this woman, which were publickly known by all, that knew any thing of her, but alſo the ſecret thoughts and reaſonings of the *Phariſee*, and makes anſwer to them; which ſhows, that he was a prophet, in the ſenſe of this man; yea, more than a prophet: *Simon, I have ſomewhat to ſay to thee*; this could not be *Simon Peter*, Chriſt ſpoke to, as ſome have ſuggeſted; for the anſwer is made unto the *Phariſee*, and he is the perſon addreſſed, by the name of *Simon*; even he, into whoſe houſe Chriſt entered, and now was, as appears from ver. 44. *And he ſaith, Maſter*; or teacher, or doctor; or as the *Syriac* verſion, *Rabbi*; which was the common ſalutation of doctors: *ſay on*. This was a way of ſpeaking in uſe with the *Jews*, giving leave to proceed in a diſcourſe; and as Chriſt was now a gueſt in this man's houſe, he aſks leave of him, and he grants him it: ſo we read of *R. Simeon ben Gamaliel* [z], that he ſaid to *R. Iſhmael ben Eliſhah*, “ is it thy pleaſure that I ſhould “ ſay before thee one thing? he ſaid unto him, “ אמור, *ſay on*.” Again, *R. Jochanan ben Zaccai* ſaid [a] to a certain governour, “ ſuffer me to ſay “ one thing to thee? he replied to him, אמור, “ *ſay on*.”

Ver. 41. *There was a certain creditor*, &c.] All the *Oriental* verſions premiſe ſomething to this. The *Syriac* verſion reads, *Jeſus ſaid unto him*. The *Arabic* verſion, *then he ſaid*. The *Perſic* verſion, *Jeſus ſaid*; and the *Ethiopic* verſion, *and he ſaid to him*; and ſomething of this kind is underſtood, and to be ſupplied in the text: *which had two debtors, the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty*; theſe were, as the word ſhows, *Roman denarii*, or *pence*; the former of theſe ſums, reckoning a *Roman* penny at ſeven-pence halfpenny of our money, amounted to fifteen pounds and twelve ſhillings and ſix-pence; and the latter, to one pound eleven ſhillings and three-pence; the one of theſe ſums was ten times larger than the other. This is a parable: by *the creditor*, God is meant; to whom men owe their beings, and the preſervation of them, and all the mercies of life; and are under obligation to obedience and thankfulneſs: hence no man can merit any thing of God, or pay off any old debt, by a new act of obedience, ſince all is due to him: by *the two debtors* are meant, greater and leſſer ſinners: all ſins are debts, and all ſinners are debtors; not debtors to ſin, for then it would not be criminal, but lawful to commit ſin, and God muſt be pleaſed with it, which he is not, and men might promiſe themſelves impunity, which they cannot; but they are debtors to fulfil the law, and in caſe of failure, are bound to the debt of puniſhment: and of theſe debtors and debts, ſome are greater, and others leſs; not but that they are all equally ſinners in *Adam*, and equally guilty and corrupted by his tranſgreſſion; and the ſame ſeeds of ſin are in the hearts of all men, and all ſin is committed againſt God, and is a breach of his law, and is mortal, or deſerving of death, even death eternal; but then, as ſome commands are greater, and others leſs, ſo muſt their tranſgreſſions be: ſin more immediately committed againſt God, is greater than that which is committed againſt our neighbour; and beſides, the circumſtances of perſons and things differ, which more or leſs aggravate the offence.

Ver. 42. *And when they had nothing to pay*, &c.] Neither the leſſer nor greater debtor; for though not alike in debt, yet both inſolvent: man has run out his whole ſtock, which the God of nature gave him, in his original creation and primitive ſtate; and is become a bankrupt and a beggar, is poor, wretched, and miſerable; he has no money, he has nothing to offer for a compoſition, much leſs for payment; he has no righteouſneſs, and if he had, it would be nothing to pay with; ſince that itſelf, even in perfection, is due to God, and can't diſcharge a former debt: ſin being committed againſt an infinite being, is in ſome ſenſe an infinite debt, and requires an infinite ſatisfaction, which a finite creature can never give; and he is therefore liable to a priſon, and that for ever: but behold the wonderful grace of God, the creditor! *he frankly forgave them both*; their whole debts, without regard to any merits of theirs, which they could not have, or any motives in them, or any conditions to be performed by them, but purely of his ſovereign will, free-grace, and rich mercy, though not without regard to the ſatisfaction of his Son; which by no means hinders the frankneſs of the pardon, or obſcures the grace of it, but increaſes and illuſtrates it; ſeeing this ſatisfaction is of God's own finding out, providing, and accepting; and is at his own expence, and without money and price, to the debtors: *tell me therefore, which of them will love him moſt*; or *ought to love him moſt*, as the *Ethiopic* verſion. The *Vulgate Latin*, and all the *Oriental* verſions, leave out the firſt part of this clauſe, *tell me*.

Ver. 43. *Simon anſwered and ſaid*, &c.] Very readily, without any heſitation, not being aware of the application of it, to the inſtance he had been pondering in his mind: *I ſuppoſe, that he to whom he forgave moſt*; it was his opinion, and to him a plain caſe, that he that owed the largeſt debt, and that being forgiven him fully, and freely, as he was under the greateſt obligation, ſo as he ought, he would ſhew the greateſt love and affection to his kind and gracious creditor: *and he ſaid unto him*; that is, Jeſus ſaid, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions expreſs it: *thou haſt rightly judged*; this is a right and true judgment of the caſe; it is according to the nature and truth of things, and what is obvious and clear at firſt ſight, and which every one muſt agree to.

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[x] Maimon. in Miſn. Chagiga, c. 2. §. 7.

[y] Ib. Hilchot Abot Hatumaot, c. 13. §. 8.

[z] Abot R. Nathan, c. 38. fol. 9. 2.

[a] Bemidbar Rabba, §. 4. fol. 183. 1.

Ver. 44. *And he turned to the woman*, &c.] That ſtood behind him at his feet, *and ſaid to Simon, ſeeſt thou this woman?* and what ſhe has done? pointing to her, and comparing him, and her, and their actions together, whereby he might judge of the preceding parable, and how fitly it might be applied to the preſent caſe: *I entred into thine houſe*; not of his own accord, but by the invitation of *Simon*, and therefore might have expected the uſual civilities: *thou gaveſt me no water for my feet*; to waſh them with, no, not ſo much as water; a civility very common in thoſe hot countries, where walking without ſtockings, and only with ſandals, they needed often waſhing; and which was very refreſhing, and was not only uſed to travellers and ſtrangers, but to gueſts, and was uſually done by the ſervants of the houſe; ſee the note on ver. 38. *but ſhe hath waſhed my feet with tears.* The *Perſic* verſion reads, *with the tears of her eyes*; which made a bath for his feet; *and wiped* them *with the hairs of her head.* The *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read only, *with her hair*, which ſhe uſed inſtead of a towel, when *Simon* neither gave him water to waſh with, nor a towel to wipe with.

Ver. 45. *Thou gaveſt me no kiſs*, &c.] A token of civility among friends, when they met together on any occaſion. The *Jews* have a ſaying [b], that "all kiſſes are fooliſh, excepting three; the kiſs of grandeur or dignity, as in 1 *Sam.* x. 1. and the kiſs at parting, as in *Ruth* i. 14. and the kiſs at meeting, as in *Exod.* iv. 27. (of which ſort this kiſs may be thought to be) to which ſome add the kiſs of conſanguinity, (or that uſed by relations to one another) as in *Gen.* xxix. 11." *but this woman ſince the time I came in.* The *Vulgate Latin* and *Syriac* verſions read, *ſince ſhe came in*; and ſo two of *Stephens*'s copies; which ſeems to be the more agreeable reading, ſeeing Chriſt was in *Simon*'s houſe before this woman came; for ſhe knowing that he was there, came thither after him: *hath not ceaſed to kiſs my feet*; which ſhows, that this action was repeated by her times without number, even ever ſince ſhe came into the houſe.

Ver. 46. *Mine head with oil thou didſt not anoint*, &c.] No not with common oil, ſo uſually done at feaſts, ſee *Pſ.* xxiii. 5. *but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment*; even *with ointment*, דבסמא, *of ſpices*, as the *Syriac* verſion renders it. There is, throughout the whole account, an oppoſition between the conduct of *Simon*, and this woman: he gave him no common water to waſh his feet with, ſhe ſhed floods of tears, and with them bathed his feet, and then wiped them clean with the hairs of her head; he gave him not the uſual ſalutation by kiſſing his head or lips, but ſhe kiſſed his feet, and that over and over again; he did not ſo much as anoint his head with common oil, when ſhe anointed his feet with coſtly ointment brought in an alabaſter box. Theſe ſeveral ceremonies to gueſts were uſed by their hoſts, in other nations, ſuch as waſhing, anointing, and kiſſing [c].

Ver. 47. *Wherefore I ſay unto thee*, &c.] Not *for this that ſhe hath done*, as the *Perſic* verſion very wrongly renders it; not becauſe ſhe had waſhed Chriſt's feet with tears, and wiped them with her hairs, and kiſſed and anointed them, therefore her ſins were forgiven; nor upon this account, and for thoſe reaſons did Chriſt ſay, or declare, that they were forgiven; but ου χαριν, *for this cauſe*, or reaſon, he ſaid this to *Simon* the *Phariſee*, to remove his objections, rectify his miſtakes, and ſtop his murmuring and complaining, by obſerving, that tho' ſhe had been a great ſinner, yet ſhe was now not ſuch an one as he took her to be; ſhe was a pardoned ſinner, and not that guilty and filthy creature he imagined; the guilt of all her ſins was removed, and ſhe was cleanſed from all her filthineſs: *her ſins, which are many, are forgiven*; tho' ſhe was like the largeſt debtor in the parable, which owed five hundred pence, yet the whole ſcore was cleared; tho' her ſins were numerous, and attended with very aggravating circumſtances, which denominated her a ſinner, in a very emphatic ſenſe, a notorious one, yet they were all fully, and freely forgiven: *for ſhe loved much*; or *therefore ſhe loved much*: her great love was not the cauſe of the remiſſion of her ſins, but the full and free remiſſion of her many ſins, which had been manifeſted to her, was the cauſe of her great love, and of her ſhewing it in the manner ſhe had done: that this is the ſenſe of the words, is clear from the parable, and the accommodation of it to the preſent caſe, otherwiſe there would be no agreement. Upon relating the parable of the two debtors, Chriſt puts the queſtion to *Simon*, which of the two it was moſt reaſonable to think would love moſt: his anſwer is, and which Chriſt approved of, he to whom moſt was forgiven; where, 'tis plain, that according to our Lord's ſenſe, and even *Simon*'s opinion of the caſe, that forgiveneſs is the cauſe, and love the effect; and that according as the forgiveneſs is of more or leſs, love is proportionate; and which is applied to the caſe in hand: this poor woman had been a great ſinner; her many ſins were pardoned; and therefore ſhe expreſſed much love to him, from whom ſhe had received her pardon by the above actions, and much more than *Simon* had done: *but to whom little is forgiven, the ſame loveth little*; this is an accommodation of the other part of the parable, and has a very ſpecial reſpect to *Simon*, the *Phariſee*, whoſe debts, in his own opinion, were few or none, at leaſt ten times leſs than this woman's; and he had little or no ſenſe of the forgiveneſs of them, or of any obligation to Chriſt on that account; and therefore was very ſparing of his love and reſpect, and even of common civilities to him.

Ver. 48. *And he ſaith unto her*, &c.] Directing his diſcourſe to the woman that now ſtood before him: *thy ſins are forgiven*; which was ſaid, partly on account of the *Phariſee*, to let him ſee, that he knew this woman, what ſhe was, and had been; that ſhe had been a ſinner, a great ſinner, one that owed five hundred pence, but was now forgiven, waſhed, cleanſed, ſanctified, and juſtified, and therefore not to be ſhunned and avoided; and partly on the woman's account, that ſhe might have a freſh diſcovery of the forgiveneſs of her ſins, for her comfort under the ſevere cenſure of the *Phariſee*, and that her faith in it might be ſtrengthened; as alſo on his own account, to ſhew that he was not only a prophet that had extraordinary knowledge of perſons, and their characters, but that he was the moſt high God, to whom belonged the prerogative of pardoning ſin.

Ver. 49. *And they that ſat at meat with him*, &c.] Other *Phariſees* that ſat at *Simon*'s table with Chriſt, whom he had invited as gueſts, on this occaſion of ſeeing and converſing with Jeſus; or ſome of *Simon*'s family, that ſat down to eat with him;

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[b] Shemot Rabba, §. 5. fol. 91. 3, 4.

[c] Vid. Apuleii Metamorph. l. 1. prope finem.

*began to ſay within themſelves*; that is, either thought and reaſoned in their own minds, or whiſpered among themſelves: *who is this that forgiveth ſins alſo?* who not content to tranſgreſs the traditions of the elders, by admitting a ſinful woman to touch him, but aſſumes that to himſelf which is peculiar to God, to forgive ſin: this they ſaid, not as wondering at him, what manner of perſon he muſt be, that with ſuch authority pronounced the forgiveneſs of ſin, as *Grotius* thinks; but rather as offended with him, and filled with indignation againſt him, and ſo cenſuring and reproaching him for wickedneſs and blaſphemy.

Ver. 50. *And he ſaid to the woman*, &c.] Notwithſtanding the *Phariſees* cenſure, both of him and her: *thy faith hath ſaved thee*; meaning either the object of her faith, himſelf, who was the author of eternal ſalvation to her; or that ſhe, thro' faith in him, had received the bleſſings of ſalvation, pardon, righteouſneſs, and life from him, and the joys and comfort of it; and had both a right unto, and a meetneſs for eternal glory and happineſs: *go in peace*; of conſcience, and ſerenity of mind; let nothing diſturb thee; not the remembrance of paſt ſins, which are all forgiven, nor the ſuggeſtions of ſatan, who may, at one time or another, preſent them to view; nor the troubles and afflictions of this preſent life, which are all in love; nor the reproaches and cenſures of men of a *phariſaic* ſpirit: go home to thy houſe, and about thy buſineſs, and chearfully perform thy duty both to God and men; and when thou haſt done thy generation-work, thou ſhalt enter into eternal peace and joy.

## CHAP. VIII.

Ver. 1. AND *it came to paſs afterwards*, &c.] After Chriſt had healed the centurion's ſervant at *Capernaum*, and had raiſed a widow's ſon that was dead, to life, at *Naim*; after *John*'s diſciples had been with him, and he had diſmiſſed them, and had ſaid many things in commendation of *John*, and in vindication both of him, and of himſelf; and after he had taken a meal in a *Phariſee*'s houſe, where he met with a woman that had been a notorious ſinner, who ſhewed great affection for him, which occaſioned much diſcourſe between him and the *Phariſee*: *that he went throughout every city and village*; that is, in *Galilee*, where he now was, as is clear from the foregoing chapter, and from what follows in this, ſee ver. 26. and beſides, it was by the ſea of *Galilee* that he delivered the following parable concerning the ſower; ſee *Matt.* xiii. 1. *preaching, and ſhewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God*; of the Goſpel-diſpenſation, which was now taking place, and had been long expected; publiſhing the doctrines and myſteries of it, ſuch as free and full remiſſion of ſins for his own ſake, juſtification by his righteouſneſs, acceptance in him the beloved Son of God, and compleat ſalvation by him as the Saviour of his people, than which nothing could be more welcome news, or better tidings; pointing out the ordinances of that diſpenſation, and ſhewing who were the proper ſubjects of them, and directing and encouraging ſuch to ſubmit unto them; as alſo ſignifying what the kingdom of grace lies in, not in meats and drinks, or any outward things, but in inward holineſs, peace, and joy; and what is a meetneſs for entrance into the kingdom of glory, namely, regenerating grace; and what gives a right unto it, even a better righteouſneſs than that of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, and which was no other than his own: *and the twelve were with him*; the twelve Apoſtles, whom Chriſt had choſe, and ordained as ſuch: theſe attended him where-ever he went, that they might be witneſſes of his miracles, and learn his doctrines; that ſo they might be thoroughly furniſhed for their future miniſtry, both in *Judea*, and among the *Gentiles*.

Ver. 2. *And certain women which had been healed of evil ſpirits*, &c.] Of devils, who had poſſeſſed them, and were healed by Chriſt, diſpoſſeſſing them; ſee the note on chap. vii. 21. *and infirmities*; various diſeaſes of body: ſome were diſpoſſeſſed of devils, and others freed from bodily diſorders; of the firſt ſort was *Mary Magdalene*, *out of whom went ſeven devils*; by the order of Chriſt, for he caſt them out, *Mark* xvi. 9. and which ſhews, that this is to be underſtood, in a literal ſenſe, of devils, and the diſpoſſeſſion of them by Chriſt; and not in a figurative ſenſe, of vices, and the expulſion of them by the power of divine grace; for this ſame phraſe is uſed where real diſpoſſeſſions are intended: nor need it be thought ſtrange, that ſeven devils ſhould be in one perſon, when, in this ſame chapter, we read of a legion in one man, and which alſo Chriſt caſt out, ſee ver. 30, 33, 35. This woman ſeems to be a different perſon from her ſpoken of in the latter part of the preceding chapter, ſeeing this looks as if it was the firſt time of her being taken notice of by this Evangeliſt, and is deſcribed by a different character. She is called *Magdalene*, to diſtinguiſh her from others of the ſame name; the reaſon of which ſee in the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 56. She is ſaid [d] to be a widow, and ſo not being bound to an huſband, was at leiſure to follow Chriſt.

Ver. 3. *And Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's ſteward*, &c.] *Joanna*, or *Juchan*, as the *Syriac* verſion calls her, was a name, among the *Jews*, for a woman, as *Jochanan*, or *John*, was for a man. In the *Talmud* [e] we read of one *Jochani*, or *Joanni*, the daughter of *Retibi*, the ſame name with this. Her huſband's name was *Chuza*. Dr. *Lightfoot* obſerves, from a *Talmudic* treatiſe [f], ſuch a name in the genealogy of *Haman*, who is called the ſon of *Chuza*; and *Haman* being an *Edomite*, and this man being in the family of *Herod*, who was of that race, ſuggeſts it to be an *Idumean* name. But in my edition of that treatiſe, *Haman* is not called the ſon of *Chuza*, but בר כיזא, *the ſon of Ciza*; and beſides, *Chuza* is a *Jewiſh* name, and the name of a family of note among the *Jews*: hence we read [g] of *R. Broka* the *Chuzite*; where the *Gloſs* is, *for he was*, מבי חוזאי, *of the family of Chuzai*. And elſewhere [h] mention is made of two ſons of *Chuzai*; and both the *Gloſs*, and *Piſke Haroſh* upon the place, ſay, *they were Jews*: ſo *Abimi* is ſaid to be of the family of *Chuzai*, or the *Chuzites* [i]; and the ſame is ſaid of *R. Acha* [k]. This man, here mentioned, was *Herod*'s *ſteward*; a ſteward of *Herod* the *tetrarch*, of *Galilee*. The *Arabic* verſion calls him his *treaſurer*; and the *Vulgate Latin*, and the *Ethiopic* verſions, his *procurator*; and ſome have thought him

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[d] Jerom in Mar. xv. 40.

[e] T. Bab. Sota, fol. 22. 1.

[f] Maſſechet Sopherim, c. 13. §. 6.

[g] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 22. 1.

[h] T. Bab. Nedarim, fol. 22. 1.

[i] Juchaſin, fol. 75. 1.

[k] Ib. fol. 78. 1.

to be a deputy-governour of the province under him; but he ſeems rather to be a governour, or *chief of his houſe*, as the *Syriac* verſion renders it: he was one that preſided in his family, and managed his domeſtic affairs; was an overſeer of them, as *Joſeph* was in *Potiphar*'s houſe; and the ſame *Greek* word that is here uſed, is adopted by the *Jews* into their language, and uſed of *Joſeph* [l]: and who moreover ſay [m], "let not a man appoint a *ſteward* "in his houſe; for if *Potiphar* had not appointed "*Joſeph*, אפוטרופוס, *a ſteward*, in his houſe, he "had not come into that matter," of calumny and reproach. It was common for kings, princes, and great men to have ſuch an officer in their families. We read [n] of a ſteward of king *Agrippa*'s, who was of this ſame family. The *Perſic* verſion is very foreign to the purpoſe, making *Chuza* to be *of the family of Herod*. This man might be either dead, as ſome have conjectured; or, if living, might be ſecretly a friend of Chriſt, and ſo willing that his wife ſhould follow him; or, if an enemy, ſuch was her zeal for Chriſt, that ſhe chearfully expoſed herſelf to all his reſentments; and choſe rather meanneſs, contempt, and perſecution with Chriſt, and for his ſake, than to enjoy all the pleaſures of *Herod*'s court without him. *And Suſanna*; this alſo was a name for a woman with the *Jews*, as appears from the hiſtory of one of this name with them, which ſtands among the *Apocryphal* writings. She, as well as *Joanna*, and perhaps alſo *Mary Magdalene*, were rich, and perſons of ſubſtance, as well as note, as ſhould ſeem by what follows: *and many others*; that is, many other women; for the words are of the feminine gender: *which miniſtred unto him of their ſubſtance*; four ancient copies of *Beza*'s, and five of *Stephens*'s, and the *Syriac* verſion read, *which miniſtred unto them*; that is, to Chriſt, and his diſciples, as the *Perſic* verſion expreſſes it. This ſhows the gratitude of theſe women, who having received favours from Chriſt, both for their ſouls and bodies, make returns to him out of their worldly ſubſtance, in a way of thankfulneſs; and alſo the low eſtate of Chriſt, and his diſciples, who ſtood in need of ſuch miniſtrations; and may be an inſtruction to the churches of Chriſt to take care of their miniſters, and to communicate in all good things to them, of whoſe ſpiritual things they partake; and may be a direction to them to miniſter to them of what is their own ſubſtance, and not another's; and to miniſter a proper part, and not the whole, as theſe women miniſtred to Chriſt, and his Apoſtles, of ſubſtance which was their own, and that not all of it, but *out* of it.

Ver. 4. *And when much people were gathered together*, &c.] To Jeſus, as he was by the ſea-ſide, the ſea of *Galilee*, or *Tiberias*: *and were come to him out of every city*; of *Galilee*, to hear him preach, and ſee his miracles: *he ſpake by a parable*; the following things.

Ver. 5. *A ſower went out to ſow his ſeed*, &c.] By whom Jeſus Chriſt is chiefly deſigned; tho' it is true of every preacher of the Goſpel, who goes forth, being ſent by Chriſt, with the precious ſeed of the word: for the phraſe, *his ſeed*, which only *Luke* has, beſt agrees with Chriſt, he being the proprietor and ſubject of it. The *Alexandrian* copy reads, *the ſeed of himſelf*. The *Perſic* verſion reads the whole clauſe thus, *a ſower choſe ground, and there he ſowed ſeed:* he fixed on the ſpot of ground to ſow his ſeed in, as Chriſt did on the people of the *Jews*, and afterwards the *Gentiles*. *And, as he ſowed, ſome fell by the way-ſide*; on the road, which was by the ſide of the field, in which people commonly walked, and ſo was beaten hard, and the ſeed lay upon it, and was not received; which deſigns ſuch hearers of the word, as are not ſuſceptive of it, don't take it in, and have no manner of underſtanding of it. *And it was trodden down*; by every one that paſſed by, as the Goſpel preached to ſuch hardened and ignorant hearers, is deſpiſed and trampled under foot by them. *And the fowls of the air devoured it*; who generally flock about places where ſeed is ſowing; and here intend the devil and his angels, that have their dwelling in the air; and frequent places of public worſhip to hinder the uſefulneſs of the miniſtry of the word, as much as in them lies.

Ver. 6. *And ſome fell upon a rock*, &c.] Which the other Evangeliſts call *ſtony places*, and *ſtony ground*; by which are meant ſuch hearers whoſe hearts are hardened thro' the deceitfulneſs of ſin, and continue ſo notwithſtanding the preaching of the word unto them. *And as ſoon as it ſprung up*; as it did *immediately*, as the other Evangeliſts ſay; and that for this reaſon, which they give, becauſe *it had no depth of earth*; only a ſmall cruſt, or ſhell of earth over the rock; and ſignifies, that theſe hearers had only a ſuperficial knowledge of the word, and haſtily made a profeſſion of it, which ſoon came to nothing: *it withered away, becauſe it lacked moiſture*; the other Evangeliſts ſay, *when the ſun was up, it was ſcorched*; meaning tribulation and perſecution, the grace of God being wanting to ſupport under fiery trials: the reaſon given in *Matthew* and *Mark* why it withered, is, *becauſe it had no root*; and ſo read the *Perſic* and *Ethiopic* verſions here.

Ver. 7. *And ſome fell among thorns*, &c.] On ground which had within it the roots of thorns and briars; and deſign ſuch hearers who have their hearts filled with worldly cares, and ſenſual luſts and pleaſures: *and the thorns ſprang up with it*; and grew faſter than that: *and choked it*; as the above things do the word, and make it uſeleſs and unprofitable; ſo that tho' it took place for a while, and was profeſſed, yet in proceſs of time was neglected and dropped; and, as *Mark* ſays, *it yielded no fruit*; at leaſt that came to perfection.

Ver. 8. *And other fell on good ground*, &c.] The *Syriac* verſion reads, *on good and beautiful ground*; and ſo the *Cambridge* copy of *Beza*'s; ground which both looked well, and proved well; and ſignifies ſuch hearers who have good and honeſt hearts, made ſo by the Spirit of God; who receive the word in the love of it, have a ſpiritual underſtanding, and real experience of it: *and ſprang up, and bare fruit, an hundred fold*; or *a hundred for one*, as the *Syriac* verſion renders it; a hundred grains for one that was ſown. The *Ethiopic* verſion adds, *and it was to thirty, and it was to ſixty*; that is, as the other Evangeliſts ſay, *ſome thirty*, and *ſome ſixty* fold; for the word of God is more fruitfull in ſome of thoſe gracious hearers, than in others: *and when he had ſaid theſe things, he cried*; with a loud voice, that what he was about to ſay might be attended to: *he that hath ears to hear, let him hear*; ſee this parable more largely explained in the notes on *Matt.* xiii. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.

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[l] Targum Jon. & Jeruſ. in Gen. xxxix. 4.

[m] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 63. 1. & Maimon. Iſſure Bia, c. 22. §. 15. & Maggid Miſn. in ib.

[n] T. Bab. Succa, fol. 27. 1.

Ver. 9. *And his diſciples aſked him*, &c.] That is, as *Mark* ſays, *when he was alone*; after the multitude were departed, and they were by themſelves, it may be in ſome houſe with other diſciples: *ſaying, what might this parable be?* what is the ſenſe and meaning of it? According to *Matthew*, they aſked why he ſpake in parables to the people; and to ſuch a queſtion the following words are a proper anſwer.

Ver. 10. *And he ſaid, unto you it is given to know the myſteries of the kingdom of God*, &c.] The doctrines of the Goſpel, which to have ſpiritual knowledge of, is a ſpecial and peculiar gift of God. The *Vulgate Latin* and *Perſic* verſions read, *the myſtery*, in the ſingular, as in *Mark: but to others in parables*; that is, the doctrines of the Goſpel are delivered in a parabolical way to others; to ſuch as *are without*, as the Evangeliſt *Mark* expreſſes it, who are ſtrangers and foreigners, and not children, who are not the favourites of heaven, and the diſciples of Chriſt: *that ſeeing they might not ſee, and hearing they might not underſtand*; what was delivered to them; ſee the notes on *Matt.* xiii. 11,13,14.

Ver. 11. *Now the parable is this*, &c.] Or *this is the ſenſe of the parable*, as the *Arabic* verſion renders it: *the ſeed is the word of God*; the Goſpel, as preached by Chriſt, his apoſtles, and faithful miniſters, which has God for its author, is concerning the grace of God, and is what he bleſſes, and makes effectual to anſwer any good purpoſe.

Ver. 12. *Thoſe by the way-ſide are they that hear*, &c.] The word of God, tho' only by accident, and very careleſsly, and without underſtanding what they hear: *then cometh the devil*; ſignified by the fowls of the air: *and taketh away the word out of their hearts*, or memories; that little of it, which is retained there, and diverts their minds from it by other objects; ſo that they quite forget what they have heard; *leſt they ſhould believe, and be ſaved:* this clauſe is only in *Luke*; and with it may be compared 2 *Cor.* iv. 4. for with true faith in Chriſt the ſum and ſubſtance of the word ſalvation is connected; and ſatan being an enemy to the ſalvation of ſouls, does all he can to hinder their faith in him.

Ver. 13. *They on the rock, are they, which when they hear*, &c.] The ſeed that fell upon the rock, or ſtony ground, ſignify ſuch ſort of hearers, *who receive the word with joy.* The *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *with joy of heart.* But this ſort of hearers receive not the word into their hearts, or with their hearts believe it, and from their hearts obey it, only into their heads, and have only an hiſtorical faith of it; nor with hearty, ſpiritual, ſolid joy, or joy in the Holy Ghoſt: for their hearts remain like a rock, unbroken by the word; but with a flaſh of natural affection, which quickly goes off. *And theſe have no root*; neither *in themſelves*, as the other Evangeliſts ſay, they have no true grace in them; nor have they any root in Chriſt, nor in the love of God: *which for a while believe*; their faith is a temporary one, like that of *Simon Magus*; which ſhows it is not true faith; for that is an abiding grace, Chriſt, who is the author, is the finiſher of it, and prays for it, that it fail not. The *Perſic* verſion renders it, *in the time of hearing they have faith*; and ſuch ſort of hearers there are, who, whilſt they are hearing, aſſent to what they hear; but when they are gone, either forget it, or, falling into bad company, are prevailed upon to doubt of it, and diſbelieve it. The *Arabic* verſion renders it, *they believe for a ſmall time*; their faith don't continue long, nor their profeſſion of it, both are ſoon dropped: *and in the time of temptation fall away*; or *go back*, as the *Vulgate Latin* verſion, they draw back unto perdition; or *forſake that*, as the *Arabic* verſion reads, the word, they have heard, and received, their faith in it, and profeſſion of it; *and ſoon become apoſtates*, as the *Perſic* verſion renders it. By *the time of temptation*, is not meant any particular and ſore temptation of ſatan, but a time of affliction and perſecution, as appears from the other Evangeliſts; which is a trying time to profeſſors of religion, and when thoſe who have not the root of the matter in them, fall away.

Ver. 14. *And that which fell among thorns are they*, &c.] The ſeed that fell among thorns, or were ſown on thorny ground, repreſent ſuch hearers: *which, when they have heard, go forth*; from hearing the word to their worldly buſineſs; or go on in the purſuit of their worldly luſts and pleaſures notwithſtanding; for the word tranſlated, *go forth*, belongs to the next clauſe; *and are choked with cares, and riches, and pleaſures of* this *life*; and with it to be read thus, *and going on in*, or *under*, that is, under the power and influence of, *the cares, and riches, and pleaſures of life they are choked*; to which agrees the *Arabic* verſion, which renders it, *in which they walk*, or *which they follow*. The *Vulgate Latin* verſion is, *and from the cares, and riches, and pleaſures of life going they are choked:* but it is not going from them, but going on in them, which chokes them, or ſuffocates the word they have heard, whereby it becomes of no effect; unleſs it ſhould be rendered, *by the cares*, &c. *they are choked, and bring no fruit to perfection*; for what fruit ſuch hearers do bring forth, in a way of profeſſion, ſoon drops off, and periſhes.

Ver. 15. *But that on the good ground are they*, &c.] The ſeed that fell on good ground deſig ſuch hearers, *which in an honeſt and good heart, having heard the word, keep it:* who hear with an honeſt and good intention, and faithfully keep it, and hold it faſt: *and bring forth fruit with patience*; with great conſtancy, ſuffering much for the ſake of it; and the more they ſuffer, the more fruitful they are. See this explanation of the parable more largely inſiſted on in the notes on *Matt.* xiii. 19,20, 21, 22, 23.

Ver. 16. *No man when he hath lighted a candle*, &c.] Chriſt by this, and ſome proverbial ſentences following, obſerves to his diſciples, that tho' the myſteries of the kingdom of heaven were delivered in parables for the preſent, that they might not b ſeen and underſtood by ſome; and though he gav to them the explanation of ſuch parables, as of th above, in a private manner; yet his intention wa not, that theſe things ſhould always remain a ſe cret with them; but as they were the lights of th world, they ſhould communicate them to others and that that light of the Goſpel, and the know ledge of the doctrines of it, which he had im parted to them, were not to be retained and con cealed in their boſoms, but to be diffuſed an ſpread among others: even as no man, when h lights a candle, *covereth it with a veſſel*; any ſo of veſſel, as with a buſhel, *Matt.* v. 15. ſee t note there; or with a bucket, or with a ſhell, the *Perſic* verſion here interprets, rather than tran lates: *or putteth it under a bed*; whether a bed ſleep on, or a couch to ſit or lie upon at meal *but ſetteth it on a candleſtick*; a veſſel, or inſtr ment made for that uſe and purpoſe, to put a hold a candle in; *that they which enter in*; to t houſe, or room, where it is, *may ſee the light* of and be enlightened by it: even ſo it is the will

Chriſt, that what evangelical light and knowledge he beſtows on any perſons, they ſhould not hide it, nor their gifts and talents, or keep it back from the view of others, but ſhould hold it forth both in their preaching, and in their practice.

Ver. 17. *For nothing is ſecret that ſhall not be made manifeſt*, &c.] Meaning, whatever was then wrapped up in parables and dark ſayings, or was ſecretly, and in a private manner, committed to them, ſhould be made manifeſt by them to others hereafter: *neither any thing hid, that ſhall not be made known, and come abroad*; for what had been whiſpered to them, in the moſt ſecret and ſilent manner, was to come abroad not only in *Judea*, but in all the world, and to be publiſhed upon the houſe tops; ſee the notes on *Matt*. x. 26, 27.

Ver. 18. *Take heed therefore how ye hear*, &c.] That ye hear not in a careleſs and negligent manner, ſince what truths and doctrines ye now hear with the ear, are to be preached by you unto others: *for whoſoever hath*; that is, hath knowledge of the doctrines of the Goſpel, and hath gifts and abilities to preach them to others: *to him ſhall be given*; more knowledge, and by uſing his gifts they ſhall be increaſed: *but he that hath not*; true, ſolid, ſpiritual knowledge of divine things, tho' he has had conſiderable advantages and opportunities of learning it, as the apoſtles eſpecially had: *from him ſhall be taken, even that which he ſeemeth to have*; or *that which he thinks he has*, as the *Syriac* verſion renders it; that which he ſeemed to others to have, or thought himſelf he had: the knowledge he had of truth, and which was rather a ſhew of knowledge than real, ſhall be taken from him; his ſeeming gifts and parts ſhall die, and vaniſh away, and he ſhall be left to fall into ignorance, error, and hereſy. Obſerve, that this is to be underſtood not of internal grace, and experimental knowledge, but of ſpeculative notions of the Goſpel, and of external gifts; and ſo furniſhes out no argument againſt the final perſeverance of real ſaints; ſee the notes on *Matt*. xiii. 12. and xxv. 29.

Ver. 19. *Then came to him his mother and his brethren*, &c.] It was when Chriſt was preaching in an houſe at *Capernaum*, that *Mary* his mother, and ſome of his near kinſmen with her, came from *Nazareth* to him: theſe brethren of his were relations according to the fleſh, either by *Joſeph*, or his mother's ſide: who they were, can't be ſaid with certainty; it may be they were *Joſes* and *Simon*; for as for *James* and *Judas*, they were among the twelve apoſtles, and with him; and theſe are the four only perſons that are mentioned by name, as his brethren, *Matt*. xiii. 55. tho' there were others that were ſo called, who did not believe in him, *John* vii. 5. *and could not come at him for the preſs*; the multitude of people that were about him, who were ſo thick, that there was no coming near him, much leſs was there an opportunity of ſpeaking privately with him. The *Syriac* verſion renders it, *they could not ſpeak unto him for the multitude*.

Ver. 20. *And it was told him* by certain, *which ſaid*, &c.] The phraſe, *which ſaid*, is omitted in the *Vulgate Latin* verſion, and in *Beza*'s moſt ancient copy. The *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions only read, *and they ſaid unto him*; and the *Perſic* verſion renders it, *a certain perſon ſaid*; ſome one perſon, as in *Matt*. xii. 47. *thy mother, and thy brethren, ſtand without, deſiring to ſee thee*; and to ſpeak with thee, as in *Matt*. xii. 47. ſee the note there.

Ver. 21. *And he anſwered and ſaid unto them*, &c.] Not to his mother and brethren, but to thoſe that told him of them; who either deſigned to reproach him with them, by reaſon of the meanneſs of them, or to interrupt him in his work: *my mother, and my brethren are theſe*; pointing to his diſciples: *which hear the word of God*; which he had been preaching, and was meant by the ſeed in the preceding parable: *and do it*; behave in their lives and converſations agreeable to it; and obſerve the precepts and ordinances in it, elſewhere called the will of God his Father; ſee the notes on *Matt*. xii. 49, 50.

Ver. 22. *Now it came to paſs on a certain day*, &c.] The ſame day at even, as *Mark* ſays, ch. iv. 35. in which he delivered the parables of the ſower, and of the ſeed caſt into the ground, and of the grain of muſtard-ſeed: *that he went into a ſhip with his diſciples*; they following him into it, as in *Matt*. viii. 23. *and he ſaid unto them, let us go over unto the other ſide of the lake*; of *Genneſareth*, or ſea of *Galilee*: *and they launched forth*; into the ſea; they ſet ſail, and proceeded: this clauſe is omitted in the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions.

Ver. 23. *But as he ſailed he fell aſleep*, &c.] On a pillow, in the hinder part of the ſhip, as in *Mark* iv. 38. *and there came down a ſtorm of wind on the lake*; ſee the note on *Matt*. viii. 24. *and they were filled*; with water: not the diſciples, but the ſhip in which they were; and ſo the *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *their ſhip was filled with water*. The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions render it, *the ſhip was almoſt ſunk*, or immerſed: *and were in jeopardy*; of their lives, in the utmoſt danger, juſt ready to go to the bottom. This clauſe is left out in the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions.

Ver. 24. *And they came to him, and awoke him*, &c.] That is, the diſciples came from ſome part of the ſhip, to the hinder part of it, where Chriſt was aſleep; and by their ſhrieks and cries, and repeated vociferations, awaked him out of ſleep: *ſaying, Maſter, Maſter, we periſh*. The *Vulgate Latin*, *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, only read *maſter*, without a repetition of the word, as in *Matthew* and *Mark*; but the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions repeat it, and render the words, *our maſter, our maſter*; ſee the note on *Matt*. viii. 25. *Then he aroſe, and rebuked the wind, and the raging of the water, and they ceaſed, and there was a calm*; ſee the note on *Matt*. viii. 26.

Ver. 25. *And he ſaid unto them, where is your faith?* &c.] That is, he ſaid ſo to his diſciples, who had profeſſed faith in him, but now diſcovered very little: *and they being afraid, wondered*; being filled with an awful ſenſe of his majeſty, were amazed at his power and authority, in rebuking the wind and ſea, which at once obeyed him, and were ſtill: *ſaying one to another*; among themſelves, privately: *what manner of man is this? for he commandeth even the winds and water*; or the ſea, as the *Vulgate Latin*. The *Syriac* verſion reads both, *the floods and the ſea: and they obey him*: according to *Matthew*, theſe words ſeem to be ſpoken by the men of the ſhip, the mariners; but here, according to *Luke*, they ſeem to be the words of the diſciples; ſee the notes on *Matt*. viii. 27. and *Mark* iv. 41.

Ver. 26. *And they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes*, &c.] In *Matt*. viii. 28. it is called *the country of the Gergeſenes*, ſee the note there, as it is here, in the *Arabic* and *Ethiopic* verſions; and *of the Geraſenes*, in the *Vulgate Latin*; but the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read, *of the Gadarenes*, as in *Mark* v. 1. ſee the note there: *which is over-againſt Galilee*; from whence the ſhip launched, and Chriſt and his diſciples came.

Ver. 27. *And when he went forth to land*, &c.] The *Perſic* and *Ethiopic* verſions read, *when they went forth to land*; when Chriſt and his diſciples came out of the ſhip, and went aſhore: *there met him out of the city a certain man*; or rather, there met him a certain man of the city; that is, one that belonged to, and was an inhabitant of *Gadara*, or ſome city thereabout; who had been born and brought up, and had lived there; for certain it is, that he did not now come out of the city, but out of the tombs, as in *Matt.* viii. 28. *Mark* v. 2. and to which agrees the account of him, that follows here: in the *Vulgate Latin* verſion, theſe words, *out of the city*, are omitted; which the interpreter not underſtanding, might leave out, as carrying in it a ſeeming contradiction, to the accounts of him: *which had devils long time.* The *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Arabic* verſions, read in the ſingular number, *which had a devil*; and which agrees with ver. 29. for though more are after mentioned, yet the many might be under one head, and chief of them; but in all the copies 'tis read in the plural number, *devils*; and to this agrees the name of legion, for there were many devils in him, and they had a poſſeſſion of him a long time, which aggravates the miſerable condition of this man, and illuſtrates the power of Chriſt, in freeing him from them: *and wore no clothes*; but went naked, and when any were put upon him, would tear them to pieces: *neither abode in any houſe, but in the tombs*; ſee the note on *Mark* v. 3.

Ver. 28. *When he ſaw Jeſus*, &c.] Even afar off; at ſome conſiderable diſtance, he ran towards him, *Mark* v. 6. *He cried out, and fell down before him*; that is, the man poſſeſſed with the devil did ſo, under his impulſe, and through his agitation of him: *and with a loud voice ſaid*; which was the unclean ſpirit in the man: *what have I to do with thee, Jeſus, thou Son of God, moſt high? I beſeech thee torment me not*; *i. e.* before the time; ſee the note on *Matt.* viii. 29.

Ver. 29. *For he had commanded the unclean ſpirit*, &c.] That had the reſt of the devils under his authority, and power, *to come out of the man*; this he had done, either before, or juſt as he came up to him; ſee the note on *Mark* v. 8. *For oftentimes it had caught him*; poſſeſſed him, and wrought ſo ſtrongly in him, and with ſo much fury, that there was no governing him: *and he was kept bound with chains and fetters*; attempts were made to bind him, and keep him bound, but in vain: *and he brake the bands*; ſee *Mark* v. 4. *And was driven of the devil into the wilderneſs*; into ſome deſart and deſolate place, where were the tombs and ſepulchres of the dead; this was done by the prince of the legion.

Ver. 30. *And Jeſus aſked him, ſaying, what is thy name?* &c.] This queſtion was put, not out of ignorance in Chriſt, but for the ſake of thoſe that were with him; and partly, that the miſerable condition of this man might be the more known; and partly, that his own power might be the more manifeſt in the diſpoſſeſſion: *and he ſaid, legion, becauſe many devils were entered into him*; ſee the note on *Mark* v. 9.

Ver. 31. *And they beſought him*, &c.] That is, all the devils, the whole legion of them, intreated Jeſus, under whoſe power, and at whoſe diſpoſe they were: *that he would not command them to go out into the deep*; meaning, not the deep waters of the ſea, for thither they ran the ſwine at their own requeſt; but the bottomleſs pit of hell, where others of theſe ſpirits lay in chains of darkneſs; and ſo the *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *into hell*: they deſired, that when they went out of this man, they might not be ordered thither, or remanded to their former priſon; for they knew that if he gave the word of command, they muſt obey; but that they might be ſuffered to continue in that country, and range about on earth, or be any where, rather than in hell.

Ver. 32. *And there was there an herd of many ſwine*, &c.] About two thouſand, *Mark* v. 13. *Feeding on the mountain*; ſee the note on *Mark* v. 11. *And they beſought him that he would ſuffer them to enter into them*; which they could not do, without his leave: *and he ſuffered them*; ſee the notes on *Mark* v. 12, 13.

Ver. 33. *Then went the devils out of the man*, &c.] Being obliged by the power of Chriſt, ſore againſt their wills, having had poſſeſſion of him a long time: *and entered into the ſwine*; poſſeſſed them: *and the herd ran violently down a ſteep place into the lake*; that is, of *Genneſareth*; or the ſea, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read; that is, the ſea of *Galilee*, the ſame with the former: *and were choaked*; in the waters, and died, as the *Ethiopic* verſion adds.

Ver. 34. *When they that fed them ſaw what was done*, &c.] That the devils went out of the man poſſeſſed by them, and entered into the herd of ſwine, which becoming mad therewith, ran furiouſly down the precipice into the ſea, and were drowned: *they fled*; as perſons affrighted, at theſe uncommon and ſurprizing events, and as afraid to ſee their owners: *and went and told it in the city*; that is, of *Gadara*, or ſome other city near at hand; the *Syriac* and *Ethiopic* verſions read, *in the cities*; in all the cities round about, in that country: *and in the country*; or *fields*, in the villages adjacent, and in the houſes which were ſcattered about in the fields for conveniency, for rural buſineſs.

Ver. 35. *Then they went out to ſee what was done*, &c.] That is, the inhabitants of the city, or cities and villages, and houſes in the fields; theſe went out from their reſpective places of abode, to ſee with their own eyes, what the ſwineherds had related to them, concerning the man that had been poſſeſſed with devils, and what was become of the ſwine: *and came to Jeſus*; where he was, which was not far from the ſea-ſhore: *and found the man out of whom the devils were departed, ſitting at the feet of Jeſus*; quiet and ſerene, in an humble poſture, and as a diſciple of Chriſt, receiving inſtructions from him: *clothed, and in his right mind, and they were afraid*; ſee the note on *Mark* v. 15.

Ver. 36. *They alſo which ſaw it*, &c.] The diſciples of Chriſt, or the men of the ſhip, or perſons who lived hard by in the fields, who were eye-witneſſes of theſe ſeveral things: *told them by what means he that was poſſeſſed of the devils, was healed*; ſee the note on *Mark* v. 16.

Ver. 37. *Then the whole multitude*, &c.] For it ſeems a very large number of people were preſently gathered together, from all parts of the country, upon the report of the ſwineherds, who fled, 'tis very likely, ſome one way, and ſome another: *of the country of the Gadarenes round about*; of the country that was round about *Gadara*. The *Vulgate Latin* reads, of the *Geraſenes*; and the *Arabic* and *Ethiopic* verſions, *of the Gergeſenes*: and they all with one accord, *beſought him to depart from them, for they were taken with great fear*: leſt they ſhould ſuffer other and greater loſſes, than the loſs of the ſwine; chuſing rather that the devils ſhould be retained among them, than Chriſt continue with them: *and he went up into the ſhip*; directly, granted their requeſt at once; not deſirous of ſtaying with ſuch an ungrateful people, that loved their ſwine more than him, yea, than the bodily health and welfare of their countrymen: *and he returned back again*; to *Galilee*, at leaſt in a very little time, after ſome ſhort diſcourſe with the diſpoſſeſſed man; having ſtaid but a very ſmall time in that place, juſt landed as it were, and not having proceeded far from the ſea-ſhore.

Ver. 38. *Now the man out of whom the devils were departed*, &c.] Senſible of the power of Chriſt, and of the favour he had received from him, was of a quite different mind from his countrymen: and *beſought him that he might be with him*; ſee the note on *Mark* v. 18. *But Jeſus ſent him away*; from him, into the country: *ſaying*; as follows.

Ver. 39. *Return to thine own houſe*, &c.] Which very likely was in the city of *Gadara*, whither he went, and throughout the whole of which, he publiſhed the account of the diſpoſſeſſion of the devils from him: *Mark* adds, *to thy friends*; relations, acquaintance, and countrymen: *and ſhew how great things God hath done unto thee*; for none but God could effect ſuch things, tacitly ſuggeſting to him hereby, that he himſelf was God. *Mark* adds, *and hath had compaſſion on thee*; ſignifying, that what he had done for him, did not ariſe from merit in the man, but from mercy in himſelf; ſee the note on *Mark* v. 19. *And he went his way*; he obeyed the orders of Chriſt, as love and gratitude obliged him: *and publiſhed throughout the whole city*; of *Gadara*, and not only there, but in the reſt of the ten cities, called *Decapolis*, *Mark* v. 20. one of which, was this of *Gadara*, as *Pliny* relates [o]: *how great things Jeſus had done unto him*; having caſt out a legion of devils from him, cloathed him, and brought him to his right mind; and had not only delivered his body from a diabolical poſſeſſion, but had given him ſpiritual and ſaving inſtructions for his ſoul, on which he had wrought a real work of grace.

Ver. 40. *And it came to paſs that when Jeſus was returned*, &c.] From the country of the *Gadarenes*, to the other ſide of the ſea of *Tiberias*, to *Galilee*; and particularly to his own city, *Capernaum*; ſee *Matt.* ix. 1. *The people* gladly *received him*; who were of a different caſt from thoſe he had juſt left; being ſenſible of the benefits they received from him, both by his miniſtry and miracles; and which was the reaſon of their receiving him, with ſo much joy and gladneſs: *for they were all waiting for him*; on the ſhore, looking out very eagerly for him, being earneſtly deſirous of his ſpeedy return to them; having many that wanted his aſſiſtance, both for their ſouls and bodies, of which the following are inſtances.

Ver. 41. *And behold, there came a man named Jairus*, &c.] See the note on *Mark* v. 22. *and he was a ruler of the ſynagogue*; at *Capernaum*; and it was the more remarkable, that ſuch an one ſhould come to Chriſt, and expreſs any regard to his perſon, or faith in his power, and therefore a *behold*, is prefixed to this account; ſee the note on *Matt.* ix. 18. *And he fell down at Jeſus feet*; ſhowing great reverence and humility, and as *Matthew* ſays, *worſhipped him*; if not in a religious, yet in a civil way: *and beſought him that he would come into his houſe*; which was at ſome diſtance from thence, as appears by what follows.

Ver. 42. *For he had one only daughter*, &c.] And ſo exceedingly dear to him: *about twelve years of age*; ſee the note on *Matt.* ix. 18. *And ſhe lay a dying*; or *was near death*, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions; or *was juſt ready to die*, as the *Ethiopic* verſion. The *Vulgate Latin* and *Arabic* verſions render it, *ſhe was dead*, or *now dead*, and which agrees with *Matt.* ix. 18. ſee the note there: *but as he went*; along the ſtreets of *Capernaum*, from *Matthew*'s houſe; where he had been entertained with his diſciples, and others, and where he had a converſation with ſome of the *Phariſees* and *John*'s diſciples, to the ruler's houſe: *the people thronged him*; ſuch a vaſt multitude followed him to ſee the cure, that he was even crouded, and ſo preſſed on all ſides, that it was difficult to walk along.

Ver. 43. *And a woman having an iſſue of blood twelve years*, &c.] The *Perſic* verſion reads, *there was a woman in that city*, &c. in the city of *Capernaum*; ſee the note on *Matt.* ix. 20. *Which had ſpent all her living upon phyſicians*; ſhe had applied to one phyſician and another, and had conſumed all her ſubſtance in this way: *neither could be healed of any*; though ſhe had followed the directions and preſcriptions of many, who pretended they were able to cure her; ſee the note on *Mark* v. 26.

Ver. 44. *Came behind him*, &c.] In the preſs and croud of people, being aſhamed to come before him, and tell him her caſe: *and touched the border of his garment*; the fringe the *Jews* were obliged to wear at the bottom of their garments, *Numb.* xv. 38. *Deut.* xxii. 12. and which the more religious ſort did, for by this they were diſtinguiſhed from the common people: 'tis aſked [p], “ who “ is a plebeian, or one of the common people? “ every one that does not read *Keriat Shema*, (*i. e.* “ *hear O Iſrael*, &c. *Deut.* vi. 4.) morning and “ evening, with the bleſſings belonging to it, the “ words of *R. Meir*: but the wiſe men ſay, who- “ ever does not put on the *Tephillin* (the frontlets, “ *Deut.* vi. 8.) *Ben Azzai* ſays, whoever has not, “ ציצית, *the fringe* on his garment;” ſee the note on *Matt.* ix. 20. This woman was perſuaded in her own mind, if ſhe could but touch the cloaths of Chriſt, ſhe ſhould be healed, and accordingly ſhe was: *and immediately her iſſue of blood ſtaunched*; ſtopped, and was dried up; ſee *Mark* v. 28, 29.

Ver. 45. *And Jeſus ſaid, who touched me?* &c.] This he ſaid, not as ignorant of the perſon that had done it, but in order to diſcover her to the people, and the cure ſhe had received, as well as her faith; ſee the note on *Mark* v. 30. *When all denied*; both the diſciples and the multitude, as many as were near him, and who might be thought to have done it; all excepting the woman, who afterwards came and declared it; for it is very likely, that as ſoon as ſhe had touched his garment, and got her cure, ſhe drew farther off: *Peter, and they that were with him*; the reſt of the diſciples, who were in company together, as appears from *Mark* v. 31. *Said, Maſter, the multitude throng thee, and preſs* thee, *and ſayeſt thou, who touched me?* or *my garment*, as the *Ethiopic* verſion reads; ſee the note on *Mark* v. 31.

Ver. 46. *And Jeſus ſaid, ſomebody hath touched me*, &c.] Not in a common and accidental way, but with deſign, and in the ſtrength of faith: *for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me*; for the cure of the perſon that had touched him, and that not without his knowledge and will; ſee ch. vi. 19.

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[o] Lib. 5. c. 18.

[p] T. Bab. Succa, fol. 22. 1.

Ver. 47. *And when the woman ſaw that ſhe was not hid*, &c.] From Chriſt, among the crowd, nor the thing that ſhe had done. The *Syriac* and *Arabic* verſions render it, *that he had not forgot her*; ſhe hoping he would be diverted from taking any notice of her and her action, through the crowd of people about him: *ſhe came trembling*; for fear of the anger and reſentment of Chriſt, and leſt the favour ſhould be revoked, and the penalty of the law inflicted; ſee the note on *Mark* v. 33. *And falling down before him*; in the moſt humble manner, *at his feet*, as the *Arabic* verſion reads; and *worſhipped him*, as the *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions have it; gave him the glory of the cure, and thanks for it: *ſhe declared unto him before all the people*; the whole truth of the matter, what a diſeaſe ſhe had laboured under for ſo long a time, what means ſhe had uſed to no purpoſe: *for what cauſe ſhe had touched him*; namely, in order to have a cure, which ſhe believed ſhe ſhould have in that way: *and how ſhe was healed immediately*; as ſoon as ever ſhe had touched him.

Ver. 48. *And he ſaid unto her, daughter*, &c.] Inſtead of frowning upon her, and chiding her for what ſhe had done, he addreſſed her in a very affable and affectionate manner; bidding her, *be of good comfort*; and not be afraid; this clauſe is left out in the *Vulgate Latin* verſion, as in *Mark* v. 34. but is in the copies, and other verſions: *thy faith hath made thee whole, go in peace*; ſee the notes on *Matt.* viii. 2. *Mark* v. 34. *Luke* vii. 50.

Ver. 49. *While he yet ſpake*, &c.] The above words to the woman; *there cometh one*: *Mark* ſuggeſts there were more than one, ch. v. 35. ſee the note there; and the *Perſic* verſion here reads, *ſome of the ruler's family came*; that is, to him, who was now with Jeſus: *from the ruler of the ſynagogues houſe*; ſo the word *houſe*, is ſupplied by the *Syriac* and *Ethiopic* verſions; otherwiſe the words would be, *from the ruler of the ſynagogue*; which could not be, ſince he was ſtill with Chriſt: hence ſome verſions, as the *Vulgate* and *Arabic*, render them, *to the ruler of the ſynagogue*; and which give a true ſenſe, and a right view of the caſe; for this meſſenger, both came from his houſe, and to him: *ſaying to him, thy daughter is dead, trouble not the maſter*; to bring him any further, ſince all hope of help was now gone. The *Vulgate Latin* verſion, inſtead of *maſter*, reads *him*; and the *Ethiopic* verſion, *Jeſus*.

Ver. 50. *But when Jeſus heard* it, &c.] The meſſage that was brought to the ruler, and the hint that was given, that it was needleſs to give him any farther trouble: *he anſwered him*; not the meſſenger, but *the father of the child*, as the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read: *ſaying, fear not*; don't be diſmayed at this meſſage, nor deſpair of help, notwithſtanding ſuch is the caſe: *believe only, and ſhe ſhall be made whole*; exerciſe faith in me, that I am able to raiſe her from the dead, and I will do it; and ſhe ſhall be reſtored to life, and to perfect health and ſtrength again.

Ver. 51. *And when he came into the houſe*, &c.] Of the ruler of the ſynagogue; *he ſuffered no man to go in*: to the room, where the dead body lay: *ſave Peter, James, and John*; not one of the multitude that followed him, nor any of the diſciples, but theſe three; who were his favourite ones, and were a ſufficient number to be witneſſes of the miracle: *and the father and mother of the maiden*; theſe alſo were admitted. The *Perſic* verſion very wrongly joins theſe laſt words, with the beginning of the next verſe, reading them thus, *the father and mother of the maiden, with the domeſticks, wept and bewailed her*.

Ver. 52. *And all wept and bewailed her*, &c.] Not only her relations and friends, and the ſervants of the houſe, but the mourning women, that were hired on this occaſion, and employed for this purpoſe: *but he ſaid, weep not*; neither in ſhow, as the mourning women did, nor in reality, as the friends of the deceaſed: *ſhe is not dead, but ſleepeth*; ſee the notes on *Matt.* ix. 24. *Mark* v. 39.

Ver. 53. *And they laughed him to ſcorn*, &c.] The ſervants, neighbours, and relations, the pipers and mourning women; theſe, from weeping for the dead, fell to laughing at Chriſt, having him and his words in the utmoſt deriſion: *knowing that ſhe was dead*; ſome of them having been employed in laying her out, and all of them having ſeen her, and were ſatisfied, and thoroughly aſſured, that ſhe was actually dead, as ever any perſon was, as ſhe doubtleſs was; but they were ignorant in what ſenſe Chriſt meant ſhe was not dead, but aſleep; ſee the notes as before.

Ver. 54. *And he put them all out*, &c.] Of the room, where the maiden lay, all the mourners and pipers; all excepting the parents of the child, and his three diſciples. This clauſe is left out in the *Vulgate Latin*, and *Ethiopic* verſions; nor was it in two of *Beza*'s ancient copies, and in two of *Stephens*'s; but in the reſt, and in the other verſions: *and took her by the hand, and called, ſaying*; in the *Syriac* language, *Talitha cumi*, as in *Mark* v. 41. *Maid, ariſe*; ſee the note there.

Ver. 55. *And her ſpirit came again*, &c.] Her ſoul, which was departed from her, upon the all-powerful voice of Chriſt, returned to her body; and *re-entered*, as the *Ethiopic* verſion adds: this ſhows, that the ſoul is immortal, and dies not with the body; that it exiſts in a ſeparate ſtate from it after death, and will hereafter re-enter the body, and be again united to it in the reſurrection, of which this inſtance, was a kind of pledge and emblem: where her ſpirit was during this time of ſeparation, is needleſs, and would be curious and raſh to enquire; it is enough to ſay with the ſcripture, that it had returned to God that gave it, *Eccleſ.* xii. 7. and by whom it was ſent back to its body again: *and ſhe aroſe ſtraightway*; from off the bed, and as *Mark* ſays, *walked*; for ſhe was at an age capable of it, and which actions of ariſing and walking, clearly proved that ſhe was alive and in health; *and he commanded to give her meat*; which was done, partly to ſhow, not only that ſhe was alive, but that her diſorder was removed, and her appetite reſtored, and that ſhe could eat and drink, as ſhe had done before her illneſs; and partly, to obſerve that ſhe was raiſed not to an immortal life, as none were before Chriſt, but to an animal life, which was to be ſupported by eating and drinking, and ſo a mortal one; ſee the note on *Mark* v. 43.

Ver. 56. *And her parents were aſtoniſhed*, &c.] At the miracle that was wrought, to ſee their child reſtored to life; to ſee her ariſe, walk, and eat, being in perfect health and ſtrength, and no diſorder attending her; *but he charged them that they ſhould tell no man what was done*. The *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *what he had done, nor any thing that was done*; not that the thing itſelf could be concealed, but the way and manner in which, and the means by which it was done, and the circumſtances of it; how that by taking her by the hand and commanding her to ariſe, ſhe forthwith aroſe and walked and eat: Chriſt's meaning is, that he would not have them take any pains to publiſh this affair, or to make it more known than was neceſſary; not to acquaint every perſon with the particulars of it, but keep them as private as they could: his reaſons for this, ſee in the note on *Mark* v. 43.

## CHAP. IX.

Ver. 1. THEN *he called his twelve diſciples together*, &c.] The *Perſic* verſion reads, *all his twelve diſciples*; the other nine, beſides the three that were with him, when he raiſed *Jairus*'s daughter, recorded in the foregoing chapter; the *Vulgate Latin*, *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read, *the twelve apoſtles*, for ſo Chriſt had named his diſciples; ſee ch. vi. 13. The *Syriac* verſion only reads, *his own twelve*; and this is agreeable to *Luke*'s way of ſpeaking; ſee ch. viii. 1. and ix. 12. *And gave them power and authority over all devils*; that is, all kinds of devils, particularly to caſt them out of the bodies of men, poſſeſſed by them: *and to cure diſeaſes*; of all ſorts.

Ver. 2. *And he ſent them to preach the kingdom of God*, &c.] The Goſpel, which gives an account of the kingdom of the Meſſiah; of his kingly office and power; of his church, which is his kingdom, and of the government of it, by the miniſtration of the word, and the adminiſtration of ordinances; of the kingdom of grace in the hearts of Chriſt's ſubjects, and the nature of it; and of the kingdom of glory, and what is the ſaints meetneſs for it, and right unto it: *and to heal the ſick*; of every diſeaſe of body, and thereby confirm their miſſion and commiſſion from Chriſt, to preach the Goſpel, and recommend it to men.

Ver. 3. *And he ſaid unto them, take nothing for your journey*, &c.] Throughout the towns and cities of *Judea*, where they were ſent to preach the Goſpel: *neither ſtaves*. The *Vulgate Latin*, and all the *Oriental* verſions, read in the ſingular number, *neither ſtaff*, rod, or club; and ſo it was in one of *Beza*'s ancient copies, but in all the reſt in the plural, as in *Matthew*; which laſt muſt be the true reading, ſince one ſtaff was allowed, according as in *Mark* vi. 8. though more than one were forbidden: *nor ſcrip*; or bag to put proviſion in; ſee the note on *Matt.* x. 10. *Neither bread, neither money*; gold, ſilver, or braſs, to buy bread with; becauſe they were to have it, wherever they came, given them, as their due, and the reward of their labour: *neither have two coats apiece*; the word *apiece*, is left out in one copy, nor is it expreſſed in the *Vulgate Latin* and the *Eaſtern* verſions, which read as in *Matt.* x. 10. though the word does aptly and clearly expreſs the ſenſe of the prohibition, which was not that they ſhould not have two coats among them, but not two a piece; or each man ſhould not have two, or have change of raiment; ſee the note on *Matt.* x. 10.

Ver. 4. *And whatſoever houſe ye enter into*, &c.] In any town, or city, they ſhould come to in their journey through *Judea*, and ſhould enter into for the ſake of lodging, during their ſtay: *there abide*; don't ſhift quarters, or move from houſe to houſe: *and thence depart*; the houſe you come into firſt, go out of laſt, when ye leave the town or city. The *Vulgate Latin* and *Perſic* verſions read, *and thence do not depart*; and ſo *Beza* ſays 'tis read in a certain copy, but then the ſenſe is the ſame, as the *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *do not go out from thence, until ye depart*; that is, don't leave the houſe, till you depart out of the town or city; agreeable to which is the *Arabic* verſion, *remain in it until the time of your going out*; ſee the note on *Matt.* x. 11.

Ver. 5. *And whoſoever will not receive you*, &c.] Into their houſes: *when ye go out of the city*; where lodging and entertainment are refuſed you; *ſhake off the very duſt from your feet, for a teſtimony againſt them*; ſee the notes on *Matt.* x. 14. and *Mark* vi. 11.

Ver. 6. *And they departed*, &c.] That is, the apoſtles, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions expreſs it: they went from Chriſt, and the place where he was, from *Capernaum*, at leaſt from ſome place in *Galilee*: *and went through the towns*; the *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions add, *and cities*; that is, of *Judea*, as well as *Galilee*, even the whole land of *Iſrael*: *preaching the Goſpel*; which explains what is meant by the kingdom of God, ver. 2. *and healing every where*; all ſorts of bodily diſeaſes, wherever they came.

Ver. 7. *Now Herod the tetrarch*, &c.] Of *Galilee*, and who is called a king in *Mark* vi. 14. as he is here in the *Ethiopic* verſion: *heard of all that was done by him*; of all the miracles that were wrought by Chriſt, and his Apoſtles; the fame of which were the more ſpread through the miſſion of the Apoſtles, and the journey they took thro' all the towns and cities of *Galilee*, which were in *Herod*'s juriſdiction; by which means he, and his court, came to the knowledge of them, the whole country ringing with the account of the ſame: *and he was perplexed*; anxious, and diſtreſſed, not knowing well what to think of Chriſt, and the different ſentiments of men about him: he was afraid leſt he ſhould be *John* the *Baptiſt* riſen from the dead, whom he had beheaded: he heſitated about it at firſt, tho' he afterwards was fully perſuaded, in his own mind, that it was he, as ſome affirmed; and this gave him great uneaſineſs, and filled him with diſtreſs and horror: *becauſe that it was ſaid of ſome that John was riſen from the dead*; and he began to fear it was true, tho' willing to diſbelieve it, at leaſt to make a queſtion of it, eſpecially in public; tho' in private, to his own family and ſervants, he was free to tell his mind.

Ver. 8. *And of ſome, that Elias had appeared*, &c.] Who had been tranſlated, body and ſoul, to heaven, and whom the *Jews* expected a little before the coming of the Meſſiah: *and of others, that one of the old prophets was riſen again*; that is, one of the former prophets. It is well known, that the *Jews* diſtinguiſh the prophets into the former and latter; the books of the prophets of the Old Teſtament are ſo diſtinguiſhed; the writings of the former prophets are thoſe of *Joſhua*, *Judges*, 1 and 2 of *Samuel*, and the firſt and ſecond of *Kings*: the latter prophets are *Iſaiah*, *Jeremiah*, *Ezekiel*, which are the greater prophets, and the twelve leſſer ones: and in the *Talmud* [q] 'tis aſked, "who "are נביאים הראשונים, *the former prophets*? "Says *R. Huna*, they are *David*, *Samuel*, and *Solomon*—and why are they called former prophets? "to except (or diſtinguiſh) them from *Haggai*, "*Zachariah*, and *Malachi*, who are the latter." So that by one of the old prophets, may be meant one of thoſe that were before the times of *Elias*, as *Samuel* or *David*.

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[q] T. Bab. Sota, fol. 48. 2.

Ver. 9. *And Herod ſaid, John have I beheaded,* &c.] That is, he had ordered him to be beheaded, and which was accordingly done by the executioner; of which he had full proof, ſince the head was brought him in a charger, and which he delivered to the daughter of *Herodias*: *but who is this of whom I hear ſuch things?* ſuch wonderful things, ſuch amazing miracles, as were done by Chriſt: he ſeems to have reaſoned after this manner with himſelf, ſurely this can't be *John*, for I have beheaded him! and yet who ſhould it be? and whereas ſome affirmed, that it was *John* that was riſen from the dead, he began to fear that it was he: *and he deſired to ſee him*; that he might be ſatisfied whether it was he or no; for he had had perſonal knowledge of *John*, and converſe with him, and therefore, upon ſight of him, could tell whether it was he that was riſen from the dead, or no; but we don't find *Herod* had a ſight of Chriſt, until he was ſent by *Pilate* to him at *Jeruſalem*; ſee *Luke* xxiii. 7, 8.

Ver. 10. *And the apoſtles when they were returned,* &c.] From the ſeveral parts of the land where they had been ſent, and had been preaching and working miracles, having gone thro' their circuit, and finiſhed the ſervice they were ſent to do: *told him all they had done*; what doctrines they had taught, how they had been received, and what ſucceſs they met with, what miracles they had wrought, how they had diſpoſſeſſed devils, and healed all ſorts of diſeaſes: *and he took them and went aſide privately*; by ſhip, over ſome part of the ſea of *Galilee*; ſee *Mark* vi. 32. *into a deſert place belonging to the city called Bethſaida*; the city of *Andrew* and *Peter*, *John* i. 44. and which, as *Joſephus*[r] ſays, was by the lake of *Genneſareth*, and by *Philip* called *Julias*; and this deſert place was the deſert of *Bethſaida*, a lonely, wild, uncultivated, and deſolate place, not far from it. Hither Chriſt went with his diſciples, that they might be retired and alone, and have ſome refreſhment and reſt from their labours, and where they might privately converſe together; and he give them ſome freſh inſtructions, directions, and comfort.

Ver. 11. *And the people when they knew* it, &c.] Having heard of his departure from others, and ſeeing him go off themſelves: *followed him*; not by ſhip, but on foot, going over the bridge at *Chammath* of *Gadara*, and got thither before Chriſt and his diſciples did: *and he received them*; very kindly, and in a very affectionate manner, and with great reſpect, tho' they had prevented the private interview between him and his apoſtles: *and he ſpake unto them of the kingdom of God*; of the Goſpel-diſpenſation, now ſetting up, and of the doctrines and ordinances of it, of the governing principle of grace in the hearts of his people, and of the glory of the world to come: *and healed them that had need of healing*; for their bodies; as well as preached the doctrines of grace for the good of their ſouls; he both taught doctrine and wrought miracles.

Ver. 12. *When the day began to wear away,* &c.] Or *to decline*, as the *Vulgate Latin* and *Arabic* verſions; or *to incline*, as the *Syriac*; that is, as the *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *when the ſun was declining* towards the *horizon*, and was almoſt ſet; or *when the evening-time was come*, as the *Perſic* verſion: *then came the twelve*; that is, *the diſciples*, as the *Perſic* verſion; or *his diſciples*, as the *Syriac*: and *ſaid unto him ſend the multitude away, that they may go into the towns and country round about*; the place where they were, round about the city of *Bethſaida*, the ſeveral adjacent houſes in the fields, villages, towns, and cities: *and lodge, and get victuals*; where they might have lodging for that night, it being too far for them to reach their habitations that evening; and alſo, that they might provide themſelves with proper and ſufficient food, which was not to be had in the place where they were: *for we are here in a deſert place*; which afforded no conveniency for lodging, nor any ſupply of food.

Ver. 13. *And he ſaid to them, give ye them to eat,* &c.] Signifying, that it was not his will to diſmiſs the people, and ſend them ſcattering abroad into the adjacent cities, towns, or houſes; and that there was no need of it, but that his will was that they ſhould be ſupplied with proviſions out of their ſtock: *and they ſaid we have no more than five loaves and two fiſhes*; and theſe loaves were barley loaves, and the fiſhes ſmall, *John* vi. 9. *except we ſhould go and buy meat for all this people*; which would at leaſt coſt them two hundred pence; and which they repreſent as impoſſible to be done, either thro' want of ſo much money, or the ſcarcity of proviſion in thoſe parts; where, had they money, it would be difficult, at leaſt to get ſuch a quantity of proviſions at once, which ſo great a number of perſons required.

Ver. 14. *For they were about five thouſand men,* &c.] Beſide women and children, *Matt.* xiv. 21. *and he ſaid to his diſciples, make them to ſit down by fifties in a company*; and by hundreds alſo: ſome companies had a hundred a-piece in them, and others fifty; and which was done partly for the more eaſy numbering of them, and partly and chiefly for the more convenient diſtribution of food to them; ſee *Mark* vi. 39, 40.

Ver. 15. *And they did ſo, and made them all ſit down.*] The diſciples did not diſpute the caſe any longer with Chriſt, but obeyed his orders, and ranged the multitude in companies, a hundred in one, and fifty in another; and ordered them to ſit down in their diſtinct companies and ranks upon the green graſs. The *Arabic* and *Ethiopic* verſions read, *and they all ſat down*; and ſo it is read in ſome copies of the *Vulgate Latin* verſion.

Ver. 16. *Then he took the five loaves and the two fiſhes,* &c.] Into his hands, being brought him by the diſciples from the lad that had them: *and looking up to heaven*; to his father there, from whom all the mercies and bleſſings of life come: *he bleſſed them*; either aſked, or commanded a bleſſing on them, that they might multiply and increaſe, that there might be a ſufficiency for all the people, and that they might be nouriſhing to them. *Beza* obſerves, that in his moſt ancient copy 'tis read, *he bleſſed upon them*; which perfectly agrees with the *Jewiſh* way of ſpeaking, ברך על הפת, he *that bleſſeth upon the bread*; ברך על היין, *he that bleſſeth upon the wine*; and ſo upon the fruits of trees, and upon the fruits of the earth, and upon other things[s]: *and brake*; the loaves, and divided the fiſhes into parts: *and gave to the diſciples to ſet before the multitude*; as they ſat in ranks, and in their diſtinct companies.

Ver. 17. *And they did eat, and were all filled,* &c.] Every one had a part, and enough: *and there was taken up of fragments that remained to them, twelve baſkets*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xiv. 20.

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[r] Antiq. l. 18. c. 3.

[s] Miſn. Beracot, c. 6. §. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7.

Ver. 18. *And it came to paſs as he was alone praying*, &c.] To his God and Father, for himſelf, as man, and mediator; for the ſucceſs of his Goſpel, and the increaſe of his intereſt; and for his diſciples, that they might have a clearer revelation of him; and which they had, as appears in their after-confeſſion of him by *Peter*, as the mouth of them all. The place where he now retired for private devotion, was ſome where in the coaſts of *Cæſarea Philippi*; for he was now gone from the deſert of *Bethſaida*, as appears from *Matt.* xvi. 13. and when he is ſaid to be *alone*, the meaning is, that he was retired from the multitude, but not from his diſciples; for it follows, *his diſciples were with him*, in this ſolitary place: *and he aſked them*, being with them alone; *ſaying, whom ſay the people that I am?* what are the ſentiments of the common people, or of the people in general concerning me? The *Alexandrian* copy, and the *Arabic* verſion read, *men*, as in *Matt.* xvi. 13. ſee the note there.

Ver. 19. *They anſwering ſaid, John the Baptiſt*, &c.] This was the opinion of ſome who thought that he was riſen from the dead, as in ver. 7. *but ſome ſay Elias*; the prophet, and the *Tiſhbite*; who, according to the *Jewiſh* notion, was to be the forerunner of the Meſſiah, ſo in ver. 8. *and others ſay that one of the old prophets is riſen again*; ſee the note on ver. 8. and thus were they divided in their ſentiments about him.

Ver. 20. *He ſaid unto them, but whom ſay ye that I am?* &c.] Which was the main thing he had in view in this private conference; and in order to introduce which, he puts the former queſtion: *Peter anſwering*; in the name of the reſt of the diſciples, they aſſenting to it: *ſaid, the Chriſt of God*; ſee the note on ch. ii. 26. The *Perſic* verſion reads, *Chriſt God*; the Meſſiah, who is the Son of God, and God over all, bleſſed for ever. The *Cambridge* copy of *Beza*'s reads, *the Chriſt, the Son of God.*

Ver. 21. *And he ſtrictly charged them, and commanded* them, &c.] Tho' he highly approved of this their confeſſion, and pronounced *Peter* bleſſed upon it; and ſignified that it was a diſcovery which fleſh and blood could not make, but what was made to him by his father; yet he gave them a ſtrict charge, and laid his commands on them, *to tell no man that thing*; that he was the Meſſiah, and the eternal Son of God, and the true God, as well as the Son of man, and really man: the reaſons for this ſee in the note on *Matt.* xvi. 20.

Ver. 22. *Saying, the Son of man muſt ſuffer many things*, &c.] In his perſon and character, in his ſoul and body, at the hands of God, and of men, and devils: *and be rejected of the elders, and chief-prieſts, and Scribes*; who made up the grand *Sanhedrim* of the nation: by theſe he was to be, and was rejected as the Meſſiah; and when put up with another which ſhould be releaſed, that other ſhould be preferr'd, and he rejected; and which was done at the inſtigation of theſe men, who were the builders; of whom it was foretold that they ſhould reject the head ſtone of the corner, *Pſ.* cxviii. 22. *and be ſlain*; or put to death, with the death of the croſs: *and be raiſed the third day*; according to the types and prophecies of the Old Teſtament. This he added for the comfort of his diſciples.

Ver. 23. *And he ſaid to them all*, &c.] Not only to all the diſciples, but *to the multitude*, as the *Arabic* verſion renders it, who were now called unto him, with his diſciples, as is clear from *Mark* viii. 34. *if any man will come after me, let him deny himſelf, and take up his croſs daily, and follow me*; the ſame is ſaid here, as in *Matt.* xvi. 24. *Mark* viii. 34. ſee the notes there; only here the word, *daily*, is added: and which, tho' as *Beza* obſerves, is not in the *Complutenſian* edition, nor in five ancient copies; yet is in others, and in the *Vulgate Latin*, and in all the *Oriental* verſions; and to be retained, as having a very conſiderable emphaſis in it; ſhewing that afflictions, trials, and perſecutions of one ſort or another, are to be expected every day by the people of God, and to be continually ſubmitted to, and bore with chearfulneſs.

Ver. 24. *For whoſoever will ſave his life*, &c.] See the note on *Matt.* xvi. 25.

Ver. 25. *For what is a man advantaged if he gain the whole world*, &c.] Or what profit will it be unto him? all the honours, riches, and enjoyments of it will be of no uſe and ſervice to him if he himſelf is loſt: *and loſe himſelf*; or his own ſoul; for he that loſes his ſoul, which is his better and immortal part, loſes himſelf: *or be caſt away*; finally, and eternally, or *ſuffer loſs* of eternal happineſs and glory; that is, periſhes, and is deſtroyed with an everlaſting deſtruction; ſee the note on *Matt.* xvi. 26.

Ver. 26. *For whoſoever ſhall be aſhamed of me*, &c.] Of my perſon and offices, of me, as the Meſſiah, Saviour, and Redeemer, of my grace, righteouſneſs, blood, and ſacrifice: *and of my words*; of the doctrines of the Goſpel, one and another of them. In *Mark* 'tis added, *in this adulterous and ſinful generation*; having a peculiar reſpect to the people of the *Jews*, and the age in which Chriſt lived; but is true of any other people and age in which men live: *of him ſhall the Son of man be aſhamed when he ſhall come in his own glory*; in the glory of his human nature, when his glorious body, as now, in heaven, ſhall be ſeen by all; and in the glory of his office, as mediator, and the judge of all the earth; and in the glory of his divine nature, which will appear in the reſurrection of the dead, in the gathering of all nations before him, in ſeparating one ſort from another, and in paſſing and executing the definitive ſentence on them; particularly the glory of his omnipotence and omniſcience will be very conſpicuous: *and in his father's*; which is the ſame with his own, as he is the Son of God, and the brightneſs of his glory; and which, as mediator, he has from him, and will be the object of the ſaints viſion to all eternity: *and of the holy angels*; who ſhall attend him at his ſecond coming, and be employed in various offices under him. The *Syriac* verſion renders theſe laſt clauſes as they are in *Matt.* xvi. 27. *Mark* viii. 38. *in the glory of his father, with his holy angels*; ſee the notes there.

Ver. 27. *But I tell you of a truth*, &c.] And let it be received as ſuch; you may aſſure yourſelves of it, that not only at the laſt day, the ſon of man will come in this glorious manner, and ſhew his reſentment to all ſuch as have been aſhamed of him; but alſo *there be ſome ſtanding here, which ſhall not taſte of death till they ſee the kingdom of God*; the Goſpel diſpenſation viſibly taking place, both among *Jews* and *Gentiles*, upon the reſurrection of Chriſt, and the pouring forth of his Spirit; and when it ſhould come in power both in the converſion of God's elect in great numbers, and in the deſtruction of the *Jewiſh* nation, for their rejection of the Meſſiah; ſee the note on *Matt.* xvi. 28.

Ver. 28. *And it came to paſs about an eight days after theſe ſayings*, &c.] About a week after he had declared the above things, at, or near *Cæſarea*

*Philippi*. The other Evangeliſts, *Matthew* and *Mark* ſay, it was ſix days after: the reaſon of this difference is, becauſe *Luke* takes in the day in which he delivered thoſe ſayings, and that in which he was transfigured, and they only reckon the intermediate days: *he took Peter, and John, and James*; the ſame that he admitted to be with him at the raiſing of *Jairus*'s daughter, and in the garden afterwards: *and went up into a mountain to pray*; to his God and Father, that his diſciples might have a viſible diſplay of his glory, as an emblem and pledge of that in which he ſhall hereafter appear: it was uſual with Chriſt to go up into a mountain to pray; ſee *Matt*. xiv. 23. *Luke* vi. 12. ſee the note on *Matt*. xvii. 1.

Ver. 29. *And as he prayed, the faſhion of his countenance was altered*, &c.] It became exceeding bright and glorious, it ſhone like the ſun, *Matt*. xvii. 2. and hereby his prayer was anſwered; and thus, as Chriſt was heard and anſwered, whilſt he was yet ſpeaking, ſo are his people ſometimes; and even their countenance is altered, when they are favoured with communion with God, and inſtead of a ſad and dejected countenance, they have a chearful one. *And his raiment was white and gliſtering*; it was as white as the light, as ſnow, and whiter than any fuller on earth could whiten, as the other Evangeliſts ſay, and ſo gliſtered exceedingly; ſee the notes on *Matt*. xvii. 2. and *Mark* ix. 3.

Ver. 30. *And behold there talked with him two men*, &c.] Of great note and fame: *which were Moſes and Elias*; the one the giver of the law from God to the people *of Iſrael*, as well as the redeemer of them from *Egyptian* bondage, and who led them through the wilderneſs, to the borders of *Canaan*'s land; and the other a prophet famous for his zeal for God, and his worſhip, and who was tranſlated, ſoul and body, to heaven: theſe appeared and talked with Chriſt on the mount; and what they talked of is mentioned in the following verſe; ſee the note on *Matt*. xvii. 3.

Ver. 31. *Who appeared in glory*, &c.] In a very glorious manner, in moſt divine and beautiful forms to Chriſt, and to his diſciples: *and ſpake of his deceaſe, which he ſhould accompliſh at Jeruſalem*; the word, rendered *deceaſe*, is *Exodus*, the name of the ſecond book of *Moſes*; ſo called from the departure of the children of *Iſrael* out of *Egypt*, it gives an account of; and which departure is expreſſed by this word, in *Heb*. xi. 22. and to which the alluſion is here. Death is a departure out of this world, and goes by this name, 2 *Pet*. i. 15. and ſo here it ſignifies Chriſt's death, or exit, which he was to make at *Jeruſalem*; and *Moſes* and *Elias* talk with him about this; the nature, manner, uſe, and near approach of it; and to which they might encourage him, as man. The ſufferings and death of Chriſt were what *Moſes* and the prophets had foretold; and theſe two ſpeak of the ſame things now; and which muſt ſerve to confirm what Chriſt a few days ago had ſhewed his diſciples, that he muſt go to *Jeruſalem*, and there ſuffer and die. Dr. *Lightfoot* thinks, that the aſcenſion of Chriſt to heaven is contained in the word *Exodus*, which was his final departure out of this world, as well as his ſufferings and death; and eſpecially if there is any alluſion to the *Iſraelites* departure out of *Egypt*, which was in victory and triumph; and the rather, becauſe *the time of his receiving up*, ver. 51. may be thought to refer to this; and ſo *Moſes* and *Elias* converſed with him, not only about his ſufferings and death; but his aſcenſion, and of which alſo the *Exodus*, or going of *Elias* out of this world to heaven, which was by a tranſlation and aſcenſion, was a figure. Some render this word, *Expedition*, and think it refers to the whole affair of the redemption of Chriſt's people by him, from the bondage of ſin, ſatan, and the law, by his ſufferings and death; of which the deliverance of the people of *Iſrael* out of *Egypt* was a lively repreſentation; an expedition which *Moſes* was ſent upon, and accompliſhed: but now the diſcourſe turns upon an expedition of greater importance, which ſhortly was to be accompliſhed at *Jeruſalem*, where Chriſt was to be arraigned, and condemned, and then ſuffer without the gates of it, in order to obtain eternal redemption for the whole *Iſrael* of God.

Ver. 32. *But Peter, and they that were with him*, &c.] The other two diſciples, *James* and *John*: *were heavy with ſleep*; as they afterwards were in the garden, while Chriſt was praying, as he had been now; being weary with the labours of the day paſt, and it being now night, as is very probable, ſince that was an uſual time Chriſt ſpent in prayer: *and when they were awake.* The *Syriac* verſion reads, *ſcarcely awake*; they were ſo heavy with ſleep, that it was with difficulty they were awaked out of it, even by the rays of light and glory that were about them. The *Ethiopic* verſion adds, *ſuddenly*; ſuch a luſtre darted from theſe glorious forms, eſpecially from the body of Chriſt, as at once ſurprized them out of their ſleep; and being thoroughly awake, *they ſaw his glory*; the brightneſs of his countenance, and the whiteneſs of his raiment: *and the two men that ſtood with him*; *Moſes* and *Elias*, and the glory in which they appeared.

Ver. 33. *And it came to paſs as they departed from him*, &c.] That is, as *Moſes* and *Elias* departed from Chriſt; or *when they began to depart*, as the *Syriac* verſion renders it; or *would depart*, as the *Arabic* and *Perſic* verſions; ſeemed deſirous of going, or made ſome ſignal or other by which the diſciples perceived they were about to go; for, as yet, they were not gone: *Peter ſaid unto Jeſus, maſter, it is good for us to be here, let us make three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moſes, and one for Elias*; ſee the note on *Matt*. xvii. 4. *not knowing what he ſaid*; nor *what to ſay*, as *Mark* obſerves, being in a ſurprize, and not in a ſituation to conſider and weigh things well, whether what he ſaid was right and proper, or not; ſee the note, as before.

Ver. 34. *While he thus ſpake there came a cloud*, &c.] While *Peter* was making the above requeſt, before an anſwer was returned, a cloud appeared, a very uncommon one, as a ſymbol of the divine preſence: *and overſhadowed them*; Jeſus, *Moſes*, *Elias*, and the diſciples: *and they feared as they entered into the cloud*; either as they themſelves entered into it, that coming gradually over them, becauſe of the glory of it, and the ſolemnity that attended it; or as *Moſes* and *Elias* entered into it; and ſo the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read, *they feared when they ſaw Moſes and Elias enter into the cloud*; which took them out of their ſight; juſt as the cloud received Jeſus out of the ſight of his diſciples, when he aſcended to heaven, *Acts* i. 9.

Ver. 35. *And there came a voice out of the cloud*, &c.] See the note on *Matt*. xvii. 5.

Ver. 36. *And when the voice was paſt*, &c.] The above words were delivered, and it was heard no more: *Jeſus was found alone*; by his diſciples; *Moſes* and *Elias* being gone, and he in the ſame form in which he was before his transfiguration. *And they* *kept it cloſe*; as Chriſt ſtrictly charged them, when coming down from the mount with them; *Matt.* xvii. 9. *And told no man in thoſe days, any of thoſe things which they had ſeen*; no, not any of their fellow diſciples, until that Chriſt was riſen from the dead.

Ver. 37. *And it came to paſs that on the next day*, &c.] For Jeſus and his diſciples ſtaid all night on the mountain: *when they were come down from the hill*; to the bottom of it: *much people met him.* The *Vulgate Latin, Syriac,* and *Perſic* verſions read, *met them.*

Ver. 38. *And behold, a man of the company*, &c.] One that was in the company, and among the multitude, that met him: *cried out*; with great vehemence and earneſtneſs: *ſaying, Maſter*; doctor, or *Rabbi: I beſeech thee*; moſt humbly, for he was now on his knees: *look upon my ſon*; with pity and compaſſion, and help him: *for he is mine only child*; wherefore he was dear unto him, and he was greatly concerned for him, and earneſtly deſirous of his being reſtored to health; and this he mentions, to move the compaſſion of Chriſt.

Ver. 39. *And lo, a ſpirit taketh him*, &c.] An evil ſpirit, the devil, as in ver. 42. ſeizes and poſſeſſes him at once: *and he ſuddenly crieth out*; in a moſt terrible manner, giving dreadful ſhrieks, as ſoon as he perceives that he is ſeized by the dæmon: *and it teareth him, that he foameth again*; throws him into convulſions, ſo that he foams at the mouth: and ſo we read [t] of a ſon of a certain *Jew*, that "a certain ſpirit paſſed before him and hurt him, "convulſed his mouth, and his eyes, and his hands "were convulſed, and he could not ſpeak." *And bruiſing him*; by daſhing him againſt the wall, or throwing him to the ground: *hardly departeth from him*; is very loath to leave him, even after he has diſtreſſed, convulſed, and bruiſed him in this dreadful manner, ſuch was his cruelty and malice; ſee the notes on *Matt.* xvii. 15. and *Mark* ix. 18.

Ver. 40. *And I beſought thy diſciples*, &c.] The nine diſciples that were left behind, whilſt Chriſt and the other three, were gone up to the mountain: *to caſt him out*; the devil out of his child: *and they could not*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xvii. 16.

Ver. 41. *And Jeſus anſwering, ſaid*, &c.] To the father of the child, and thoſe that were with him; and with a particular view to the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, who had been inſulting the diſciples, and triumphing over them, becauſe of their inability to caſt out this evil ſpirit: for the words are not ſpoken to the diſciples, as they might ſeem at firſt view to be, and as the *Perſic* verſion renders them, *and Jeſus turned his face to the diſciples, and ſaid*; but to the unbelieving *Jews, O faithleſs and perverſe generation, how long ſhall I be with you, and ſuffer you? bring thy ſon hither*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xvii. 17.

Ver. 42. *And as he was yet a coming*, &c.] Whilſt he was in the way bringing to Jeſus, before he came to him: *the devil threw him down, and tare* him; knowing who Jeſus was, and that he was able to diſpoſſeſs him; and having reaſon to believe he would, was reſolved to do all the miſchief he could, and give him all the pain and diſtreſs he was able, whilſt he was in him; and therefore threw him to the ground, and convulſed him in a terrible manner at the ſame time: *and Jeſus rebuked the unclean ſpirit*; for his malice and cruelty, and ordered him to depart: *and healed the child*; by diſpoſſeſſing the ſpirit: *and delivered him again to his father*; free from the poſſeſſion, and in perfect health, and which muſt be very pleaſing and acceptable to him.

Ver. 43. *And they were all amazed at the mighty power of God*, &c.] Or *at the greatneſs*, or *majeſty of God*; which was diſplayed in this cure: for the great power of God was manifeſtly ſeen in it, to the aſtoniſhment of the diſciples, who could not cure this child, and of the parent and friends of it, and of the whole multitude; and to the confuſion of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*: *but while they wondered every one, at all things which Jeſus did*; and were applauding him for them, and ſpeaking in his praiſe on account of them: *he ſaid unto his diſciples*; privately, when they were alone together, the following words, that he might not ſeem to be lifted up with the praiſe of men; and alſo to ſhew their inconſtancy, that thoſe who now admired him, would one day crucify him; and to take off the thoughts of the diſciples from a temporal kingdom and glory, they were ſo much in expectation of, and which every miracle of Chriſt, and the applauſe he got thereby among men, ſtrengthened them in.

Ver. 44. *Let theſe ſayings ſink down into your ears*, &c.] The *Vulgate Latin, Arabic,* and *Ethiopic* verſions read, *in your hearts*: Chriſt's ſenſe is, that they would diligently attend to them, ſeriouſly conſider them, and carefully lay them up in their memories; and what he refers to, are not the words he had ſpoken, but what he was about to ſay; namely, as follow: *for the Son of man ſhall be delivered into the hands of men*; by whom he ſhould be killed, though he ſhould riſe again the third day; ſee *Matt.* xvii. 22.

Ver. 45. *But they underſtood not this ſaying*, &c.] What was meant by being betrayed into the hands of men, and by his being put to death; they knew not how theſe things could poſſibly be, for they could not by any means reconcile them with the notions they had of a temporal Redeemer, and victorious Meſſiah: *and it was hid from them, that they perceived it not*; the true meaning of this ſaying was hid from their underſtanding, which was veiled with the above notion of the worldly grandeur of the Meſſiah, that they did not take it in: *and they feared to aſk him of that ſaying*; of the meaning of it; imagining that he had a ſecret, myſtical meaning in it, which they could not reach; leſt he ſhould reproach them with their dullneſs and ſtupidity; or ſhould rebuke them with the like ſharpneſs and ſeverity he had reproved *Peter* not long ago, upon the ſame head.

Ver. 46. *Then there aroſe a reaſoning among them*, &c.] The *Vulgate Latin, Syriac,* and *Arabic* verſions read, *a thought entered into them*; ſuggeſted very likely by ſatan, which broke out into words, and iſſued in a warm diſpute among them; and this was in the way, as they were travelling from *Cæſarea Philippi*, to *Capernaum*; ſee *Mark* ix. 33. *Which of them ſhould be greateſt*; that is, *in the kingdom of heaven*, as in *Matt.* xviii. 1. in the kingdom of the Meſſiah, which they expected would be a temporal one: wherefore the diſpute was not about degrees in glory, nor in grace; nor who ſhould be the greateſt apoſtle and preacher of the Goſpel; but who ſhould be prime miniſter to the king Meſſiah, when he ſhould ſet up his monarchy in all its grandeur and glory.

Ver. 47. *And Jeſus perceiving the thought of their heart*, &c.] Not by any words he had heard; for the diſpute was on the road, as they came along behind him; but as the omniſcient God, who is the diſcerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, he was privy to all their ambition, and the vanity of their minds, and to all their reaſonings and debates; though he was before them, and out of the reach of hearing of them: and when he came to *Capernaum*, after having aſked them what they diſputed about by the way; *he took a child and ſet him by him.* The *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *before them*, the diſciples; and *Matthew* and *Mark* ſay, he *ſet him in the midſt of them*; all which were true, Jeſus ſitting in the midſt of them; ſo that the child he ſet by him, was in the middle of them, and before them; ſee the note on *Matt.* xviii. 2.

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[t] Zohar in Lev. fol. 21. 4.

Ver. 48. *And ſaid unto them, whoſoever ſhall receive this child*, &c.] Or *one ſuch little child*, as in *Matt.* xviii. 5. and ſo the *Syriac* verſion here, *a child like to this*; and the *Arabic* verſion, *one like to this child*; not in age, but in meekneſs and humility; one that is not proud and haughty, ambitious of worldly honour, and envious at the ſuperior ſtate of others: whoever receives ſuch an one into his houſe and heart, and the Goſpel he preaches, *in my name*; becauſe he belongs to me, is ſent by me, and repreſents me, and delivers my meſſage: *receiveth me*; perſonated by him, and will be ſo taken: *and whoſoever ſhall receive me, receiveth him that ſent me*; ſee the note on *Mark* ix. 37. *For he that is leaſt among you all*; that is ſo in his own opinion, and behaves as ſuch in his conduct, who is lowly and meek, and humble; and ſo the *Ethiopic* verſion rather interpreting than tranſlating, renders it, *for he that makes himſelf humble, who is leſſer than all*; who conſiders himſelf as the leaſt of the apoſtles, and unworthy to be one, as did the apoſtle *Paul*: *the ſame ſhall be great*; ſhall be highly honoured with gifts, and made greatly uſeful, as the above-mentioned apoſtle was: a ſaying like this, the *Jews* have[u]; "every one, המקטין עצמו, *that* "*makes himſelf little*, for the words of the law in "this world, נעשה גדול, *ſhall be made great* in "the world to come;" that is, in the days of the Meſſiah: and again 'tis ſaid by[w] them, "worthy "is he that makes himſelf *little* in this world, how "*great* and high ſhall he be in that world!—— "whoever is little ſhall be great, and he that is "great ſhall be little."

Ver. 49. *And John anſwered and ſaid, Maſter*, &c.] The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read, *our Maſter: we ſaw one caſting out devils in thy name, and we forbad him*; ſee the note on *Mark* ix. 38. *Becauſe he followeth not with us*; the *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read, *becauſe he followeth not thee with us*; did not join in company with them, and follow Chriſt along with them, and as they did.

Ver. 50. *And Jeſus ſaid unto him, forbid* him *not*, &c.] Or *forbid not* him, or any other ſo doing: *for he that is not againſt us, is for us*: in two exemplars of *Beza*'s 'tis read, *for he is not againſt you*; the *Vulgate Latin*, and *Syriac* verſions, inſtead of *us*, in both clauſes read *you*, and ſo likewiſe the *Perſic* and *Ethiopic* verſions; ſee the notes on *Mark* ix. 39, 40.

Ver. 51. *And it came to paſs when the time was come*, &c.] Or *days were fulfilled*, an uſual *Hebraiſm*; when the period of time fixed for his being in *Galilee* was come to an end; when he had fulfilled his miniſtry, and finiſhed all his ſayings, and wrought all the miracles he was to work in thoſe parts; when he was to quit this country, and go into *Judea*, and up to *Jeruſalem*, ſignified in the next clauſe: *that he ſhould be received up*; or as all the *Oriental* verſions rightly render the words, *when the time, or days of his aſcenſion were fulfilled*; not of his aſcenſion to heaven, as interpreters generally underſtand the paſſage, becauſe the word is uſed of that, in *Mark* xvi. 19. *Acts* i. 2, 11, 22. 1 *Tim.* iii. 16. much leſs as others, of his being taken and lifted up from the earth upon the croſs, and ſo ſignifies his crucifixion, and ſufferings, and death; for of neither of theſe can it be ſaid, that the time of them was come, or the days fulfilled, in which either of theſe ſhould be: for if Chriſt was now going to the feaſt of tabernacles, as ſome think, it muſt be above half a year before his death, and ſtill longer before his aſcenſion to heaven; and if to the feaſt of dedication, it was above three months to his aſcenſion: hence interpreters that go this way, are obliged to interpret it, that the time drew near, or was drawing on, or the days were almoſt fulfilled; whereas the expreſſion is full and ſtrong, that the time was come, and the days were fulfilled; and which was true in the ſenſe hinted at, that now the time was up, that *Jeſus* muſt leave the low-lands of *Galilee*, having finiſhed his work there, and go into the higher country of *Judea*, and ſo up to *Jeruſalem*; for of his aſcenſion from *Galilee* to *Jeruſalem*, are the words to be underſtood; ſee *Matt.* xix. 1. *Mark* x. 1. And it is obſervable, that after this, he never went into *Galilee* any more: and this ſenſe is confirmed by what follows; *he ſtedfaſtly ſet his face to go to Jeruſalem*; or *ſtrengthened his face*, as the *Vulgate Latin* and *Ethiopic* verſions; ſet his face like a flint, as in *Iſa.* l. 7. denoting not impudence, as hardening of the face is uſed in *Prov.* xxi. 29. but boldneſs, courage, conſtancy, and firmneſs of mind: or *he prepared his face*, as the *Syriac*; or *turned his face*, as the *Arabic*, he looked that way, and ſet forward; or as the *Perſic* verſion renders it, *he made a firm purpoſe*, he reſolved upon it, and was determined to go to *Jeruſalem*, his time being up in *Galilee*: and though he knew what he was to meet with and endure; that he ſhould bear the ſins of his people, the curſe of the law, and wrath of God; that he ſhould have many enemies, men and devils to grapple with, and undergo a painful, ſhameful, and accurſed death; yet none of theſe things moved him, he was reſolutely bent on going thither, and accordingly prepared for his journey; ſee 2 *Kings* xii. 17.

Ver. 52. *And ſent meſſengers before his face*, &c.] Who very likely were his two diſciples, *James* and *John*; ſince they ſo highly reſented the ill-treatment their maſter met with, from the *Samaritans*: *and they went*; before him: *and entred into a village of the Samaritans*; or *city*, as the *Vulgate Latin*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read, and ſo one of *Stephens*'s copies; which lay in the way from *Galilee* to *Judea*, where the diſciples had been forbid to enter, that is, in order to preach, *Matt.* x. 5. *To make ready for him*; to prepare a lodging, and proper food for him and his diſciples, as they paſſed on in their journey, for his intention was not to make any ſtay there.

Ver. 53. *And they did not receive him*, &c.] The *Ethiopic* verſion reads *them*, the meſſengers; but it ſhould rather ſeem, that they did receive the meſſengers, and promiſed them lodging and entertainment; being glad that ſo great a perſon would honour them with his preſence, hoping that miracles would be done by him, among them; and that he would ſtay with them, and ſhew ſome approbation of them, and their worſhip; but when Chriſt came in perſon, with his diſciples and the multitude, they would not admit him; the reaſon follows, *be*

*cauſ*

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[u] T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 85. 2.

[w] Zohar in Num. fol. 70. 1. & Toſaphta in Zohar in Gen. fol. 76. 2.

*cauſe his face was as though he would go to Jeruſalem*: by all circumſtances, by his words and looks, and geſtures; by all that they could ſee and hear, and learn from him, his determination was to make no ſtay with them, but proceed on to *Jeruſalem*, after he had took a night's lodging with them, and had refreſhed himſelf and company, and therefore they would not receive him: it had been of a long time a controverſy, between the *Jews* and *Samaritans*, which was the right place of worſhip; whether at the temple at *Jeruſalem*, or whether at their temple on mount *Gerizzim?* Now if Chriſt would have intereſted himſelf in this conteſt, in favour of them, and would have ſtaid with them, and worſhipped where they did, they would have gladly received him; but they perceived he was going to *Jeruſalem*, either to keep the feaſt of *tabernacles* there, or the feaſt of the dedication of the temple; and if the latter, it muſt be ſtill more provoking to them, becauſe it ſhewed, that he preferred that temple to theirs: and however, it ſeems to be on this account that they would not admit him, becauſe he favoured the temple worſhip at *Jeruſalem*; otherwiſe his bare going thither, could not give the offence.

Ver. 54. *And when his diſciples James and John ſaw this*, &c.] The *Perſic* verſion reads thus; *when James and John, and the diſciples ſaw this*; that is, the other diſciples beſides them, ſo making all the diſciples ſay what follows; whereas only thoſe two are intended, who having been the meſſengers, were the more provoked at this indignity to their Lord and maſter: *they ſaid, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and conſume them*; being enraged at this conduct of the *Samaritans* towards Chriſt, and burning with love to him, and zeal for his honour; being *Boanerges*'s, ſons of thunder, they were for puniſhing of them in a moſt terrible manner, even with fire from heaven; by which *Sodom* and *Gomorrha*, and the cities of the plain, were deſtroyed: this they doubted not of doing, knowing what miraculous power was conferred upon them; but did not think proper to attempt to exert it, until they had aſked leave of Chriſt to do it: *even as Elias did*; upon the two captains of fifties, with their fifties, as recorded in 2 Kings i. 9, 10, 11, 12. This clauſe was wanting in a certain copy of *Beza*'s, and is not in the *Vulgate Latin* verſion; but is in other copies and verſions, and by all means to be retained.

Ver. 55. *But he turned and rebuked them*, &c.] He turned himſelf about to them, and looking upon them with a ſtern countenance, ſharply reproved them for their intemperate zeal, their paſſion of wrath and anger, and deſire of revenge: *and ſaid, ye know not what manner of ſpirit ye are of*; or do not conſider that this is not the true ſpirit of zeal, but of anger and revenge; and is not agreeable to the ſpirit of the meek and humble followers of Chriſt, or to the Spirit of God, and thoſe gifts of his beſtowed on them, nor to the ſpirit of the Goſpel-diſpenſation: ſo good men, for want of attention, may not know ſometimes from what ſpirit they act; taking that for a good one, which is a very bad one; being covered with ſpecious pretences of love and zeal, and the examples of former ſaints; not obſerving the difference of perſons, times, and things.

Ver. 56. *For the Son of man*, &c.] Meaning himſelf, in his ſtate of humiliation: *is not come to deſtroy mens lives*; the word *mens*, is omitted in the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, and *Perſic* verſions; and both words, *mens lives*, are left out in the *Arabic* verſion: *but to ſave them*; as they might eaſily obſerve, by his caſting out devils from the bodies of men, and healing all ſorts of diſeaſes: and therefore, though it was agreeable to the legal diſpenſation, and the times of *Elijah*, to puniſh offenders in ſuch a manner, it was not agreeable to the Goſpel-diſpenſation, and to the ends of the Meſſiah's coming into the world: ſo far in this verſe, and the latter part of the former verſe, are left out in five ancient copies of *Beza*'s, and in the *Ethiopic* verſion, but are in the reſt of the *Eaſtern* verſions, and in other copies, and are rightly retained: *and they went to another village*; in *Samaria*, more civil and courteous, and leſs prejudiced, and where they got lodging and entertainment.

Ver. 57. *And it came to paſs as they went in the way*, &c.] From one village of the *Samaritans*, to the other; though if this is the ſame hiſtory related in *Matt.* viii. 19. it was as Chriſt went from *Capernaum* to the ſea-ſide, in order to go to the other ſide of it; and muſt be inſerted here, without regard to the order of time: *a certain man ſaid unto him*; if the ſame as in *Matthew*, he is there ſaid to be a *Scribe*; *Lord, I will follow thee, whereſoever thou goeſt.* The *Arabic* and *Ethiopic* verſions, read theſe words by way of queſtion, *Lord, ſhall I not follow thee whereſoever thou goeſt?* ſee the note on *Matt.* viii. 19.

Ver. 58. *And Jeſus ſaid unto him, foxes have holes*, &c.] Both the words of this man to Chriſt, and Chriſt's anſwer to him, are exactly the ſame as in *Matthew*, which makes it look as if it was the ſame hiſtory; though it is not improbable, that Chriſt might be accoſted in the ſame manner by another perſon, at another time and place, and return a like anſwer to each; ſee the note on *Matt.* viii. 20.

Ver. 59. *And he ſaid unto another, follow me*, &c.] According to *Matthew*, one of his diſciples, who had attended him ſome time, and whom he now called to the miniſterial work; ſee the note on *Matt.* viii. 21. The *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *another ſaid to him, ſhall I not follow thee?* but without any foundation: they are certainly the words of Chriſt, directed to another perſon, at the ſame time he met with the former: *but he ſaid, Lord, ſuffer me firſt to go and bury my father*; ſee the note on *Matt.* viii. 21.

Ver. 60. *Jeſus ſaid unto him, let the dead bury the dead*, &c.] See the note on *Matt.* viii. 22. *but go thou and preach the kingdom of God*; that the kingdom of heaven is at hand, the Goſpel-diſpenſation is now uſhering in, and the kingdom of the Meſſiah is ſetting up; go and publiſh the things concerning the kingdom of grace, which lies not in outward rites and ceremonies, but in righteouſneſs and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghoſt; and declare the things relating to the kingdom of glory, and eternal life and happineſs; aſſert, that unleſs a man is born again, and has a better righteouſneſs than his own, he is neither fit for, nor has he a right unto everlaſting bliſs.

Ver. 61. *And another alſo ſaid*, &c.] *To him*, as the *Syriac* and *Arabic* verſions add, that is, to Chriſt; the *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *and a third ſaid to him*; for this is the third perſon mentioned in this relation of *Luke*'s; only two are ſpoken of by *Matthew*, but a third is added here: *Lord, I will follow thee*; he moves it himſelf, to be a diſciple of his, and a preacher of his Goſpel, only with this condition: *but let me firſt go bid them farewel, which are at home at my houſe*; as *Eliſha* deſired *Elijah*, that he might go and kiſs his father and his mother, and

and then he promiſes he would follow him, 1 *Kings* xix. 20. The *Syriac* verſion adds, *and I will come*; and the *Perſic*, *and give commands*, *and then will I come*: and the phraſe not only ſignifies, that he deſired to take leave of his friends, but to compoſe and ſet in order his family affairs, and diſpoſe of his worldly effects among his domeſtics, relations, and friends, in the beſt manner he could; and then he ſhould have leiſure, and be at liberty to follow Chriſt, and attend his ſervice.

Ver. 62. *And Jeſus ſaid unto him*, &c.] The copulative *and*, is left out in the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions: *no man having put his hand to the plough*; or *plough-ſhare*, as reads the *Syriac* verſion; or *plough-handle*, as the *Perſic*; referring, as *Beza* thinks, to the buſineſs of *Eliſha*, in 1 *Kings* xix. 19. *And looking back*; behind him; for the ploughman ought to look before him, on his plough, and the ground he is ploughing, or he is not fit to be a ploughman; nor will he make proper furrows, or do his work well; and ſo he that enters upon the miniſterial work, and looks back, and engages himſelf in the affairs of the world, ſets his heart on them, and ſpends his time in them, *is not fit for the kingdom of God*: that is, to preach the kingdom of God, as in ver. 60. He cannot ſerve God and mammon, his own intereſt, and the intereſt of Chriſt; he can't rightly perform the work of the miniſtry, whilſt his thoughts and time are taken up in the affairs of the world.

## CHAP. X.

Ver. 1. AFTER *theſe things*, &c.] After the calling and miſſion of the twelve apoſtles, and giving them their powers, commiſſions, and inſtructions, with other things that followed thereon; ſee ch. ix. 1. *the Lord appointed other ſeventy alſo*; not that he had appointed before ſeventy, and now made an appointment of ſeventy more; but as the *Syriac* verſion renders it, *Jeſus ſeparated out of his diſciples, ſeventy others*: that is, beſides the twelve, whom he choſe and called out, from among the multitude of the diſciples, and ordained them apoſtles, he ſelected and ordained ſeventy others, in alluſion to the ſeventy elders of *Iſrael*, *Numb.* xi. 16, 24, 25. The *Vulgate Latin* and *Perſic* verſions read, *ſeventy-two*, and ſo does *Epiphanius* [x]. The *Jewiſh Sanhedrim*, is ſometimes ſaid to conſiſt of ſeventy-one [y], and ſometimes of ſeventy-two [z]; though commonly ſaid to be of the round number ſeventy, as theſe diſciples might be. The above mentioned ancient writer, gives the names of ſome of them, as the ſeven deacons; *Stephen*, *Philip*, *Prochorus*, *Nicanor*, *Timon*, *Parmenas*, and *Nicolas*; together with *Matthias*, *Mark*, *Luke*, *Juſtus*, *Barnabas*, *Apelles*, *Rufus*, and *Niger*. The names of all theſe diſciples, according to ancient traditions, though not to be depended on, are given in an alphabetical order, with the places where they afterwards preſided as biſhops, or paſtors, by a late learned writer [a], and are as follow, *viz.* *Agabus*, the prophet; *Amphias*, of *Odyſſus*, ſometimes called *Amphiatus*; *Ananias*, who baptized *Paul*, biſhop of *Damaſcus*; *Andronicus*, of *Pannonia*, or *Spain*; *Apelles*, of *Smyrna*, or according to others, of *Heraclea*; *Apollo*, of *Cæſarea*; *Ariſtarchus*, of *Apamea*; *Ariſtobulus*, of *Britain*; *Artemas*, of *Luſtra*; *Aſyncritus*, of *Hyrcania*; *Barnabas*, of *Milain*; *Barnabas*, of *Heraclea*; *Cæſar*, of *Dyrrachium*; *Caius*, of *Epheſus*; *Carpus*, of *Berytus*, in *Thracia*; *Cephas*, biſhop of *Konia*; *Clemens*, of *Sardinia*; *Cleophas*, of *Jeruſalem*; *Creſcens*, of *Chalcedon*, in *Galatia*; *Demas*, a prieſt of idols; *Epænetus*, of *Carthage*; *Epaphroditus*, of *Andriace*; *Eraſtus*, of *Paneas*, or, according to others, of the *Philippians*; *Evodus*, of *Antioch*; *Hermas*, of *Philippi*, or *Philippolis*; *Hermes*, of *Dalmatia*; *Hermogenes* and *Phygellus*, who followed *Simon Magus*; *Hermogenes*, biſhop of the *Megarenes*; *Herodion*, of *Tarſus*; *James*, the brother of our Lord, of *Jeruſalem*; *Jaſon*, of *Tarſus*; *Jeſus Juſtus*, biſhop of *Eleutheropolis*; *Linus*, of *Rome*; *Luke*, the Evangeliſt; *Lucius*, of *Laodicea*, in *Syria*; *Mark*, who is alſo *John*, of *Biblopolis*, or *Byblus*; *Mark* the Evangeliſt, biſhop of *Alexandria*; *Mark*, the ſiſter's ſon of *Barnabas*, biſhop of *Apollonia*; *Matthias*, added to the apoſtles; *Narciſſus*, of *Athens*; *Nicanor*, he died when *Stephen* ſuffered martyrdom; *Nicolaus*, of *Samaria*; *Olympius*, a martyr at *Rome*; *Oneſiphorus*, biſhop of *Corone*; *Parmenas*, of the *Soli*; *Patrobulus*, the ſame with *Patrobas*, in *Rom.* xvi. 14. of *Puteoli*, or as others, of *Naples*; *Philemon*, of *Gaza*; *Philemon* (in the *Acts* he is called *Philip*) by whom the eunuch of the queen of *Ethiopia* was baptized, of *Trallium*, of *Aſia*; *Philologus*, of *Sinope*; *Phlegon*, biſhop of *Marathon*; *Phygellus*, of *Epheſus*; *Prochorus*, of *Nicomedia*, in *Bithynia*; *Pudens*; *Quartus*, of *Berytus*; *Rhodion*, a martyr at *Rome*; *Rufus*, of *Thebes*; *Silas*, of *Corinth*; *Sylvanus*, of *Theſſalonica*; *Soſipater*, of *Iconium*; *Soſthenes*, of *Colophon*; *Stachys*, of *Byzantium*; *Stephen*, the firſt martyr; *Tertius*, of *Iconium*; *Thaddæus*, who carried the epiſtle of *Jeſus*, to *Edeſſa*, to *Abgarus*; *Timon*, of *Boſtra*, of the *Arabians*; *Trophimus*, who ſuffered martyrdom with the apoſtle *Paul*; *Tychicus*, biſhop of *Chalcedon*, of *Bithynia*; *Tychicus*, of *Colophon*; *Urbanus*, of *Macedonia*; and *Zenas*, of *Dioſpolis*. According both to this account, and *Epiphanius*, *Luke* was one of theſe ſeventy, and he is the only Evangeliſt that makes mention of the appointment of them: *and ſent them two and two before his face*; as he did the twelve before, to be his harbingers and forerunners; *into every city and place, whither he himſelf would come*; which he intended to viſit: he ſent them before-hand to acquaint the inhabitants of it; and prepare them by their miniſtry, for the reception of him; as *John* the *Baptiſt*, who was in a more eminent ſenſe, the harbinger and fore-runner of Chriſt, went before him in his miniſtry, and prepared the way for him.

Ver. 2. *Therefore ſaid he unto them*, &c.] That is, the *Lord Jeſus*, as the *Ethiopic* verſion expreſſes it; he ſaid to the ſeventy diſciples, what he had before ſaid to the twelve Apoſtles in *Matt.* ix. 37, 38. where are the ſame words as here: *the harveſt truly is great, but the labourers are few, pray ye therefore the Lord of the harveſt that he would ſend forth labourers into his harveſt*; for tho' there was ſuch a number of diſciples called to the miniſterial work, and ſent out, there was ſtill need of more; ſo great was the harveſt of ſouls, or number of hearers, that the labourers were yet but few; and therefore the Lord of the harveſt, and whoſe all ſouls are, was to be prayed unto to ſend forth more laborious preachers; ſee the notes on *Matt.* ix. 37, 38.

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[x] Contr. Hæreſ. hæreſ. 20.

[y] Maimon. Hilchot Sanhedrim, c. 1. §. 3.

[z] Miſn. Yadaim, c. 3. §. 5. Aben Ezra in Num. 11. 25.

[a] Fabricii lux Evangelii, p. 115, 116, &c.

Ver. 3. *Go your ways*, &c.] Into all the villages, towns, cities, and places, where he directed them to go, to make ready for him. *Behold, I ſend you forth as lambs among wolves*; as harmleſs, innocent, profitable, and defenceleſs creatures among ſpiteful, malicious, cunning, and cruel men; ſee the note on *Matt.* x. 16.

Ver. 4. *Carry neither purſe*, &c.] The *Syriac* verſion reads, *purſes*, to put money, gold, ſilver, and braſs in; and the prohibition regards the money in the purſe chiefly: *nor ſcrip*; the *Syriac* verſion here alſo reads in the plural number, *ſcrips*, to put victuals in, proviſions of any ſort for their journey, which they were not to carry with them, any more than money to buy food with. *Nor ſhoes*; any more than thoſe they had upon their feet; ſee the notes on *Matt.* x. 9, 10. *and ſalute no man by the way*; that they might not be retarded, and hindered in their journey by tedious ceremonies, and long enquiries into the health of perſons and friends, and the buſineſs they were going about, and places where; and by diſcourſes and confabulations, drawn out to great length, as was often the caſe at meeting on the road: and, for the ſame reaſon, a like charge is given to *Gebazi*, 2 *Kings* iv. 29. and which, as the *Jewiſh* commentators on the place obſerve [a], was, that he might not multiply words with perſons he met with, and might not be ſtopped by the way; and that his intention might be in his work, and his mind might not turn to any other thing, either by word or deed. So our Lord's intention, by this order, was, not to teach them incivility, or to be moroſe and uncourteous; but that they might diſpatch their buſineſs with the utmoſt expedition, and rather forego ſome common civilities and ceremonies, than to neglect, or, in the leaſt, to hinder a work of ſo much importance they were ſent about: and this was the more neceſſary, ſince, according to the *Jewiſh* maxim [b], "prevent every man with a ſalutation;" they ſaluted all that they met, which took up time, and hindered buſineſs. Some ſorts of perſons indeed were excuſed, as thoſe who were mourners [c] for the dead, and ſuch as kept faſts for rain [d]: but ſuch were not theſe diſciples; they neither mourned, nor faſted, nor could they, ſo long as the bridegroom was with them.

Ver. 5. *And into whatſoever houſe ye enter*, &c.] When ye come into any city, town, or village, *firſt ſay, peace be to this houſe*: ſalute the inhabitants in the uſual form, ſaying, peace be to you; wiſhing them all happineſs and proſperity, temporal, ſpiritual, and eternal. This ſhows our Lord did not diſapprove of civil ſalutations.

Ver. 6. *And if the ſon of peace be there*, &c.] If there be any elect perſon or perſons in the houſe, whom God has choſen to partake of peace by the blood of Chriſt, and the benefits ariſing from it; and of a conſcience-peace in their ſouls, upon the beſt foundation; and of eternal peace in the world to come tho' yet in a ſtate of nature; and which may be known by this ſign; *your peace ſhall reſt upon it*: the ſalutation, or wiſh of peace, ſhall be well taken, and gratefully received; and upon this you'll be kindly invited into the houſe, and uſed well by thoſe of the family; *if not, it ſhall turn to you again*: if there are no ſons of peace, no elect perſons there, your ſalutation, or wiſh of peace and proſperity to the family, will be deſpiſed and rejected, and will return to you without any good effect upon them.

Ver. 7. *And in the ſame houſe remain*, &c.] Where the ſons of peace are, and the peace reſts, and into which you are invited, and kindly received and uſed: *eating and drinking ſuch things as they give*; or rather, *ſuch things as are with them*, as the *Vulgate Latin* renders it; or *of that which is theirs*, as the *Syriac* verſion; all one, and with as much freedom, as if they were your own: the reaſon follows, *for the labourer is worthy of his hire*; what you eat and drink is your due; what you ought to have; your diet is a debt, and not a gratuity; ſee the note on *Matt.* x. 10. *go not from houſe to houſe*; as if fickle and unconſtant, as if not ſatisfied with your lodging and entertainment, and as ſeeking out for other and better, or as if burdenſome where they were; ſee the note on *Matt.* x. 11. The *Jews* have a proverb, expreſſing the inconvenience and expenſiveneſs, and the danger of moving from place to place: "he that goes, מבית לבית, *from houſe to houſe*, (loſes his) ſhirt (*i. e.* comes to diſtreſs and poverty) from place to place (his) life [e];" or he is in great danger of loſing his life.

Ver. 8. *And into whatſoever city ye enter*, &c.] Into whatſoever houſe in it ye go, and apply to for lodging and entertainment, *and they receive you*, readily and chearfully, *eat ſuch things as are ſet before you*; tho' ever ſo mean, accept of them, and don't object to them on that account, leſt it ſhould be thought you ſerve your own bellies, and ſeek to gratify your appetites; nor, on the other hand, don't think any thing too good for you, or that you are burdenſome and chargeable, but eat as if it were your own; nor aſk queſtions about the cleanneſs and uncleanneſs of it, or whether it has been tithed or not; but feed upon it without any ſcruple.

Ver. 9. *And heal the ſick that are therein*, &c.] Of all their bodily diſeaſes, which would not only ſhow their power, and warrant, their miſſion and commiſſion, but alſo their goodneſs and beneficence to men; and would be a ſufficient return for what they eat and drank: *and ſay unto them*; not only to the ſick that are healed, and thoſe in the houſe in which they were, but to all the inhabitants of the city; *the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you*: the Goſpel-diſpenſation, the kingdom of the Meſſiah, and even the Meſſiah himſelf, as might be concluded from the miracles they wrought; and thus by their miniſtry and works, were they to go before Chriſt, and prepare his way.

Ver. 10. *But into whatſoever city ye enter*, &c.] On the other hand Chriſt here directs how to behave towards other cities they ſhould come to, and be rejected: *and they receive you not*; refuſe to admit them into their houſes, or provide in any ſhape for them, nor hear their meſſage: *go your ways out into the ſtreets of the ſame.* The *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *caſt the duſt off your feet into the ſtreets of it*: *and ſay*; aloud, in the moſt public manner, in the ears of all the people, as follows.

Ver. 11. *Even the very duſt of your city, which cleaveth on us*, &c.] The *Syriac* verſion adds, *to our feet*; and ſo in *Beza*'s moſt ancient copy, and the *Arabic* and *Perſic* verſions read, *which cleaves to our feet*; which agrees with *Matt.* x. 14. *Mark* vi. 11. *we do wipe againſt you*; for a teſtimony againſt them, that they had been with them, and were rejected by them; ſee the notes on *Matt.* x. 14. *Mark* vi. 11. *notwithſtanding be ye ſure of this*; they might aſſure themſelves of this, and which will be an aggravation of their guilt, and increaſe their puniſhment another day: *that the kingdom of God*

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[a] Jarchi, Kimchi & R. Levi, Ben Gerſom in 2 Kings iv. 29.

[b] Pirke Abot, c. 4. §. 15.

[c] Maimon. in Miſn. Moed Katon, c. 3. §. 6.

[d] Miſn. Taanith, c. 1. §. 7.

[e] Bereſhit Rabba, §. 39. fol. 34. 3.

*is come nigh unto you*; was at their very doors, ſince the miniſters of it, of the Goſpel-diſpenſation, the harbingers of the Meſſiah, who were ſent to publiſh his Goſpel, to proclaim him as king, and declare that his kingdom was at hand, had been with them, and they had deſpiſed them.

Ver. 12. *But I ſay unto you,* &c.] The ſame that he ſaid to the twelve Apoſtles, when he ſent them out, *Matt.* x. 15. *that it ſhall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom than for that city.* By *that day* is meant, the famous day to come, the laſt day; the day of judgment, as it is expreſſed in *Matthew*; and ſo the *Ethiopic* verſion reads here, *it ſhall be better in the day of judgment.* *Sodom* was a very wicked city, and was deſtroyed by fire from heaven for its iniquity, and its inhabitants ſuffer the vengeance of eternal fire: and there was alſo *Gomorrha*, a neighbouring city, guilty of the ſame crimes, and ſhared the ſame fate; and which is mentioned along with *Sodom* in *Matthew*; and is here read in the *Perſic* verſion. And the ſenſe of the whole is, that tho' the iniquities of *Sodom* and *Gomorrha* were very great, and their puniſhment very exemplary; yet, as there will be degrees of torment in hell, the caſe of ſuch a city, which has been favoured with the Goſpel, and has deſpiſed and rejected it, will be much worſe than the caſe of thoſe cities, which were devoured by fire from heaven; and than that of the inhabitants of them in the future judgment, and to all eternity; ſee the note on *Matt.* x. 15.

Ver. 13. *Wo unto thee Chorazin,* &c.] See the note on *Matt.* xi. 21. *Wo unto thee Bethſaida*; a city of *Galilee*, a fiſhing town, from whence it has its name, and was the native place of thoſe two fiſhermen, *Peter* and *Andrew*: very likely *Chorazin* was near it, ſince they are here, and in *Matthew*, mentioned together; and wo is pronounced upon them both for their impenitence and unbelief, which were attended with aggravating circumſtances: *for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you*; meaning both the miniſtry of the word by Chriſt, which was with power and authority, and the miracles of Chriſt, which were the works of almighty power, and ſhewed him to be the mighty God: theſe were not done in *Tyre* and *Sidon*, cities in *Phœnicia*; for tho' our Lord was on the borders of thoſe places, yet not in them, they being *Gentile* cities, to which he was not ſent, and in which he did not preach, nor do miracles; but he did both in *Bethſaida* and *Chorazin*, and they repented not of their ſins; nor did they embrace his doctrine, tho' confirmed by miracles; whereas, in all likelihood, humanly ſpeaking, had the inhabitants of *Tyre* and *Sidon* had the like advantages, *they had a great while ago repented*: they would have repented immediately, it would have been ſoon viſible in them, of which they would have given proof, by *ſitting in ſackcloth and aſhes*; which was an outward token of repentance, uſed by penitent ſinners, as by the *Ninevites*, and others. The ſame things are ſaid at another time, and on another occaſion, as here; ſee the notes on *Matt.* xi. 21, 22, 23, 24.

Ver. 14. *But it ſhall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment,* &c.] Or *in the day of judgment*, as read the *Syriac*, *Perſic*, *Ethiopic*, and *Gothic* verſions; and as it is in *Matt.* xi. 22. *than for you*; the inhabitants of *Chorazin* and *Bethſaida*, who will be more ſeverely puniſhed than theſe *Gentile* cities; for by how much greater were their light, privileges, and advantages againſt which they ſinned, by ſo much will be their ſeverer puniſhment.

Ver. 15. *And thou Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven,* &c.] Referring either to the ſituation of it, which was on a very high hill; or to its privileges, thro' the miniſtry and miracles of Chriſt; or the phraſe may be expreſſive of the pride and loftineſs of the inhabitants of it, who were elated with the mercies they enjoyed, it being a moſt delightful, pleaſant, and comfortable place to live in, as its name ſignifies. It was a famous port, commodiouſly ſituated by the ſea of *Tiberias*; and, as *Joſephus*[f] ſays, was in an excellent temperament of the air, and watered with a moſt choice fountain, called by the ſame name. *Shalt be thruſt down into hell*; meaning either the low condition to which it was to be, and has been reduced in a temporal ſenſe, and continues in to this day; there being nothing of it now remaining, as travellers, who have been eye-witneſſes of it, ſay[g], but a few little houſes and cottages; or elſe the ſad and miſerable condition of the inhabitants of it hereafter: and ſo it is, that ſuch who have lived in great plenty and pleaſure in this life, and have thought themſelves to be the favourites of heaven, and that they ſhould enter there, ſhall be thruſt down to hell by the arm of vengeance, with the utmoſt indignation in God, and ſhame to themſelves: it follows in *Matthew*, *for if the mighty works which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day; but I ſay unto you, it ſhall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom, in the day of judgment, than for thee.*

Ver. 16. *He that heareth you, heareth me,* &c.] This is ſaid for the encouragement of the ſeventy diſciples, that tho' they would be rejected by ſome, they would be received by others, who would hear them, and embrace their doctrine, as if the Meſſiah himſelf had been among them; they looking upon them as perſonating him: and ſo Chriſt himſelf conſiders them as embaſſadors in his name, and as repreſenting his perſon, taking what is done to them, as done to himſelf; ſee the note on *Matt.* x. 40. *and he that deſpiſeth you, deſpiſeth me*: every degree of contempt caſt upon them by words or actions, Chriſt looked upon as caſt on himſelf, and will reſent it another day, and puniſh for it. The deſpiſing of wiſe men, or doctors, and their diſciples or ſcholars, was accounted with the *Jews* a very heinous crime, and was ſeverely puniſhed both by excommunication and fines: for thus it is ſaid[h], "a great iniquity it is to deſpiſe the wiſe men, or to hate them. *Jeruſalem* was not deſtroyed until the diſciples of the wiſe men were deſpiſed in it, as it is ſaid, 2 *Chron.* xxxvi. 16. *but they mocked the meſſengers of God, and deſpiſed his words, and miſuſed his prophets*: as if he ſhould ſay, they deſpiſed thoſe that taught his words: and thus ſaith the law, *if ye deſpiſe my ſtatutes*; they that teach my ſtatutes ye will deſpiſe; and every one that deſpiſeth the wiſe men, hath no part in the world to come; and lo! this is included in that general rule, *for he hath deſpiſed the word of the Lord.* Altho' he that deſpiſeth the wiſe men hath no part in the world to come, if witneſſes come (and depoſe) that he hath deſpiſed them even in words, he is guilty of excommunication: and the *Sanhedrim* excommunicate him publickly, and fine him a pound of gold in every place, and give it to the wiſe men: and he that deſpiſeth a wiſe man by words,

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[f] De Bello Jud. l. 3. c. 35.

[g] Vid. L'Empereur, Not. in Benj. Itinerar. p. 68.

[h] Maimon. Hilch. Talmud Tora, c. 6. §. 11, 12.

“ even after his (the wiſe man's) death, the *Sanhedrim* excommunicate him; and they free him “ when he returns by repentance: but if the wiſe “ man is alive, they don't free him till he pleaſes.” *And he that deſpiſeth me, deſpiſeth him that ſent me:* this is ſaid to aggravate the ſin of the deſpiſers of Chriſt's miniſters, and to deter from it; ſince the contempt does not terminate in them, nor even in Chriſt, but reaches his Father alſo. The *Ethiopic* verſion adds, *and he that heareth me, heareth him that ſent me:* but is not ſupported by any copy, or any other verſion.

Ver. 17. *And the ſeventy returned again*, &c.] The *Syriac* verſion adds, *whom he had ſent:* theſe diſciples having received orders and inſtructions from Chriſt, went as he directed them; and when they had finiſhed their embaſſy, they returned again to him, and gave him an account of their journey and ſucceſs. The *Vulgate Latin* and *Perſic* verſions read here, *the ſeventy-two*, as they do in ver. 1. *with joy*; with great joy, as read the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions; notwithſtanding the difficulties that had attended them, the reproaches caſt upon them, the ill treatment they might have met with in ſome places, and the labours and fatigues of their journey, and the dangers they had been expoſed to: *ſaying, Lord, even the devils are ſubject unto us thro' thy name:* they found the miraculous power conferr'd on them was greater than they at firſt imagined, or could collect from what Chriſt ſaid to them, who only bid them heal the ſick, ver. 9. but when they came to make uſe of it, they found they had a power of caſting out devils; not in their own name and ſtrength, but in the name, and thro' the power, and by the authority of Chriſt; and this had thrown them into an extaſy of joy, and in a ſort of a rapture: they expreſs themſelves as men aſtoniſhed at the powers beſtowed on them.

Ver. 18. *And he ſaid unto them*, &c.] In order to abate their ſurprize, and reduce their tranſport of mind: *I beheld ſatan as lightning fall from heaven*; meaning, that this was no news to him, nor any ſurprizing event, that devils ſhould be caſt out of men, and be in a ſtate of ſubjection; for as he exiſted as the eternal Son of God before his incarnation, he was preſent, and ſaw him and his angels fall from heaven, from their firſt eſtate, their habitation of bliſs and glory, down to hell, upon their ſin and rebellion, as violently, ſwiftly, and ſuddenly, as the lightning falls from heaven to earth; and when he ſent out theſe his diſciples, as ſoon as they began their work, and all along in it, he, by his divine omniſcience, ſaw the powers of darkneſs falling before their miniſtry and miracles; and he alſo foreſaw how ſatan hereafter, in a more conſpicuous manner, would fall before the preaching of his Goſpel by his Apoſtles, not only in *Judea*, but eſpecially among the *Gentiles*, where he, the prince of this world, would be caſt down from his throne, and out of his kingdom; ſo that what they related, as it was what he knew before, it was but little in compariſon of what he himſelf had ſeen long ago, and of what he foreſaw would be; and even he would give them power to do other miraculous works beſides theſe.

Ver. 19. *Behold, I give you power to tread on ſerpents and ſcorpions*, &c.] Which may be literally underſtood, as in *Mark* xvi. 18. *Acts* xxviii. 3, 5. or figuratively of the devil, and his principalities and powers, and all his emiſſaries, who, for their craft and cunning, and for their poiſonous and hurtful nature and influence, may be compared to ſerpents and ſcorpions: *and over all the power of the enemy*; of mankind in general, and of the ſeed of the woman, Chriſt and his people in particular. Chriſt has a power over all his power, his whole poſſe of devils, even the power of the air, of which he is prince; and he communicated this power to his diſciples, even to the ſeventy: adding, *and nothing ſhall, by any means, hurt you*; not the moſt hurtful and poiſonous animals, nor the moſt malicious perſecutors on earth, nor all the devils in hell: as the former venemous creatures, when took up in their hands, ſhould not hurt their bodies; ſo the other, whatever they might be permitted to do with reſpect to their lives, and outward eſtate, ſhould never hurt their ſouls, and the eternal welfare of them; nor even hinder the work of God proſpering in their hands.

Ver. 20. *Notwithſtanding in this rejoice not*, &c.] That their power was enlarged, or that they had, the ſame as before: *that the ſpirits*, evil ſpirits, devils, *are ſubject unto you*; and come out of men at your command; rejoice not ſo much in this, or chiefly and principally; not but that it was matter of joy, both with reſpect to the gift beſtowed upon them, and the benefits men received by it, and the glory that was brought to Chriſt thro' it: *but rather rejoice, becauſe your names are written in heaven*; in the book of life, called the lamb's book of life, written from the foundation of the world; in divine predeſtination to everlaſting glory and happineſs: which ſhows that God's election to eternal life is of particular perſons, of perſons by name; that it is ſure, and certain, and immutable, being in oppoſition to what is written in earth, *Jer.* xvii. 13. that the knowledge of this may be attained to, thro' the grace of God, the revelation of Chriſt, and the witnneſſigs of his Spirit; and that this is matter of the greateſt joy, ſince it is the foundation and ſecurity of all the bleſſings of grace and glory.

Ver. 21. *In that hour Jeſus rejoiced in ſpirit*, &c] In his human ſoul: his heart was filled with joy, not ſo much at the ſucceſs of the ſeventy diſciples, and the ſubjection of the devils to them, as in the view he had of the ſpread of the Goſpel, and of the revelation and application of the truths of it to multitudes of mean and deſpicable perſons, while it was rejected by the wiſe and learned; and particularly at the ſovereign and diſtinguiſhing grace of God towards the elect, whoſe names are written in heaven; upon the mention of which his ſoul was ſo affected, that he broke out in an exulting ſtrain, into thankſgivings to God, in the following manner, *and ſaid, I thank thee, O father*, &c. ſee the notes on *Matt.* xi. 25, 26. in three ancient copies of *Beza*'s, and in the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, and *Ethiopic* verſions 'tis read, *in the holy ſpirit*; and the *Perſic* verſion reads, *he ſpake*, or *confabulated with the holy ſpirit:* but the former reading and ſenſe are beſt.

Ver. 22. *All things are delivered to me of my father*, &c.] In ſome ancient copies, and in the *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, before theſe words, are read, *and turning to his diſciples he ſaid, all things*, &c. *and no man knoweth who the Son is*; what is his name, his nature, his perfections and glory; and how he is the Son of God, his only-begotten Son: *but the Father*; who begat him, and whoſe own, and proper Son he is: *and who the Father is*; what are his perfections, purpoſes, grace, greatneſs, mind, and will: *but the Son*; who is of him, and lay in his boſom: *and he to whom the Son will reveal him*; in himſelf, by his Spirit; ſee the note on *Matt.* xi. 27.

Ver. 23. *And he turned him unto* his *diſciples,* &c.] Both to the twelve apoſtles, and ſeventy diſciples; *and ſaid privately*; or *to them apart*: the phraſe *privately* is wanting in the *Vulgate Latin* verſion: *bleſſed are the eyes that ſee the things that ye ſee*; the perſon of the Meſſiah, his kingdom ſetting up in the world, miracles wrought by him, and ſatan falling before him; ſee the note on *Matt.* xiii. 16.

Ver. 24. *For I tell you that many prophets and kings,* &c.] As *Abraham, Iſaac, Jacob,* who were prophets, as well as patriarchs, and *David, Solomon,* and others: *have deſired to ſee thoſe things which ye ſee, and have not ſeen them, and to hear thoſe things which ye hear, and have not heard them*; meaning himſelf, doctrines, and miracles; ſee the note on *Matt.* xiii. 17.

Ver. 25. *And behold a certain lawyer ſtood up,* &c.] From his ſeat, having been hearing Chriſt preach, very likely, in ſome ſynagogue: when and where this was, is not certain. The *Syriac, Perſic,* and *Ethiopic* verſions call this man a *Scribe*; and a lawyer and a *Scribe* were the ſame, as appears from *Matt.* xxii. 35. compared with *Mark* xii. 28. *and tempted him*; or tried him whether he underſtood the law, or whether he would ſay any thing contrary to it, and ſee if he could gain any advantage againſt him, and expoſe him, and get credit and applauſe to himſelf: *ſaying, maſter, what ſhall I do to inherit eternal life?* the ſame queſtion as was put by the young ruler in *Mark* x. 17. ſee the note on *Matt.* xix. 16. for they were both of the ſame complexion, and upon the ſame foundation, ſeeking eternal life by their own works: *he ſaid unto him*; that is, *Jeſus,* as all the *Oriental* verſions expreſs it.

Ver. 26. *What is written in the law?* &c.] Chriſt, with great propriety, ſends him to the law, to ſee and obſerve what was written there, what are the terms and conditions of life, as fixed there; partly, becauſe this man, by his office and character, was an interpreter of the law; and partly, becauſe his queſtion was, what ſhall I *do? how readeſt thou?* in the law, every day; referring to the *Keriat Shema,* the reading of the *Shema,* i. e. thoſe words in *Deut.* vi. 4, *&c. Hear, O Iſrael,* &c. morning and evening [i], as appears by his anſwer.

Ver. 27. *And he anſwering ſaid, thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God,* &c.] This was part of their phylacteries, which they recited every day; ſee the notes on *Matt.* xxii. 37, 39. and on *Mark* xii. 28, 29.

Ver. 28. *And he ſaid unto him, thou haſt anſwered right,* &c.] It is ſo written, and read; and this, as if he ſhould ſay, is the ſum and ſubſtance of the law, and what that requires men ſhould do: wherefore, *do this, and thou ſhalt live*; for the bare reading of it was not ſufficient; tho' theſe men placed great confidence in reading this paſſage, or in reciting their phylacteries, of which this was a part, morning and night. Our Lord intimates by this, that, according to the tenor of the law, eternal life was not to be had without a complete and perfect performance of the duties of love to God, and to the neighbour, contained in theſe words; and this he ſuggeſts, in order to convict him of the impoſſibility of obtaining life by the works of the law, ſince ſuch a performance cannot be made by man.

Ver. 29. *But he willing to juſtify himſelf,* &c.] Upon the foot of his own righteouſneſs, and to make himſelf appear to be righteous to others; for this the *Jews* thought themſelves able to do, both to juſtify themſelves before God by their own works, and make it out to men, that they were truly righteous perſons; and it is a maxim with them, that "every one, המצדיק את עצמו, *that juſtifies him-*" "*ſelf,* below (on earth,) they juſtify him above (or" "in heaven) [k]." No wonder then that this man was deſirous of juſtifying himſelf; and in order to which he *ſaid, and who is my neighbour?* he takes no notice of God, and love to him, as coming into the account of his juſtification, only of his neighbour; thinking when this queſtion was anſwered, he ſhould be very able to make it out, that he was not wanting neither in doing juſtice between himſelf and his neighbour, nor in ſhewing kindneſs and beneficence to him; for by his neighbour he meant only an *Iſraelite*; one of the ſame nation and religion with him. So the *Jews* commonly interpret the word *neighbour,* either of one that is related to them in nature, קרובו, that is, near a-kin to them in blood [l]; or that profeſſes the ſame religion as they do, and whom they call a neighbour in the law; and ſo they explain the paſſage now cited, *and thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thyſelf,* שהוא רעך בתורה; *that is, who is thy neighbour in the law* [m]: for they will not allow a *Gentile,* no, not even a proſelyte of the gate to be a neighbour: for thus they ſay [n], "an *Iſraelite* that ſlays a proſelyte of the gate, or the" "ſtranger that dwells with him, is not ſlain for" "him by the *Sanhedrim*; for it is ſaid, *Exod.* xxi." "14. *but if a man comes preſumptuouſly upon his*" "*neighbour to ſlay him,* &c. and there is no need" "to ſay he is not ſlain for a *Gentile.*" And again [o], "when a man ſees one of them (the *Gentiles*) fall" "into the ſea, he need not take him up; as it is ſaid," "*Lev.* xix. 16. *neither ſhalt thou ſtand againſt the*" "*blood of thy neighbour,* ואין זה רעך, *but this is*" "*not thy neighbour.*" This notion Chriſt oppoſes and diſproves in the following parable, which is an anſwer to the lawyer's queſtion.

Ver. 30. *And Jeſus anſwering, ſaid,* &c.] The following things; which may either be conſidered as a narrative of matter of fact, or as a ſuppoſed caſe, and delivered by way of parable; and in either way, though the general deſign of it is in anſwer to the lawyer's queſtion, to ſhew who may be called a neighbour; and that a man who is a ſtranger, and accounted an enemy, yet doing acts of mercy, kindneſs, and beneficence, to one in diſtreſs, ought to be accounted a neighbour; and has a much better title to ſuch a character, than one of the ſame nation and religion, who takes no notice of a diſtreſſed object; yet it may be conſidered, as repreſenting the ſad eſtate and condition of mankind by the fall, and their recovery by Chriſt; whereby he ſhews himſelf to be their beſt neighbour, and trueſt friend: *a certain man went down from Jeruſalem to Jericho.* The diſtance between theſe two places, the *Jews* ſay [p], was ten *parſa's,* that is, forty miles for every *parſa* was four miles, and ten *parſa's* ar expreſsly ſaid [q] to be forty miles; which muſt b underſtood of the leſſer miles, otherwiſe a parſa it ſelf, was but a mile: the *Jews* had two ſorts o miles, the greater was 2000 cubits, the leſſe 1000 cubits: the man is ſaid to go down from th one to the other, becauſe *Jeruſalem* ſtood on hig ground, and *Jericho* in a valley. This *certain ma* may repreſent mankind falling in *Adam,* from ſtate of happineſs, into miſery: human nature w originally in one man, but one man was created

fit

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[i] Vid. Miſn. Beracot, c. 1. §. 1, 2.

[k] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 8. 1.

[l] Kimchi in Pſ. xv. 3.

[m] Moſes K ſenſis Mitzvot Tora, pr. affirm. 9.

[n] Maimon. Hilch. Rotzeach, c. 2. §. 11.

[o] Ib. c. 4. §. 11.

[p] T. B Yoma, fol. 20. 2. & 39. 20. Bartenora in Miſn. Tamid, c. 3. §. 8.

[q] T. Bab. Peſachim, fol. 93. 2. & Gloſſ. in ib.

firſt, and he had all human nature in him, and was the repreſentative of mankind; he was made upright, but ſinned, and fell from his uprightneſs, and all mankind in him: he may be ſaid to go down from *Jeruſalem*, which ſignifies peace, and the viſion of it; and was a city compact together, beautiful and well ſituated; where were the worſhip of God, and his *Shekinah*, or divine preſence; to *Jericho*, a city accurſed by *Joſhua*, and a very wicked place in the days of Chriſt: ſince man by ſinning againſt God, departed from his happy and peaceful ſtate, from a ſtate of peace and tranquillity with God, with the holy angels, and even with the beaſts of the field; and alſo from peace and ſerenity in his own conſcience, as well as from communion with God; and from his pure worſhip and ſervice, to a ſenſual, earthly, worldly, wicked, and accurſed ſtate: *and fell among thieves:* in the way to *Jericho*, was a place called *Adomim*, which ſignifies *bloods*, becauſe much blood was ſhed there, by the frequent incurſions of thieves and robbers, as *Jerom* obſerves[r]; and was about four hours journey from *Jericho*[s]: and by the man's falling among thieves, may be expreſſed mankind coming into the hands of ſin and ſatan, which are as robbers, that ſteal, kill, and deſtroy; ſince theſe have robbed man of his honour, defaced the image of God in him, and deprived him of the glory of God, and were murderers of him from the beginning: *which ſtripped him of his raiment*; as thieves and robbers are uſed to do; ſignifying the loſs of original righteouſneſs by ſin, which was a covering to man, in which he could appear before God; and was very ornamental to him, being pure and perfect in its kind, though only a creatures righteouſneſs, and a created one; and which was natural and loſeable, as the event has ſhewn: hence man is become a naked creature, has nothing to cover himſelf with, but ſtands expoſed to the law, juſtice, and wrath of God; is deſtitute of a righteouſneſs, nor can he work out one that will ſtand him in any ſtead, or juſtify him before God: *and wounded him*; which is the common uſage of ſuch men; and may ſet forth the morbid and diſeaſed condition that ſin has brought man into; being from the crown of the head, to the ſole of the foot, full of wounds, bruiſes, and putrifying ſores; and ſuch as are in themſelves mortal, and incurable by any, but the great phyſician of ſouls, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; and yet men are naturally inſenſible of them, and unconcerned about them: *and departed, leaving him half dead*; or *near death*, as the *Arabic* verſion renders it; which may be applied to death, natural, ſpiritual, and eternal: to death natural, which comes by ſin, ſeeing it is but one part, or half of the man that dies this death, namely, his body; and to a ſpiritual death, or the death of the ſoul, which is dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, whilſt the body is alive; and to eternal death, to which men are expoſed for ſin, and are under the ſentence of it, though not executed; and in each of theſe ſenſes may be ſaid to be *half dead:* and which is no ways to the advantage of the doctrine of man's free-will, and the powers and abilities of it; as if man was not in a ſpiritual ſenſe ſo dead, that he can do nothing in a ſpiritual manner; but the phraſe is uſed, to ſhow the power of ſin, and the malice of ſatan, and yet that man is ſtill recoverable by the grace of God.

Ver. 31. *And by chance there came down a certain prieſt that way*, &c.] Who had been at *Jeruſalem*, to take his turn in the courſes, and was now returning to *Jericho*, where the ſtationary men were, to which he belonged: for it is ſaid[t], that "the former prophets appointed twenty and four courſes; and for every courſe there was a ſtation at *Jeruſalem*, of prieſts, and of *Levites*, and of *Iſraelites*; and when the time of the courſe came to go up, the prieſts and *Levites* went up to *Jeruſalem*. The *Rabbans* teach, that there were twenty-four courſes in the land of *Iſrael*, and there were twelve at *Jericho*." And which is elſewhere[u] related thus; "the former prophets appointed four and twenty courſes, and for every courſe there was a ſtation at *Jeruſalem*, of prieſts, of *Levites*, and of *Iſraelites*; the tradition is, that four and twenty thouſand were the ſtation from *Jeruſalem*, and half a ſtation from *Jericho*; though *Jericho* was able to furniſh out a perfect ſtation itſelf; but for the ſake of dividing the glory to *Jeruſalem*, it produced but half a ſtation." So that it is no wonder to hear of prieſts and *Levites*, paſſing to and fro in this road. Nor was this a chance matter with reſpect to God, by whoſe providence all things are ordered, directed, and governed; nor any wonderful thing with reſpect to men, which fell out in an uncommon way, beyond expectation; the phraſe only ſignifies, that ſo it came to paſs: *and when he ſaw him, he paſſed by on the other ſide*; when he ſaw him naked, and in ſuch a bloody condition, he might take him for one really dead, and therefore croſſed the way on purpoſe, leſt he ſhould any ways touch him, and be defiled by him, and ſo break the law, and incur the penalty of it, mentioned in *Numb.* xix. 16. or to ſhun ſo horrible a ſight; or rather, through hardneſs of heart, and want of compaſſion.

Ver. 32. *And likewiſe a Levite, when he was at the place*, &c.] Where the poor man lay in this deplorable condition: *came and looked on him*; and that was all; but neither ſpoke a comfortable word, nor adminiſtered any relief to him, or in the leaſt aſſiſted him: *and paſſed by on the other ſide*; as the prieſt had done before him: by the *prieſt* may be meant, the moral law, and by the *Levite* the ceremonial law; and ſo by both, the whole law of *Moſes*; and intimates, that no mercy is to be expected from thence: the law makes no abatement in its demands, nor any allowance for the fall and weakneſs of man; nor is it become milder under the Goſpel-diſpenſation; nor will it accept of an imperfect, though ſincere obedience, in the room of a perfect one; and is deaf to all repentings, cries, and tears: no relief is to be had from thence, for a naked, wounded, and dead man; no robe of righteouſneſs to cover a naked ſoul; for by the law is the knowledge of ſin, but not a juſtifying righteouſneſs by the deeds of it: for the deeds of the law, performed by ſinful men, are impure and imperfect; and were they pure and perfect, they would be unprofitable, and could not juſtify in the ſight of God from former ſins; for could they, they would eſtabliſh boaſting, and diſanull the death of Chriſt, and fruſtrate the grace of God; and therefore righteouſneſs cannot be by the law, that leaves a man as naked as it finds him: nor is there any healing by it to a wounded conſcience; there's no pity from it, no juſtification by it, no pardon through it, no expiation or atonement of ſin, by obedience to it; no word of comfort is ſpoken by it; ſo far from it, that when it comes with power, it opens the wounds of ſin, fills the conſcience with wrath and terror, deſtroys all the man's former hopes of happineſs, and leaves him where it found him; without healing him itſelf, or pointing out a phyſician to him; much leſs can it give life to a dead ſinner: ſpiritual life is not communicated by it, nor can eternal life, or any true hope of it, be attained through it; it is ſo far from it, that it is the killing letter, and the miniſtration of condemnation and death.

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[r] Ad Euſtochium, Tom. I. fol. 59. I. K.

[s] Maſius in Joſh. xv. 7.

[t] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 27. 1.

[u] T. Hieroſ. Peſachim, fol. 30. 3. & Taanith fol. 67. 4.

Ver. 33. *But a certain Samaritan*, &c.] By whom Chriſt may be meant; not that he was really ſo, for he was a *Jew*, a ſon of *Abraham*, and of *David*, according to the fleſh, but he was ſo called by the *Jews*, *John* viii. 48. and was treated as ſuch by them: and ſince it is the deſign of the parable in general to ſhew, that he that does acts of kindneſs and mercy to perſons in diſtreſs, is a neighbour in the trueſt ſenſe, tho' he is not an *Iſraelite*, but even a *Samaritan*, who was, above all men, hated by the *Jews*; why may it not be thought to be the view of Chriſt in particular, to prove himſelf to be the beſt neighbour and friend of men, though he was traduced by the *Jews* as a *Samaritan*? *as he journeyed*; which may deſign the aſſumption of human nature, which is ſometimes expreſſed, by his coming from his Father, by his deſcending from heaven, and coming into this world; which phraſes intend his incarnation, and carry in them the idea of journeying: for as his aſcent to heaven is expreſſed by taking a journey, *Matt.* xxv. 15. ſo may his deſcent from heaven; and while he was here on earth, he was as a ſtranger and pilgrim, as a ſojourner and traveller: *came where he was*; put himſelf in the law-place, and ſtead of his people, who fell with the reſt of mankind in *Adam*; he became their ſurety from eternity, and cloathed himſelf with their nature in time; he took upon him their ſins, as their repreſentative, and fulfilled the righteouſneſs of the law on their account, and bore the penalty of it in their room: *and when he ſaw him*; Chriſt ſaw the elect before the fall, as they were choſen in him, and given unto him, in all the glory they were to be brought into; when he loved them, and his delight was with them: and when he came to redeem them, he ſaw them as follows; as loſt, as weak and ſtrengthleſs, as wicked, and as the worſt of ſinners, as ungodly, and enemies, as children of wrath by nature, as others; and he ſhed his blood for them, and waſhed them from their ſins, that he might preſent them to himſelf a glorious church, without ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing; juſt ſuch an one he had ſeen them to be, in the glaſs of his Father's purpoſes, in his council and covenant; and he ſees them in their blood, and in the impurity of their nature, when he comes to call them by his grace: *and he had compaſſion on him*. The compaſſion of Chriſt on his elect, is to be ſeen in his eternal covenant engagements; for his tender mercies have been ever of old; and in his aſſumption of their nature, which was through his own, as well as the tender mercy of his Father; and in the redemption of them, which was in love and pity; and alſo in their regeneration and converſion, for the great things there, and then done for them by him, are owing to his compaſſion.

Ver. 34. *And went to him, and bound up his wounds*, &c.] Which ſin had made; it being part of the work of Chriſt, to bind up the broken-hearted, to heal wounded ſinners, and reſtore comforts to mourners; and which he does, by *pouring in oil and wine*: by which, in general, may be deſigned, the blood of Chriſt, applied to the conſcience of a wounded ſinner; which cleanſes from all ſin, heals all the wounds and diſeaſes of ſin, chears and revives fainting ſpirits, gives eaſe, peace, and pleaſure, and is therefore exceeding valuable and precious: and in particular by *oil* may be meant, the grace of the Spirit of God; compared unto it, for its ſweet ſmell, its chearing and refreſhing virtue and efficacy, and its cooling, ſoftening, ſuppling, and healing nature: and by *wine*, the doctrines of the Goſpel; ſuch as free juſtification by Chriſt's righteouſneſs, and pardon through his blood; which when applied to diſtreſſed minds, cauſe joy and gladneſs, and them to forget their ſorrow, and remember their miſery no more: and the *pouring in* of theſe, may denote the plentiful effuſion of Chriſt's blood, and the riches of his grace in the application of it; and the freeneſs and generouſneſs of this action, which is his own; for man cannot do it. It was uſual with the *Jews*, to mix oil and wine together, for the healing of wounds: hence thoſe rules and traditions [w]; "they anoint a linen "cloth for a ſick man on the ſabbath; when? "when they mingle *the oil and the wine* on the ſabbath-eve, but if they do not mingle it on the "ſabbath-eve, it is forbidden; it is a tradition, ſays "*R. Simeon ben Eleazar*, *R. Meir* pronounced it "lawful, לטרוף יין ושמן, *to mingle wine and oil*, and "to anoint the ſick on the ſabbath." So oil and wine were mingled together, and uſed to heal the ſore occaſioned by circumciſion [x]: *and ſet him on his own beaſt*; by which may be meant, either the red horſe of Chriſt's humanity, *Zech.* i. 8. to which he has united all his people; and in which he has bore their perſons, and has repreſented them, and ſtill bears them on his heart: or the white horſe of the Goſpel, *Rev.* vi. 2. compared to a *horſe*, for its ſtrength, ſwiftneſs, and uſefulneſs in battle; and to a *white* one, for the purity of its doctrines, the joy and peace it brings, and the victory it obtains: and this is Chriſt's own, and on which he himſelf rides, and ſhews his glory, and goes forth conquering and to conquer; and on which he ſets his people, and they are carried out of the reach of men and devils to deſtroy them, and are cauſed to ride on the high places of the earth: *and brought him to an inn*; a church of Chriſt, where the Goſpel guides, directs, and carries ſouls: ſaints are not at home in their proper city and country, they are travellers here, and need refreſhment by the way; and a church of Chriſt is as an inn, for the entertainment of ſuch: 'tis large, and has room enough for as many as come to it; and is well ſtored with proviſions of all ſorts, ſignified by bread, and milk, and wine, a feaſt of fat things, a furniſhed table, *Zion*'s proviſions, the goodneſs and fatneſs of God's houſe; and has rivers of pleaſure, and very good lodgings, ſure dwellings, and quiet habitations; all which is agreeable to weary travellers: and hither Chriſt brings his people, whom he ſaves and calls; it is his will that they ſhould be in a church-ſtate, and it is his own act to bring them there, and 'tis their great privilege to be thither brought: *and took care of him*; clothed him with his righteouſneſs, fed him with the choiceſt of proviſions, gave him reviving cordials of love, refreſhing promiſes, exceeding great and precious ones; and larger ſupplies of grace, with protection and preſervation from all evils.

Ver. 35. *And on the morrow when he departed*, &c.] Having taken care of him all night, and put him into a comfortable way, leaves him, though in good hands; as Chriſt does his people, to learn to live by faith upon him: *and he took out two pence*; two

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[w] T. Hieroſ. Sabbat, fol. 14. 3. & Beracot, fol. 3. 1.

[x] Miſn. Sabbat, c. 19. §. 2.

*Roman Denarii*, or pence; which amount to about fifteen pence of our money, and were equal to the half ſhekel, paid for the redemption of an *Iſraelite*: by which may be meant, not the law and Goſpel; for though theſe both bear the image and ſuperſcription of God, and are his current coin, and are both delivered by Chriſt, and to be regarded and diſpenſed by the miniſters of the word; yet they are not of equal value and uſe, as theſe two pence ſeem to be: wherefore, rather the two Teſtaments, Old and New, may be deſigned, ſince they are both inſpired by God, and dictated by the ſame Spirit, and bear the ſame impreſs; and are alike, and exactly agree, as two pence do; and are given to the miniſters of the Goſpel to handle, and make uſe of for the good of ſouls: unleſs the two ordinances of baptiſm, and the Lord's ſupper, ſhould rather be thought to be intended: theſe bear the ſame ſtamp and authority, and are both jointly neceſſary to communion, and church order; and are given by Chriſt to his miniſters, to be adminiſtered by them, for the good of his church; and are ſimilar, as two breaſts are, they being both breaſts of conſolation, and agree in ſetting forth the ſufferings and death of Chriſt: or rather, the gifts and graces of the Spirit of God, to qualify men for the work of the miniſtry; which both come from the ſelf-ſame Spirit of God, and are jointly neceſſary to fit a man for ſuch ſervice; and are given for the benefit and advantage of the Lord's people, and in an eminent manner by Chriſt, on his departure from hence, when he aſcended on high, and received gifts for men, and gave them to them: *and gave them to the hoſt*; or the keeper and maſter of the inn; by whom are meant, the miniſters of the Goſpel; who are governours in the church, the maſters of that ſpiritual inn; who have the proviſions of God's houſe under their care, and whoſe buſineſs it is to invite travellers in, and to dreſs their food for them, and ſet it before them, and bid them welcome: *and ſaid unto him, take care of him*; which is the work of Chriſt's miniſters to do, by feeding ſouls with the words of faith and ſound doctrine; by miniſtring the Goſpel to them in a faithful manner; and by a conſtant adminiſtration of the ordinances of it; and by keeping a diligent watch over them, both with reſpect to principles and practice; and by ſpeaking a word in ſeaſon to them: *and whatſoever thou ſpendeſt more*: faithful miniſters ſpend much, and are at great expence in taking care of the ſouls of men; in fervent and frequent prayer to God; in diligent ſearching the ſcriptures; in the laborious miniſtry of the word and ordinances; and in the conſtant exerciſe and improvement of their ſpiritual gifts; and in the loſs of reputation and credit, and of health, and ſometimes of life itſelf: *when I come again, I will repay thee*: Chriſt will certainly come again a ſecond time, to judge both quick and dead; and then he'll recompenſe his miniſters, for all their toil and labour, care and expence; he'll then bid them, as good and faithful ſervants, enter into the joy of their Lord; and when they ſhall every one receive the reward of his own work, in a way of grace, and ſhall ſhine as the ſtars in the firmament, for ever and ever.

Ver. 36. *Which now of theſe three*, &c.] The prieſt, the *Levite*, and the *Samaritan*, *thinkeſt thou, was neighbour to him that fell among the thieves?* the prieſt and *Levite* that paſſed by, and took no notice of him, and gave him no relief, neither by words nor actions; or the *Samaritan*, that did all the above kind and generous things to him?

Ver. 37. *And he ſaid, he that ſhewed mercy to him*, &c.] Meaning the *Samaritan*; which he was obliged to declare, though of another country and religion, and accounted as an enemy; yet the caſe was ſo plain, as put by Chriſt, that he could not with any honour or conſcience, ſay otherwiſe: *then ſaid Jeſus unto him, go and do thou likewiſe*; ſuch like acts of beneficence and kindneſs, though to a perſon of a different nation and religion, and though even an enemy; and by ſo doing, thou wilt not only appear to be a good neighbour thyſelf, but to love thy neighbour as thyſelf.

Ver. 38. *Now it came to paſs as they went*, &c.] As Chriſt and his diſciples went from *Jeruſalem*, having been at the feaſt of tabernacles, *John* vii. 2, 10. or at the feaſt of dedication, *John* x. 22. to ſome other parts of *Judea*: *that he entered into a certain village*; called *Bethany*, which was about fifteen furlongs, or two miles from *Jeruſalem*, *John* xi. 1, 18. *and a certain woman named Martha.* This is a common name with the *Jews*; hence we read of *Samuel bar Martha* [y], and of *Abba bar Martha* [z], and of *Iſaac bar Martha* [a]; and of *Martha*, the daughter of *Baithus* [b], who is ſaid to be a rich widow; and this *Martha* here, is thought by *Grotius* to be a widow alſo, with whom her brother *Lazarus*, and ſiſter *Mary* lived: though ſometimes, this name was given to men; ſo we read of [c] *Martha*, the uncle of *Rab*, who had five brethren; and the ſame writer obſerves [d], that it is not known whether *Martha* is a man or a woman, but this is determined here: *received him into her houſe*; in a very kind and courteous manner ſhe being miſtreſs of it; and having known Chriſt before, or at leaſt had heard much of him, and believed in him, as the true Meſſiah.

Ver. 39. *And ſhe had a ſiſter called Mary*, &c.] Which alſo was a common name with the *Jews*, and is the ſame with *Miriam*; ſo we read of *Mary*, the daughter of *Nicodemon*, the ſame perhaps with *Nicodemus*; and the ſame perſon that is before called *Martha*, the daughter of *Baithus*, is ſometimes called *Mary*, the daughter of *Baithus* [e], though theſe two names are certainly diſtinct: *which alſo ſat at Jeſus feet*; was a diſciple of his, as well as *Martha*; for it was uſual for diſciples, or the ſcholars of the wiſe men, to ſit at the feet of their maſters, to which the alluſion is in *Deut.* xxxiii. 3. ſee the note on *Acts* xxii. 3. The *Vulgate Latin*, *Arabic*, and *Coptic* verſions, read *at the Lord's feet*; ſo *Beza*'s ancient copy, and one of *Stephens*'s; and the *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read, *at our Lord's feet.* The phraſe is expreſſive of her great affection for Chriſt, her humble deportment, and cloſe attention: *and heard his word*; or diſcourſe; for as ſoon as he entered into the houſe, he began to preach to thoſe that were in it, and that came along with him, improving every opportunity for the good of ſouls; and *Mary* heard him with great eagerneſs and diligence, affection, pleaſure, and profit.

Ver. 40. *But Martha was cumbred about much ſerving*, &c.] Or *was drawn off*, from hearing the word; from attending on Chriſt; being taken up in providing for him, and thoſe that came with him;

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[y] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 13. 2. & 25. 2. & Peſachim, fol. 106. 2. Yoma, fol. 19. 2. Juchaſin, fol. 76. 2.

[z] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 121. 2. Juchaſin, fol. 72. 2.

[a] T. Bab. Peſachim, fol. 33. 2. Juchaſin, fol. 91. 1.

[b] Miſn. Yebamot, c. 6. §. 4. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 18. 1. Succa, fol. 52. 2. Cetubot, fol. 104. 1. Gittin, fol. 56. 1. Juchaſin, fol. 57. 1.

[c] Juchaſin, fol. 99. 1.

[d] Ib. fol. 105. 1.

[e] Echa Rabbati, fol. 49. 2.

in dreſſing the food, or in ordering her ſervants, how ſhe would have every thing done, and in over-looking them, that every thing was done in proper order; ſo that ſhe had a great deal of buſineſs upon her head and hands, which diſtracted her thoughts, or took them off of divine things, and put her in great hurry and concern. The *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *Martha laboured in preparing many things for him*; making a large and ſumptuous entertainment: and the *Perſic* verſion, which is rather a comment than a tranſlation, renders it, *Martha was buſied in preparing food, and making a feaſt*; ſparing no coſt nor pains, thinking nothing too good, nor too grand, for ſuch a gueſt ſhe had in her houſe: *and ſhe came to him and ſaid, Lord, doſt thou not care that my ſiſter hath left me to ſerve alone?* ſhe came to him; that is, to *Jeſus*, as the *Perſic* verſion expreſſes it: ſhe came out of the room where ſhe was getting ready the entertainment, into the room where Chriſt was preaching; and, as the *Vulgate Latin*, *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read, *ſhe ſtood and ſaid*: ſhe did not ſit down at his feet, as *Mary* did, to hear his word, but ſtood as about to go away again, after ſhe had ſaid what ſhe came about: ſhe did not think fit to ſpeak to *Mary* herſelf, tho' perhaps ſhe might do that firſt; who, ſhewing an unwillingneſs to go with her, ſhe therefore applies to Chriſt, as believing that he would, with her, look upon it as a very reaſonable thing, that ſhe ſhould take her part with her; and that a word from him would go a great way with her ſiſter. And ſhe ſeems to ſpeak, not only by way of complaint of *Mary*, who had left her to prepare and ſerve up this entertainment alone; but even of Chriſt himſelf, in ſome ſort, as if he had not ſhewed that care and concern in this matter, which ſhe thought was neceſſary. However, ſhe was willing to have his ſenſe of her ſiſter's conduct, and hoped, and even doubted not, but that he would be of the ſame mind with herſelf: *bid her therefore that ſhe help me*; that ſhe join, aſſiſt, and put an helping hand in this ſervice; ſpeak but a word to her, give her orders, and ſhe'll obſerve and obey.

Ver. 41. *And Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto her*, &c.] Calling her by her name, and repeating it, *Martha, Martha*, which expreſſes great intimacy and friendſhip, and much earneſtneſs, and, as it were, pitying her preſent ſituation and circumſtances: *thou art careful and troubled about many things*; intimating, that ſhe was over anxious, and too ſolicitous, and more thoughtful and careful than ſhe need be: he did not require ſuch preparations for him, and ſo much attendance; ſhe gave herſelf an unneceſſary trouble in providing ſo many things for his entertainment, when leſs would have ſufficed; ſo that inſtead of joining with her in her requeſt, he reproves her for her over-anxious care and ſolicitude, to have a nice and plentiful feaſt. The *Perſic* verſion gives a ſenſe quite contrary to the deſign of the text, rendering the words thus, *thou art adorned in all things, and haſt the preference above many women*.

Ver. 42. *But one thing is needful*, &c.] Meaning not that one diſh of meat was ſufficient, and there was no need of any more, in oppoſition to *Martha*'s carefulneſs in preparing many; for this is too low a ſenſe of the words; which yet ſome ancient writers have given into: but rather the hearing of the word, the Goſpel of Chriſt, which *Mary* was engaged in; and which, ordinarily ſpeaking, is neceſſary to the knowledge of Chriſt, and ſalvation by him, and to faith in him, *Rom.* x. 14, 17. not that this is the only needful thing; nor does Chriſt ſay there is but one thing needful, but that there is one thing needful; for there are other things that are alſo needful, and uſeful, as meditation and prayer, and attendance on, and ſubmiſſion to the ordinances of baptiſm, and the Lord's ſupper, and all the duties of religion: but Chriſt's meaning ſeems plainly to be, that *Mary* hearing the word from his mouth, and at his feet, was one neceſſary thing, in oppoſition to *Martha*'s many unneceſſary ones, about which ſhe was cumbred: and *Mary hath choſen that good part*; or *the good part*, or *portion*; Chriſt, the ſum and ſubſtance of the word ſhe heard, and eternal life and ſalvation by him. God himſelf is ſaid to be the portion of his people, and a good one he is, and a portion that laſts for ever; and ſo is Chriſt; ſee *Pſ.* lxxiii. 26. *Lam.* iii. 24. where the *Septuagint* uſe the ſame word as here. The heavenly inheritance alſo, eternal glory and happineſs is the ſaints portion: it is called in *Col.* i. 12. the part, or portion of the inheritance with the ſaints in light. The word anſwers to the *Hebrew* word, חלק; as in that ſaying of the *Miſnic* doctors [f], "all *Iſrael* have, חלק, *a part*, or *portion* in the world to come." All the *Oriental* verſions add, *for herſelf*; and this choice ſhe made, not from the natural power of her own free-will, but as directed, influenced, and aſſiſted by the Spirit and grace of God, and in conſequence of God's eternal choice of her unto ſalvation by Jeſus Chriſt: and the part ſhe choſe is, that *which ſhall not be taken away from her*; by men or devils: faith which comes by hearing of the word, and ſo every other grace of the Spirit is what can never be loſt; nor an intereſt in God, as a covenant God, or in Chriſt as a Saviour, nor a right and title to, nor meetneſs for eternal life, nor that itſelf, can be taken away, or the believer ever be deprived thereof.

## CHAP. XI.

Ver. 1. AND *it came to paſs that as he was praying*, &c.] The following directions concerning prayer, tho' they agree with thoſe in *Matt.* vi. 9, *&c.* yet were delivered at another time, and in another place, and upon another occaſion: Chriſt was then in *Galilee*, now in *Judea*; he gave the former directions unaſked for, theſe at the requeſt of one of his diſciples; the other were given as he was preaching, theſe immediately after he had been praying; as ſoon as he had done a work he was often employed in, as man and mediator, on account of himſelf, his diſciples, cauſe, and intereſt: and this was done *in a certain place*; perhaps in the mount of *Olives*, which was not far from *Bethany*, where we hear of him laſt, ſince this was a place where he uſed to abide in the night, and pray, *Luke* xxi. 37. The *Arabic* verſion reads, *in a deſart place*; and after he had been at *Bethany*, he did go to a country near the wilderneſs, to a city called *Ephraim*, *John* xi. 54. *when he ceaſed*; from praying; when he had concluded his prayer, and finiſhed all his petitions, and was off of his knees: *one of his diſciples*; perhaps one of the ſeventy diſciples who had not heard the ſummary of prayer, and the directions about it before given on the mount, *Matt.* vi. 9. The *Perſic* verſion

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[f] Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 11. §. 1.

ſion reads, *his diſciples*; as if they all united in the requeſt: *and ſaid unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his diſciples*; who, as *Tertullian* ſays[g], brought in a new order and method of praying, and gave his diſciples ſome inſtructions and directions concerning it, much better than what the *Jews* in common had: and this diſciple looking upon his Lord and maſter as much better qualified to give directions in this important affair than even *John* himſelf was, requeſts of him that he would; and what might put him upon it at this time ſeems to be, his obſerving that Chriſt had now been at prayer.

Ver. 2. *And he ſaid unto them*, &c.] That is, *Jeſus*, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions expreſs, who directed his ſpeech to all the diſciples; for tho' but one of them addreſſed him, it was in the name of the reſt: and beſides, the inſtructions Chriſt was about to give concerned them all, even thoſe that heard them before, and thoſe that had not: *when ye pray, ſay, our father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, as in heaven, ſo in earth*; the laſt petition is left out in the *Vulgate Latin*; ſee the notes on *Matt.* vi. 9, 10.

Ver. 3. *Give us day by day our daily bread.*] Or *for the day*; or *every day*, as the *Syriac* verſion renders it; ſee the note on *Matt.* vi. 11.

Ver. 4. *And forgive us our ſins*, &c.] *Beza*'s moſt ancient copy reads *debts*, as in *Matt.* vi. 12. ſee the note there; and which beſt agrees with the phraſe *indebted*, after mentioned: *for we alſo forgive every one that is indebted to us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil*; ſee the notes on *Matt.* vi. 12, 13. The doxology there uſed, and the word *Amen*, are here omitted. Some of the petitions in this prayer are not delivered in the very ſame words as they are in *Matthew*. The three firſt petitions are word for word the ſame; for tho' the third petition is different in our tranſlation, it is the ſame in the original. The fourth and fifth vary: in *Matthew* the fourth is, *give us this day our daily bread*; here in *Luke*, *give us day by day our daily bread*. The fifth in *Matthew* is, *and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors*; here, *and forgive us our ſins, for we alſo forgive every one that is indebted to us.* And theſe verbal variations, tho' the ſenſe is the ſame, together with the omiſſion of the doxology, and the word *Amen*, ſhew, that this prayer was not deſigned to be an exact form, and to be ſo uſed, but as a directory of prayer. I have, in my notes on *Matt.* vi. 9, *&c.* ſhewn the agreement there is between the petitions in this prayer, and ſome that were made uſe of among the *Jews*; and have ſuppoſed that our Lord took notice of ſuch petitions, which the good people among the *Jews* frequently uſed; and which he approved of, and ſingled out, and put them into the order and method in which they ſtand, with ſome alterations for the better, to be a directory to his diſciples and followers. Which to ſuppoſe, I apprehend, does not at all countenance the making and uſing ſtinted forms of prayer; ſince the petitions uſed by good men among the *Jews*, were not uſed as forms of prayer, but what they were led unto by the Spirit of God from common and conſtant experience to make uſe of; juſt as we may obſerve now, that good people in different parts, who uſe no form of prayer, nor have ever heard one another pray, and yet make uſe of the ſame petitions, and almoſt, if not altogether, in the ſelfſame words, their wants, neceſſities, caſes, and circumſtances being the ſame; and theſe frequently returning, oblige to a repeated uſe of them, in the ſame words, or near unto them. And tho' forms of prayer might not be in uſe among the *Jews* in the times of Chriſt, yet it is eaſy to account for it, how Chriſt came to be acquainted with the petitions in general uſe with good men; ſince not only he is God omniſcient, and knows all the prayers of his people, both in public and private; but, as man, muſt know what were uſed, by his attendance on public worſhip, and by the private communion he had with the ſaints and children of God. It muſt indeed be owned, that forms of prayer very early obtained among the *Jews*; and if not in Chriſt's time, yet in the times of his Apoſtles. There is frequent mention[h] of the eighteen prayers in the times of *Gamaliel*, the maſter of the Apoſtle *Paul*; and of a nineteenth compoſed by one of his diſciples[i], *Samuel* the little, who is thought, by ſome, to be *Saul* himſelf, whilſt he was a ſcholar of his; and which is directed againſt the hereticks, or chriſtians, as they were called by the *Jews*; and this eaſily accounts for, how the petitions of the ancient good men among the *Jews* came to be put with others into their forms of prayer, where we now find them. For that they ſhould take theſe petitions from this directory of Chriſt's, is not reaſonable to ſuppoſe, conſidering their implacable enmity againſt him. Moreover, ſuppoſing, but not granting, that theſe petitions which our Lord took, and put into this order, for the uſe and inſtruction of his diſciples, had been uſed by good men as forms of prayer, it will not juſtify the uſe of forms by any authority of Chriſt, or as being agreeable to his will; ſince it is certain, that however theſe petitions were uſed by good men before, our Lord never deſigned they ſhould be uſed as an exact, preciſe form of prayer by his diſciples; ſeeing there are ſeveral variations in them as here delivered, from what they are as they ſtand in *Matthew*; whereas, had they been intended as a ſtinted form, they would have been expreſſed in the ſelfſame words: and moreover, to approve of here and there a petition, which for their matter are excellently good, and to approve of them all together, as a form are two different things: to which may be added, that tho' there is an agreement between the petitions, as uſed by the *Jews*, and thoſe our Lord directs to; yet there are ſome variations and alterations much for the better, which deſtroy the form of them.

Ver. 5. *And he ſaid unto them, which of you ſhall have a friend*, &c.] A neighbour, or acquaintance: *and ſhall go unto him at midnight*; which may ſeem a very unſeaſonable time, and which nothing but real diſtreſs, not knowing what otherwiſe to do, would put a man upon: *and ſay unto him, friend, lend me three loaves*: it was uſual with the *Jews* to borrow bread of one another, and certain rules are laid down, when, and on what condition, this is to be done; as for inſtance, on a ſabbath-day[k], “a man “may aſk of his friend veſſels of wine, and veſ“ſels of oil, only he muſt not ſay, lend me; and ſo “a woman, מחבירתה ככרות, *bread of her friend.*” Again[l], “ſo ſaid *Hillell*, let not a woman lend, “ככר לחברתה, *bread to her friend*, till ſhe has

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[g] Contr. Marcion. l. 4. c. 26.

[h] Miſn. Beracot, c. 4. §. 3. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 28. 2. T. Hieroſ. Taaniot, fol. 65. 3. Maimon. Hilch. Tephilla, c. 7. §. 7.

[i] T. Bab. Beracot, ib. Maimon. Hilch. Tephilla, c. 2. §. 1, 2. Ganz. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 25. 2.

[k] Miſn. Sabbat, c. 23. §. 1.

[l] Miſn. Bava Metzia. c. 5. §. 9.

"fixed the price; leſt wheat ſhould be dearer, and "they ſhould be found coming into the practice "of uſury." For what was lent, could not be demanded again under thirty days[m].

Ver. 6. *For a friend of mine in his journey*, &c.] Or *out of the way*; having loſt his way, being benighted; and has rambled about for ſome time, and at length, *is come to me*; for lodging and entertainment: *and I have nothing to ſet before him*; to refreſh him with, after ſuch a fatigue, before he goes to bed, which was very requiſite and proper.

Ver. 7. *And he from within ſhall anſwer and ſay*, &c.] The friend within doors, ſhall reply to him that is without at his door, in the ſtreet: *trouble me not*; by knocking at the door, and importuning to riſe and lend loaves; whereby his reſt would be diſturbed, and trouble given him: *the door is now ſhut*; being very late at night, and which could not be opened without noiſe and inconvenience: *and my children are with me in bed*; ſleeping, as the *Perſic* verſion adds; there were none, children, or ſervants up, to let him in: *I cannot riſe*; without diſturbing them: *and give thee*; the loaves deſired.

Ver. 8. *I ſay unto you*, &c.] This is the accommodation of the parable; to theſe words are premiſed, in the *Vulgate Latin* verſion, the following, *if he continue knocking: though he will not riſe and give him, becauſe he is a friend*; though mere friendſhip will not influence and engage him to riſe from his bed, at ſuch an unſeaſonable time, and fulfil the requeſt of his friend; *yet becauſe of his importunity, he will riſe and give him as many as he needeth*: as he aſks for, or more, if neceſſary: the deſign of this parable, is the ſame with that of the widow and the unjuſt judge, in ch. xviii. which is to ſhew the force of importunity, where friendſhip, as here, and the fear of God, and regard of men, which were wanting there, have no influence; and ſo to encourage to conſtancy and perſeverance in prayer, with earneſtneſs; taking no denial at the hand of God, but ſtill continuing to make preſſing inſtances.

Ver. 9. *And I ſay unto you, aſk, and it ſhall be given you*, &c.] This is ſaid by Chriſt, to encourage to prayer, and importunity in it; that if any one aſks of God, in the name of Chriſt, and in faith, whether it be bread for the body, or food for the ſoul; or any bleſſing whatever, whether temporal or ſpiritual, it ſhall be given; not according to their deſerts, but according to the riches of the grace of God; who is rich unto all that call upon him, in ſincerity and truth: *ſeek, and ye ſhall find*; whether it be Chriſt, the pearl of great price, or God in Chriſt; or particularly, pardoning grace and mercy through Chriſt, or the knowledge of divine things; and both grace here, and glory hereafter, as men ſeek for hidden treaſure; ſuch ſhall not loſe their labour, but ſhall enjoy all theſe valuable things, and whatever they are by prayer, and in the uſe of other means, ſeeking after: *knock, and it ſhall be opened to you*; the door of mercy with God; the door of fellowſhip with Chriſt; the door of the Goſpel, and the myſteries of it, and of the Goſpel diſpenſation and church-ſtate, into which is admiſſion, to all that ſeek; and the door of heaven, into which there is entrance by the blood of Jeſus: the ſeveral phraſes denote prayer, the continuance of it, and importunity in it; ſee the note on *Matt.* vii. 7.

Ver. 10. *For every one that aſketh receiveth*, &c.] Some indeed aſk and receive not, becauſe they aſk amiſs, *Jam.* iv. 3. who either apply to a wrong perſon, or aſk in a wrong manner, or from wrong principles, or with wrong ends in view: but when a man is right in the object of prayer, and in the matter and manner of prayer, and in the end he propoſes to himſelf, let him be what he will, of whatſoever nation, or ever ſo mean a perſon, he has the petitions which he aſks, either immediately, or, at leaſt, he may be aſſured he ſhall have them in God's due time: *and he that ſeeketh findeth*; whoever not only prays, but makes uſe of means, as attendance on other ordinances, and is diligent in the uſe of them, ſooner or later finds his account herein, and what his ſoul ſeeks for: *and to him that knocketh it ſhall be opened*; not only who prays heartily, and ſeeks diligently, but who is importunate, and will have no denial; continues knocking; tho' there may be ſome time a ſeeming delay, yet the door will not always be ſhut to him; after much knocking it will be opened; ſee the note on *Matt.* vii. 8.

Ver. 11. *If a ſon ſhall aſk bread of any of you that is a father*, &c.] Our Lord illuſtrates and confirms what he had ſaid before by an inſtance common among men: the relation between a father and a ſon is natural, and it is very near; and it is uſual for a ſon, when hungry, and at the proper times of meals, to aſk bread of his father: and when he does, *will he give him a ſtone?* ſhould he do ſo, he would ſhow that his heart was as hard, or harder than the ſtone he gives: *or if he aſk a fiſh, will he, for a fiſh, give him a ſerpent?* And endeavour to deceive him by the likeneſs of the one to the other, eſpecially ſome ſort of fiſh, which would poiſon, or ſting him, but not refreſh and nouriſh him: ſuch inhuman, brutiſh parents are not ſurely to be found; ſee the notes on *Matt.* vii. 9, 10.

Ver. 12. *Or if he ſhall aſk an egg, will he offer him a ſcorpion?*] Of which there are three ſorts; ſome are terreſtrial, or land ſcorpions, ſcorpions of the earth, a kind of ſerpents, very venemous and miſchievous, to whom the wicked *Jews* are compared, *Ezek.* ii. 6. and the locuſts in *Rev.* ix. 3, 5: others are airy, or flying ſcorpions, a ſort of fowl; and others are ſea ſcorpions, of the fiſh kind: it is not eaſy to ſay which of them is here meant. There is an herb which is called, עקרבנין[n], *the ſcorpion*: its leaves are like unto a ſcorpion, as the *Jewiſh* commentators ſay[o]. This is obſerved with the ſame view as the former. By it may be meant here, either the fiſh that is ſo called, ſince a fiſh is mentioned before; or rather, the land ſcorpion, which is of the ſerpent kind; this brings forth little worms, in the form of eggs, as [q] *Pliny* ſays: and it is ſaid, that a ſcorpion put into an empty egg-ſhell, has been uſed to be given to perſons, whoſe death has been deſired; which it burſting from, at once ſtrikes and kills: but what father would do ſo to a child!

Ver. 13. *If ye then being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children*, &c.] See the note on *Matt.* vii. 11. *How much more ſhall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that aſk him?* inſtead of the *Holy Spirit* here, the *Vulgate Latin* verſion reads, *good Spirit*, and ſo two copies of *Beza*'s; and the *Ethiopic* verſion, *the good gift of the Holy Spirit*; and doubtleſs intends the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, in diſtinction from, and as preferable to the good things given by earthly parents, to their children.

Ver. 14. *And he was caſting out a devil*, &c.] At a certain time, either the ſame that is recorded in *Matt.* ix. 32. or in *Matt.* xii. 22. for both of them were attended with the ſame effect upon the people, and with the ſame calumny of the *Phariſees*, mentioned here; *and it was dumb*. The *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *deaf and dumb*; that is, the devil, which poſſeſſed the man, made him both deaf and dumb; if the ſame as in *Matt.* xii. 22. he was blind, as well as dumb: *and it came to paſs, when the devil was gone out*; of the man poſſeſſed by him, by the command of Chriſt: *the dumb ſpake*; as other men did, and as he had done before; the cauſe being removed, the effect ceaſed: *and the people wondered*; at the power of Chriſt, and concluded that he muſt be the Meſſiah, the ſon of *David*.

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[m] T. Bab. Maccot, fol. 3. 2. Jarchi in T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 148. 1. Bartenora in Miſn. Sabbat, c. 23. §. 1.

[n] Miſn. Erubin, c. 2. §. 6.

[o] Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

[p] Lib. 11. c. 25.

Ver. 15. *But ſome of them ſaid*, &c.] The *Phariſees*, *Matt.* ix. 34. and xii. 24. who could not bear that he ſhould be thought to be the Meſſiah, and therefore put an ill conſtruction on the miracle: *he caſteth out devils through Beelzebub*, *the chief of devils*; in ſeveral copies he is called *Beelzebul*, and in the *Arabic* and *Ethiopic* verſions; which laſt adds theſe words, *and he anſwered and ſaid, how can ſatan caſt out ſatan?* ſee the note on *Matt.* xii. 20.

Ver. 16. *And others tempting him*, &c.] Others of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, or *Sadducees*: *ſought of him a ſign from heaven*; ſee the notes on *Matt.* xii. 38. and xvi. 1.

Ver. 17. *But he knowing their thoughts*, &c.] Being God omniſcient, *ſaid unto them*; the following parables, as they are called in *Mark* iii. 23. or proverbial expreſſions, very pertinent to the purpoſe, and ſufficient to ſet aſide the baſe calumnies of the *Phariſees*: *every kingdom divided againſt itſelf, is brought to deſolation*; in proceſs of time, diviſion will end in deſtruction; and as it does in the kingdoms of the world, of which there have been fatal inſtances, ſo it would in the kingdom of ſatan, was there in it a diviſion, which the calumny of the *Phariſees* ſuppoſes: *and an houſe divided againſt an houſe, falleth*. The *Perſic* verſion renders it, *an houſe divided from the foundation, falls*; the ſenſe is, a family, in which one part is oppoſed to the other, iſſues in the ruin of both; ſee the notes on *Matt.* xii. 25. and on *Mark* iii. 24, 25.

Ver. 18. *And if ſatan alſo be divided againſt himſelf, how ſhall his kingdom ſtand?* &c.] This is the accommodation of the above parables, or proverbial ſentences; ſuggeſting, that ſatan muſt be againſt himſelf, if what the *Phariſees* ſaid was true; and conſequently, his kingdom and government, could not long ſubſiſt: *becauſe ye ſay that I caſt out devils through Beelzebub*; which is all one as to ſay, that ſatan is divided againſt himſelf, which is not reaſonable to ſuppoſe; ſee the notes on *Matt.* xii. 26. and on *Mark* iii. 26.

Ver. 19. *And if I by Beelzebub caſt out devils*, &c.] Which is what the *Phariſees* charged him with; in the *Greek* copies, and ſo in the *Arabic* and *Ethiopic* verſions it is read, *by Beelzebul*, and ſo in the preceding verſes; ſee the note on *Matt.* x. 25. *By whom do your ſons caſt them out?* by whoſe help? or in whoſe name? for the *Jews* pretended to caſt out devils, and to heal thoſe that were poſſeſſed with them; which they did ſometimes, by making uſe of the names of the patriarchs *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, and ſometimes of the name of *Solomon*: *Joſephus* [q] ſpeaks of many in his time, who had this power of healing; and he himſelf ſaw one *Eleazar*, in the preſence of *Veſpaſian*, his children, officers, and ſoldiers, cure many that were poſſeſſed of devils: and his method was, by putting a ring to the noſe of the poſſeſſed, under the ſeal of which, was a root directed to by *Solomon*, and thereby brought out the unclean ſpirit; and as ſoon as the man was healed, he adjured the devil never to return more; at which time he made mention of the name of *Solomon*, and rehearſed the inchantments written by him: the ſaid *Eleazar*, to give a ſpecimen of the efficacy of his art, ſet a cup full of water upon the ground, and commanded the devil when he went out of the man, to turn it over, as a ſign that he had left the man, and the devil immediately obeyed his order: now if theſe ſons of theirs caſt out devils, which they would not ſay were done by the help of the devil, or in his name, why ſhould they aſcribe the ejection of devils by Chriſt, to a diabolical aſſiſtance? *therefore ſhall they be your judges*; or *judges againſt you*, as the *Arabic* verſion; or *ſhall reprove you*, as the *Ethiopic*; convict and condemn you; ſee the note on *Matt.* xii. 27.

Ver. 20. *But if I with the finger of God*, &c.] The power of God, referring to *Exod.* viii. 19. and ſo the *Cabaliſtic Jews* [r] explain it, "the finger is one "of the five in the hand, and is that finger which "works by the power of *Elohim*;" it is the ſame with the Spirit of God; ſee the note on *Matt.* xii. 28. which is often called the hand of the Lord, *Ezek.* i. 3. and iii. 22. and xxxvii. 1. and xl. 1.

Ver. 21. *When a ſtrong man armed*, &c.] By *the ſtrong man*, is meant the devil; ſee the note on *Matt.* xii. 29. and who may be ſaid to be *armed*, both with his own temptations, which are as fiery darts, and which are thrown by him thick and faſt, ſuddenly and ſwiftly, privily, and with great art and cunning, and with great ſtrength, and are very injurious; and alſo with the ſins and luſts of men, which are armour of unrighteouſneſs, and which ſatan turns upon them, and makes uſe of againſt them, to their great detriment; and who *keepeth his palace*: which is the corrupt heart of an unregenerate man, where he dwells as a king, has his throne, keeps his court, and has his courtiers and attendants, the luſts of the fleſh, and the deſires of the will, and the carnal affections; and which, as filthy a palace as it is, is perfectly agreeable to his nature; and this is kept by a guard of devils, and worldly luſts, till its ſtrong holds are demoliſhed by the Goſpel, and Chriſt the king of glory enters in; till ſuch time, *his goods are in peace*: there is no concern in ſuch an heart about ſin, no uneaſineſs on that account, no ſenſe of danger, nor enquiry after ſalvation; no dread upon the mind at the curſes of the law, nor fears of hell and damnation; but ſuch a man lives in entire ſecurity, crying peace, peace, to himſelf.

Ver. 22. *But when a ſtronger than he*, &c.] By whom is meant Chriſt, who is the mighty God, the Almighty; and appears to be ſo, in the creation of all things, in upholding them by the word of his power, in the government of the world, and the works of providence, in the redemption of his people from ſin, ſatan, and the law, and in the converſion of them, by the efficacy of his grace, and in the preſervation of them by his power; and who is manifeſtly ſtronger than ſatan, not only by theſe inſtances, but by what follows: *ſhall come upon him*; as he did in perſon, when he diſpoſſeſſed him from the bodies of men; and does by his Spirit in converſion, when he enters into his palace, the heart of man, binds him, and looſes men from him, and turns them from the power of ſatan, to God, and ſets up a throne of grace, where he himſelf dwells and reigns: ſo he comes upon him

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[q] Antiqu. Jud. l. 8. c. 2.

[r] R. Moſch in Sepher Haſhem, apud Cabal. Denudata, T. I. par. 1. p. 146.

as an adverſary, and often at an unawares; and always with great power and ſtrength, and ſucceeds: ſatan came upon Chriſt in the wilderneſs, in the garden, and on the croſs, and attacked him, but without ſucceſs; whence it is clear, that he is ſtronger than he: *and overcame him*; he overcame him in the wilderneſs, and obliged him to retreat; and on the croſs, when he obtained a compleat victory over him, deſtroyed him, his principalities and powers, and all his works, and led him captive; and in converſion, ſo as to deliver his people from him, that were led captive by him, as that he can never re-gain his dominion over them more; and though he's ſuffered to tempt them, he cannot deſtroy them; and the ſaints ſhall overcome him at laſt, and have him bruiſed under their feet: and at the ſame time, *he taketh from him all his armour, wherein he truſted*; as his temptations, which he himſelf repelled in the wilderneſs, and wrenched out of his hands, and made them uſeleſs, and he gives power to his people to reſiſt them, and ſuccours them under them, and delivers them out of them; and alſo the ſins of men, which he took away on the croſs, when he bore them, and the puniſhment of them there: and in converſion, he greatly weakens the power of ſin, and takes away the dominion of it; and though the being of it is not removed, hence ſatan has ſomething to work upon, yet its power is ſo far gone, that neither that nor ſatan, can deſtroy ſuch who are truly called by the grace of God: *and divideth his ſpoils*; he ſpoils his houſe, the heart of man, from being any longer a palace for him, and his goods, his mind and conſcience, which are enlightened and awakened, and purged: or by his ſpoils are meant, the ſouls of men; which are taken as a prey out of his hands, and become trophies of victorious grace.

Ver. 23. *He that is not with me, is againſt me*, &c.] Our Lord does not mean one, that was not perſonally with him; for there might be ſome, and doubtleſs were many, who were not in perſon with him, and yet were not againſt him, but friends to him, and to his intereſt; nor one that was not a profeſſed diſciple of his, or not a follower of him, and his apoſtles; for there were ſome who called themſelves *John*'s diſciples, and did not attend on Chriſt, and yet were not againſt him, but caſt out devils in his name; and ſuch an one perhaps was he, that is made mention of, in *Mark* ix. 38, 39, 40. on occaſion of whom, Chriſt there ſays ſome words, which may ſeem at firſt view, not ſo well to accord with theſe: but ſuch are intended, who acted a neutral part between him and the *Phariſees*; who could bear to hear them accuſe him of caſting out devils by the prince of devils, and be eaſy at it; and ſuch perſons are condemned, who can hear all manner of blaſphemy againſt the deity, ſonſhip, blood, righteouſneſs, and ſacrifice of Chriſt, and expreſs no indignation at it; theſe, as they can't be ſaid to be with Chriſt, may be truly ranked among thoſe that are againſt him: *and he that gathereth not with me, ſcattereth*; whoever did not encourage perſons to attend on the miniſtry of Chriſt, which was confirmed by ſuch miracles the *Phariſees* ſpoke ſo reproachfully and contemptuouſly of, were reckoned by Chriſt as ſuch, who were the means of hindering perſons gathering unto him; as well as thoſe who menaced and excommunicated them for ſo doing: the alluſion is either to the gathering of the ſheep into the fold, and the ſcattering of them by the wolf; or to the gathering of the wheat, and binding it in ſheaves, and bringing it home in harveſt; and to the ſcattering of the wheat looſe in the field, whereby it is loſt, and comes to nothing; ſee the note on *Matt.* xii. 30.

Ver. 24. *When the unclean ſpirit is gone out of a man*, &c.] That is, the devil, who is in, and works in the children of diſobedience, whether under a profeſſion of religion or not; whoſe hearts are unclean like himſelf, wherefore there he delights to dwell; and ſo the *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *the evil dæmon*; who may be ſaid to go out of a man in appearance, when he outwardly reforms and takes up a profeſſion of religion. *He walketh thro' dry places*; or *a deſert*, as the *Ethiopic* verſion; to which the *Gentile* world is ſometimes compared in the Old Teſtament, *Iſ.* xxxv. 1. and xli. 18, 19. and xlii. 11. whither ſatan might go, being diſturbed in *Judea*, thro' the many diſpoſſeſſions by Chriſt; or rather leaving for a while the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, who outwardly appeared righteous before men, he went to the *Gentiles*; *ſeeking reſt, and finding none*; being alſo made uneaſy among them, thro' the preaching of the Goſpel, which was ſent unto them after Chriſt's reſurrection; and not being able to keep his place in the hearts of men, nor do the miſchief he was deſirous of. *He ſaith, I will return unto my houſe whence I came out*; to the *Jews* again, who were blinded and filled with rage and enmity to the Goſpel by him, and whom he inſtigated to perſecute the Apoſtles of Chriſt, and preachers of the word, where-ever they came; ſee the notes on *Matt.* xii. 43, 44.

Ver. 25. *And when he cometh, he findeth it ſwept and garniſhed.*] In *Matthew* it is alſo ſaid to be *empty*; and ſo it is read here in the *Arabic* verſion; and in the *Ethiopic* verſion, *empty of men*: but rather the ſenſe is, that he found it empty of all goodneſs, notwithſtanding all the ſweeping and garniſh of an outward reformation. The *Perſic* verſion renders it, *heated and prepared*; heated with wrath and fury againſt Chriſt, and his Goſpel, and ſo was prepared and fitted to be a proper habitation for ſatan; and in ſuch a caſe as this was the *Jewiſh* nation from the time of Chriſt's death to the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xii. 44.

Ver. 26. *Then goeth he and taketh to him ſeven other ſpirits*, &c.] Or *dæmons*, as the *Ethiopic* verſion, whom he took to him as his conſorts and companions, as the ſame verſion calls them. *More wicked than himſelf*; for it ſeems there are degrees of wickedneſs among the devils, as well as among men: *and they enter in and dwell there*; the unclean ſpirit, and the other ſeven: ſo ſeven devils were in *Mary Magdalene*, and a legion in another man; and indeed the evil heart of man is an habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul ſpirit: here it may chiefly deſign the place and power which the devil had among the *Jews* before their deſtruction: *and the laſt ſtate of that man is worſe than the firſt*; the *Perſic* verſion adds, *and more miſerable*; as was the caſe of the *Jews*, to which this parable refers; as appears by what is ſubjoined in *Matthew*, which manifeſtly applies it to them, *even ſo ſhall it be alſo unto this wicked generation*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xii. 45.

Ver. 27. *And it came to paſs as he ſpake theſe things*, &c.] That is, as Chriſt ſpake, or *had finiſhed theſe ſayings*, as the *Perſic* verſion expreſſes it, before related, in vindication of himſelf and his miracles, from the blaſphemy of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* to their entire confuſion, and had delivered the above parable concerning the unclean ſpirit, which had a particular regard to them: *a certain woman of the company*; obſerving the miracle he had wrought, in caſting out a devil, and being affected with his diſcourſe, in which he ſo fully cleared himſelf, and ſo ſtrongly confuted his enemies, and ſet them forth in ſo juſt a light: *lift up her voice, and ſaid unto him*; aloud, in the hearing of all the people, and with great earneſtneſs and fervour: *bleſſed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou haſt ſucked*: whether this woman perſonally knew *Mary*, the mother of Chriſt, is not certain; it may be that ſhe was now preſent, or at leaſt not far off; and this woman hearing that ſhe, with the brethren of Chriſt, were without, and deſired to ſpeak with him, might be the occaſion of her uttering theſe words; ſee *Matt.* xii. 46. though they are ſaid not ſo much in praiſe, and to the honour of *Mary*, as in commendation of Chriſt, from whom, and for the ſake of bearing and ſuckling ſo great a perſon, ſhe was denominated bleſſed as before, both by the Angel and *Elizabeth*, *Luke* i. 28, 42. This was a form of bleſſing among the *Jews*: ſo it is ſaid [s] of *R. Joſhuah ben Chananiah*, a diſciple of *R. Jochanan ben Zaccai*, who lived about theſe times, אשרי יולדתו, *bleſſed is ſhe that bore him*: and they had alſo a form of curſing among them, much after the ſame manner, as ליט ביזא דכן איינק, *curſed be the paps that ſuckled him* [t]. The *Jews*, in their blaſphemous rage againſt Chriſt, and all that belong to him, ſay of *Mary*, the daughter of *Eli*, by whom they ſeem to deſign the mother of our Lord, that ſhe hangs in the ſhades by the fibres of her paps [u]; but this woman had a different opinion of her.

Ver. 28. *But he ſaid*, &c.] Chriſt ſaid *to the woman*, as the *Perſic* verſion reads, as correcting her, tho' not denying it, nor reproving her for it, but improving upon it: *yea rather, bleſſed are they that hear the word of God and keep it*; intimating, that tho' his mother was happy in bearing and ſuckling ſuch a ſon, yet it was a far greater happineſs to hear the word of God; meaning either himſelf, the eternal *Logos*, ſo as to embrace him, believe on him, and have him formed in the heart; or the Goſpel preached by him, ſo as to underſtand it, receive it as the ingrafted word, and bring forth fruit, and act in obedience to it, obſerve it, and abide by it, and never relinquiſh it. This is a greater happineſs than to be related to Chriſt in the fleſh, tho' ever ſo nearly. The *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *that hear the word of God, and believe, and keep* it; for faith comes by hearing, and ſhews itſelf in doing. Barely to hear the word, and even give an aſſent to it, will be of little avail, unleſs what is heard and believed is put in practice.

Ver. 29. *And when the people were gathered thick together*, &c.] Upon this woman's lifting up her voice, and ſaying the things ſhe did; or rather to ſee what ſign he would give, which ſome had deſired, ver. 16. *he began to ſay, this is an evil generation.* The *Alexandrian* copy, two copies of *Beza*'s, and the *Vulgate Latin*, and *Arabic* verſions read, *this generation is an evil generation*; and alſo it was an *adulterous* one, as is added in *Matt.* xii. 39. *they ſeek a ſign*; for they had aſked one of him, ver. 16. *and there ſhall no ſign be given it, but the ſign of Jonas the prophet*; one like unto it; ſee the note on *Matt.* xii. 39.

Ver. 30. *For as Jonas was a ſign to the Ninevites*, &c.] As he was by lying three days and three nights in the whale's belly, and then caſt on ſhore alive; which ſign, or miracle was wrought to confirm his miſſion and meſſage, and to engage the *Ninevites* to give credit to him, and repent, or they might aſſure themſelves they would be utterly deſtroyed: *ſo ſhall alſo the Son of man be to this generation*; by lying three days and three nights in the heart of the earth, and then riſing again from the dead the third day; and which ſhould be done to confirm the truth of his Meſſiahſhip, and to declare him to be the Son of God with power, and to engage perſons to believe in him; and to aſſure that wicked generation, that in caſe they remained, after ſuch a ſign, impenitent and unbelieving, wrath would come upon them to the uttermoſt; ſee *Matt.* xii. 40.

Ver. 31. *The queen of the ſouth*, &c.] That is, the queen of *Sheba*, which was a country of *Arabia*, which lay ſouth of *Judea*; of whom it is ſaid, that ſhe *ſhall riſe up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them*: the ſenſe is, that at the laſt day, when all ſhall riſe from the dead, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, this heathen queen ſhall riſe together with the men of that preſent generation among the *Jews*, ſtand in judgment with them, and againſt them; and that her conduct would be brought as an evidence againſt them, and be improved as an aggravation of their condemnation: *for ſhe came from the uttermoſt parts of the earth to hear the wiſdom of Solomon, and behold a greater than Solomon is here*: the difference between them, and what aggravates the caſe is, that ſhe was a *Gentile* that knew not God, they were *Jews*, his profeſſing people; ſhe came from afar, they were near, upon the ſpot, where Chriſt was, he was preaching in their ſtreets, temple, and ſynagogues, ſhe came to hear only natural or moral wiſdom, but they might have heard ſpiritual and heavenly wiſdom, with which eternal happineſs is connected; ſhe came to hear only a mere man, but they might have heard him who is the wiſdom of God, and the only wiſe God, and our Saviour; ſee the note on *Matt.* xii. 42.

Ver. 32. *The men of Nineveh ſhall riſe up in the judgment with this generation, and ſhall condemn it*, &c.] *Luke* changes the order of theſe inſtances; *Matthew* mentions this before the inſtance of the queen of *Sheba*; but *Luke* puts it laſt: this circumſtance is not material, and the deſign of it is the ſame with the former: *for they repented at the preaching of Jonas, and behold a greater than Jonas is here*: what in this caſe will aggravate the condemnation of the *Jews* in the day of judgment is, that theſe men were heathens, aliens from the commonwealth of *Iſrael*, and ſtrangers to the covenants of promiſe, and were not uſed to have prophets ſent to them; and yet as ſoon as *Jonas*, a mere man, came to them, and preached but one ſermon among them, they repented of their ſins, and turned from them; whereas the *Jews*, who had a better notion of religion, and who, tho' they had the Son of God himſelf among them, and preached to them, and that many ſermons, and whoſe miniſtry was confirmed by miracles, and afterwards his Apoſtles for a courſe of years, had yet remained impenitent and unbelieving; ſee the note on *Matt.* xii. 41.

Ver. 33. *No man when he hath lighted a candle*, &c.] Theſe words are often repeated by Chriſt on different occaſions, ſee *Matt.* v. 15. *Luke* viii. 16. and the notes there; and here ſeem to deſign the free, open, and clear miniſtry of Chriſt, who excelled *Solomon* in wiſdom, and *Jonas* in powerful preaching. It being as a candle, which, when lighted, no man *putteth in a ſecret place*; as under a bed, *Mark* iv. 21. where it can't be ſeen, and its light be of any uſe: *neither under a buſhel, but on a candleſtick, that they which come in may ſee the light*; intimating, that Chriſt and his diſciples did not preach in corners, or in private houſes, and ſecret places, but in the ſtreets of the city, and in the temples and ſynagogues, the public places of worſhip: and therefore the *Jews* were the more inexcuſable, that they did not attend to the miniſtry of the word; and this would be their condemnation, that light was come among them, and they preferred darkneſs to it, *John* iii. 19.

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[s] Pirke Abot, c. 2. §. 8.

[t] T. Hieroſ. Celaim, fol. 27. 2. Bereſhit Rabba, §. 5. fol. 5. 1.

[u] T. Hieroſ. Chagiga, fol. 77. 4. & Sanhedrin, fol. 23. 3.

Ver. 34. *The light of the body is the eye,* &c.] The *Vulgate Latin*, and all the *Eaſtern* verſions read, *the light of thy body is thine eye.* The ſenſe is, that as the eye gives light to the body, and the ſeveral members of it, by which they are guided and directed; ſo the underſtanding is the light of the ſoul, and the guide to all the powers and faculties of it: *therefore when thine eye is ſingle, thy whole body alſo is full of light*: as when the eye is free from vicious humours, and its ſight is clear, the whole body reaps the advantage of it, and is perfectly illuminated by it; ſo, when the eye of the underſtanding is opened and enlightened by the Spirit of God, into the truths of the Goſpel, and a ſingle regard is had unto them, and to the glory of Chriſt in them, the whole ſoul is filled with light, joy, and comfort: *but when* thine eye *is evil, thy body alſo is full of darkneſs*: as when the eye of the body is attended with any bad humours that hinder the ſight, all the members of it are in darkneſs; ſo, when the underſtanding is darkened thro' the blindneſs and ignorance there is in men, with reſpect to Goſpel-truths, all the powers and faculties of the ſoul are in a very miſerable and uncomfortable condition. The 35th and 36th verſes are not in *Beza*'s moſt ancient copy.

Ver. 35. *Take heed therefore,* &c.] By attending to the light of the Goſpel, ſhining in the miniſtration of it, and don't neglect and deſpiſe it: *that the light which is in thee be not darkneſs*; leſt being given up to a judicial blindneſs and hardneſs of heart, not only the light of nature, which the *Jews* had in common with the *Gentiles*, but even that notional light and knowledge of divine things, which they had by being favoured with an external revelation, the writings of the Old Teſtament, ſhould be loſt.

Ver. 36. *If thy whole body therefore be full of light,* &c.] That is, if the whole ſoul, as the *Ethiopic* verſion reads, be full of Goſpel-light, thro' the illuminating influences of the bleſſed Spirit accompanying the word: *having no part dark*; every power and faculty of the ſoul being affected with it, and influenced by it, though, as yet, the light and knowledge of evangelical things is not perfect in any: *the whole ſhall be full of light, as when the bright ſhining of a candle doth give thee light*; the whole ſoul ſhall be as full of light and joy, which the Goſpel always brings with it, as a room is full of light, when a candle is lighted, and ſhines brightly, and burns clearly in it.

Ver. 37. *And as he ſpake,* &c.] Either the above words, or others at another time: *a certain Phariſee beſought him to dine with him*; as one of the ſame ſect had before, in ch. vii. 36. and who either was better affected to Chriſt than the generality of them were; or had a deſign upon him to get him into company with others, in private, and enſnare him if they could, and overcome him, who was an over-match for them before the people; among whom they feared, ſhould they go on thus publickly to attack him, their credit and reputation would ſink, and be loſt. *And he went in and ſat down to meat*: whatever were the intentions of the *Phariſee*, Chriſt, who was always affable and free with all ſorts of men, readily accepted of the invitation, and at once went along with him to his houſe; and dinner being ready, and on the table, he immediately ſat down without any ceremony.

Ver. 38. *And when the Phariſee ſaw* it, &c.] That Chriſt laid himſelf down on one of the couches and began to eat: *he marvelled*; that ſo great a prophet as he was, and a man of ſo much religion and holineſs, ſhould ſhow no regard to a common cuſtom with them, and which was one of the traditions of their elders, and which they put upon a level with the commands of God. The *Vulgate Latin* verſion, and ſo *Beza*'s moſt ancient copy, and another Exemplar, read, *he began to ſay, thinking* (or judging) *within himſelf*: he was *moved* at it, as the *Perſic* verſion renders it; he was filled with aſtoniſhment and indignation, *that he had not firſt waſhed before dinner*; eſpecially ſince he had been in a croud of people, ver. 29. for the *Phariſees* not only waſhed their hands, by immerſing them up to the elbow before eating; but when they had been at market, or among any large number of people, or had reaſon to think they had, or feared they had touched any unclean perſon or thing, they immerſed themſelves all over in water; and which is the ſenſe of the word βαπτιζομαι here uſed; ſee the notes on *Mark* vii. 2, 3, 4.

Ver. 39. *And the Lord ſaid unto him,* &c.] *Jeſus*, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read; the *Lord Jeſus*, as the *Ethiopic*. *Now do ye Phariſees make clean the outſide of the cup, and the platter*; being very tenacious of the traditions of the elders, concerning the waſhing of cups and pots, which had been of late years brought in among them, and therefore the word *now* is uſed; ſee the notes on *Matt.* xxiii. 25. and *Mark* vii. 4. *but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedneſs*: meaning, either their ſouls, which were full of all manner of ſin, the cleanſing and purity of which they had no concern about, whilſt they were very ſtrict and curious in waſhing their bodies, their cups and platters; or rather the veſſels which were filled with meat and drink got by extortion, rapine, and oppreſſion; ſee *Matt.* xxiii. 25.

Ver. 40. *Ye fools, did not he that made that which is without,* &c.] That is, made clean that which is without, or the outſide of the cup and platter; *make that which is within alſo?* does not he make the inſide clean likewiſe? whoever waſhes a cup or platter, but waſhes and makes clean the inſide, as well as the outſide? and ſo ye, who are ſo very careful to have your cups and platters clean, ſhould be as careful what you put in them, that they are clean alſo; not only that they are clean according to the law, in a ceremonial ſenſe, but in a moral ſenſe, that they are honeſtly and lawfully got. The word, ποιεω, rendered, *made* and *make*, anſwers to the *Hebrew* word, עשה, which ſometimes ſignifies to beautify and adorn, and to cleanſe, and remove away filth, as by paring nails, and waſhing the feet; ſo in *Deut.* xxi. 12. it is ſaid of a captive-woman that a man takes into his houſe for his wife, among other things, ועשתה, *ſhe ſhall make her nails*; that is, *pare* them, as we render it, and remove the filth from them. Again, in 2 *Sam.* xix. 24. it is ſaid of *Mephiboſheth*, that from the day king *David* departed, he had not, עשה, *made his feet*; that is, as the *Targum* renders it, לא שטף, *he had not waſhed his feet*; and ſo other *Jewiſh* interpreters underſtand it, either of his having not waſhed his feet, much leſs his whole body [w], or of not having pared his nails [x]; and ſo the *Vulgate Latin* renders it, that he came to meet the king *with unwaſhen feet*; which may ſerve to illuſtrate and confirm the ſenſe before given: tho' interpreters generally underſtand this of God, as the maker of the ſoul, as well as of the body; and therefore the purity of the former ſhould be regarded, as well as that of the latter.

Ver. 41. *But rather give alms of ſuch things as ye have*, &c.] The phraſe τα ενοντα, is variouſly rendered, and ſo furniſhes out various ſenſes: the *Syriac* verſion renders it, *give that which is*, which is yours; or *which is given to you*, as the *Perſic* verſion, and agrees with ours, *ſuch things as ye have*; and which carries in it but a very odd ſenſe; for none can give of that which they have not. The *Vulgate Latin* verſion reads, *that which is over and above*; ſuperfluous ſubſtance, and which may be eaſily ſpared without hurting a man, or his family: others, *as much as you can*; according to a man's ability, and as God has proſpered him in the world. The *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *that which is neceſſary*; which the neceſſities of the poor call for, and is right and proper to give them: and the *Arabic* verſion, very foreign from the ſenſe of the phraſe, reads, *before every thing*; above all things give alms. But the true ſenſe of it is contained in the literal verſion of it, *things that are within*; that is, that are within the cup and the platter; give meat and drink to the poor, your platters and cups are full of, gotten by injuſtice and oppreſſion. Some read it not imperatively, *give*, but indicatively, *ye do give*; you oppreſs and defraud men, devour widows houſes, and fill your own with the ſpoils of others; and then give out of your cups and platters drink to the thirſty, and meat to the hungry, to make atonement for your avarice and extortion: *and behold all things are clean unto you*; that is, according to their own opinion, who fancied that almſdeeds juſtified them in the ſight of God, cleanſed them from their ſins, delivered them from hell, and gave them a title to eternal life; ſee the note on *Matt.* vi. 1. for it can never be thought to be our Lord's meaning in earneſt, that either their perſons, or what they had, ſhould be pure and clean unto them, by giving a part of their ill-gotten goods to the poor; but he ſpeaks their ſenſe, in an ironical way. From this opinion of theirs it is, that the *Hebrew* word, זכה, which ſignifies *to be clean*, is uſed by them for giving alms: ſo it is ſaid [y], that "*R. Jonathan* and *Reſh Lekiſh* went "down to bathe themſelves in the baths of *Tiberias*; "and a certain poor man met them, and ſaid unto "them, זכיין בי, *give me alms*; they ſaid unto "him, when we come back we will, זכיין בך, *give* "*thee alms*:" and ſo the *Mahometans* call alms by the ſame name, becauſe they imagine that they cleanſe their other ſubſtance from pollution, and their ſouls from avarice.

Ver. 42. *But wo unto you Phariſees*, &c.] Tho' theſe words, with ſeveral other paſſages in this chapter, are much alike with thoſe in *Matt.* xxiii. yet 'tis clear that they were ſpoken at different times theſe in the houſe of a *Phariſee*, and they in the temple at *Jeruſalem*: *for ye tithe mint and rue*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiii. 23. the *Perſic* verſion here reads, *mint and aniſe*, as there; and the *Ethiopic* verſion only *hyſſop*: *and all manner of herbs*; or *every herb*; that is, all ſorts of herbs that grow in the garden, and were not common to all; *and paſs over judgment, and the love of God*: by *judgment* may be meant juſtice, or doing that which is right between man and man, both publickly and privately, which was greatly neglected by theſe extortioners and unjuſt men: and by *the love of God* may be intended, both love to God, which ſhows itſelf in the obſervance of the firſt table of the law, and love to the neighbour, which God requires, and regards the ſecond table: *theſe ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiii. 23.

Ver. 43. *Wo unto you Phariſees, for ye love the uppermoſt ſeats in the ſynagogues*, &c.] And alſo *the uppermoſt rooms at feaſts*, *Matt.* xxiii. 6. *and greetings in the market*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiii. 6, 7.

Ver. 44. *Wo unto you Scribes and Phariſees, hypocrites*, &c.] As they are all along called by *Matthew*; tho' only here by *Luke*. The *Vulgate Latin* only reads, *wo unto you*, leaving out all the reſt: but the whole is retained in all the *Oriental* verſions: *for ye are as graves which appear not*; being covered with graſs; or *which were not marked*, as the *Ethiopic* verſion renders it; that is, were not whited or covered with lime, as ſome were, that they might be ſeen at a diſtance, and be known what they were; that ſo men might avoid going near them, and prevent their being defiled with them; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiii. 27. *and the men that walk over* them *are not aware* of them; and ſo are defiled by them. Chriſt compares the *Phariſees*, becauſe of their hypocriſy, and ſecret iniquity, both to whited ſepulchres, and to thoſe that were not: to thoſe that were, becauſe, like them, they looked beautiful without, and righteous in the ſight of men, and yet were inwardly full of all manner of pollution and ſin; and to thoſe that were not, becauſe they did not appear to be what they were, and men were deceived by them; and under ſpecious pretences to religion and holineſs, were by their corrupt doctrines and practices unawares drawn into the commiſſion of ſin. Regard may not only be had to graves covered with graſs, or not marked with lime, by which they might be known; but alſo to what the *Jews* call, קבר התהום, *the grave of the abyſs* [z]; a grave that is not known no more than if it was in the bottomleſs pit: ſo uncleanneſs by touching a dead body, which a man is not conſcious of, is called the uncleanneſs of the abyſs, or an unknown one [a].

Ver. 45. *Then anſwered one of the lawyers*, &c.] Or *Scribes*, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read; and ſo the *Ethiopic* verſion calls him, *a Scribe of the city*: the *Scribes* and lawyers were the ſame ſort of perſons who were interpreters of the law, and equally tenacious of the traditions of the elders Chriſt had referred to, as the *Phariſees*, and in general were *Phariſees*; tho' ſome of them might be of the ſect of the *Sadducees*. This man obſerving that Chriſt, in his laſt words, joined the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* together, and charged them both with hypocriſy, and pronounced a wo upon them, was very uneaſy at it: *and ſaid unto him, maſter, thus ſaying*,

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[w] R. David Kimchi & Rabbenu Iſaiah in loc. Vid. Jarchi in ib.

[x] R. Levi ben Gerſom in ib.

[y] Vajikra Rabba, §. 34. fol. 174. 2. Vid. fol. 173. 3, 4. & 174. 4.

[z] Miſn. Parah. c. 3. §. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Parah. c. 3. §. 2.

[a] Maimon. in Miſn. Nazir, c. 9. §. 2. & Peſach. c. 7. §. 7.

*ſaying, thou reproacheſt us alſo*; us lawyers, or *Scribes* alſo; both by mentioning their names, and accuſing the *Phariſees* of the ſame things, which they muſt be conſcious to themſelves they were equally guilty of; ſo that if the one were criminal, the others were alſo. The *Ethiopic* verſion reads by way of interrogation, *what thou ſayeſt, does it not injure us?*

Ver. 46. *And he ſaid, wo unto you alſo, ye lawyers,* &c.] Chriſt was ſo far from calling back what he had ſaid or ſuggeſted, that he repeats and confirms it, and more particularly names them, and enlarges on their evil practices: *for ye lade men with burthens grievous to be born, and ye yourſelves touch not the burthens with one of your fingers*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiii. 4.

Ver. 47. *Wo unto you,* &c.] Meaning particularly the lawyers or *Scribes*, together with the *Phariſees*, and even the whole body of the people, who in general were of the caſt and complexion here deſcribed: *for ye build the ſepulchres of the prophets*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiii. 29. *and your fathers killed them*; the prophets; or *whom your fathers killed*, as read the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions; the one put them to death, and the other erected ſtately monuments over them, or adorned them; and yet both had the ſame malignant ſpirit againſt the faithful ſervants and meſſengers of God; and which ſhewed their great hypocriſy.

Ver. 48. *Truly ye bear witneſs, that ye allow the deeds of your fathers,* &c.] Or *ye bear witneſs, and ye allow*; that is, they both witneſſed that their fathers killed the prophets, and they conſented to what they did, and approved of their actions: *for they indeed killed them*; it muſt be owned, and not their ſons: *and ye build their ſepulchres*; which was a bearing and keeping up a teſtimony againſt them, and a continuing a remembrance of their crimes; and which looked as tho' they approved of them, or otherwiſe they ſhould have been content to have the prophets lie buried in ſilence, and not erected ſtately monuments over them, which ſeemed to be raiſed more for the honour of thoſe that put them to death, than of the prophets themſelves. Or, whereas they did this under ſpecious pretences of diſliking their fathers ſins, which yet ſecretly they loved, and were of the ſame wicked diſpoſition againſt the miniſters of the word, and which they would quickly ſhow; this diſcovered their hypocriſy, and confirmed the character Chriſt had before given of them; for it follows,

Ver. 49. *Therefore alſo ſaid the wiſdom of God,* &c.] The *Syriac* verſion only reads *wiſdom*; by which ſeems to be meant not the perfection of God's wiſdom; tho' it is uſual with the *Jews* to repreſent the divine perfections as ſpeaking, as the juſtice and mercy of God. They ſay [b], that "when the holy "bleſſed God ſought to make *Hezekiah* the Meſſiah, and *Sennacherib*, *Gog*, and *Magog*, מידת הדין, "*the property of judgment*, or *juſtice*, *ſaid* before "the holy, bleſſed God, Lord of the world, *&c.*" and ſo the ſenſe may be here, that the infinite wiſdom of God ſaid within himſelf, determined in his own breaſt, to do what follows. But I rather think that Chriſt is intended, who, as God, is the eſſential wiſdom of God; and, as man and mediator, has the ſpirit of wiſdom reſting on him, and the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge hid in him; ſince this is ſaid by Chriſt, *Matt.* xxiii. 34. tho' the words here ſeem to be the words of the Evangeliſt relating what Chriſt had ſaid. Some have thought, that ſome book, under the name of *the wiſdom of God*, is here cited, which had in it the following words, *I will ſend them prophets and apoſtles*; which, in *Matthew*, are called prophets, wiſe men, and *Scribes*; and by whom are meant the apoſtles of Chriſt, and the miniſters of the Goſpel. The *Perſic* verſion reads, *lo, I ſend to you*, as in *Matt.* xxiii. 34. *and ſome of them they ſhall ſlay and perſecute*; ſome of them they ſhall put to death, and others they ſhall perſecute from one place to another; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiii. 34.

Ver. 50. *That the blood of all the prophets,* &c.] The ſame with *all the righteous blood*, or the blood of all the righteous men, in *Matt.* xxiii. 35. *which was ſhed from the foundation of the world*; for there were prophets from the beginning, which propheſied of Chriſt, *Luke* i. 70. and whoſe blood was ſhed very early: for *Abel*, the ſon of the firſt man, and who was the firſt whoſe blood was ſhed, was not only a righteous man, but a prophet; for by the ſacrifice which he offered up, he gave a prophetical hint of the ſacrifice of Chriſt, in that he ſpoke before-hand of it, as being dead he yet ſpeaks: and now the Lord was about to ſend apoſtolical prophets, whom the *Jews* would ſlay, and he would ſuffer them to ſlay, that ſo the blood of all the former ones, *may be required of this generation*; and they be puniſhed for it: juſt as in *Babylon* will be found, when God makes inquiſition for blood, as he ſooner or later always does, the blood of the prophets and ſaints, and of all that are ſlain upon earth, every ſince *Rome* papal has been in power, *Rev.* 18. 24.

Ver. 51. *From the blood of Abel,* &c.] *Righteous Abel*, as in *Matt.* xxiii. 35. and ſo read the *Arabic* verſion here, and two manuſcripts in the *Bodleian* library, and three of *Stephens*'s copies; the *Perſic* verſion renders it, *innocent Abel*: he is mentioned becauſe he was the firſt man that was ſlain, and he was ſlain becauſe of his righteouſneſs. *Unto the blood of Zacharias*; in the *Cambridge* copy of *Beza*'s, it is added, the *ſon of Barachias*, as in *Matt.* xxiii. 35. and ſo the *Arabic* verſion, *the ſon of Baraſciah*; who he was, ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiii. 35. *which periſhed between the altar and the temple*; or *the houſe*, that is, the holy place: and the *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *the holy houſe*; here he died, being ſlain by the *Jews*; ſee the note, as before. *Verily I ſay unto you, it ſhall be required of this generation*; as it was at the time of the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*.

Ver. 52. *Wo unto you lawyers,* &c.] Who are particularly addreſſed again in diſtinction from the *Phariſees*, tho' much the ſame things are ſaid to them both in *Matt.* xxiii. 13. *for ye have taken away the key of knowledge*; of the ſcriptures, of the law, and the prophets, and the true interpretation of them, and eſpecially of ſuch places as refer to the Meſſiah, and the Goſpel-diſpenſation, called the kingdom of heaven, *Matt.* xxiii. 13. they had not only arrogated the knowledge of theſe to themſelves, ſetting up for the only interpreters of the ſacred writings; but they had took away from the people the true knowledge and ſenſe of them, by their falſe gloſſes upon them, ſo that they were deſtroyed for lack of knowledge: and hence came tha famine of hearing the word, which they ſay [c] ſhoul be before the coming of the king Meſſiah, and no was. The *Syriac* and *Arabic* verſions read, *the key of knowledge*; and the *Ethiopic* verſion, *the key o righteouſneſs*. The *Jews* ſometimes ſpeak of *th keys of the law*, and repreſent the oral law as th

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[b] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 94. 1. Vid. Targum in Eccl. x. 8. & in Lam. i. 1. & ii. 20. Ruth i. 1.

[c] Targum

root and *key* of the written law [d]: but, alas! it was by the oral law, or the traditions of the elders, that they took away the key, or obſcured the true ſenſe of the written law. Some think, that here is an alluſion to the cuſtom of delivering a key to any one, when he was ordained or promoted to the dignity of a doctor: it is ſaid of *R. Samuel* [e], that “when he died they put, מפתחו, *his key*, and his writing book into his coffin, becauſe he was not worthy of a ſon” to ſucceed him: *ye entered not in yourſelves*; into the kingdom of heaven, the Goſpel-diſpenſation, neither receiving its doctrines, nor ſubmitting to its ordinances: *and them that were entering in ye hindered*; by reproaching the miracles and miniſtry of Chriſt; by threatenings and excommunications; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiii. 13.

Ver. 53. *And as he ſaid theſe things unto them*, &c.] Denounced the above woes upon them, charging them with the above crimes, and threatening them with divine vengeance: *the Scribes and Phariſees began to urge him vehemently*; to fall upon him with their tongues, and expreſs great rage, wrath, and virulence againſt him: *and to provoke him to ſpeak of many things*; they put queſtions to him, and urged him to anſwer them, and did all they could to irritate him to ſay things that they could improve againſt him, to draw words out of his mouth, and then wreſt and pervert them.

Ver. 54. *Laying wait for him*, &c.] To enſnare and entangle him, watching his words, obſerving what he ſaid, and laying hold thereon: *and ſeeking to catch ſomething out of his mouth*; like beaſts of prey, or hunters, that were watching for their prey; or lay in ambuſh, diligently looking out, and greedily catching at every thing they thought for their purpoſe: *that they might accuſe him*; either of hereſy or ſedition, to the *Jewiſh Sanhedrim*, or the *Roman* governour.

## CHAP. XII.

Ver. 1. I*N the mean time*, &c.] While Chriſt was diſcourſing with the *Phariſees*, and they were uſing him in the vileſt manner, throwing out their invectives againſt him, in order to draw off the people from him: *when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people.* There were *myriads* of them, as in the original text, and a myriad is ten thouſand; the meaning is, that there were ſeveral thouſands of them: *inſomuch that they trod one upon another*; ſtriving to get near to Chriſt, either to ſee his perſon, or to hear his diſcourſes; and particularly, what he would ſay to the *Phariſees*, who had fallen upon him in ſo violent a manner: *he began to ſay unto his diſciples firſt of all*; he directed his diſcourſe not to the *Phariſees*, nor to the multitude, but to his diſciples in the firſt place; at leaſt, chiefly to them; for whom he had a ſpecial regard, who were his dear friends, and were to be the preachers of his Goſpel every where; and therefore it was proper that they ſhould be aware of the diſſembling arts of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, and have their minds fortified againſt approaching dangers, perſecutions, and death itſelf: the laſt phraſe, *firſt of all*, is omitted in the *Vulgate Latin* verſion; and by all the *Oriental* verſions, it is joined to the next clauſe, and read thus, *eſpecially*, or *before all things, beware ye of the leaven of the Phariſees, which is hypocriſy*; expreſſed both in their doctrines, and in their lives; which carried a great ſhow of piety and holineſs, but was in appearance only: very aptly is hypocriſy in doctrine and manners, compared to leaven; which at firſt is ſmall and little, but gradually increaſes and ſpreads itſelf, and lies hid and covered, and is not eaſily diſcerned, nor its influence and effects obſerved; but in time, it infects and corrupts the whole of mens principles and practices, and puffs and ſwells them up with a vain opinion of themſelves: and when our Lord bids his diſciples beware of it, his meaning not only is, that they take heed that they were not infected with it themſelves, but that they were not impoſed upon by the ſpecious pretences of theſe artful and deſigning men.

Ver. 2. *For there is nothing covered that ſhall not be revealed*, &c.] No ſin, be it ever ſo ſecret or privately done, as nothing is more covered than hypocriſy, but what ſhall be detected ſooner or later; if not in this world, which is often the caſe, yet at the laſt judgment, and in the world to come: *neither hid, that ſhall not be known*; for how careful ſoever men may be to hide their vices from others, they are known to God; who will bring every thing into judgment, and make manifeſt the ſecrets of all hearts. Theſe were general ſentences, which were uſed by Chriſt at different times, upon different occaſions, and applied to particular caſes; ſee the note on *Matt.* x. 26.

Ver. 3. *Therefore whatſoever ye have ſpoken in darkneſs*, &c.] In the moſt private manner, to one another: *ſhall be heard in the light*; which makes all things manifeſt, the day ſhall declare it: *and that which ye have ſpoken in the ear in cloſets*; whiſpered to perſons in their bed-chambers, and places of the moſt ſecret retirement: *ſhall be proclaimed upon the houſe-tops*; declared in the moſt publick manner: in *Matt.* x. 27. theſe words are ſo expreſſed, as to carry in them ſuch a ſenſe as this; that what was told the diſciples by Chriſt, in the moſt private place and way, ſhould be publiſhed by them, in the moſt free and open manner; ſee the note there.

Ver. 4. *And I ſay unto you my friends*, &c.] Whom he dearly loved, and had taken into the greateſt intimacy and familiarity; making known to them whatever he had heard from his Father; giving them the beſt inſtructions, the moſt faithful and friendly advice, and proper precautions; all which, and more, ſhewed them to be his friends, and for whom he after laid down his life: *be not afraid of them that kill the body*; though he would have them beware of the *Phariſees*, he would not have them be afraid of them; he would have them know them, and avoid their hypocriſy, and guard againſt it; but not fear them, or the worſt they could do unto them, which was to kill the body; and that they had no need to be afraid of, ſince at death, their ſouls would be immediately happy, in the enjoyment and viſion of God; and their bodies would ſleep in Jeſus, and be raiſed in the reſurrection morn, and be united to their ſouls, and be both for ever bleſſed: *and after that have no more that they can do*; they have nothing more to kill, or which they can put to pain or miſery; the ſoul is out of their reach, is an immortal ſpirit, and can't be hurt or deſtroyed by them.

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[d] Zohar in Exod. fol. 46. 1.

[e] Vid. Cameron. in loc.

Ver. 5. *But I will forewarn you whom ye ſhall fear*, &c.] I will be your monitor, and direct you to the proper object of fear and reverence, and whom you ſhould be careful to diſpleaſe and offend: *fear him, which after he hath killed*; your body, as the *Perſic* verſion adds; hath taken away the life of it, by ſeparating ſoul and body aſunder, by ſending one diſeaſe or another, or death in one ſhape or another: *hath power to caſt into hell*; your ſoul, as the above verſion alſo adds; yea, to deſtroy both body and ſoul in hell, as in *Matt*. x. 28. ſee the note there: *yea, I ſay unto you, fear him*; and none elſe, not with a ſervile, but with a filial fear.

Ver. 6. *Are not five ſparrows ſold for two farthings*, &c.] As two were ſold for one farthing, *Matt*. x. 29. ſee the note there; ſo in buying and ſelling, where more money is laid out, things are bought cheaper; the *Perſic* verſion reads, *for two barley corns: and not one of them is forgotten before God*; a ſingle ſparrow, a bird of little value and worth, is taken notice and care of by him; it has its life from him, and is provided for with food by him, and is under his protection; nor does he ever forget it, nor can any thing be done to it, without his permiſſion; it can't be ſtruck, ſo as to cauſe it to fall on the ground, or be taken in a ſnare, or be killed in any ſhape, without the knowledge of God: his providence reaches to the minuteſt creatures and things, and much more then to rational creatures, to men; and ſtill more to his dear children, miniſters, and apoſtles.

Ver. 7. *But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered*, &c.] Not only their perſons had paſſed under the hands of him that telleth them, who is the *Palmoni*, or *wonderful numberer*, as in the margin of *Dan*. viii. 13. and not only the ſeveral members of their bodies, or the more ſubſtantial parts of them, were written in the book of his purpoſes, according to which they were faſhioned in time, but the more minute parts, and leſs to be regarded, were all told over, and kept in account; even the very hairs of their head, and not one of them could fall to the ground, any more than a ſparrow; or be plucked off by men, without the knowledge and will of God; ſo careful is the providence of God, of all his people: *fear not therefore, ye are of more value than many ſparrows*; for if the hairs of their heads are as much regarded as ſparrows, their perſons and their lives muſt be of more account, than an infinite number of them, nor are they to be mentioned with them.

Ver. 8. *Alſo I ſay unto you*, &c.] The ſame as in *Matt*. x. 32. *whoſoever ſhall confeſs me before men, him ſhall the Son of man alſo confeſs before the angels of God*; only inſtead of *I*, he here calls himſelf *the Son of man*; and inſtead of *before my Father which is in heaven*, here it is, *before the angels of God*; who will accompany Chriſt when he comes to judgment, and will be preſent, when he ſhall acknowledge his true followers as the bleſſed of his Father, the choſen of God, his redeemed and ſanctified ones; and reject others before his Father, and the whole univerſe of rational beings: 'tis ſaid in the *Targum* on *Cant*. i. 15. "when the children "of *Iſrael* do the will of their king, he by his "word (the *Logos*) praiſes them in the family of "the holy angels." This Chriſt, the eternal word, will do at the great day.

Ver. 9. *But he that denieth me before men*, &c.] That is, that continues to deny Chriſt, and lives and dies a denier of him; for otherwiſe it is poſſible, for a perſon to deny Jeſus to be the Son of God, or the Meſſiah, and afterwards confeſs him, as a *Pagan* or *Jew*; and through temptation, a real chriſtian may be left for a while, in one ſhape or another, to deny him and his truths, and afterwards truly repent, and at laſt be ſaved, as *Peter*; but they that deny Chriſt publickly, and perſiſt in it, *ſhall be denied before the angels of God*; they will be denied by Chriſt as belonging to him; they will be denied admiſſion into heaven; they will be covered with ſhame and confuſion publickly; they'll be ſent into everlaſting burnings, and be for ever tormented with fire and brimſtone, in the preſence of the holy angels.

Ver. 10. *And whoſoever ſhall ſpeak a word againſt the Son of man, it ſhall be forgiven him*, &c.] Theſe words, though introduced by *Luke* among the ſayings of Chriſt, recorded in *Matt*. x. yet were ſaid by Chriſt, on occaſion of the *Phariſees* aſcribing his works to diabolical influence and aſſiſtance, in *Matt*. xii. 32. ſee the note there: *but unto him that blaſphemeth againſt the Holy Ghoſt*; as the *Phariſees* did, by charging the miracles of Chriſt with being done by the help of the devil, when they were wrought by the finger of the Spirit: *it ſhall not be forgiven*. The *Ethiopic* verſion adds at the cloſe of this verſe, as in *Matthew*, *neither in this world, nor in that which is to come*.

Ver. 11. *And when they bring you unto the ſynagogues*, &c.] Of the *Jews*, to be examined and ſcourged by the rulers of them: *and unto magiſtrates and powers*; heathen ones; the *Perſic* verſion reads, *princes and kings*; and the *Ethiopic* verſion, *princes, kings*, and *judges*; ſee *Matt*. x. 18. *Take ye no thought how, or what thing ye ſhall anſwer, or what ye ſhall ſay*; be not anxiouſly concerned, neither about the manner, nor the matter of your anſwer, apology, and defence: in the firſt part of this clauſe, the *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, only read, *how*; and the *Arabic* verſion only, *what*; ſee the note on *Matt*. x. 19.

Ver. 12. *For the Holy Ghoſt ſhall teach you*, &c.] Shall give both words and matter: *in the ſame hour*; inſtantly, immediately: *what ye ought to ſay*; what will be proper to be ſaid, for the honour of Chriſt, the defence of the Goſpel, and the confuſion of enemies; ſee the note on *Matt*. x. 20.

Ver. 13. *And one of the company ſaid unto him*, &c.] Not one of the diſciples of Chriſt, but one of the multitude, or crowd, about him, ver. 1. *Maſter, ſpeak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me*: the firſt-born, according to the law, in *Deut*. xxi. 17. had a double portion; but the elder brother here, it ſeems, was for keeping all, and not divide any part to his younger brother; wherefore he applies to Chriſt, to interpoſe his authority, which he imagined would have great weight with his brother, who might be a hearer of Chriſt, and a favourer of him: or however, ſuch was the fame of Chriſt, and ſuch credit he obtained by his miniſtry and miracles, that he concluded a word from him, would go a great way with his brother, to engage him to make a right and proper diviſion, as he ought; and eſpecially, if he looked upon him, as the king Meſſiah the *Jews* expected, he might take this to be part of his work and office, to ſettle ſuch civil affairs as theſe: we often read in the *Jewiſh* writings, of brethren dividing their ſubſtance, left by their parents; ſo it is ſaid [f], "האחין שחלקו, *brethren that divide*, (a field,) give two corners (to the poor;) if "they return and become partners, they give but "one." Where there were but two brethren, as here, the one was called, בכור, the *firſt born*; and the other, פשוט, *ſimple*, having no title or character: and concerning dividing inheritances, there are the following rules[g]: “the firſt-born takes a double portion of his father's goods, as is ſaid, *Deut*. xxi. 17. how? a man leaves five children, and one of them is the firſt-born; the firſt-born takes the third part of the ſubſtance, and every one of the four ſimple ones, takes a ſixth part: if he leaves nine children, and one of them is the firſt-born, he takes the fifth part, and every one of the eight ſimple ones, takes a tenth part; and ſo according to this diviſion, they divided for ever——he that has two ſons, a firſt-born and a ſimple one, and they both die in his lifetime, the firſt-born leaves a daughter, and the ſimple one leaves a ſon; lo, the ſon of the ſimple one inherits the third part of the old man's goods, which is his father's part; and the daughter of the firſt-born, inherits the two-thirds, which is the part of her father.” And again[h], “two brethren that *divide*, and a brother comes to them from the province of the ſea; and ſo three brethren that *divide*, and a creditor comes and takes the part of one of them, though the one takes land, and the other money, the diviſion is void, and they return and divide the reſt equally: if any one orders at the time of his death, that there ſhould be given to ſuch an one a palm-tree, or a field out of his ſubſtance, and the brethren *divide*, and do not give ſuch an one any thing, lo, the diviſion is void; and how do they do? they give what he ordered the heirs, and after that they return and divide as at the beginning: brethren that divide, value what is upon them; but what is upon their ſons and their daughters, which they have in poſſeſſion, they do not value——he that leaves fatherleſs children, ſome that are grown up, and others little ones, and they are willing to divide their father's goods, ſo that thoſe that are grown up may take their part, the *Sanhedrim* appoint a guardian for the little ones, and he chooſes a good part for them; and when they are grown up, they can't make it void, for lo, by the decree of the *Sanhedrim*, they divided for them; but if the *Sanhedrim* err in computation, and give them leſs, they may make it void, and make another diviſion when they are grown up.” But it would be tedious to tranſcribe all the rules, relating to ſuch caſes.

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[f] Miſn. Peah, c. 3. §. 5.

Ver. 14. *And he ſaid unto him, man*, &c.] Or *friend*, as the *Ethiopic* verſion renders it; that is, *Jeſus* ſaid to him, as the *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions expreſs it: *who made me a judge, or a divider over you?* referring to the words of one of the *Hebrews* to *Moſes*, when he interpoſed in a difference, *Exod*. ii. 14. ſuggeſting, that the ſame might be retorted on him, ſhould he engage in ſuch an affair: the reaſon why Chriſt avoided meddling with it, was not becauſe it is unlawful for chriſtians, to concern themſelves in arbitrations about civil affairs, and in making up family differences, which is very commendable; but leſt by ſuch a ſtep, he ſhould give occaſion to them, to conclude he was a temporal king: whereas his kingdom was not of this world, and his buſineſs lay not in civil affairs, and the management of them; but in ſpiritual concerns, in preaching the Goſpel, and doing good to the ſouls of men; wherefore this was out of his province: and beſides, it was a matter of covetouſneſs, either in this perſon, or his brother, or both; which Chriſt takes an occaſion from hence to expoſe, agreeable to his office; to which may be added, that this man ſeems to have diſturbed Chriſt in his publick work, and was of ſuch a worldly ſpirit, as to prefer the care of his ſecular affairs, to the hearing of the word, and the welfare of his immortal ſoul.

Ver. 15. *And he ſaid unto them*, &c.] Either to the two brethren, or to his diſciples, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read, or to the whole company: *take heed, and beware of covetouſneſs*; of *all* covetouſneſs, as read the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, and ſome copies; that is, of all ſorts of covetouſneſs, and every degree of it, which of all vices is to be avoided and guarded againſt, being the root of all evil; and as the *Perſic* verſion renders it, is *worſe than all evil*, and leads into it: *for a man's life conſiſteth not in the abundance of the things which he poſſeſſeth*; of flocks and beaſts, as the *Perſic* verſion renders it: a man's natural life cannot be prolonged by all the good things of the world, he is poſſeſſed of; they cannot prevent diſeaſes nor death; nor do the comfort and happineſs of life, lie in theſe things; which are either not enjoyed by them, but kept for the hurt of the owners of them, or are intemperately uſed, or ſome way or other imbittered to them, ſo that they have no peace nor pleaſure in them: and a man's ſpiritual life is neither had nor advantaged hereby, and much leſs is eternal life to be acquired by any of theſe things; which a man may have, and be loſt for ever, as the following parable ſhews.

Ver. 16. *And he ſpake a parable unto them, ſaying*, &c.] He ſuppoſed the following caſe, and made uſe of it by way of illuſtration of what he had ſaid: *the ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully*; who notwithſtanding his riches, was but a fool, as the ſequel ſhows: rich men are not always wiſe in things natural and civil; and very few of them are ſpiritually wiſe, or wiſe in ſpiritual things, in things which relate to the welfare of their ſouls; but however, this man was very proſperous in his worldly affairs, as a man of a ſmall ſhare of common ſenſe may be, and wicked men often are: the word tranſlated *ground*, ſignifies a *region*, or *country*, which expreſſes the more, the riches of this man, that he had not a common and ordinary farm, but a whole country as it were; at leaſt a very large part of one, and all this fruitful.

Ver. 17. *And he thought within himſelf*, &c.] And fooliſh thoughts they were; he did not think of God, or that there was one, and much leſs that he was the author of all his outward proſperity and plenty; and was ſtill further off of thinking of returning thanks to God for it; or of aſking counſel of him, what he ſhould do with it; but he conſults himſelf only, and thought only within, and for himſelf; and not at all of his poor neighbours, or for the good of others; nor did he think even of his own ſoul, but altogether about his worldly ſubſtance: *ſaying, what ſhall I do?* he does not ſay what ſhall I do for God? for his intereſt, ſervice, and glory? for the poor, the hungry, and thirſty, and naked? or for my own ſoul, that that may be eternally ſaved? but what ſhall I do with my goods? *becauſe I have no room where to beſtow my fruits*; he had gathered in his harveſt, and filled his barns as full as they could hold, ſo that they had no room for more; and yet had ſtill an abundance to lay up, and about which he was anxiouſly concerned; not thinking of the empty bellies, barns, and houſes, of the poor, where he might have ſtowed much.

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[g] Maimon. Hilchot Nechalot, c. 2. §. 1, 7.

[h] Ib. c. 10. §. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Ver. 18. *And he ſaid, this will I do*, &c.] This was the reſolution he came to, and which he took up, without conſulting God, or aſking leave of him: *I will pull down my barns, and build greater*; which was not a very wiſe one; for he might have let his preſent barns have ſtood, and have added new ones to them: *and there will I beſtow all my fruits and my goods*; he aſcribes the increaſe of his ſubſtance to himſelf, and reckons them his own acquiſitions, and entirely owing to his diligence and induſtry; and therefore calls them *my fruits*, and *my goods*; and accounts them his good things, his only good things; as worldly men place all good and happineſs in outward enjoyments, having no notion of ſpiritual and eternal good things: he determines to lay up *all* in his barns, for his own uſe and ſervice, and nothing for God and his intereſt, nor any thing for the poor and their relief.

Ver. 19. *And I will ſay to my ſoul*, &c.] Himſelf, ſee *Pſal.* xlix. 18. or to his ſenſual appetite, which he ſought to indulge and gratify, for he was wholly a ſenſual and carnal man: *ſoul, thou haſt much goods laid up for many years:* he fooliſhly promiſes himſelf a long life, when no man can boaſt of to morrow, or knows what a day will bring forth; or can aſſure himſelf he ſhall live a day, an hour, or moment longer: and he alſo depended upon the ſafety of his goods, thus laid up; whereas his barns might be conſumed by fire at once, or his goods be devoured by vermin, or plundered by thieves, and by various ways taken out of his hands; for riches are uncertain things, and often make themſelves wings and fly away: *take thine eaſe, eat, drink, and be merry*; ſpend thy life in eaſe, luxury, and mirth; put away the evil day far from thee; never trouble thyſelf about a future ſtate, to morrow ſhall be as this day, and much more abundantly; and thou haſt enough to make thyſelf happy, and let nothing diſturb thee, and give a looſe to all ſenſual pleaſures, and carnal joys. This is the language of an epicure among the *Jews*, and is forbidden to be uſed, eſpecially on faſt-days; for ſo it is ſaid[l], "let not a man ſay I will go to my "houſe, *and I will eat and drink*, (and ſay) "שלום עליך נפשי, *peace to thee, O my ſoul*; if "he does ſo, of him the ſcripture ſays, *Iſa.* xxii. "13, 14. *Behold joy and gladneſs, ſlaying oxen, and* "*killing ſheep, eating fleſh, and drinking wine, let* "*us eat and drink, for to morrow we ſhall die*—— "*ſurely this iniquity ſhall not be purged from you, till* "*ye die*, &c."

Ver. 20. *But God ſaid unto him*, &c.] He determined within himſelf he ſhould die that night; for the time of a man's death, as well as of his birth, is fixed by God; or he ſent the meſſenger of death, ſome diſeaſe or another, the language of which was, immediate death, or death in a very ſhort time; or he ſpoke to his conſcience, and impreſſed it on his mind, that he ſhould die that night, and not live: *thou fool*; as he appeared to be, throughout the whole of his conduct: *this night thy ſoul ſhall be required of thee*; which is of God's immediate formation, is immortal, of more worth than a world, and its loſs is irreparable; and for which a man is accountable to God, the father of ſpirits; and which he requires at a man's hands at death, which is here deſigned; and ſhows, that a man has no power over it to retain it, but muſt give it up when it is called for, even that very inſtant, *this night*; which may refer to the time when covetous perſons are employing their thoughts about their worldly goods, or when epicures and ſenſual perſons, are indulging themſelves in luxury and intemperance; and to the condition the ſoul is in, being in the night and in darkneſs, and knows not whither it is going; and denotes its immediate remove, and the ſuddenneſs of divine wrath and vengeance: the *Vulgate Latin*, and *Syriac* verſions, agreeable to the *Greek* text, read the words, *this night do they require thy ſoul of thee*; or *out of thy body*, as the *Perſic* verſion reads: the *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *they ſhall take thy ſoul from thee*; that is, the evil angels, the devils having a commiſſion from God, ſhall demand thy ſoul; and as ſoon as ever it is ſeparated from the body, ſhall ſeize upon it, and carry it to hell; juſt as the good angels carry the ſouls of the ſaints to heaven, *Luke* xvi. 22. *Then whoſe ſhall thoſe things be, which thou haſt provided?* not his own, for he can carry nothing with him; nor does he know whoſe they will be, whether the perſons he deſigned them for, or ſome others whom he abhorred, and would, if poſſible, have prevented their enjoyment of them; and ſhould he have them for whom he intended them, he does not know how he will turn out, whether a wiſe man or a fool, or what uſe he'll make of them.

Ver. 21. *So is he that layeth up treaſure for himſelf*, &c.] This is the accommodation of the parable. Juſt ſuch a fool is he, and this will be the end of him, who employs all his thoughts, and ſpends all his time, in amaſſing to himſelf worldly riches and wealth, in laying up treaſures on earth for himſelf, for futurity; and makes no uſe of his earthly ſubſtance for the good of others; nor ſhews any concern for ſpiritual and eternal riches; but places all his hope, truſt, and confidence, in uncertain riches: *and is not rich towards God*; or *in God*, as the *Syriac* and *Arabic* verſions read; in things pertaining to God, in ſpiritual things, in faith, and in good works; and is not concerned to lay up a treaſure in heaven, to have an intereſt in durable riches and righteouſneſs; whereas one that is rich towards God, acknowledges that he receives all his riches *from God*, as the *Ethiopic* verſion reads; he gives up all into the hands of God, depends upon his providence for the increaſe, ſecurity, and continuance of it; and uſes it to his honour and glory, and for the good of his intereſt; and is chiefly concerned for the riches of grace and glory; and enjoys much of God, and places all his riches in him: ſuch a man is a wiſe man, but the reverſe of this is the fool in the parable.

Ver. 22. *And he ſaid unto his diſciples*, &c.] Having finiſhed the parable which he ſpake to the whole audience in common, he directed himſelf to his diſciples, who were poor, and apt to be over anxious about their living in the world: *therefore I ſay unto you, take no thought for your life, what ye ſhall eat.* The *Ethiopic* verſion adds, *and what ye ſhall drink*; and ſo a manuſcript in *Gonvill* and *Caius* college in *Cambridge*, which ſeems to be tranſcribed from *Matt.* vi. 25. life is very near and dear to man; all that a man has, he'll give for it; and it is his duty to be careful to preſerve it, and to make uſe of means for the ſupport of it; but then, as he ſhould not be dainty about the food he eats, and ſhould refuſe no good creature of God, but receive it with thankſgiving, ſo he ſhould not diſtreſs himſelf for fear of wanting bread, nor diſtruſt the promiſes of God, and a ſupply from him; but ſhould caſt all his care upon the Lord, who daily cares for him: *neither for the body, what ye ſhall put on:* it

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[l] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 11. 1.

is highly proper and neceſſary that the body ſhould be clothed, partly for decency, and partly to ſecure it from the inclemency of the weather; but then perſons ſhould not be difficult and over-nice about what they wear, nor be diſtreſſed, fearing they ſhould be clothed with rags; but ſhould truſt in the Lord, who gives food and raiment, and all things richly to enjoy.

Ver. 23. *The life is more than meat*, &c.] What in *Matthew* is put by way of queſtion, is here ſtrongly affirmed; and theſe words contain a reaſon or argument to diſſuade from an anxious, diſtreſſing thought and care about the neceſſaries, conveniencies, and comforts of life: and all the *Oriental* verſions read, *for*, or *ſeeing the life is more than meat*; that is, it is more excellent and valuable in its own nature, being that for the ſupport of which meat is provided; and ſeeing God is the author and giver of life, it need not be doubted but he will give meat for the maintenance and continuance of it, ſo long as it is his pleaſure it ſhould ſubſiſt. *And the body is more than raiment*; it is of more worth than the richeſt clothing that can be had; the fineſt piece of embroidery is not comparable to the curious workmanſhip of the body, *Pſ.* cxxxix. 15. and he that has ſo curiouſly wrought that, will not fail to provide ſuitable and proper clothing for it; and therefore there ought to be no anxiety on this account; ſee the note on *Matt.* vi. 25.

Ver. 24. *Conſider the ravens*, &c.] According to the *Jews*[k] there are three ſorts of ravens, the black raven, the raven of the valley, which is ſaid to be white, and the raven whoſe head is like a dove. In *Matthew*, the *fowls of the air* in general are mentioned, as they are here in the *Cambridge* copy of *Beza*'s; but in others, *the ravens* in particular, they being fowls of very little worth, and diſregarded by men, and odious to them, as well as unclean by the law; and yet theſe are taken care of by God. The *Arabic* verſion reads, *the young ravens*; and theſe are they which are ſaid to cry unto God, who provides food for them, and gives it to them, *Job* xxxviii. 41. *Pſ.* cxlvii. 9. *for they neither ſow nor reap, which neither have ſtorehouſe nor barn*; and yet they are provided for, and therefore, why ſhould men, and eſpecially God's own people, diſtruſt his providence over them, when they both ſow and reap, have the ſeeds time, and harveſt in the appointed ſeaſons: they caſt their ſeed into the earth, and it ſprings up and brings forth much fruit, which they reap when ripe, and gather into their barns and ſtorehouſes, from whence they are ſupplied till another ſeaſon returns; wherefore they have no reaſon to diſtreſs themſelves, ſeeing, tho' this is not the caſe of ravens, yet *God feedeth them*; their young ones, as the above places ſhew. *Jerom* ſays[l], that it is affirmed by ſome philoſophers, that they live upon dew. The *Jews*[m] have a notion, that the old ravens being cruel to their young, and hating them, the Lord has pity on them, and prepares flies, or worms for them, which ariſe out of their dung, and enter into their mouths, and they eat them. One of their commentators ſay[n], when the young ones are hatched they are white, and the old ones leave them, not taking them for their own, and therefore bring them no food, and then they cry to God; and this is mentioned by ſome Chriſtian writers, but not ſufficiently confirmed: and another of them obſerves[o], that the philoſophers of the *Gentiles* ſay, that the ravens leave their young as ſoon as they are hatched; but what *Ariſtotle*[p], *Pliny*[q], and *Ælianus*[r] affirm of theſe creatures is, that as ſoon as they are able to fly they turn them out of their neſts, and even drive them out of the country where they are; when, as it is ſaid in *Job*, they *wander for lack of meat*, and *cry unto God*, who gives it to them: and ſince this is the caſe, and the providence of God is ſo much concerned for ſuch worthleſs creatures, the people of God, and diſciples of Chriſt, ought by no means to diſtruſt it: for as it follows, *how much more are ye better than the fowls*; or *than theſe*, as the *Vulgate Latin* verſion reads; that is, than theſe ravens, or any other fowls whatever; ſee the note on *Matt.* vi. 26.

Ver. 25. *And which of you with taking thought*, &c.] In an anxious and diſtreſſing manner, for food and raiment, in order to preſerve and continue life, *can add to his ſtature one cubit?* The *Perſic* verſion reads, *to his ſtature and heighth*, as if this referred to the heighth of ſtature; whereas it ſeems rather to regard the age of a man, and the continuance of his life; ſee the note on *Matt.* vi. 27.

Ver. 26. *If ye then be not able to do that which is leaſt*, &c.] As to make the ſmalleſt addition to a man's ſtature, or rather to add one moment to his days: *why take ye thought for the reſt?* which are much greater, as to preſerve the body in its whole bulk, and all its parts, or for the feeding and clothing of it, or rather for the continuation and preſervation of life to any length of time; for if it can't be by all a man's care and ſolicitude lengthened out one moment longer than is the pleaſure of God, how ſhould it be by ſuch anxiety continued for months and years?

Ver. 27. *Conſider the lilies how they grow*, &c.] Some copies read, *the lilies of the field*, as in *Matt.* vi. 28. The *Perſic* verſion renders the word, *the roſes and lilies of the field*; and the *Arabic* verſion, *the flowers*; any flowers of the field; for what is afterwards ſaid, is true of any of them, but particularly of the lilies: now, as the former inſtance of God's feeding the ravens is deſigned to remove all anxious and diſtreſſing thoughts about food for the body; this is mentioned to take off every thing of that kind with reſpect to cloathing for it; wherefore, in *Matthew*, theſe words are premiſed to it, *and why take ye thought for raiment?* there will be no need of it, when it is conſidered how the lilies, or tulips, or any other flowers grow up out of the earth, and in what a fine beautiful dreſs they appear, without any care or labour of their own, and even without the care and management of a gardener; for flowers of the field are here meant: *they toil not, they ſpin not*; they neither labour as men do, in ſowing of flax, and dreſſing it, or in combing of wool, or in ſpinning of either: *and yet I ſay unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of theſe*. The *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *in the whole time of his glory*; throughout his glorious reign, at any time; whenever upon any extraordinary occaſion he was dreſſed out in the fineſt manner, yet even then a lily out-did him; its glory being natural to it, whereas his, at beſt, was but artificial, and an imitation of nature; ſee the note on *Matt.* vi. 29.

Ver. 28. *If then God ſo clothe the graſs*, &c.] As lilies and tulips; for they are no other than graſs, weak, frail, fading, ſhort-lived flowers, which have all their gaiety and beauty from the great creator of them: *which is to-day in the field, and to-morrow is caſt into the oven:* the graſs is one day in the field, in all its verdure, glory, and beauty; and being cut down before evening, the next day it is withered, and dried, and made fit to put into an oven, or under a furnace to heat them with: *how much more will* he clothe *you, O ye of little faith?* The *Perſic* verſion renders the words, *how much more excellent are ye than that, O ye of little faith?* they are more excellent in their nature, and of a longer duration, and are deſigned for greater ends and purpoſes; and therefore if God clothes the one in ſuch a manner as he does, how much more will he not clothe the other? and ſuch who are diſtruſtful and diffident in this matter, may well be called men of little faith; ſee the note on *Matt.* vi. 30.

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[k] T. Bab. Cholin, fol. 63. 1.

[l] Comment. in Job xxxviii. 41. & in Pſ. cxlvii. 9.

[m] Jarchi in Job xxxviii. 41. & in Pſ. cxlvii. 9. & Kimchi in ib.

[n] Kimchi ib. Vid. T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 49. 2. & Gloſſ. in ib.

[o] Aben Ezra in Pſ. cxlvii. 9.

[p] Hiſt. Animal. l. 9. c. 31.

[q] Nat. Hiſt. l. 10. c. 12.

[r] De Animal. Natura, l. 2. c. 49.

Ver. 29. *And ſeek not what ye ſhall eat, or what ye ſhall drink,* &c.] That is, in an anxious and diſtreſſing manner, with a tormenting and vexatious care; otherwiſe food is to be both aſked of God every day, and to be ſought for and after in the uſe of proper means: *neither be ye of doubtful minds*; queſtioning and diſtruſting that ye ſhall have any thing to eat or drink: be not fickle, unſtable, and inconſtant, and wandering in your thoughts about theſe things, like the meteors in the air, which are carried about here and there; let not your minds be diſturbed and diſtracted about them, or be anxiouſly ſolicitous for them; ſee the note on *Matt.* vi. 31.

Ver. 30. *For all theſe things do the nations of the world ſeek after,* &c.] That is, the *Gentiles*, as in *Matt.* vi. 32. who are frequently, in the *Jewiſh* writings,[*] called, in diſtinction, from the *Jews*, אומות העולם, *the nations of the world*. This is an argument uſed to diſſuade from an immoderate and anxious concern for food and raiment, becauſe it is heatheniſh, and therefore very unbecoming the diſciples and followers of Chriſt: it need not be wondered at in thoſe that know not God, and do not acknowledge his providence, and are ſtrangers to his covenant and promiſes; but muſt be very unſuitable to the characters of ſuch who know that godlineſs has the promiſe of this life, and of that which is to come: *and your father knoweth that ye have need of theſe things*; and therefore it is needleſs to be ſo anxious about them: the *Perſic* verſion reads, *all theſe things*, and ſo ſome copies; that is, meat, drink, and clothing, all the neceſſaries of life; ſee the note on *Matt.* vi. 32.

Ver. 31. *But rather ſeek ye the kingdom of God,* &c.] The *Vulgate Latin* verſion adds, *firſt*, as alſo, *and his righteouſneſs*, as in *Matt.* vi. 33. and the *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *ſeek his kingdom and righteouſneſs*; meaning either the grace of God, which is not meat and drink, but righteouſneſs, peace and joy in the Holy Ghoſt, *Rom.* xiv. 17. or the heavenly glory; unleſs the Goſpel, and the diſpenſation of it, which is the Meſſiah's kingdom, and which was then juſt uſhering in, ſhould rather be intended. *And all theſe things ſhall be added unto you*; food and raiment, which are as much as can be enjoyed; and godlineſs with theſe, and contentment with them, is great gain; ſee the note on *Matt.* vi. 33.

Ver. 32. *Fear not little flock,* &c.] Theſe words are particularly directed to the immediate apoſtles and diſciples of Chriſt; but are true of all the ſaints in all ages of time, who are compared to a *flock* of ſheep, being ſeparated from the reſt of the world in election, redemption, and effectual vocation, and being folded together in a Goſpel church-ſtate; and alſo for their patience, meekneſs, humility, and harmleſſneſs: theſe are a *little* flock; few in number, when compared with the wicked of the world; and mean and deſpicable in the account of men; and little in their own eyes: theſe are ſubject to many *fears*; ſome relate to their outward ſtate and condition, as that they ſhall want food and raiment, and not have the neceſſaries of life; which ſeems to be in the firſt place here intended, as appears from the context: and ſome regard their ſpiritual and eternal eſtate, as leſt they ſhould have no intereſt in the love of God, and in the covenant, in the bleſſings and promiſes of his grace; leſt they ſhould not belong to Chriſt; or the good work of grace ſhould not be begun in them; or that they ſhould not perſevere to the end, and ſhould at laſt miſcarry of eternal life and happineſs: and theſe fears ariſe from a body of ſin, from the temptations of ſatan, the hidings of God's face, and the prevalence of unbelief; for they have no true reaſon for them: God is on their ſide, and will not leave, nor forſake them, nor ſhall they want any good thing; Chriſt is their ſhepherd, and he has bought them with his own blood, and will loſe none of them; and therefore they need not fear being taken care of both in ſoul and body, for time and eternity: and eſpecially when what follows is conſidered, *for it is your father's good pleaſure to give you the kingdom*; not only the Goſpel, and the knowledge of the myſteries of it; nor the Goſpel church-ſtate, and a right to all its ordinances; nor only the kingdom of grace, which cannot be moved; but the kingdom of glory: and which is a gift unto them, not obtained by any deſerts or works of theirs; nor is their right unto, and enjoyment of it depending upon any ſuch thing: and it is their father's gift, who is ſo by adopting grace, and thro' Chriſt Jeſus their Lord; and which he gives according to his ſovereign will and pleaſure, and with a good will, delighting in them, and rejoicing over them to do them good, both here and hereafter: ſo that they may depend upon every good thing needful for them both in this world, and in the world to come; nor ſhould they indulge anxious cares, or ſlaviſh fears.

Ver. 33. *Sell that ye have, and give alms,* &c.] Since they had a kingdom bequeathed them by their heavenly father, they ſhould be ſo far from indulging an anxious care about food and raiment, that when there was a call in providence for it, and rather than the poor ſhould go without a ſupply, it became them to ſell their houſes and lands, and whatever poſſeſſions they had, and relieve them; and ſo they did not long after; for ſome of thoſe who ſold their eſtates, and brought the money to the apoſtles, *Acts* iv. 34, 35. might be now preſent; and the more readily and chearfully do what they did, remembering theſe words of Chriſt: *provide yourſelves bags which wax not old*; as do the bags of miſers: their bag is, צרור נקוב, *a bag pierced through*, or that has a hole in it, which lets the money out as it is put in, *Hag.* i. 6. and which the *Targum* renders by, למארתא, *for a curſe*; as money hoarded up in bags by covetous perſons generally is: Chriſt would have his followers put their money up in other bags; not in ſuch which rot through age, or are worn out, and are full of holes thro' uſe; but into the hands and bellies of the poor, the fruit and reward of which will always abide; *a treaſure in the heavens that faileth not:*

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[*] Vid. T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 28. 2. & 29. 1.

whereas treaſure on earth does, being either taken away from the poſſeſſors of it by various ways, or they from that: *where no thief approacheth*; can come near to ſteal it away, which is often the caſe here on earth: *neither moth corrupteth*; as it does the beſt of garments, wore by men: but the robes of glory and immortality can never be corrupted; ſee the note on *Matt.* vi. 20.

Ver. 34. *For where your treaſure is*, &c.] Whether in heaven, or in earth, *there will your heart be alſo*: the heart is always ſet upon the treaſure, and as is a man's treaſure, ſuch is his heart, that is, ſet upon it; if his treaſure is only here, and he has not the true riches, his heart is only earthly and carnal; but if his treaſure is heavenly, his heart and converſation will be in heaven; ſee the note on *Matt.* vi. 21.

Ver. 35. *Let your loins be girded about*, &c.] With the girdle of truth, *Eph.* vi. 14. keeping cloſe to the doctrines of the Goſpel, abiding faithfully by them, even unto death: the alluſion is either to the eating of the firſt paſſover, *Exod.* xii. 11. or rather to ſervants, who, in theſe eaſtern countries, wore long garments; and therefore, when in buſineſs, uſed to gather them up, and gird them about them, that they might perform their ſervice with greater ſtrength, more eaſe, quicker diſpatch, and leſs hinderance: the phraſe denotes readineſs for buſineſs: *and your lights burning*. The *Vulgate Latin* verſion adds, *in your hands*; meaning torches that were held in the hand: and may deſign either the ſcriptures of truth, which were to be a light or lamp unto them, guiding and directing them in the miniſtration of the Goſpel; or the lamps of profeſſion, which ſhould be kept clear and bright, and good works, becoming them, that ſhould ſo ſhine before men, that all may ſee them, and glorify God. The alluſion is to perſons waiting at a wedding in the night, with torches and flambleaus in their hands.

Ver. 36. *And ye yourſelves like unto men that wait for their Lord*, &c.] Who either was at a wedding, or was the bridegroom himſelf; ſo be ye in a readineſs, waiting for the coming of Chriſt, the bridegroom of the church: *when he will return from the wedding*. The *Syriac* verſion renders it, *from the houſe of feaſting*; from any entertainment, or from the marriage-feaſt, or rather the marriage itſelf, to the bride-chamber: ſo when Chriſt has, by the preaching of the Goſpel, and the power of his grace, eſpouſed all his elect, he'll deſcend from heaven, and take them to himſelf; they ſhall then be called to the marriage-ſupper of the lamb, and enter with him into the nuptial-chamber, and be for ever with him: *that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open to him immediately*; and let him in without any delay, as ſoon as ever he comes to the door; and at the firſt knock, open it to him at once, having light, and being in a poſture of readineſs, and in conſtant expectation of him: ſo ſuch who have believed in Chriſt, and have been faithful to his cauſe and intereſt, and have held faſt the profeſſion of their faith without wavering, when Chriſt ſhall either come and knock at their doors by death, or ſhall come to judgment, and ſound the alarm of it, they ſhall be ready to obey the ſummons with the greateſt chearfulneſs, and meet him with the utmoſt pleaſure.

Ver. 37. *Bleſſed are thoſe ſervants whom the Lord*, &c.] The *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read, *their Lord*; the maſter of them, or the Lord Jeſus Chriſt: *when he cometh ſhall find watching*; for him, and not aſleep. The *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *ſo doing, and watching*; girding up their loins, trimming their lamps, and waiting for their Lord's coming: ſuch ſervants are happy, they will appear to be in the favour of their maſter, who will take notice of them, and ſhow ſome marks of reſpect to them; as Chriſt will to all his good and faithful ſervants, whenever he comes, whether at death, or at judgment; and who will be happy then, being found ſo doing, and found in him: *verily I ſay unto you, that he ſhall gird himſelf*; not that Chriſt ſhall really do this, or appear in the form of a ſervant; but that he ſhall readily, chearfully, and at once introduce his ſervants into his joy, and make them partakers of all the glories of the other world: *and make them to ſit down to meat*; at his table in his kingdom; ſee *Matt.* viii. 11. *Luke* xxii. 30. *and will come forth and ſerve them*; with food, yea, will feed them himſelf, and lead them to fountains of living water, *Rev.* vii. 17. The *Arabic* verſion renders it, *he ſhall ſtand to miniſter unto them*: the phraſe is expreſſive of the poſture of a ſervant; who, as Dr. *Lightfoot* obſerves, is הולך, *walking*, and who goes round about the table, whilſt others ſit [t]: ſome think there is an alluſion in the words to a cuſtom uſed at ſome feaſts, particularly at the feaſts in honour of *Saturn*, in which ſervants changed clothes with their maſters, and ſat at their tables, and their maſters ſerved them [u].

Ver. 38. *And if he ſhall come in the ſecond watch*, &c.] Of the night, that is, after nine o'clock, or any time between nine and twelve; for the ſecond watch was from nine o'clock till twelve; and this was coming early from an entertainment, or a wedding, which were commonly kept in the night, and late: *or come in the third watch*; or after twelve o'clock, or any time between twelve and three; for the third watch was from twelve o'clock to three, which was late; ſee the note on *Matt.* xiv. 25. The *Perſic* verſion reads, *in the ſecond, or third part of the night*; and the *Ethiopic* verſion, *in the ſecond or third hour of the night*: *and find them ſo*. The *Arabic* verſion adds, *doing*; as above deſcribed, with their loins girt, lights burning, and they watching for their Lord's coming: *bleſſed are thoſe ſervants*; ſince they ſhall be uſed and treated as before related.

Ver. 39. *And this know*, &c.] The *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *this only know*; only take notice of this one thing, and it may be of ſome uſe to direct you in your conduct how to behave during the abſence of your Lord, until the time he ſhall come again: *that if the good man of the houſe had known what hour the thief would come*; that is, if the owner, or maſter of the houſe, whoſe the goods in the houſe are, could by any means know what time of the night the thief would come to break into his houſe, in order to plunder it, and carry off his goods: *he would have watched*; either he himſelf in perſon, or he would have ſet a watch about his houſe, or in it: *and not have ſuffered his houſe to be broken thro'*; either the door to be broken up, or the wall to be dug thro', but by a guard about it, or within it, would have prevented ſuch a deſign. And ſo in like manner, could it be known in what time Chriſt would come, either to the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, or at death, or to judgment, every thoughtful, prudent man that ſhould know it, would be upon his guard, that he might not be ſurprized with it; and tho' the preciſe time could not be known, yet inaſmuch as the thing itſelf is certain, it became all the ſervants of Chriſt to be watching for it; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 43.

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[t] Jarchi in T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 77. 2.

[u] Vid. Lipſii Saturnal. l. 1. c. 2. p. 6.

Ver. 40. *Be ye therefore ready alſo*, &c.] Not only habitually, but actually, in the exerciſe of grace, and the diſcharge of duty, with loins girt, and lights burning. This may be underſtood either of a readineſs to meet the Lord in the way of his judgments, and particularly the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, which was to be a in few years; or of a preparation for death, and the laſt judgment, which lies in the righteouſneſs of Chriſt imputed, and his grace imparted: and to have a comfortable view of the one, and a gracious experience of the other, as they will engage to the performance of good works, to which ſuch are ready; ſo they make meet for the coming of Chriſt, be it in what way, and whenſoever it will: and the rather, a concern ſhould be had for ſuch a preparation, becauſe of the following reaſon, *for the ſon of man cometh at an hour when ye think not*; in either of the above ways; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 44.

Ver. 41. *Then Peter ſaid unto him, Lord*, &c.] The *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read, *our Lord: ſpeakeſt thou this parable*; of the maſter at the wedding, and his ſervants waiting for him, or of the houſekeeper watching that his houſe be not broken up, or both: *unto us, or unto all? Peter* was in doubt whether the above diſcourſe was peculiarly directed to them, the Apoſtles, as containing ſpecial inſtructions to them in the diſcharge of the miniſterial work; or whether it was deſigned for all his diſciples and followers, both in the preſent age, and in time to come, to the end of the world.

Ver. 42. *And the Lord ſaid, who then is that faithful and wiſe ſteward*, &c.] Chriſt does not directly, and in expreſs words, anſwer to *Peter*'s queſtion, but ſuggeſts, that tho' he intended it as a caution to all his people, and in it ſpake to them all to be upon their watch and guard, *Mark* xiii. 37. yet that he had a ſpecial regard to them, his Apoſtles, and ſucceeding miniſters of the Goſpel, whoſe characters, office, work, dignity, and honour, are here deſcribed. Such are *ſtewards* in Chriſt's family; they are entruſted with the ſtores and proviſions of his houſe; and *faithfulneſs* and *wiſdom* are requiſite in them; the one, that they do not corrupt and adulterate the word of God, and mix it with human doctrines, but that they deliver it out pure and ſincere as it is; and the other, that they may rightly divide it, and wiſely diſtribute it: *whom his Lord ſhall make ruler over his houſhold:* Chriſt's *houſhold*, or family, is his church, over which the miniſters of the Goſpel are appointed *rulers*, to govern the houſe according to the laws of Chriſt, and keep every thing in good decorum and order; and particularly their work, and which agrees to their character as ſtewards is, *to give them their portion of meat in due ſeaſon*; in doing which they anſwer the characters of faithful and wiſe ſtewards: they are faithful who give out the whole portion allotted, without adulterating it, or keeping back any part of it; and they are wiſe, who deliver it to them in proper time and ſeaſon. The word tranſlated, *portion of meat*, is only uſed in this place, and is rendered in the *Vulgate Latin* verſion, *a meaſure of wheat*; but it may be applied to any food in general, and an allotment of it; and ſignifies ſuch a portion as was given to ſervants for one month, or rather every day; and may ſignify that portion of the word of God, and the interpretation of it, which is to be given forth every Lord's day to his people, ſuitable to their condition, caſes, and circumſtances. The *Septuagint* tranſlators uſe the verb in *Gen.* xlvii. 12. who render the text thus, *and Joſeph*, εσιτομετρει, *meaſured out to his father*, and to *his brethren*, *and to all the houſe of his father*, *wheat*, or bread, *according to their perſons*, i. e. the number of them: to which paſſage there may be ſome reference here; at leaſt it ſerves to illuſtrate this; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 45.

Ver. 43. *Bleſſed is that ſervant*, &c.] Who is faithful and wiſe, rules well, and diſcharges his truſt with integrity, and diſpoſes of the proviſions of the houſe, in his hands, with great diſcretion and prudence: *whom his Lord, when he cometh*; to take vengeance on the wicked *Jews*, or by death, or at judgment: *ſhall find ſo doing*; behaving as a good ruler, and as a wiſe and faithful ſteward.

Ver. 44. *Of a truth I ſay unto you*, &c.] This, with Chriſt, was a ſtrong way of aſſerting the truth of any thing; and the ſenſe is, you may aſſure yourſelves of it, this will certainly be the happy caſe of ſuch a ſervant: *that he will make him ruler over all that he hath*; as *Joſeph* was made by *Pharoah*. Such an one ſhall reign with Chriſt on earth a thouſand years, and then in heaven with him to all eternity, where he ſhall enjoy all things; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 47.

Ver. 45. *But and if that ſervant ſay in his heart*, &c.] Not the ſame ſervant before ſpoken of as a wiſe and faithful ſteward, that gives to all in the family the portion of meat in due ſeaſon, and ſhall be found ſo doing, and be made ruler over his maſter's goods; but another, who alſo, as he, is made by his Lord ruler over his houſhold, and is in a like poſt, and in the ſame office, but is an *evil ſervant*, as *Matthew* calls him, to diſtinguiſh him from the other; and ſo the *Arabic* and *Ethiopic* verſions read here: *my Lord delayeth his coming*; tho' a wicked ſervant, he calls Chriſt his Lord; but it is not ſaying Lord, Lord, that will be of any avail, but doing the will of God, by believing in Chriſt, and obeying his commands: he had a notion of the coming of Chriſt, tho' he did not deſire it; and becauſe he tarried longer than was expected, ſuppoſed him to be ſlack concerning his promiſe, and began to think, and hope, and at length to believe, that he would not come at all, and therefore gave himſelf up to a wicked and licentious way of living: *and ſhall begin to beat the men-ſervants and maidens*; to perſecute the miniſters of the Goſpel, and the true diſciples of Chriſt, the undefiled virgins, that follow the lamb whitherſoever he goes: *and to eat, and drink, and to be drunken*; to live a voluptuous and ſenſual life, to give himſelf up to intemperance and debauchery: and, generally ſpeaking, as profeſſors of religion, when they turn apoſtates, are the moſt violent perſecutors of the ſaints; ſo ſuch perſecutors of Chriſt's faithful followers are commonly drunkards and debauchees; ſee the notes on *Matt.* xxiv. 48, 49.

Ver. 46. *The Lord of that ſervant will come in a day when he looketh not for him*, &c.] For, not coming as was expected, he gives over looking, and concludes he'll not come at all; in which he'll find himſelf miſtaken, for he'll come in the very day which is appointed, tho' men know not of it, and don't look for it: *and at an hour when he is not aware*; for as neither the day, nor hour of Chriſt's coming are known to any man, it becomes men to look for it every day and hour, leſt it come upon them unawares; as it will, on ſuch evil ſervants before deſcribed, with whom it will go ill, as follows: *and will cut him in* *ſunder, and appoint him his portion with unbelievers*; whoſe portion is the lake which burns with fire and brimſtone, which is the ſecond death, *Rev.* xxi. 8. and by theſe are meant, not only the heathens, who never heard of Chriſt; nor the *Jews* only, who diſbelieved the Meſſiah, and rejected him when he came; but all deiſts and atheiſts, who deny revelation; even all unbelievers of, and ſcoffers at the coming of Chriſt, and who put away the evil day far from them; compare with this *Job* xx. 29. ſee the notes on *Matt.* xxiv. 50, 51.

Ver. 47. *And that ſervant which knew his Lord's will,* &c.] Not his ſecret, but his revealed will; the will of God, which lies in the declarations of his grace and mercy in the Goſpel, and in the commands and ordinances expreſſed in his word; and which are the good, perfect, and acceptable will of God; the knowledge of which is neceſſary, in order to practice: and where there is a ſpiritual and ſaving knowledge, there will be practice; but there may be knowledge, where there is no practice, and which was the caſe here: Chriſt here diſtinguiſhes between wicked ſervants, ſome being knowing, and others ignorant; and accordingly the aggravations of their guilt are more or leſs: *and prepared not* himſelf; ſo the *Arabic* and *Ethiopic* verſions ſupply, but the *Syriac* verſion, *for him*, that is, for his Lord: but it may as well be read as in the *Vulgate Latin*, without any ſupplement, *and prepared not*; he took no thought nor care, about doing it: there is no preparation, readineſs, nor diſpoſition, in a natural man, to the will of God: no man is prepared, or ready to do it, but he that is regenerated, or is made a new creature; who has the laws of God written on his heart, and who has the Spirit of God put within him, to cauſe him to keep them; and who has faith in Chriſt, and ſtrength from him to obſerve them: but there may be knowledge, where ſuch a preparation is wanting; perſons may know much, and profeſs to know more, and in works deny all, and be to every good, unfit, diſobedient, and reprobate: this clauſe is left out in the *Perſic* verſion: *neither did according to his will*; the will of God is done aright, when what is done, is done according to the command of God, in the ſtrength of Chriſt, from love to him, in the exerciſe of faith on him, and with a view to his glory, and without any dependance on what is done; but there may be knowledge, without any thing of this: the words, *neither did*, are wanting in the *Syriac* verſion: and ſuch a man that has knowledge without practice, *ſhall be beaten with many* ſtripes; alluding to the law of the *Jews*, by which a wicked man was to be puniſhed, by beating him with ſtripes, not exceeding forty, according to the nature of his fault, *Deut.* xxv. 2, 3. and here it ſignifies, that perſons who have light and knowledge, and the means thereof, and act not according to them, ſhall be puniſhed with the greateſt ſeverity, and endure the greateſt degree of torments in hell; ſee *Matt.* xi. 21, 22, 23, 24.

Ver. 48. *But he that knew not,* &c.] His Lord's will; either not having the means of knowing it, as the heathens; or through neglect of them, not attending to them, and making uſe of them, which is the caſe of many, where the Goſpel revelation is: *and did committ things worthy of ſtripes*; or puniſhment; as the *Gentiles*, by ſinning againſt the law, and light of nature; and thoſe who might have the advantage of a divine revelation, but neglect it: the *Septuagint* in *Deut.* xxv. 2. have the ſame phraſe as here, αξιος πληγων, *worthy of ſtripes*: *ſhall be beaten with few* ſtripes; their puniſhment ſhall be leſs, and it ſhall be more tolerable for them in the day of judgment, than for knowing profeſſors. The *Jews* did not always inflict forty ſtripes, or forty ſave one, upon delinquents; but according to their crimes, and as they were able to bear them, more or fewer: ſo it is ſaid [w], "when they judge a ſinner, how many (ſtripes) he can bear, they don't reckon, but by ſtripes that are fit to be trebled: if they judge he is able to bear *twenty*, they don't order that he be beaten with twenty-one, that ſo they may be trebled, but that he be beaten with *eighteen*: if they adjudge him to receive forty, and after he is begun to be beaten, they obſerve him to be weak, and they ſay he can't bear any more than theſe *nine*, or *twelve*, with which he has been beaten, lo, he is free: if they adjudge him to receive *twelve*, and after that he is beaten, they ſee that he is ſtrong and able to bear more, lo, he is free, and he is not to be beaten any more, upon that eſtimation: if they adjudge him to day, that he is to be beaten with *twelve* (ſtripes,) and they don't beat him till to morrow, and lo, to morrow he is able to bear eighteen, they don't beat him but with *twelve*." And elſewhere the rule is [x], "he that commits a ſin, in which there are two negative (commands broken) if they pronounce but one ſentence, he is beaten and is free; but if not (*i. e.* if more than one) he is beaten, and when he is healed, he is beaten again." *For unto whomſoever much is given, of him ſhall much be required*: the more knowledge a man has, the more practice is expected from him; and the greater his gifts are, the more uſeful he ought to be, and diligent in the improvement of them: *and to whom men have committed much*, or *to whom much is committed, of him they will aſk the more*; not more than what was committed to him, but more than from him, who has leſs committed to him; in proportion to what a man is entruſted with, the greater increaſe and improvement 'tis expected he ſhould make.

Ver. 49. *I am come to ſend fire on the earth,* &c.] Meaning either the Goſpel, which is as fire, that gives both light and heat, warms the hearts of God's people, and cauſes them to burn within them; though very diſtreſſing and torturing to wicked men; ſo the word of God is compared to fire, in *Jer.* xx. 9. and xxiii. 29. Or elſe zeal for it, and which would be oppoſed with ſharp contentions by others; or rather perſecution for the ſake of the Goſpel, called ſometimes the fiery trial; which tries men, as gold is tried in the fire, what they are, and what their principles and profeſſion be; unleſs the Holy Ghoſt, and baptizing with him, and with fire, ſhould be meant; ſince Chriſt in the next verſe, ſpeaks of the baptiſm of his ſufferings, which that was to follow: *and what will I?* what ſhall I ſay concerning this fire? what ſhall I wiſh and pray for? what would be pleaſing and agreeable to me? even this, *if it be already kindled*; or *that it were already kindled*, or *O that it were already kindled*; meaning either that the Goſpel was warmly preached by his diſciples, and zealouſly defended by them, as it was after his death and reſurrection; or that hot perſecution was raiſed againſt it, which was now beginning, ſince the advantage of it, would be far greater than the evil in it; or that the Holy Ghoſt was come down in cloven tongues, like as of fire.

Ver. 50. *But I have a baptiſm to be baptized with,* &c.] Not water baptiſm, for he had been baptized with that already; nor the baptiſm of the Spirit, which he had alſo received without meaſure; though the *Ethiopic* verſion reads it actively, *with which I ſhall baptize*, referring doubtleſs to that; but the baptiſm of his ſufferings is meant, which are compared to a baptiſm, becauſe of the largeneſs and abundance of them; he was at it were immerſed, or plunged into them; and which almoſt all interpreters obſerve on the text, and by which they confeſs the true import and primary ſignification of the word uſed: as in baptiſm, performed by immerſion, the perſon is plunged into water, is covered with it, and continues a while under it, and then is raiſed out of it, and which being once done, is done no more; ſo the ſufferings of Chriſt were ſo many and large, that he was as it were covered with them, and he continued under them for a time, and under the power of death and the grave, when being raiſed from thence, he dies no more, death hath no more dominion over him. This baptiſm he *had*, there was a neceſſity of his being baptized with it, on his Father's account; it was his will, his decree, and the command he enjoined him as Mediator; it was the portion he allotted him, and the cup he gave unto him: and on his own part, he obliged himſelf unto it, in the counſel and covenant of peace; for this purpoſe he came into this world, and had ſubſtituted himſelf in the room and ſtead of his people; and it was neceſſary on their part, for their ſins could not be atoned for without ſufferings, nor without the ſufferings of Chriſt; moreover, the promiſes and prophecies of the Old Teſtament concerning them, made them neceſſary: *and how am I ſtraitned until it be accompliſhed:* theſe words expreſs both the trouble and diſtreſs Chriſt was in, at the apprehenſion of his ſufferings as man; which were like to the diſtreſs of perſons, cloſely beſieged by an enemy; or rather of a woman, whoſe time of travail draws nigh, when ſhe dreads it, and yet longs to have it over: and likewiſe they ſignify, his reſtleſs deſire to have them accompliſhed; not that he deſired that *Judas* ſhould betray him, or the *Jews* crucify him, as theſe were ſins of theirs; nor merely his ſufferings as ſuch; but that thereby the juſtice of God might be ſatisfied, the law might be fulfilled, and the ſalvation of his people be obtained: and this eager deſire of his, he had ſhown in various inſtances, and did ſhow afterwards; as in his ready compliance with his Father's propoſal in eternity; in his frequent appearances in human nature before his incarnation; in ſending one meſſage after another, to give notice of his coming; in his willingneſs to be about his Father's buſineſs, as ſoon as poſſible; in rebuking *Peter*, when he would have diſſuaded him from all thoughts of ſuffering; in going to *Jeruſalem* on his own accord, in order to ſuffer there; in his earneſt wiſh, to eat the laſt paſſover with his diſciples; in the joy that poſſeſſed him, when *Judas* was gone out, in order to betray him; in ſtopping in the midſt of his ſermon, leſt he ſhould over-run, or outſlip the time, of meeting him in the garden, *John* xiv. 30, 31. in his going thither, and willingly ſurrendering himſelf up into the hands of his enemies; and in chearfully laying down his life: all which aroſe, from the entire love he had for the perſons he died for; and becauſe it was his Father's will, and his glory was concerned herein, and his own glory alſo was advanced thereby; moreover, his death was the life of others, and the work required haſte.

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[w] Maimon. Hilchot Sanhedrin, c. 17. §. 2, 3.

[x] Miſn. Maccot, c. 3. §. 11.

Ver. 51. *Suppoſe ye that I am come to give peace on earth?* &c.] To ſet up a temporal kingdom, in great pomp, and outward peace and tranquillity? Chriſt came to make peace with God for men, and to give the Goſpel of peace, and ſpiritual and eternal peace to men; but not external peace, eſpecially that, which is not conſiſtent with the preſervation of truth: *I tell you, nay*; whatever ſuppoſitions you have made, or whatever notions you have entertained, I ſolemnly affirm, and you may depend upon it, I am not come into the world on any ſuch account, as to eſtabliſh outward peace among men: *but rather diviſion*; ſo he calls the Goſpel, which in *Matthew* is ſtiled a *ſword*; and the *Ethiopic* verſion ſeems to have read both here, ſince it renders it, *but a ſword that I may divide*: the Goſpel is the ſword of the Spirit, which divides aſunder ſoul and ſpirit, and ſeparates a man from his former principles and practices; and ſets men apart from one another, even the neareſt relations, at the greateſt diſtance; and is, through the ſin of man, the occaſion of great contention, diſcord, and diviſion.

Ver. 52. *For from henceforth there ſhall be five in one houſe*, &c.] Which are the five following, mentioned in the next verſe; the father and the ſon, the mother and the daughter, and her daughter-in-law, or ſon's wife; for the mother and mother-in-law, are one and the ſame perſon, only ſtanding in different relations; as a mother to her own daughter, and a mother-in-law to her ſon's wife, or to her huſband's daughter by his firſt wife; though the former beſt anſwers to the word uſed: now from the time of Chriſt's ſaying theſe words, or quickly after this, immediately upon his baptiſm of ſufferings, or ſoon after his death, when the Goſpel ſhould be preached more publickly and extenſively, this ſhould be the effect of it; that ſuppoſing a family conſiſting of the above number, they ſhould be *divided* from one another, in the following manner: *three againſt two, and two againſt three*; three that did not believe in Chriſt, againſt two that did believe in him; or two that did not believe, againſt three that did; or three that did, againſt two that did not; or two that did, againſt three that did not. The *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *two ſhall be ſeparated from three, and one ſhall be ſeparated from two.*

Ver. 53. *The father ſhall be divided againſt the ſon*, &c.] Shall oppoſe him, differ with him, and be alienated from him, and ſo the other relations as follow; ſee the notes on *Matt.* x. 35, 36.

Ver. 54. *And he ſaid alſo to the people*, &c.] For what Chriſt had before ſaid, were chiefly, if not ſolely, directed to his diſciples; but now he turned himſelf to the innumerable multitude that were about him, and particularly addreſſed himſelf to the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* that were among them: *when ye ſee a cloud riſe out of the weſt*; the watry vapours being attracted by the heat of the ſun, out of the *Mediterranean* ſea, which lies weſt of the land of *Judea*, and formed into a cloud, and drove by the wind: *ſtraightway ye ſay there comes a ſhower*; as ſoon as it is ſeen, it is preſently concluded and affirmed, that a very heavy ſhower will ſoon fall, it having been frequently obſerved ſo to do, when this has been the caſe: *and ſo it is*; for the moſt part, there commonly follows a large ſhower on ſuch an appearance, and they were ſeldom miſtaken in their concluſions.

Ver. 55. *And when ye ſee the ſouth wind blow*, &c.] From the hot countries of *Egypt*, *Ethiopia*, and *Arabia*, which lay ſouth of *Judea*: *ye ſay there will be heat*; or hot ſultry weather, ſcorching heat, which ſuch a wind brings with it: *and it cometh to paſs*; generally ſpeaking, as is aſſerted.

Ver. 56. *Ye hypocrites,* &c.] A word often uſed of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, and which ſuggeſts, that there were ſuch in company, to whom Chriſt more eſpecially directs his diſcourſe; and this may be the rather thought, ſince much the like things are ſaid by him to the *Phariſees*, with the *Sadducees*, in *Matt*. xvi. 1, 2, 3. and the ſame appellation is given them there, as here: *ye can diſcern the face of the ſky, and of the earth*; from the appearance of the ſky, they could tell how it would be with the earth, and the inhabitants of it, whether they ſhould have dry or wet weather, heat or cold: *but how is it that ye do not diſcern this time?* that this is the time of the Meſſiah's coming, and that it is the accepted time, and day of ſalvation, if ye receive him, and believe in him; and a time of vengeance, if ye reject him: this might have been diſcerned by the prophecies of the Old Teſtament, which fix the characters of the Meſſiah, and the time of his coming; and deſcribe the manners of the men of that generation, in which he ſhould come; and point out both their happineſs and their ruin; as alſo by the doctrines they heard Chriſt preach, and eſpecially by the miracles which were wrought by him, it might have been known he was come.

Ver. 57. *Yea, and why even of yourſelves,* &c.] From their own obſervation, as in diſcerning the ſigns of the weather; in a rational way, by the light of reaſon, and according to the dictates of their own conſciences; by what they themſelves ſaw and heard; by the ſigns and wonders which were done, they might have concluded, that now was the time of the Meſſiah's coming; and that he was come, and that Jeſus of *Nazareth* was he: this was as eaſy, by obſervation, to be diſcerned, as the face of the ſky was; even of themſelves, without any hints or directions from others: *judge ye not what is right?* or *truth*, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions render it; concerning the preſent time, the coming of the Meſſiah, and the accompliſhment of the promiſes and prophecies of the Old Teſtament in him: or why do ye not of yourſelves judge, what is fit and right to be done between man and man, without going to law? and that in caſes which are plain and clear, the conſequences of which may be as eaſily diſcerned, as what weather it will be by the ſigns in the heavens; to which ſenſe the following words incline.

Ver. 58. *When thou goeſt with thine adverſary,* &c.] The creditor, as the *Perſic* verſion, and who is the proſecutor, that has commenced a ſuit of law againſt another, in order to obtain his right: for Chriſt is here ſpeaking of a bad man, that will not pay his juſt debts, ſo that his creditor is obliged to proſecute him, and have him *to the magiſtrate*; ruler, or prince; the *Naſi*, or prince of the *Sanhedrim*, who ſat as judge there: as thou art *in the way*; going along with the creditor, or proſecutor, to the court of judicature; *give diligence that thou mayſt be delivered from him.* The *Perſic* verſion renders it, *give him the money*; and the *Arabic* verſion, *give what thou oweſt*; and the *Syriac* verſion, *give the gain*; or pay the intereſt, about which the diſpute is, and ſo eſcape out of his hands; leſt when the matter is brought into court, ſentence ſhould be given, to pay both intereſt and principal, with all coſts and charges; or however, make up matters with him, ſatisfy him in ſome way or other, before things are brought to an extremity: *leſt he hale thee to the judge*; the ſame that is called the magiſtrate, or prince before, that ſits chief upon the bench, hears and tries cauſes, and paſſes ſentence: *and the judge deliver thee to the officer*; who upon hearing the matter in difference, and giving the cauſe againſt the defendant, and for the proſecutor, delivers the debtor into the hands of a proper officer, in order to commit him to priſon: the word rendered *officer*, ſignifies an exactor of debts, or fines, and was one that obliged ſuch as were caſt, to do what the judge appointed to be done: in the *Septuagint* on *Iſa*. iii. 12. it anſwers to an *oppreſſor*; and ſuch men were wont to uſe rigour, to bring perſons to the payment of their debts, or fines: *and the officer caſt thee into priſon*; which he had power to do, when committed into his hands by the judge, in caſe the ſentence pronounced was not immediately complied with; ſee the note on *Matt*. v. 25.

Ver. 59. *I tell thee,* &c.] The *Syriac* verſion before theſe words, prefixes an *Amen*, or *verily*, for the ſake of the ſtronger affirmation, which ſeems to be taken from *Matt*. v. 26. *thou ſhalt not depart thence*; get out of priſon: *till thou haſt paid the very laſt mite*; of the ſum in debate, which was what the *Jews* call a *prutah*, and that was the eighth part of an *Italian* farthing, and half a common farthing; ſee *Mark* xii. 42. and the note there: with this agrees what *Maimonides* ſays [y], that "when he that lends, requires what he has lent, though he is rich, and the borrower is diſtreſſed, and ſtraitened for food, there's no mercy ſhewed him in judgment, but his debt is demanded of him, עד פרוטה אחרונה, *unto the laſt prutah*, or *mite*."

## CHAP. XIII.

Ver. 1. T*HERE were preſent at that ſeaſon,* &c.] Among the innumerable multitude of people, ch. xii. 1. that were then hearing the above diſcourſes and ſayings of Chriſt; *ſome that told him of the Galileans, whoſe blood Pilate had mingled with their ſacrifices.* Theſe *Galileans*, were very likely ſome of the followers of *Judas Gaulonitis*, or *Judas* of *Galilee*; ſee *Acts* v. 37. who endeavoured to draw off the *Jews* from the *Roman* government, and affirmed it was not lawful to give tribute to *Cæſar*; at which *Pilate* being enraged, ſent a band of ſoldiers, and ſlew theſe his followers; who were come up to the feaſt of the paſſover, as they were offering their ſacrifices in the temple, and ſo mixed their blood with the blood of the paſſover lambs: this being lately done, ſome of the company ſpoke of it to Chriſt; very likely ſome of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, whom he had juſt now taxed as hypocrites; either to know his ſenſe of *Pilate*'s conduct, that ſhould he condemn it as brutiſh and barbarous, they might accuſe him to him; or ſhould he approve of it, might traduce him, and bring him into contempt among the people; or to know his ſentiments concerning the perſons ſlain, whether or no they were not very wicked perſons; and whether this was not a judgment upon them, to be put to death in ſuch a manner, and at ſuch a time and place; and which ſenſe ſeems to be confirmed by Chriſt's anſwer. *Joſephus* [z] relating a ſlaughter of the *Samaritans* by *Pilate*, which bears ſome likeneſs to this, has led ſome, though without any juſt reaſon, to conclude, that theſe were *Samaritans*, who are here called *Galileans*. This hiſtory is neither related nor hinted at, by any other writer but *Luke*. The phraſe of mingling blood with blood, is *Jewiſh*; it is ſaid of one *Trogianus* the wicked (perhaps the Emperor *Trajan*) that he ſlaughtered the *Jews*, ועורב דמן בדמן, *and mingled their blood with their blood*; and their blood ran into the ſea, unto *Cyprus* [a]. The *Jews* [b] have a notion, that "in the age in which the ſon of *David* comes, "*Galilee* ſhall be deſtroyed." Here was a great ſlaughter of the *Galileans* now; ſee *Acts* v. 37. but there was a greater afterwards by the *Romans*: it may be that the *Phariſees* made mention of this caſe to Chriſt, to reproach him and his followers, who were called *Galileans*, as his diſciples chiefly were.

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[y] Hilchot Milvah, c. 1. §. 4.

Ver. 2. *And Jeſus anſwering, ſaid unto them*, &c.] Neither approving, nor condemning *Pilate*'s action; and though he allowed the *Galileans* to be ſinners, which could not be denied, he does not bear hard upon them, but improves the inſtance for the conviction of his hearers, and in order to ſhow them the neceſſity of repentance, and to bring them to it: *ſuppoſe ye that theſe Galileans were ſinners above all the Galileans, becauſe they ſuffered ſuch things?* ſuch a ſuppoſition they ſeem to have made, by their ſpeaking to Chriſt concerning this matter; and concluded from their violent and untimely deaths, that they had been notorious and uncommon ſinners, and guilty of the moſt enormous crimes, which had brought upon them the juſt judgments of God: whereas this is not a rule of judging; oftentimes the beſt of men, ſuffer exceedingly in this life; God's judgments are a great deep, and not to be fathomed by us, nor is it to be eaſily known, when any thing befalls perſons in a way of judgment; there's nothing comes by chance, but every thing by the wiſe diſpoſal of divine providence, to anſwer ſome end or another; nor are perſons that are puniſhed, either immediately by the hand of God, or by the civil magiſtrate, to be inſulted, but rather to be pitied; beſides, love and hatred, the characters and ſtates of men, are not to be known by theſe effects in providence.

Ver. 3. *I tell you, nay*, &c.] They were not greater ſinners than others of their neighbours, nor is it to be concluded from the bloody ſlaughter that was made of them; others might be much more deſerving of ſuch an end than they, who yet eſcaped it: *but except ye repent*; of ſin, and particularly of the diſbelief of the Meſſiah: *ye ſhall likewiſe periſh*; or periſh in like manner, as theſe *Galileans* did: and ſo it came to paſs in the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, that great numbers of the unbelieving *Jews*, even three hundred thouſand men were deſtroyed at the feaſt of paſſover [c]; and that for ſedition, as theſe men very likely were.

Ver. 4. *Or thoſe eighteen*, &c.] Men; the *Perſic* verſion reads, *thoſe twelve*; but all copies, and other verſions, agree in the number: *upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and ſlew them*; there was a pool near *Jeruſalem*, called the pool of *Siloam*, *John* ix. 7. near, or over which, was a tower built, which fell down and killed eighteen men; very likely as they were purifying themſelves in the pool, and ſo was a caſe very much like the other, and might be a very late one; and this Chriſt the rather obſerves, and puts them in mind of, that they might ſee that not *Galileans* only, whom they had in great contempt, but even inhabitants of *Jeruſalem*, died violent deaths, and came to untimely ends; and yet, as not in the former caſe, ſo neither in this was it to be concluded from hence, that they were ſinners of a greater ſize, or their ſtate worſe than that of other men: *think ye that they were ſinners*; or debtors; for as ſins are called debts, *Matt.* vi. 12. ſo ſinners are called debtors: *above all men that dwelt in Jeruſalem?* there might be, and doubtleſs there were, as great, or greater ſinners, in that holy city, and among ſuch that made great pretenſions to religion and holineſs, as they were.

Ver. 5. *I tell you, nay*, &c.] I affirm it, and you may depend upon it, they were not greater ſinners than others; though ſuch a melancholy accident befel them, not without the providence of God: *but except ye repent, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh*; or periſh in the ſame manner; that is, ſhall be buried under the ruins of the city and temple of *Jeruſalem*, when one ſtone ſhould not be left upon another; juſt as theſe eighteen men were buried under the ruins of the tower of *Siloam*, of which it was a pledge and emblem; and accordingly great numbers of them did periſh in the temple, and were buried under the ruins of it [d].

Ver. 6. *He ſpake alſo this parable*, &c.] That is, *Jeſus* ſpake, as the *Perſic* verſion expreſſes it, that which follows; and at the ſame time, and upon the above occaſion; ſetting forth the patience of God towards the *Jewiſh* nation, their unfruitfulneſs, and the danger of their being deſtroyed, in caſe of non-amendment: *a certain man had a fig-tree planted in his vineyard*. This was not at all contrary to the law in *Deut.* xxii. 9. *thou ſhalt not ſow thy vineyard with divers ſeeds*; for according to the *Jewiſh* canons [e], "the prohibition on account of divers "ſeeds in a vineyard, concerned divers ſorts of "corn, (as wheat, barley, &c.) and divers ſorts of "herbs only: but it was lawful to ſow other ſorts "of ſeeds in a vineyard, and there is no need to "ſay other trees." And there are caſes put, and inſtances given, which expreſs, or ſuppoſe fig-trees, particularly, to have been planted in vineyards: for it is ſaid [f], "if a man carries a vine over part of "a tree for meat, he may ſow ſeed under the other "part of it——it happened that *R. Joſhuah* went "to *R. Iſhmael* to *Cephar Aziz*, and he ſhewed him "a *vine*, carried over, מקצת תאנה, *part of a fig-"tree*." Again, more than once it is ſaid in a parabolical way [g], "this is like unto a king "that has a paradiſe, or orchard planted, "שורה של תאנים ושל גפנים, *a row of fig-trees "and of vines*, and of pomegranates, and of ap-"ples, &c." By the *certain man* may be meant, either God the Father, who is ſometimes called an huſbandman; or rather the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who is truly man, as well as properly God; and by *his vineyard* may be meant, the *Jewiſh* nation; ſee *Iſa.* v. 1, 2, 7. which were his own nation and people, from whence he ſprung, and to whom he was particularly ſent, and among whom he had a ſpecial property; and may alſo be applied to the church of God in any age or nation, which is often compared to a vineyard, conſiſting of perſons ſeparated from the world, and planted with

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[z] Antiqu. l. 18. c. 5. [a] T. Hieroſ. Succa, fol. 55. 2. Vid. Lightfoot Hor. in loc. [b] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 97. 1. [c] Vid. Joſeph. de Bello Jud. l. 6. c. 11. & l. 7. c. 17. Euſeb. l. 3. c. 5. [d] Joſeph. de Bello Jud. l. 6. c. 4. [e] Maimon. Hilchot Celaim, c. 5. §. 6. [f] Miſn. Celaim, c. 6. §. 4. [g] Vajikra Rabba, §. 23. fol. 164. 3. Shirhaſhirim Rabba, fol. 9. 2.

various plants, ſome fruitful, pleaſant, profitable, and valuable, and are Chriſt's by his father's gift, and his own purchaſe. And by *the fig-tree* planted in it, may be principally meant the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, and the generality of the *Jewiſh* people; who were plants, but not of Chriſt's father's planting, and therefore to be cut down, or rooted up: and may be accommodated to profeſſors of religion; ſome of which are true and real, and may be compared to the fig-tree, becauſe of its large and green leaves, expreſſive of their profeſſion; and become fruitful, as they are, being filled with the fruits of the ſpirit, of righteouſneſs, and of grace; and becauſe it puts forth its fruit before its leaves, as there ſhould be the fruit of grace before a profeſſion of faith is made. Others are only nominal profeſſors; and are like a fig-tree, of which ſort was this in the parable, that has large leaves, but no fruit; make a large profeſſion, but bring forth no fruit to the glory of God; and tho' they are planted in the houſe of God, yet not by God the Father, nor by Chriſt, only at beſt by miniſters and churches hoping well of them, but miſtaken in them: *and he came and ſought fruit thereon, and found none.* This, if underſtood of God the Father, deſigns his coming to the *Jewiſh* people by his ſervants and prophets, time after time, and at laſt by *John* the *Baptiſt*, and Jeſus Chriſt, and his apoſtles, ſeeking and requiring fruits of holineſs, righteouſneſs, and judgment, but found inſtead thereof the wild grapes of wickedneſs, oppreſſion, and violence: but if of Chriſt, which ſenſe is rather to be choſen, it denotes his incarnation, or his coming into the world in human nature, and ſeeking, by his miniſtry, the fruits of faith in himſelf, and repentance towards God among the people of the *Jews*, but found none; at leaſt inſtances of faith in *Iſrael* were very rare, and few repented of their evil works; and hence he upbraided many with their impenitence and unbelief; ſee *Matt.* xi. 20.

Ver. 7. *Then ſaid he unto the dreſſer of the vineyard*, &c.] If by the owner of the vineyard is meant God the Father, then by the dreſſer of the vineyard Jeſus Chriſt is intended; but as he ſeems rather deſigned by the owner, the vine-dreſſer, or *the gardeners*, as the *Perſic* verſion reads, in the plural number, may ſignify the miniſters of the word, to whom Chriſt, who is *Solomon*'s antitype, lets out his vineyard to dreſs and cultivate it, and to keep the fruit of it; ſee *Cant.* viii. 11, 12. *behold, theſe three years I come ſeeking fruit on this fig-tree, and find none*; or *behold, there are three years ſince I came*; ſo read the *Vulgate Latin* and *Perſic* verſions, and *Beza*'s moſt ancient copy. Some think Chriſt here refers to the three years of his public miniſtry, which he had now gone thro' among the *Jews* with little ſucceſs; but he ſeems rather to allude to the nature of fig-trees, which, if fruitful, bear in three years time; for even, בנות שוח, *a ſort of white figs*, which are the longeſt before they bring forth fruit to perfection, yet their fruit is ripe in three years time. Theſe trees bear fruit once in three years; they bear fruit indeed every year, but their fruit does not come to maturity till after three years [i]; and this may be the reaſon why this number is fixed upon; for if ſuch fig-trees do not bring forth ripe fruit in three years time, there's little reaſon to expect any from them: and thus it was time after time with the *Jewiſh* nation; and ſo it is with carnal profeſſors: hence it follows, *cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?* or *that it may not cumber*; or *render the ground uſeleſs*, as read the *Arabic* verſion, and one of *Beza*'s copies; for unfruitful trees ſuck up the juices of the earth, and draw away nouriſhment from other trees that are near them, and ſo make the earth barren, and not only hurt other trees, but ſtand in the way and place of fruitful ones; and therefore 'tis beſt to cut them down. So barren profeſſors, as were the *Jews*, are not only uſeleſs and unprofitable themſelves, being fruitleſs, but make churches barren, and ſtand in the way of others, who are ſtumbled by them; they are grieving to God, to Chriſt, and to the bleſſed Spirit, and are troubleſome and burdenſome to churches, miniſters, and true believers: and the cutting them down may regard the judgment of God upon the nation of the *Jews*, which Chriſt would not have his apoſtles and miniſters interpoſe for the averting of; or the excommunication of ſuch worthleſs and hurtful profeſſors out of the churches by them.

Ver. 8. *And he anſwering ſaid unto him, Lord*, &c.] Which, if underſtood of God the Father, may intend the interceſſion of Chriſt with him, who not only intercedes for his elect, for thoſe that are unconverted, that they may be converted; and for converted ones, for the carrying on of the work of ſanctification; for freſh diſcoveries of pardoning grace; for conſolation and ſupport under trouble; for their final perſeverance, and eternal glorification: but alſo for his enemies, for prophane ſinners, and for formal profeſſors; for the ſake of his own people among them, and for their preſervation, and for the averting of divine judgments from them, at leaſt as yet: and ſo the *Jewiſh* nation was ſpared for ſome time after this, though now deſerving of immediate deſtruction. But rather, the interceſſion of the miniſters of Chriſt, and other good men, may be here meant; who, as *Abraham* interceded for *Sodom*, and *Moſes* and *Aaron* for *Iſrael*, ſo do they for a ſinful nation, a barren and unfruitful church and people, and particular perſons, that they may be ſpared, at leaſt a little longer, as here: *let it alone this year alſo*; have patience one year more, or a little while longer. The *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *until the winter*, that being a time for digging about, and dunging of trees, as follows: *till I ſhall dig about it, and dung it*; theſe ſame phraſes are uſed in the *Miſna* [k], “מזבלין ומעדרין, “ *they dung and dig* in gardens of cucumbers, and “ gourds, until the beginning of the year:” upon which their commentators ſay [l], that they carry dung into their gardens to moiſten the earth, and dig about the roots of the trees, and lay them bare, and cover them again, and prune them, and ſmoke them to kill the worms. And by theſe phraſes may be ſignified the various means Chriſt made uſe of by his own miniſtry, and by the miniſtry of his Apoſtles, to make the *Jews* a fruitful people; and rather the means Chriſt's miniſters make uſe of, as did the Apoſtles with the *Jews*, to reach the caſes of barren profeſſors; as by *digging*, ſtriking at, and expoſing ſome ſecret ſin or ſins, which are the root and ſource of their barrenneſs; ſhewing them, that they have no root in Chriſt, nor the root of the matter in them; and declaring to them the inſufficiency of a mere profeſſion of religion to ſave them: and *dunging*, which as it ſuppoſes want of heat, or coldneſs, which is the cauſe of barrenneſs, and ſignifies, that ſuch profeſſors are without ſpiritual life, and without ſpiritual heat, or real warmth of love to Chriſt, his truths, ordinances, and people, and diſcharge their duty in a cold and lifeleſs manner; ſo it may deſign the means they make uſe of to warm and fire them with zeal for God, and true religion; by preaching the ſoul-quickening doctrines of the Goſpel, and by laying before them the agreeableneſs of a becoming zeal, and the diſagreeableneſs of a lukewarm ſpirit and diſpoſition, an indolence and unconcern for the glory of God, and intereſt of Chriſt.

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[i] T. Hieroſ. Sheviith, fol. 35. 4. Jarchi, Maimon. & Bartenora in Miſn. Demai, c. 1. §. 1. & Sheviith, c. 5. §. 1.

[k] Sheviith, c. 2. §. 2.

[l] Jarchi, Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

Ver. 9. *And if it bear fruit*, well, &c.] If hereby barren profeſſors, as the *Jews*, become fruitful, 'tis well, a good thing is done; 'tis well for themſelves, they ſhall eat the fruit of their doings; 'tis well for the churches, where they are, for good works are profitable to men; and it is well for the owner of the vineyard, and the dreſſer of it too, for when Chriſt has his fruit from his churches, his miniſters have theirs alſo: *and if not*, then *after that*; *for the time to come*, as the *Vulgate Latin*; or *year following*, as the *Perſic* verſion renders it: *thou ſhall cut it down*; do with it as thou pleaſeſt, nothing more will be ſaid or pleaded in its behalf; full conſent ſhall be given, and no more interceſſion uſed: any trees might not be cut down, only barren ones; there's a law in *Deut.* xx. 19, 20. about cutting down trees, and which the *Jews* explain thus[m]; “ they may not cut down trees for meat “ without the city, nor with-hold from them the “ courſe of water, that ſo they may become dry; “ as it is ſaid, *thou ſhalt not deſtroy the trees*; and “ whoever cuts any down is to be beaten, and not “ in a ſiege only, but in any place: whoever cuts “ down a tree for meat, by way of deſtroying it, “ is to be beaten; but they may cut it down if it “ hurts others trees, or becauſe it hurts in the field “ others, or becauſe its price is dear; the law does “ not forbid, but by way of deſtroying. Every “ barren tree it is lawful to cut down, even tho' a “ man hath no need of it; and ſo a tree for meat, “ which does hurt, and does not produce but little “ fruit, and it is not worth while to labour about “ it, it is lawful to cut it down: and how much “ may an olive-tree produce, and it may not be “ cut down? the fourth part of a *Kab* of olives; “ and a palm-tree which yields a *Kab* of dates may “ not be cut down.” Much ſuch a parable as this is formed by the *Jews* upon *Moſes*'s interceſſion for the people of *Iſrael*[n]. “ Says *R. Abin*, in the “ name of *R. Simeon ben Joſedech*, a parable, to “ what is it like? to a king that hath an uncul- “ tivated field; he ſays to his gardener, go and “ manure it, and make it a vineyard: the gardener “ went and manured that field, and planted it a “ vineyard; the vineyard grew, and produced “ wine, and it turned to vinegar; when the king “ ſaw that the wine turned to vinegar, he ſaid to “ the gardener, go, וקוץ אותה, *and cut it down*, “ why ſhould I ſeek after a vineyard that brings “ forth that which is ſour? the gardener replied, “ my lord, the king, what expence haſt thou been “ at with this vineyard before it was raiſed? and “ now thou ſeekeſt to cut it down; and ſhouldſt “ thou ſay becauſe its wine turns ſour; the reaſon is, “ becauſe it is young, therefore its wine turns ſour, “ and it does not produce good wine: ſo when *Iſrael* “ did that work (of the golden calf) the holy, “ bleſſed God ſought to conſume them; ſaid *Moſes*, “ Lord of the world, haſt thou not brought them “ out of *Egypt* from a place of idolatry, and now “ they are young, or children, as it is ſaid, *Hoſ.* “ xi. 1. wait a little for them, and go with them, “ and they will do good works in thy preſence.”

Ver. 10. *And he was teaching in one of the ſynagogues*, &c.] That is, *Jeſus*, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions expreſs it; which was his work, he being a teacher ſent from God, and who took all opportunities of inſtructing men in the truths of the Goſpel; this was done either in *Galilee*, or in *Judea*, in one of the ſynagogues of ſome city there, for in their larger cities there were more ſynagogues than one. In *Jeruſalem*, we are told[o], there were three hundred and ninety-four ſynagogues; and other writers[p] increaſe their number, and ſay, there were four hundred and eighty: and it was *on the ſabbath*; which was now in force, and was religiouſly obſerved by Chriſt.

Ver. 11. *And behold there was a woman*, &c.] In the ſynagogue, who, as infirm as ſhe is hereafter deſcribed, got out to the place of worſhip; and which may be a rebuke to ſuch, who, upon every trifling indiſpoſition, keep at home, and excuſe themſelves from an attendance in the houſe of God: *which had a ſpirit of infirmity eighteen years*; or a weakneſs that was brought upon her by an evil ſpirit, by ſatan, as appears from ver. 16. who, by divine permiſſion, had a power of inflicting diſeaſes on mankind, as is evident from the caſe of *Job*; and ſo the *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *whom a dæmon had made infirm*: and this diſorder had been of a long ſtanding; ſhe had laboured under it for the ſpace of eighteen years, ſo that it was a known caſe, and had been given up as incurable, which made the following miracle the more illuſtrious and remarkable. *And was bowed together, and could in no wiſe lift up* herſelf; or lift up her head, look up, or ſtand upright; it was a thing utterly impoſſible, which ſhe could by no means do; her body was convulſed, and every part ſo contracted, that, as the *Perſic* verſion renders it, ſhe could not *ſtretch out a hand or foot*.

Ver. 12. *And when Jeſus ſaw her*, &c.] In the ſynagogue among the people, either whilſt, or after he had done teaching: *he called her to him*, to come nearer him, *and ſaid unto her*; of his own accord, without being aſked by the woman, or any other for her, out of great compaſſion to her, ſeeing her in this miſerable condition, and knowing full well the nature, cauſe, and long continuance of her diſorder: *woman, thou art looſed from thine infirmity*; which had not only bowed her, but it had bound her, as if ſhe had been bound with cords; but Chriſt by ſaying theſe words, with his hands laid upon her, burſt her bonds aſunder, diſpoſſeſſed the evil ſpirit, and delivered her from her long affliction.

Ver. 13. *And he laid his hands on her*, &c.] As he ſpoke the above words, which he ſometimes did when he healed diſeaſes. *And immediately ſhe was made ſtraight*; ſhe lift up herſelf, ſtood upright, and her body, and all the parts of it were as ſtraight as ever they had been, or as any were in the ſynagogue. *And glorified God*; that is, *the woman* glorified God, as the *Perſic* verſion expreſſes it; ſhe was filled with thankfulneſs for the mercy, and gave God the glory of it. This woman was an emblem of a poor ſinner held in the bonds of iniquity by ſatan, and led captive by him at his will, who can by no means raiſe himſelf; nor is he able to lift up his head to heaven, or look upwards to Chriſt for deliverance; and yet attends upon the outward miniſtry, when Chriſt, in his own time, meets with him under it, and manifeſts his power and grace, breaks his bonds aſunder, delivers him out of ſatan's hands, and from the bondage of his own corruptions, ſets him ſtraight, and cauſes him to lift up his head, and look to him for life and ſalvation; and ſo puts a new ſong into his mouth, even praiſe to God, to whoſe free grace and favour he readily aſcribes his deliverance.

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[m] Maimon. Hilch. Melacim, c. 6. §. 8, 9.

[n] Shemot Rabba, §. 43., fol. 141. 2.

[o] T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 105. 1.

[p] Peſikta in Jarchi in Iſ. i. 21. Shirhaſhirim Rabba, fol. 20. 3. Ecka Rabbati, fol. 37. 4.

Ver. 14. *And the ruler of the ſynagogue,* &c.] For there never was but one in a ſynagogue, whatever ſome writers have obſerved to the contrary; ſee the note on *Matt.* ix. 18. the *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *the chief-prieſts*, but wrongly; theſe dwelt at *Jeruſalem*, and not in *Galilee*: *anſwered with indignation, becauſe that Jeſus had healed on the ſabbath-day*; his indignation was at Chriſt, and the miracle he had wrought, being filled with envy at the honour it would bring unto him; tho' he covered it under pretence of its being a violation of the ſabbath, and that it ought not to have been done on ſuch a day, and in ſuch a place, which were appropriated not to ſervile works, but to religious worſhip; *and ſaid unto the people*; over whom he had an authority, and who ſtood in awe of him, becauſe of his office and dignity; and not daring to attack Chriſt himſelf, at leaſt not directly, tho' he ſtruck at him thro' the people, whoſe doctrine and miracles were ſo extraordinary. *There are ſix days in which men ought to work, in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the ſabbath-day*; referring to the fourth command: but this obſervation and reproof were impertinent and needleſs, for the people did not come to be healed; for ought appears, the cure was unthought of and unexpected; nor was healing, eſpecially as performed by Chriſt, by a word and a touch, a ſervile work, and therefore could not be any breach of the law referred to. The *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *is there not a ſixth day?——come on that day*; the day before the ſabbath.

Ver. 15. *The Lord then anſwered him and ſaid,* &c.] Tho' he did not direct his ſpeech to him, he knew that he ſtruck at him, and ſuggeſted that he was a violater of the ſabbath, as well as the people: and therefore in defence of himſelf, and of what he had done, and to expoſe the hypocriſy of this man, made anſwer as follows, *thou hypocrite*; the *Vulgate Latin*, *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read in the plural, *hypocrites*; as do the *Complutenſian* edition, and four ancient copies of *Beza*'s, and the *Alexandrian* copy; but the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read in the ſingular, *hypocrite*; as this man was, who covered his malice and envy at Chriſt, with a ſhew of zeal for the ſabbath-day; and yet did that upon it, which muſt be allowed by themſelves, and others, to be a much greater violation of the ſabbath, than this cure could ever be thought to be: *doth not each one of you, on the ſabbath-day, looſe his ox, or his aſs, from the ſtall*; or rack, where he is faſtened with a rope; *and lead him away to watering?* to ſome place of water, where he may drink, after having filled himſelf at the rack: and that this was agreeable to their own canons and practice, that beaſts might be led out on a ſabbath-day, is certain; for they deliver various rules concerning leading them out, with what they might, and with what they might not be brought out; and particularly, among others, mention aſſes and heifers [q]; and they ſpeak [r] of leading them to water, not only to drink of it, but to waſh their chains in it, which, it ſeems, received pollution, and needed waſhing, and might be done on a ſabbath-day; yea, they allow, that not only a beaſt may be led out to watering, but a man might fill a veſſel of water, and pour it out into a trough for it, provided he did not directly ſet it before it: the rule is this [s], "a man may not fill water (a veſſel of it) and put it on a ſabbath-day before his beaſt, but he may fill it, and pour it out, and it may drink of it." And particularly on a feaſt-day, their rule is [t], that "they don't water nor ſlay beaſts of the deſert, but they water and ſlay domeſtic ones. Domeſtic ones are ſuch as lie in the city (*i. e.* as *Maimonides* ſays [u], within the ſabbatical border, 2000 cubits from the city) and thoſe of the deſert are ſuch as lie in paſtures." And therefore very juſtly does our Lord obſerve to the ruler of the ſynagogue their own practices towards a beaſt, in defence of his works of mercy to men.

Ver. 16. *And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham,* &c.] Not only a woman, a rational creature, and much preferable, as ſuch, to an irrational one; but a deſcendant of *Abraham*, of whom the *Jews* gloried, and in deſcent from him prided themſelves, and truſted; and choſe to call their women by this name [w], which gave them a character above others: and who, beſides all this, was doubtleſs a good woman, a ſpiritual worſhipper of the God of *Iſrael*; who, in a ſpiritual ſenſe, was a daughter of *Abraham*, that walked in the ſteps of his faith, and was now a believer in Chriſt, and appeared to be a choſen veſſel of ſalvation: *whom ſatan hath bound, lo theſe eighteen years*; with a bodily diſtemper that none could looſe her from in ſo long a time. The *Perſic* verſion, very wrongly, reads, *twelve years*; tho' in ver. 11. it obſerves the right number. Should not ſuch an one *be looſed from this bond on the ſabbath-day?* the force of Chriſt's reaſoning is this, that if it was lawful, on a ſabbath-day, to lead out a beaſt to watering, to quench its thirſt, that ſo it may not ſuffer ſo much as one day for want of water, how much more reaſonable muſt it be, that a rational creature, one of *Abraham*'s poſterity, and a religious perſon, who had been for eighteen years under a ſore affliction, thro' the power of *ſatan* over her, by divine permiſſion, ſhould be freed from ſo long and ſore an affliction on the ſabbath-day? if mercy is to be ſhown to beaſts, much more to men and women.

Ver. 17. *And when he had ſaid theſe things,* &c.] Had argued with them from their own practices, and in a way ſo ſtrong and rational, that carried ſuch evidence and conviction with it: *all his adverſaries were aſhamed*; not only the ruler of the ſynagogue, but the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, that were preſent, who followed him where-ever he went, and were his implacable enemies; theſe were confounded and ſilenced; ſhame appeared in their countenances; they could not lift up their heads, and look him in the face. *And all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him*; for the doctrines he taught, and the miracles he wrought, and his wiſe and cloſe reaſonings at this time, to the ſhame and confuſion of all that oppoſed him: for his audience conſiſted of different ſorts, and what he ſaid, and did, had different effects upon them. Some were filled with joy, and others with wrath, malice, and envy. And this is true with reſpect to ſpiritual and eternal things. Glorious things have been done by Chriſt in eternity, by becoming the ſurety of his people, by entering into a covenant with his Father on their account, and by taking the care and charge of their perſons, and of all grace, bleſſings, and promiſes for them; and in time, by aſſuming their nature, fulfilling the law, bringing in an everlaſting righteouſneſs, making peace and reconciliation, procuring pardon, and finiſhing the work of redemption and ſalvation; and now in heaven, by entering as the fore-runner for them, appearing in the preſence of God on their account, preſenting their prayers, and making interceſſion for them: and theſe are *glorious* things; they make for the glory of all the divine perfections; they iſſue in the glory of Chriſt himſelf; and in conſequence of them, the ſaints enjoy eternal glory and happineſs: theſe are things of the greateſt importance, are wonderful and amazing, and for which ſaints and angels will glorify God both here and hereafter; and theſe occaſion joy, and gladneſs in the Lord's people now. For not carnal and prophane perſons, or hypocrites, and formal profeſſors, or *Phariſees*, and ſelf-righteous perſons rejoice at theſe things; but ſuch as are the Lord's own people, who are openly his; who have paſſed under a work of the Spirit of God, who have ſeen their need of theſe things, and are ſenſible of the value of them; who know Chriſt, and love him, and believe in him.

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[q] Miſn. Sabbat, c. 5. §. 1, 2, 3, 4. & 18. 2. T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 51. 2. & 52. 1. & Piſke Toſephot in ib. art. 226, 227, 28, 233.

[r] Bartenora in Miſn. Sabbat, c. 5. §. 1.

[s] T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 20. 2.

[t] Miſn. Betza, c. 5. §. 7.

[u] In ib.

[w] T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 72. 2. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 109. 1.

Ver. 18. *Then ſaid he, unto what is the kingdom of God like?* &c.] The ſame with the kingdom of heaven, in *Matt.* xiii. 31. and ſo the *Ethiopic* verſion reads it here, *and whereunto ſhall I reſemble it?* of this way of ſpeaking, ſee the note on *Mark* iv. 30.

Ver. 19. *It is like a grain of muſtard-ſeed,* &c.] Both for its ſmallneſs at firſt, and its after increaſe; wherefore both the Evangeliſts *Matthew* and *Mark* obſerve, that *it is the leaſt of all ſeed*; which is true of the miniſtry of the Goſpel, of the Goſpel church-ſtate, and of the grace of God in the hearts of his people: *which a man took and caſt into his garden*; the *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *and ſowed in his field*, as in *Matt.* xiii. 31. tho' muſtard uſed to be ſowed in gardens as well as in fields. [x] Says *R. Simeon ben Chelphetha*, I have one ſtalk of muſtard-ſeed, בתוך שלי, *in my garden*; ſo [y] *Buxtorf* tranſlates it. And by the place in the text, where this ſeed is caſt, may be meant, either the *field* of the world, where the Goſpel is preached, and churches are raiſed; or the *garden* of the church, where the word and ordinances are adminiſtred, and in the hearts of the members of it, the grace of God is implanted and increaſed; ſee *Cant.* iv. 12, 13. *and it grew and waxed a great tree*; which may deſign the ſpread of the Goſpel in the world, the flouriſhing ſtate of the church of Chriſt, and the growth of grace in the hearts of believers. *And the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it*; the *Syriac* verſion reads in the ſingular number, *the fowl of the air*; not ſatan, and his principalities and powers, which devour the ſeed ſown by the way-ſide; nor the angels of heaven; but rather gracious men on earth, who ſit under the ſhadow of a Goſpel miniſtry with great delight; and *make their neſts*, as the *Perſic* verſion here renders the words, and take up their reſidence in Goſpel churches; ſee the notes on *Matt.* xiii. 31, 32. and on *Mark* iv. 31, 32.

Ver. 20. *And again he ſaid,* &c.] That is, *Jeſus*, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions expreſs it; beſides the parable of the grain of muſtard-ſeed, that alſo of the leaven hid in three meaſures of meal: *whereunto ſhall I liken the kingdom of God*; either the Goſpel of the kingdom, and the myſteries of it; or the church, which is Chriſt's kingdom; or the grace of God in the heart, which makes meet for the kingdom of glory; the firſt ſeems rather to be intended; ſee the note on *Matt.* xiii. 33.

Ver. 21. *It is like leaven,* &c.] Which is ſmall in quantity, but is of a ſwelling, ſpreading quality; and fitly expreſſes the ſmall beginnings of the Goſpel miniſtry, and its increaſe, alſo the ſtate and caſe of Goſpel churches, and the nature of the grace of God; unleſs falſe doctrine ſhould rather be meant, which privately, ſecretly, and by little and little, got into the churches of Chriſt, the kingdom of God, and ſpread itſelf all over them, as in the times of the papacy: *which a woman took*; Chriſt, and his miniſters, wiſdom, and her maidens, underſtanding it of the Goſpel; but if the leaven of error is intended, that woman, *Jezabel*, is meant, who calls herſelf a propheteſs, and teaches, and ſeduces the ſervants of God, *Rev.* ii. 20. *and hid in three meaſures of meal*; among a few of God's people at firſt, both among *Jews* and *Gentiles*, *till the whole was leavened*; until all the elect of God are gathered in, and evangelized by it; even the the whole fulneſs of the *Gentiles*, and all the people of the *Jews*, which ſhall be ſaved in the latter day: but if the parable is to be underſtood of the falſe doctrine and diſcipline of the anti-chriſtian and apoſtate church of *Rome*, it may denote the ſmall beginnings of the myſtery of iniquity, which began to work in the Apoſtle's time by the errors and hereſies then propagated, and the manner in which the man of ſin was privately introduced; whoſe coming is after the working of ſatan, with ſigns and lying wonders, and with all deceiveableneſs of unrighteouſneſs, firſt among a few, and then more, until at length the whole world wondered after the beaſt, 2 *Theſſ.* ii. 7, 9, 10. *Rev.* xiii. 3.

Ver. 22. *And he went thro' the cities and villages,* &c.] Either of *Galilee*, or of *Judea*, or both; ſince he was upon his journey from *Galilee*, thro' *Judea*, to *Jeruſalem*, as it follows: *teaching and journeying toward Jeruſalem*; as he was journeying he taught in every place he came, where he could have an opportunity; his delight was to do good both to the bodies and ſouls of men; and he was conſtant and aſſiduous in it.

Ver. 23. *Then ſaid one unto him,* &c.] Not one of his diſciples, but one of the company, in ſome one of the cities or villages he paſſed through, or as he was in the road to *Jeruſalem*: *are there few that be ſaved?* It is a received opinion among the *Jews* [z], that all *Iſrael* ſhall have a part in the world to come; and this man might put the queſtion to know whether Chriſt was of this ſentimen or no. And by ſome things he had obſerved drop from him, and it may be the foregoing parables which expreſs the ſmall beginnings of his kingdom, and ſeem to ſignify, that at firſt his Goſpe ſhould be received but by a few, tho' it ſhould afterwards ſpread, he might collect, that his ſenſ was, there would be but a few ſaved; or thi might be a queſtion of mere curioſity and ſpeculation, as it ſeems to be, by Chriſt's treatment of it who does not give a direct anſwer to it, but pu him and others upon ſhewing a concern for the own ſalvation. *And he ſaid unto them*; not to th man only that put the queſtiion, but to the whol company; tho' the *Perſic* and *Ethiopic* verſions rea *he ſaid unto him*, as follows.

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[x] T. Hieroſ. Peah, fol. 20. 2.

[y] Lex. Talmud. col. 823.

[z] Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 11. § 1.

Ver. 24. *Strive to enter in at the ſtraight gate*, &c.] What is meant by the *ſtraight gate*, and by *entering* in at it, ſee the note on *Matt.* vii. 13. To *ſtrive*, is to be diligent in the uſe of means; to ſearch the ſcriptures with care; to attend on the preaching of the word with conſtancy, neglecting no opportunity; to pray earneſtly for ſpiritual light, knowledge, and grace; to contend with every enemy that oppoſe the ſalvation of the ſoul, as ſin, ſatan, and the world; to bear all reproaches and perſecutions, and preſs through all difficulties, for the prize of the incorruptible crown: the metaphor ſeems to be taken from the ſtriving, wreſtling, and combat in the *Olympic* games, for a corruptible crown: *for many I ſay unto you, will ſeek to enter in, and ſhall not be able*; either when it is too late, when the door is ſhut; or elſe before, very faintly, in a ſuperficial manner, from a mere natural affection, from a principle of ſelf-love, which leads every one to deſire happineſs; and by very indirect and improper methods, by their own civility, morality, and righteouſneſs; by works of the law, moral, or ceremonial; or by a profeſſion of religion, and an outward compliance with the ordinances of the Goſpel, and not by Chriſt, and faith in him.

Ver. 25. *When once the maſter of the houſe is riſen up*, &c.] From table, or off of his couch, the entertainment being over: and ſo here, the Goſpel feaſt, or diſpenſation, being at an end, and all the gueſts come in, who were effectually called, and long patience and forbearance being uſed towards others; or *has entered in*, as the *Vulgate Latin* verſion reads, and ſo *Beza*'s ancient copy, and one of *Stephens*'s; is came from the wedding; ſee ch. xii. 36. Chriſt having eſpouſed all his elect to himſelf, by the miniſtry of the word: for by *the maſter of the houſe* is meant, the bridegroom of the church, the head of the body, the king of ſaints, who is ſon over his own houſe, and high-prieſt there; of whom the whole family in heaven and earth, is named: *and hath ſhut to the door*; the door of mercy and of hope; the door of faith; the preaching of the word, and the adminiſtration of ordinances, when theſe ſhall be no more: *and ye begin to ſtand without*; or *do ſtand without*; without the holy city, where dogs are; having no admittance to the nuptial chamber, to the marriage-ſupper of the lamb, and the joys of heaven: *and to knock at the door*; which ſhows how near ſome perſons may come to heaven, and yet not enter there, even to the very door; and what an expectation, yea, an aſſurance they may have, of admiſſion into it, not at all doubting of it; and therefore knock as if they were ſome of the family, and had a right to enter; but not finding the door opened to them, ſo ſoon as they imagined, they begin to call as well as knock: *ſaying, Lord, Lord, open unto us*; they acknowledge Chriſt to be Lord, as all will at the laſt day, to the glory of God the Father, even profeſſors and profane; they repeat the word, to ſhew the vehemency and earneſtneſs of their intreaty; and according to the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions, they claim an intereſt in Chriſt, which read, *our Lord, our Lord*; and on account of which they doubted not, but the door would be opened: but alas! he was only their Lord in a profeſſional way; they had only called him Lord, Lord, but had never truly and heartily yielded obedience to him; their hearts had never been opened to him, and he had never had a place there, nor his Goſpel; wherefore though they knock, he'll not open; *and he ſhall anſwer and ſay unto you*. The *Perſic* verſion adds, *nay, but be ye gone hence*, for the following reaſon, *I know you not, whence you are*: not but that Chriſt being the omniſcient God, will know who they are, from whence they come, of what country and place they be, and to whom they belong; but the ſenſe is, that he wont own them, and expreſs any approbation of them, as his; but will treat them as ſtrangers, that come, it is not known, from whence; he'll reject them, as not being born from above, as not being the ſheep of his fold, or members of his true church: they did not come from heaven, they were not heaven-born ſouls, or partakers of the heavenly calling, and therefore ſhall not be received there; they belonged to the men of the world, and were of their father the devil, and ſhall be ſent to him: ſo the fooliſh virgins, or formal profeſſors of religion, and ſuch as have been preachers of the Goſpel, will intreat Chriſt at the laſt day, and ſhall have ſuch an anſwer as this returned to them, which will be very awful and ſtartling; ſee the notes on *Matt.* vii. 23. and xxv. 12.

Ver. 26. *Then ſhall ye begin to ſay*, &c.] Or *ye ſhall ſay*; in favour of themſelves, and in order to be admitted within, the following pleas will be made by them: *we have eaten and drank in thy preſence*; which may be underſtood both literally of many, who were miraculouſly fed by Chriſt, or at whoſe tables he had eat and drank, and they with him; as did not only publicans and ſinners, but ſome of the *Phariſees*, who invited him to their houſes; and in a religious ſenſe, of many who eat of the legal ſacrifices; and of others, who eat the bread, and drink the wine at the Lord's table; all which will be inſufficient, to introduce men into the kingdom and glory of Chriſt: natural relation to Chriſt, which the *Jews* may claim, being born of them, and perſonal acquaintance with him, and a bare profeſſion of him, will be of no avail another day: *and thou haſt taught in our ſtreets*; in the ſtreets of many cities in *Galilee* and *Judea*: it was cuſtomary with the *Jewiſh* doctors to teach in the ſtreets: "ſays *Rabba*, behold I am as *Ben Azzai*, "in the ſtreets of *Tiberias* [a];" the *Gloſs* upon it is, "who was דורש בשוקי, *expounding in the ſtreets* "*of Tiberias*." And it is ſaid [b] of *Rabban Jochanan ben Zaccai*, "that he was ſitting in the "ſhade of the temple, and expounding all the "whole day;" the *Gloſs* on the place is, "the "temple being an hundred cubits high, its ſhade "went very far *in the ſtreet*, which is before the "mountain of the houſe; and becauſe *the ſtreet* was "large, and held abundance of men, he was ex-"pounding there by reaſon of the heat, for no "ſchool could hold them:" and it is alſo ſaid of *R. Chija* [c], that "he went out and taught his bro-"ther's two ſons, בשוק, *in the ſtreet*." So that what our Lord did, was no other than what was uſual with their doctors; nor is this contrary to what is ſaid in *Matt.* xii. 19. ſee the note there: this is alſo a fruitleſs plea, and which will be of no ſervice; it will ſignify nothing, to have heard Chriſt preached, or Chriſt himſelf preach, unleſs there is faith in him, which works by love; for not hearers of the word only, but doers of it are regarded.

Ver. 27. *But he ſhall ſay*, &c.] The *Perſic* verſion adds, *be gone from my ſight, and be far from my door*; expreſſing indignation at them, an abhorrence of them, as not being able to bear them in his ſight, or near unto him: *I tell you, I know you not whence you are*; this is repeated, and with a ſtrong aſſeveration, to denote the certainty of the truth expreſſed, and to caſt off all hope in them, of ever ſucceeding by their intreaties and importunity: *depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity*; or *of a lie*, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions render it: for they were deceitful workers, they profeſſed what they did not from the heart believe; they ſaid they were chriſtians, but were not, and now are found liars; they only attended on the word and ordinances in an hypocritical way, and truſted in, and depended upon, their outward profeſſion of religion, and ſubjection to ordinances; and by ſo doing, inſtead of working righteouſneſs, wrought iniquity; and ſo as they did not ſubmit to Chriſt and his righteouſneſs, they are bid to depart from him, as wicked and unrighteous men, as they were: the word *all* is here uſed, which is not in *Matt*. vii. 23. which agrees with *Pſal*. vi. 8. to which there ſeems to be a reference, though it is omitted here, in the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions; ſee the note on *Matt*. vii. 23.

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[a] T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 29. 1.

[b] T. Bab. Peſachim, fol. 26. 1.

[c] T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 16. 2.

Ver. 28. *There ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of teeth*, &c.] See the note on *Matt*. viii. 12. This will be upon hearing the above ſentence and character, *depart from me*, &c. and will be increaſed, *when ye ſhall ſee Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob*: whoſe offspring they were, and to whom they ſtood related according to the fleſh; and of deſcent, from whom they boaſted, and even truſted in it, thinking themſelves the favourites of heaven, and expecting to be admitted into the kingdom of God on account of it: ſad will be the diſappointment of ſuch perſons; a being born of religious parents, will neither give right unto, nor meetneſs for eternal glory; regeneration is not of blood: *and all the prophets in the kingdom of God*; whoſe prophecies were tranſmitted to them, and whoſe books they had in their hands, and read; and who deſired to ſee and hear what they did, and which they now plead, and yet they did not enjoy, but were nevertheleſs happy: and *you* yourſelves *thruſt out*; with indignation and contempt, with ſhame and *ignominy*, as the *Perſic* verſion adds; not ſuffered to go in with them, though their ſons and ſucceſſors; but bid to depart, and ordered to be for ever ſeparated from them, as only fit company for devils and damned ſpirits.

Ver. 29. *And they ſhall come*, &c.] From all parts of the world, from every nation under the heavens; meaning the *Gentiles*, and which will be a greater aggravation of the puniſhment of the *Jews*, and cauſe ſtill more rage and madneſs: theſe ſhall *come from the eaſt and from the weſt*; from the riſing of the ſun, to the going down of the ſame, *Iſa*. xlv. 6. *Mal*. i. 11. *and from the north, and from the ſouth*; from the moſt diſtant parts of the world inhabited by men; ſee *Iſa*. xliii. 5, 6. God has his choſen ones, and Chriſt has a people in all parts of the world; and therefore his Goſpel muſt be preached to all nations, for the gathering of them in, which will be done in the latter day; and in the reſurrection morn, as theſe will be raiſed in the ſeveral places where they will have been buried, they will come from thence, and make one body, and will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and will be for ever with him: *and ſhall ſit down in the kingdom of God*; in Chriſt's kingdom, in the new heavens, and new earth, as perſons that ſit down at a table, to partake of a feaſt; ſee *Luke* xxii. 30. and in the ultimate glory, where they ſhall have reſt, peace, and joy, for evermore. The *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *they ſhall rejoice in the kingdom of God*; they ſhall partake of the joys of heaven; everlaſting joy ſhall be upon their heads, and ſorrow and ſighing ſhall flee away; and the *Perſic* verſion, *and they ſhall take a repoſe, and ſit and reſt*; they ſhall reſt from all their labour, and be in perfect eaſe and peace; ſee the note on *Matt*. viii. 11.

Ver. 30. *And behold, there are laſt which ſhall be firſt*, &c.] The *Gentiles*, the moſt mean and abject, afar from God, aliens from the commonwealth of *Iſrael*, called laſt of all; theſe ſhall be firſt, and ſit down among patriarchs and prophets, men of the firſt rank here on earth, in the kingdom of heaven, and enjoy the ſame glory and happineſs with them: *and there are firſt which ſhall be laſt*; the *Jews*, who were firſt the viſible profeſſing people of God, to whom the oracles of God, and outward privileges and ordinances were given; who had the Meſſiah firſt ſent to them, and the Goſpel firſt preached among them; theſe ſhall be laſt, be rejected and deſpiſed, and ſhut out of the kingdom of heaven, they thought themſelves heirs of, and expected to enjoy; ſee *Matt*. xix. 30. and xx. 16.

Ver. 31. *The ſame day there came certain of the Phariſees*, &c.] Who dwelt in *Galilee*, for they were in all parts of the country: theſe being nettled and filled with indignation at Chriſt, becauſe of the parables he had that day delivered, the miracles he had wrought, and the ſeveral awful and ſtriking things which dropped from him, and which they knew reſpected them; contrived to get rid of him, by frighting him with a deſign of *Herod*'s, to take away his life, ſhould he continue there: for this ſeems to be rather a ſtratagem of theirs, than of *Herod*'s; though it may be, that *Herod* might take this method, and make uſe of theſe men in this way, to terrify him; fearing to lay hold on him, and put him to death; partly becauſe of the people, and partly becauſe of the remaining uneaſineſs and terror of his mind, for taking off the head of *John* the *Baptiſt*: *ſaying, get thee out and depart hence*; in all haſte, as ſoon as poſſible: *for Herod will kill thee*; he is reſolved upon it, he has formed a deſign, and will quickly take methods to execute it. This was *Herod* the *Tetrarch*, of *Galilee*; from whence we learn, that Chriſt was as yet in *Galilee*, though he was journeying towards *Jeruſalem*, ver. 22. for *Herod*'s juriſdiction reached no farther than *Galilee*: this was either a device of *Herod*'s, or of the *Phariſees*, or of both, to get rid of Chriſt in the eaſieſt manner.

Ver. 32. *And he ſaid unto them, go ye and tell that fox*, &c.] *Herod*, who it may be ſent them, of which Chriſt was not ignorant, nor of his deſign in it; and who, as *Nero*, for his cruelty is compared to a lion, ſo he for his ſubtlety in this inſtance, as well as in the whole of his conduct, to a fox; though ſome think Chriſt has a regard to the *Phariſees*, and their craftineſs, in forming this ſtory, pretending good-will to him, by acquainting him of *Herod*'s malicious deſigns, when their view was only to ſcare him out of their country; ſo the falſe prophets and teachers, are for their cunning, ſubtlety, and flattery, compared to foxes, *Cant*. ii. 15. *Ezek*. xiii. 4. as well as for their greedineſs and voraciouſneſs: the word is uſed with the *Jews*, for a vain and empty man, in oppoſition to a good man; as in that ſaying [d] of *R. Jannai*, "be thou "the tail of lions, and not the head of foxes;" or *vain men*, as the *Gloſs* explains it: *behold, I caſt out devils*; or *I will caſt out devils*, as the *Ethiopic* verſion reads, in ſpight of him, let him do his worſt: *and I do cures to day and to morrow*; and ſo for ſome time to come; and which was doing good, and was what *Herod* and the *Phariſees*, had they any humanity in them, would have rejoiced at, and have choſe, that he ſhould have continued with them, and not have threatened him with his life, or have took any methods to ſend him from them: *and the third day I ſhall be perfected*; that is, in a little time after, I ſhall be made perfect by ſufferings, my courſe will be finiſhed, and I ſhall have done all the work compleatly, I came about; and till that time comes, it is not in his power, nor yours, nor all the men on earth, or devils in hell, to take away my life, or hinder me doing what I am about.

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[d] Pirke Abot, c. 4. §. 15. & Jarchi in ib.

Ver. 33. *Nevertheleſs, I muſt walk*, &c.] The *Syriac* verſion reads, *I muſt work*, and ſo the *Arabic*; as going about doing good, caſting out devils, and healing diſeaſes: *to day and to morrow, and the day following*; a few days more in *Galilee*, and towards *Jeruſalem*: all the *Oriental* verſions read, *the day following I ſhall depart*; either out of this world; or out of *Galilee*, and go to *Jeruſalem*, and there ſuffer and die: *for it cannot be that a prophet periſh out of Jeruſalem*; becauſe the great *Sanhedrim* only ſat at *Jeruſalem*, to whom it belonged to try and judge a prophet; and if found falſe, to condemn him, and put him to death: the rule is this [e]; "they "don't judge, neither a tribe, nor *a falſe prophet*, "nor an high-prieſt, but by the *Sanhedrim* of "ſeventy and one." Not but that prophets ſometimes periſhed elſewhere, as *John* the *Baptiſt* in *Galilee*; but not according to a judicial proceſs, in which way Chriſt the prophet was to be cut off, nor was it common; inſtances of this kind were rare, and always in a violent way: and even ſuch as were ſentenced to death by the leſſer *Sanhedrim*, were brought to *Jeruſalem*, and publickly executed there, whoſe crimes were of another ſort; for ſo runs the canon [f]; "they don't put any one to death by "the *Sanhedrim*, which is in his city, nor by the "*Sanhedrim* in *Jabneh*; but they bring him to the "great *Sanhedrim* in *Jeruſalem*, and keep him till "the feaſt, and put him to death on a feaſt-day, "as it is ſaid *Deut.* xvii. 13. *and all the people ſhall "hear and fear*." And ſince *Jeruſalem* was the place where the prophets were uſually put to death, it follows,

Ver. 34. *O Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem, which killeſt the prophets*, &c.] Theſe words, with what follow, as they ſtand in *Matt.* xxiii. 37, 38, 39. were delivered by Chriſt, when he was in the temple at *Jeruſalem*; but here they were ſpoken by him when in *Galilee*, in *Herod*'s juriſdiction; ſo that it appears, that the ſame words were ſpoken by Chriſt at different times, in different places, and to different perſons: unleſs it can be thought, that *Luke* tranſcribed them from *Matthew*, and inſerts them here, on occaſion of Chriſt's having mentioned the periſhing of a prophet in *Jeruſalem*; where many had been killed and put to death, in one way or another, and particularly in the following: *and ſtoneſt them that are ſent unto thee*; as *Zechariah*, 2 *Chron.* xxiv. 20, 21, 22. and others: *how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not?* and therefore ought not to have been condemned as a falſe prophet by their *Sanhedrim*, as he ſuggeſts he ſhould be, and as he afterwards was; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiii. 37.

Ver. 35. *Behold, your houſe is left unto you deſolate*, &c.] That is, would be in a little time, both city and temple; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiii. 38. *and verily I ſay unto you*; affirm in the ſtrongeſt manner: *ye ſhall not ſee me*; the *Arabic* verſion adds, *from henceforth*, and ſo ſome copies, as in *Matt.* xxiii. 39. and ſo the *Ethiopic* verſion, *from this time*; that he ſpoke theſe words, whether in *Galilee*, or in the temple: *until the time come*; or *until he ſhall come*, meaning himſelf, and his ſecond coming: *when ye ſhall ſay, bleſſed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord*; not they themſelves in perſon, but their poſterity, who will be converted in the latter day; and ſhall acknowledge the Meſſiah, the bleſſed of the Lord, who will come in his name, to judge the world in righteouſneſs: or elſe the meaning is, that when Chriſt ſhall come a ſecond time, and every eye ſhall ſee him, theſe *Jews*, among the reſt, ſhall behold him, whom they have pierced, and mourn; and wiſh themſelves among thoſe, that ſhall receive him with joyful acclamations; and however, will be obliged to own him as the Meſſiah, and to confeſs that he comes in the name, and with the authority of the Lord, and that he is bleſſed for evermore.

## CHAP. XIV.

Ver. 1. AND *it came to paſs*, &c.] The *Perſic* verſion adds, *on a certain day*; and it is afterwards ſaid to be the ſabbath-day. This ſeems to have been ſome where or other in *Galilee*; ſee ch. xvii. 11. *As he went into the houſe of one of the chief Phariſees*; or rather, one of the rulers, and of the ſect of the *Phariſees*: and he might be either a ruler of a ſynagogue, or a member of one of the leſſer or greater *Sanhedrim*; ſuch another as *Nicodemus*, who was of the *Phariſees*, and a ruler of the *Jews*, *John* iii. 1. for that there was any diſtinction among the *Phariſees* as a ſect, does not appear: to this man's houſe Chriſt went, after he came out of the ſynagogue, being invited by him; *to eat bread on the ſabbath-day*. The ſabbath-day was a feaſting day with the *Jews*, in which they made very large and magnificent entertainments, for the honour of the ſabbath; and he was reckoned the moſt praiſe-worthy, that exceeded this way; and no doubt, ſince this man was a *Phariſee*, one that was tenacious of the traditions of the elders, and was alſo a ruler, his table was well ſpread: the rules concerning this part of keeping the ſabbath, are theſe [g]; "what is this "delight? the wiſe men ſay, a man ought to "prepare abundance of food and ſpiced liquids, "for the ſabbath, all according to a man's ſubſtance; and whoever multiplies in the expences "of the ſabbath, and in preparing food, much "and good, lo, he is praiſe-worthy; and if he "is not able, though he only prepares boiled food, "and ſuch like, on account of the glory of the "ſabbath, lo, this is the delight of the ſabbath: "and he is not obliged to ſtraiten himſelf, nor to "aſk of others, to increaſe the food of the ſabbath: the ancient wiſe men ſaid, make thy ſabbath a common day, and don't make thyſelf neceſſitous to men; he who is delicate and rich, "and lo, all his days are as a ſabbath-day, ought "to have food on a ſabbath-day, different from

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[e] Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 1. §. 5. & T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 18. 2.

[f] Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 10. §. 4.

[g] Maimon. Hilchot Sabbat, c. 30. §. 7, 8, 9.

"that on a week-day; and if it is not poſſible to "change, let him alter the time of eating; if he "had been uſed to have it ſoon, let him have it "late; and if late, let him have it ſooner: a man "is obliged to eat three meals, or feaſts, on a ſabbath-day; one in the evening, and one in the "morning, and one at the time of the meat-offering; and he ought to take heed to thoſe three "feaſts, that he does not diminiſh them at all; "and even a poor man that is maintained by alms, "muſt keep the three feaſts." And this laſt canon, or rule, is of the utmoſt importance with them; for they [h] ſay, "whoever keeps the three feaſts on "the ſabbath-day, ſhall be delivered from three "puniſhments, from the ſorrows of the Meſſiah, "from the judgment of hell, and from the war "of *Gog* and *Magog*." *That they watched him*; that is, thoſe that ſat down to meat with him, the lawyers and *Phariſees*: and it is very probable, that it was not out of pure reſpect to him, that he was aſked to eat meat at this ruler's houſe; but with a deſign to obſerve whatever might be ſaid, or done by him, they could take any advantage from, againſt him.

Ver. 2. *And behold, there was a certain man before him*, &c.] Who ſat juſt before him, as he was at table; who either came there of himſelf, in order to receive a cure; or rather, ſince it was in a private houſe, and he at table too, was brought and ſet there on purpoſe by the *Phariſees*, to try whether Chriſt would heal him on the ſabbath-day, that they might have ſomewhat againſt him; which they doubted not but he would do, knowing his compaſſionate and beneficent diſpoſition to do good to creatures in diſtreſs, whenever he had an opportunity: *which had the dropſy*; or *gathered waters*, as the *Syriac* verſion renders it; was filled with water, which is the nature of that diſeaſe, and diſtinguiſhes it from what is called the dry dropſy: this diſeaſe is a preternatural collection of ſerum, or water in ſome part of the body; or a too great proportion thereof in the blood. The *dropſy* acquires different names, from the different parts it afflicts, or the different parts the waters are collected in; that of the *abdomen*, or lower belly, called ſimply and abſolutely *dropſy*, is particularly denominated *aſcites*; that of the whole habit of the body, *anaſarca*, or *leucophlegmatia*; that of the head, *hydrocephalus*; that of the ſcrotum, *hydrocele*.——There is alſo a ſpecies of this diſeaſe, ſuppoſed to be cauſed inſtead of water, by a collection of wind, called *tympanites*; and by *Hippocrates*, the *dry dropſy*: we alſo meet with dropſies of the breaſt, pericardium, uterus, ovaries, *&c.* The cauſes of dropſies in general, are whatever may obſtruct the ſerous part of the blood, ſo as to make it ſtagnate in the veſſels; or burſt the veſſels themſelves, ſo as to let the blood out among the membranes; or weaken and relax the tone of the veſſels; or thin the blood, and make it watry; or leſſen perſpiration. Theſe cauſes are various, *viz.* ſometimes acute diſeaſes, ſcirrhous tumours of any of the more noble viſcera, exceſſive evacuations, particularly hæmorrhages, hard drinking, *&c.* The *aſtites*, or *water-dropſy* of the *abdomen*, is the moſt uſual caſe, and what we particularly call the *dropſy*: its ſymptoms are tumours, firſt of the feet and legs, and afterwards of the *abdomen*, which keep continually growing; and if the belly be ſtruck or ſhook, there is heard a quaſhing of water: add to this, three other attendants, *viz.* a dyſpnoea, intenſe thirſt, and ſparing urine; with which may be numbered heavineſs, liſtleſſneſs, coſtiveneſs, a light fever, and an emaciation of the body [i]. Such we muſt ſuppoſe to be the caſe of this man, and that he was now in ſuch a condition, as to be thought incurable.

Ver. 3. *And Jeſus anſwering, ſpake unto the lawyers and Phariſees*, &c.] All the *Oriental* verſions for *lawyers*, read *Scribes*: theſe with the *Phariſees*, were got together in a body, in their brother *Phariſees* houſe, to watch the motions of Chriſt; who knew their deſigns upon him, and the thoughts of their hearts, and made anſwer to them, by putting the following queſtion; *ſaying, is it lawful to heal on the ſabbath-day?* The occaſion of the queſtion, was the object before him, whom Chriſt had a compaſſionate regard to, and determined to cure; but knowing that theſe men were catching at every thing, to traduce him, was deſirous of having their ſentiments firſt; not but that he knew full well, what was agreeable to the law of God, and what was not; and what alſo were the traditions of their elders, which they held, and which allowed of healing on the ſabbath-day, where life was in danger.

Ver. 4. *And they held their peace*, &c.] Or were ſilent, chuſing to ſay nothing, which might countenance ſuch an action; and yet knew not how to condemn it: *and he took him, and healed him, and let him go*; he took him by the hand, or laid his hands on him; he touched him, and it may be ſtroaked the part affected, and in an inſtant, the prodigious ſwelling of his body came down: for he who at his rebuke could dry up the ſea, could by a touch dry up ſuch a quantity of water, as was in this man's body; and then he diſmiſſed him from the table and company, and he went home perfectly cured.

Ver. 5. *And anſwered them, ſaying*, &c.] Murmuring ſecretly at what he had done: *which of you ſhall have an aſs, or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not ſtraightway pull him out on the ſabbath-day?* being juſt ready to be drowned there; and therefore it muſt be much more right and neceſſary to cure a man, a reaſonable creature, juſt drowning with a dropſy, as this man was. The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions, inſtead of *an aſs*, read *a ſon*, very wrongly: a like kind of reaſoning is uſed by Chriſt, in *Matt.* xii. 11. *Luke* xiii. 15. ſee the notes there.

Ver. 6. *And they could not anſwer him again to theſe things.*] The juſtice, equity, mercy, and humanity that appeared in our Lord's reaſonings, and the caſes he inſtanced in, being agreeable to their own tenets and practices, their mouths were ſhut up, and they could not return an anſwer to them, without being expoſed.

Ver. 7. *And he put forth a parable to thoſe which were bidden*, &c.] To the dinner at the *Phariſees* houſe, particularly the lawyers, or *Scribes* and *Phariſees*: *when he marked how they choſe out the chief rooms*; the uppermoſt places at the table, which theſe men loved, coveted, and ſought after; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiii. 6. *ſaying unto them*; as follows,

Ver. 8. *When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding*, &c.] To a wedding-dinner, or to any other; ſuch an one as the preſent entertainment was, which was not a marriage-feaſt, for they might not marry on the ſabbath-day; ſee the note on *John* ii. 1. but a common ſabbath-meal: *ſit not down in the higheſt room*; in the chief place at table, as ſoon as come in; *leſt a more honourable man*; for age, office, dignity, wiſdom, learning, or riches: *than thou be bidden of him*; the maſter of the feaſt; and who may not yet be come, and for whom the chief place may be deſigned, and will better ſuit him.

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[h] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 118. 1. Kimchi in Iſa. lviii. 13.

[i] Chambers's Cyclopædia on the word *dropſy*.

Ver. 9. *And he that bad thee and him*, &c.] To the feaſt, and who is the maſter of it, and has a right to diſpoſe of, and order his gueſts at his table, as he thinks fit: *come and ſay to thee, give this man place*; pray riſe up, and give this honourable man this ſeat, which is more ſuitable for a perſon of his rank and figure, and take another: *and thou begin with ſhame to take the loweſt room*; or place, which muſt unavoidably fill a man with ſhame and confuſion; becauſe hereby his pride and vanity, in affecting the uppermoſt room, will be publickly expoſed; and he who before ſat in the chief place, will have the mortification, before all the gueſts, to be ſeated in the loweſt.

Ver. 10. *But when thou art bidden*, &c.] To an entertainment, and the time is come, *go and ſit down in the loweſt room*; place thyſelf at the lower end of the table, or in the moſt inferior ſeat; which will ſhow humility and lowlineſs of mind, and prevent ſhame and mortification; ſince there can be no putting into a lower place, and there may be an advance to an higher: *that when he that bad thee cometh*; into the dining-room, and obſerve in what place thou art: *he may ſay unto thee, friend, go up higher*; to a more honourable ſeat at table, pointing to it, and ſaying, there's ſuch a ſeat empty, go up and take it, it beſt becomes thee: *then ſhalt thou have worſhip*; or *glory*, as the word ſignifies; honour and eſteem, inſtead of ſhame and bluſhing; not only from the maſter of the feaſt, *but in the preſence of them that ſit at meat with thee*; and from them, who will take notice of the honour done thee, and will entertain an high opinion of thee, and commend thee for thine humility and modeſty. Advice, like to this, is given by *Solomon* in *Prov.* xxv. 6, 7. and which is explained by the *Jews* in like manner as here[k]: "*Ben Azzai* uſed to ſay, "deſcend from thy place two or three degrees, and "ſit; it is better that it ſhould be ſaid to thee, "עלה, *go up*, than that it ſhould be ſaid to thee, "deſcend, as it is ſaid in *Prov.* xxv. 7." Which is elſewhere[l] thus expreſſed: "*R. Akiba* taught it "(or expounded, *Prov.* xxv. 7.) in the name of "*R. Simeon ben Azzai*, remove from thy place "two or three ſeats, and ſit until it is ſaid to thee, "עלה, *go up*; but do not go up, (*i. e.* firſt) for it "will be ſaid to thee deſcend; it is better that it "ſhould be ſaid to thee go up, go up, than that "it ſhould be ſaid to thee go down, go down: "and *Ben Hillell* uſed to ſay, my humiliation is "my exaltation, and my exaltation is my humiliation."

Ver. 11. *For whoſoever exalteth himſelf*, &c.] Either in the above way, or any other, *ſhall be abaſed*, humbled and mortified; *and he that humbleth himſelf*; behaves in an humble and modeſt manner, *ſhall be exalted*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiii. 12.

Ver. 12. *Then ſaid he alſo to him that bad him*, &c.] As he had given advice and inſtructions to the gueſts, ſo he likewiſe thought fit to give ſome to the maſter of the houſe, that had given both him and them an invitation to the preſent meal; obſerving, very likely, that his gueſts conſiſted of ſuch perſons as are hereafter deſcribed. *When thou makeſt a dinner, or a ſupper*; any entertainment for other perſons, at what time of the day ſoever, whether ſooner or later, at noon, or at night, on ſabbath-days, or others: *call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinſmen, nor thy rich neighbours*; that is, do not invite thy rich friends, rich brethren, and rich kinſmen, as well as not rich neighbours: not that our Lord's meaning is, that ſuch ſhould not be invited at all; which would be to deſtroy friendſhip and ſociable converſation among perſons in ſuch a relation, and of ſuch rank and fortune: but his ſenſe is, that not theſe only ſhould be invited, to the neglect of poor friends, poor brethren, poor kinſmen, and poor neighbours; and who, comparatively ſpeaking, ſhould rather be invited than the former, as being what would be more ſerviceable to them, and of a greater advantage in the iſſue to the maſter of the feaſt himſelf. *Leſt they alſo bid thee again*; and thee only, and not the poor, to as grand an entertainment, which is commonly done: *and a recompence be made thee*; one feaſting bout for another, ſo that there will be no obligation on either ſide; and this will be all the advantage that will be gained; the return is made here, and there will be no reward hereafter.

Ver. 13. *But when thou maketh a feaſt*, &c.] An entertainment for others, a dinner, or a ſupper: *call the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind*; that is, the poor maimed, the poor lame, and the poor blind; otherwiſe 'tis poſſible that rich men may be maimed, lame, and blind; whereas theſe are not intended, but ſuch who are in indigent circumſtances, that ſtand in need of a meal, and to whom it is welcome.

Ver. 14. *And thou ſhalt be bleſſed*, &c.] By God, with an increaſe of worldly ſubſtance, or with ſpiritual bleſſings, and with eternal glory and happineſs; and by theſe poor objects, who will pray to God for a bleſſing upon ſuch a kind benefactor: *for they cannot recompenſe thee*; by inviting again to a like entertainment, as rich gueſts can do, and when they have done that there's nothing elſe to be expected; but ſuch that entertain the poor can have no return from them, and yet a retaliation will be made: *for thou ſhall be recompenſed at the reſurrection of the juſt*; when the juſt ſhall riſe again, which will be the firſt reſurrection; and happy is he that has part in it: for the righteous, or dead in Chriſt will riſe firſt; and notice will be taken of the good works of the ſaints, particularly of their acts of beneficence to the poor members of Chriſt; and which they have done in faith, from a principle of love to Chriſt, and with a view to the glory of God, and the good of their fellow-creatures and chriſtians.

Ver. 15. *And when one of them that ſat at meat with him*, &c.] One of the *Scribes*, lawyers, or *Phariſees*, that were gueſts at this feaſt: *heard theſe things*; which were ſpoken by Chriſt, and was pleaſed and affected with them, tho' he was ignorant: *he ſaid unto him, bleſſed is he that ſhall eat bread in the kingdom of God*; in the world to come, in the kingdom of the Meſſiah; concerning feaſting in which, the *Jews* had entertained very groſs notions; and which this man was reminded of by Chriſt's making mention of the reſurrection of the juſt, and of recompence at that time, which the *Jews* expected at the Meſſiah's coming. They ſuppoſe, that God will make a ſplendid feaſt, a ſumptuous entertainment; in which, beſides *bread*, which they call, לחמה של מלכות, *the bread of the kingdom*, and *the bread of the world to come*[m], there will be great variety of fleſh, fiſh, and fowl, plenty of generous wine, and all ſorts of delicious fruit: particularly they ſpeak of a large ox, which they ſuppoſe to be the *Behemoth* in *Job*, that will then be prepared; and of *Leviathan* and his mate, which will then be dreſſed; and of a large fowl, called *Ziz*, of a monſtrous bigneſs; and of old wine kept in the grape from the creation of the world, which will then be drank; and of the rich fruits of the garden of *Eden*, that will then be ſerved up[n]: ſuch groſs and carnal notions have they entertained of the world to come; and which this man ſeemed to have imbibed, and placed happineſs in.

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[k] Abot R. Nathan, c. 25. fol. 6. 4.

[l] Vajikra Rabba, §. 1. fol. 146. 4. Vid. Shemot Rabba, §. 45. fol. 142. 1.

[m] Midraſh Ruth, fol. 33. 2. Bereſhit Rabba, §. 82. fol. 72. 4.

Ver. 16. *Then ſaid he unto him*, &c.] That is, *Jeſus*, as the *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions expreſs it; he ſaid to the man that was ſo affected with the happineſs of ſuch that ſhall ſhare in the proviſions of the Meſſiah's kingdom; *a certain man made a great ſupper*: by which is meant not the Lord's ſupper, which was not as yet inſtituted; nor the ſupper of the Lamb, which will be at the end of the world; but the Goſpel-diſpenſation, which was now taking place, and the proviſions of it in the word and ordinances: and which is called a *ſupper*; becauſe made in the end of the world, in the laſt days; and a *great* one, becauſe of the maker of it, the king of kings, and lord of lords; and the matter of it, a variety of rich proviſions, a feaſt of fat things, an entertainment conſiſting of the greateſt dainties, and moſt delightful food; and on account of the number of the gueſts invited, all people, every creature, to whom the outward miniſtration of the Goſpel comes; and thoſe who are properly gueſts that come, are a great number which no man can number; as well as becauſe of the coſt and charges of it to the maker, tho' it is all free to the gueſts; and likewiſe becauſe of the circumſtances of exceeding great joy and pleaſure that attend it; to which may be added, the long duration of it, even from the firſt to the ſecond coming of Chriſt. *And bade many*. This firſt bidding more eſpecially reſpects the *Jews*, who are ſaid to be *many*, in reference to the promiſe made to *Abraham*, that his ſeed ſhould be as the ſtars of the heavens, and as the ſand of the ſea; and to ſet off the magnificence of the feaſt; and in diſtinction from all the world, and every creature, which were afterwards put into the Goſpel-commiſſion: a foundation was laid for this ſupper in eternity, in the purpoſes, counſel, and covenant of God; and many prophecies concerning it were given out from the beginning; and ſacrifices and ordinances were inſtituted, as emblematical of it, and to lead on to it, and give notice of it.

Ver. 17. *And ſent his ſervant at ſupper-time*, &c.] Either *John* the *Baptiſt*, the harbinger and forerunner of Chriſt, who declared that the kingdom of heaven, or the Goſpel-diſpenſation, was at hand; and exhorted the people to believe in Chriſt that ſhould come after him; or Chriſt himſelf, who is God's ſervant as man, of his chuſing and appointing, and whom he ſent in the fulneſs of time in the form of a ſervant, as the miniſter of the circumciſion, to the loſt ſheep of the houſe of *Iſrael*, and to call ſinners to repentance; or ſervant may be put for ſervants, ſince in *Matt.* xxii. 3, 4. mention is made of more; and ſo the *Perſic* verſion here; which parable bears ſome likeneſs to this, if it is not the ſame; and may deſign the Apoſtles of Chriſt, who were the ſervants of the moſt high God, and the miniſters of Chriſt, who were firſt ſent by him to preach the Goſpel to the *Jews*, and to them only for a while; *to ſay to them that were bidden come*: this call, or invitation, was not the internal call, which is a fruit of love, and by grace, and of mighty power; to ſpecial bleſſings, grace, and glory; and is irreſiſtible, effectual, and unchangeable: but external, to outward ordinances; and is often ſlighted and neglected; and is ſometimes of perſons who are neither choſen, nor ſanctified, nor ſaved: *for all things are now ready*; the *Syriac* verſion adds, *for you*: righteouſneſs, pardon of ſin, peace, and reconciliation, ſin put away by the ſacrifice of Chriſt, redemption obtained, and life and ſalvation ſecured; which ſhows the perfection of the preſent diſpenſation, and the large proviſions of the Goſpel, to which nothing is, or can be brought to be added to them, or qualify for them.

Ver. 18. *And they all with one* conſent *began to make excuſe*, &c.] Or, *they all together*, as the *Vulgate Latin* verſion, באחת, *in one*, or *at once*, in *Jer*. x. 8. is rendered *altogether*; and ſo the *Ethiopic* verſion, which adds, *with one voice*: but their words and language were not the ſame; their excuſes are differently expreſſed. Some render απο μιας, *from one hour*, or the ſelf-ſame hour; immediately, directly, as ſoon as ever they were bidden, they began to frame excuſes; they at once agreed, as by common conſent, to excuſe themſelves from coming. *The firſt ſaid unto him, I have bought a piece of ground*, or *a field*, *and I muſt needs go and ſee it*: he ought to have ſeen it before he bought it; and however it was a very improper time at evening, at ſupper-time, as this was, to go and ſee a piece of ground; and at leaſt it might have been put off till next morning; ſo that it was a mere excuſe indeed. *I pray thee have me excuſed*; coming to the ſupper: theſe were the principal men among the *Jews*, the *Phariſees* and rulers among the people; who were rich and covetous, worldly men, ſeeking their own worldly advantage more than their ſpiritual and eternal welfare, or the intereſt of God and religion.

Ver. 19. *And another ſaid I have bought five yoke of oxen*, &c.] To plough the field with, *and I go to prove them*: this alſo being at, or near evening, was an unſuitable time to go into the field with yokes of oxen to try them, how they would draw the plough, and work in the field; the morning would have been a much more proper time: *I pray thee have me excuſed*; to the maſter of the feaſt: this man repreſents alſo the carnal and worldly *Jews*, who preferr'd temporal things before ſpiritual.

Ver. 20. *And another ſaid I have married a wife*, &c.] And his pretence might be, that he had his own marriage-feaſt, and friends to attend, nor could he leave his wife directly; but his circumſtances were ſuch as made an invitation to a feaſt the more agreeable, and he might have brought his wife and friends along with him, who would have been as welcome as himſelf: *and therefore I cannot come*. The *Arabic* verſion renders it, *therefore I will not go*: this man is more ruſtic and rude than the former; he does not ſo much as deſire to be excuſed; and repreſents ſuch who are fond of their ſenſual luſts and pleaſures, and are reſolved to indulge them, and will not be taken off from them by any means whatever.

Ver. 21. *So that ſervant came and ſhewed his Lord theſe things*, &c.] The ſeveral excuſes which thoſe that were bidden to the ſupper made. So the miniſters of the Goſpel come to God and Chriſt, and give an account of the ſucceſs of their miniſtry, which is often with grief, and not with joy: *then the maſter of the houſe being angry*; as well he might, at their ingratitude to him, their ſlighting of his kindneſs, and the contempt they poured upon his entertainment. Chriſt reſented the impenitence and unbelief of the *Jews*, who were favoured with his miniſtry and miracles; and looked upon them with anger, and was grieved becauſe of the hardneſs of their hearts; and threatened them with a ſorer puniſhment, a more aggravated condemnation, and more intolerable torments, than other men. *And ſaid to his ſervants*; the apoſtles, when their commiſſion was enlarged to preach to all nations, beginning at *Jeruſalem*: *go out quickly into the ſtreets and lanes of the city*; to the *Jews*, who lived under a civil government, under the law of *Moſes*; tho' the meaner ſort of them, the poor, and ſuch as knew not the law in ſuch ſort as the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* did, who rejected the counſel of God againſt themſelves; and ſo are comparable to perſons that lie about the ſtreets, and live in lanes and alleys: and it may alſo regard the *Jews* that were ſcattered abroad in other places, and the proſelytes to their religion among the *Gentiles*; to whom the Goſpel was firſt preached, after it was rejected by the *Jews* at *Jeruſalem* and in *Judea*: *and bring in hither the poor*; not in a literal, but in a myſtical and ſpiritual ſenſe; ſuch as have no ſpiritual food to eat, but aſhes, gravel, wind, and huſks of carnal luſts and ſins; nor any ſpiritual clothing, no righteouſneſs, but what may be juſtly called filthy rags; nor money to buy either, but are in debt, owe ten thouſand talents, and have nothing to pay; of which ſpiritual poverty ſome are ſenſible, and others are not. *And the maimed*; who are debilitated and enfeebled by ſin; and ſo weak and ſtrengthleſs, that they are not able to keep the law of God; to atone for ſin; to redeem themſelves, or others, from the bondage of ſin, ſatan, and the law; to begin and carry on a work of grace and holineſs in them; or to do any thing that is ſpiritually good: *and the halt*; which is ſometimes a character of perſons that are in ſuſpenſe about matters in religion, and know not which ſide to take; or who halt in religion, and faulter and fail in the exerciſe of it: but here, of ſuch who are in an incapacity of going or walking in a ſpiritual ſenſe; as unto Chriſt, for life and ſalvation, without the drawings and influences of the father's grace: *and the blind*; who are ſo, as to any ſaving knowledge of God in Chriſt; of Chriſt, and the way of righteouſneſs, life, and ſalvation by him; of the plague of their own hearts, the exceeding ſinfulneſs of ſin, and the need of a Saviour; of the work of the Spirit of God upon their ſouls, and the neceſſity of it; and of the truths of the Goſpel, in a ſpiritual and experimental way. In ſhort, under theſe characters are repreſented natural and unconverted men, and the moſt vile, profligate, and abandoned of them; which are ſometimes under the power of divine grace accompanying the miniſtration of the Goſpel brought to Chriſt, and into his church. So *the blind and the lame*, in 2 *Sam.* v. 6, 8. are by the *Targum* on the place, explained of, חטאיא וחיביא, *ſinners and wicked perſons*.

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[n] See my notes on the Targum in Cant. viii. 2.

Ver. 22. *And the ſervant ſaid*, &c.] After he had been and brought in a large number of ſuch as are before deſcribed, and he was directed to, and ſucceeded to the gathering of them in: *Lord, it is done as thou haſt commanded*; the apoſtles exactly obſerved the orders of their Lord and maſter; they began to preach the Goſpel at *Jeruſalem*; and being drove from thence, they went and preached to the *Jews* of the diſperſion, and to the proſelytes among the *Gentiles*: *and yet there is room*; that is, for the *Gentiles*, after God's elect, among the *Jews*, for that time were gathered in: there was room provided for them in the heart and love of God from everlaſting, and in electing grace; in the ſuretyſhip-engagements of Chriſt, and in the covenant of his grace; and they had a place in the redeeming grace of Chriſt, in time; and in the laſt commiſſion he gave to his diſciples; and there was now room for them in the church of God; and will be in the new *Jeruſalem*, and in the heavenly glory.

Ver. 23. *And the Lord ſaid unto the ſervant*, &c.] A ſecond time; that ſince the *Jews* put away the word of eternal life from them, and judged themſelves unworthy of it by their contradicting and blaſpheming it, he commanded his apoſtles to turn from them to the *Gentiles*; ſee *Acts* xiii. 45, 46, 47. *go out into the high-ways and hedges*: the *Perſic* verſion adds, *of the vineyards*; ſee 1 *Chron.* iv. 23. and may in general deſign the mean, baſe, vile, and ſinful ſtate of the *Gentiles*; who might be ſaid to be *in the high-ways*, becauſe they were without the commonwealth and church of the *Jews*; were not admitted to civil converſation, nor to religious worſhip with them; and were left to walk on in their own ways, of their own deviſing and chuſing, in which they delighted: they were not in God's high-way, which is a way of holineſs, *Iſ.* xxxv. 8. but in their own high-ways; either following the various ſects of the philoſophers, which were vain and fooliſh; or going into different practices of idolatry, and walking in very ſinful and vicious courſes; and ſo were in the broad road and high-way to deſtruction: and their being in, and under *the hedges*, may denote their ſtate of ſeparation from God; being without him, alienated from the life of him, and afar off from him; being aliens from the commonwealth of *Iſrael*, and ſtrangers from the covenants of promiſe, *Eph.* ii. 12. they were not in the gardens and incloſures, but under the hedges: *and compel them to come in*; to the houſe of God, and church of Chriſt; to come and hear the word, and quit their former courſe of living, and attend the word and worſhip of God; and upon an evidence of the truth of grace upon their ſouls, to come into a Goſpel church-ſtate, and partake of all privileges and ordinances in it; to which they are to be compelled, not by outward force, but by forcible words, by powerful arguments, and by the ſtrength of perſuaſion; which expreſſes the nature of the Goſpel miniſtry, which is to perſuade *Japhet* to dwell in the tents of *Shem*; and the power that attends it by the divine Spirit; the caſe and condition of ſouls, who are generally baſhful and backward, judging themſelves unworthy; as alſo the earneſt deſire, and great liberality of Chriſt, the maſter of the feaſt, whoſe end in it is as follows: *that my houſe may be filled*; with men, like a flock, and theſe with gifts and grace; with ſuch as ſhall be ſaved, as with elect *Jews*, ſo with the fulneſs of the *Gentiles*.

Ver. 24. *For I ſay unto you*, &c.] Moſt ſolemnly affirm it, and even ſwear to it, nothing is more certain, or will be found more true; *that none of thoſe men that were bidden*: the impenitent and unbelieving *Jews*, the *Scribes*, and *Phariſees*, and the greater part of the nation; who firſt had the Goſpel publiſhed to them, who are the many that were called, tho' few were choſen, and therefore came not; nor did, nor *ſhall taſte of my ſupper*: nor had they ſo much as a ſuperficial knowledge of the Goſpel, of the truths, bleſſings, promiſes, and ordinances of it; being given up to judicial blindneſs and hardneſs of heart; and from whom, in a little while, the Goſpel was wholly taken; and is not yet afforded to them as a body; nor will till the latter day, when the veil ſhall be taken away, and they ſhall turn to the Lord, and all *Iſrael* ſhall be ſaved; but as for the firſt diſbelievers and rejecters of Chriſt among the *Jews*, they died in their ſins, and periſhed eternally.

Ver. 25. *And there went great multitudes with him*, &c.] From *Galilee*, as he journeyed from thence to *Jeruſalem*; ſome for one thing, and ſome another, and all perhaps were in expectation of his ſetting up a temporal kingdom when he came there; and hoped they ſhould ſhare, more or leſs, the worldly advantages of it; for the whole nation was big with ſuch carnal notions of the Meſſiah. Jeſus therefore to draw off their minds from ſuch views, and that they might not be diſappointed, acquaints them, that if they would be his diſciples, they muſt part with all that was near and dear to them; and prepare to ſuffer great hardſhips and difficulties for his name ſake: for it follows, *and he turned*; himſelf to the company that was behind: *and ſaid unto them*; with a grave and ſtern countenance, looking wiſhly at them, and in the moſt ſolemn manner delivered what is hereafter related.

Ver. 26. *If any man come to me*, &c.] Not in a corporal, but in a ſpiritual way; nor barely to hear him preach; but ſo come, as that he believes in him, applies to him for grace, pardon, righteouſneſs, life, and ſalvation; profeſſes to be his, ſubmits to his ordinances, and deſires to be a diſciple of his; *and hate not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and ſiſters, yea, and his own life alſo, he cannot be my diſciple*: not that proper hatred of any, or all of theſe, is enjoined by Chriſt; for this would be contrary to the laws of God, to the firſt principles of nature, to all humanity, to the light of nature, to reaſon and divine revelation: but that theſe are not to be preferred to Chriſt, or loved more than he, as it is explained in *Matt*. x. 37. yea, theſe are to be neglected and forſaken, and turned from with indignation and reſentment, when they ſtand in the way of the honour and intereſt of Chriſt, and diſſuade from his ſervice: ſuch who would be accounted the diſciples of Chriſt, ſhould be ready to part with their deareſt relations and friends, with the greateſt enjoyment of life, and with life itſelf, when Chriſt calls for it; or otherwiſe they are not worthy to be called his diſciples. The *Ethiopic* verſion inſerts, *his houſe*, into the account.

Ver. 27. *Whoſoever doth not bear his croſs*, &c.] All reproach, afflictions, perſecutions, and death itſelf, chearfully and patiently; the *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *of his death the croſs*; it ſignifies whatever is trying and diſagreeable to fleſh and blood: *and come after me*; bearing his croſs; as Chriſt himſelf was about to do, and which doubtleſs he had in view; *cannot be my diſciple*; he is not ſo in reality, nor does he deſerve the name.

Ver. 28. *For which of you intending to build a tower*, &c.] Taking up a profeſſion of Chriſt and his Goſpel, is like building a tower; which as a tower, muſt be laid on a good foundation; not on carnal deſcent and parentage; nor on a ſober and religious education; nor on a civil, moral life and converſation; nor on a bare knowledge of Goſpel truths, and a flaſh of affection for them, and the people of God; but upon Chriſt the ſure foundation; and on principles of grace formed by his Spirit, in their hearts: and this, like a tower, is carried very high; not by profeſſing high things, but by living on high amidſt a profeſſion; by having the affections ſet on things above; and by looking down with contempt on things below; and by looking to, and preſſing after, the prize of the high calling of God in Chriſt: the profeſſion of ſome perſons is very low; it ariſes from low principles, and proceeds on low views, aims, and ends; but where it is right, and well founded, it is like a tower, firm and ſteady, and is a fortreſs and bulwark againſt apoſtacy. Now what perſon acting deliberately in ſuch a caſe as this, and proceeding with intention and deſign, *ſitteth not down firſt, and counteth the coſt, whether he have* ſufficient *to finiſh* it? as every wiſe man would, who has any thoughts of building a tower, or any other edifice: and ſo ſuch that have an intention to take up a profeſſion of religion, ſhould ſit down and well conſider of it; which does not imply, that perſons ſhould delay making a profeſſion, on whom it is incumbent; but that this ſhould be done with thoughtfulneſs, care, and prudence: it ſhould be conſidered on what foundation a man is going to build; whether the work of grace is truly wrought upon his ſoul; what be the nature and uſe of Goſpel ordinances; with what views he takes up a profeſſion, and ſubmits to ordinances; what the church and miniſter are, he intends to walk with; and what the charge and coſt of a profeſſion; for ſuch a work is chargeable and coſtly, and ſhould be thought of and conſidered, whether he is able to bear it: for he will be called to ſelf-denial; and muſt expect to ſuffer the loſs of the favour of carnal relations and friends; and to be expoſed to the ſcorn and rage of the world; a croſs muſt be took up and bore; and great grace and ſtrength are requiſite to all this.

Ver. 29. *Leſt haply after he hath laid the foundation*, &c.] Has begun to build, has taken up a profeſſion, has ſubmitted to ordinances, and got into a church-ſtate: *and is not able to finiſh* it; a foundation may be laid, and the building may never be finiſhed, becauſe the foundation is not laid right; was it, it would continue, and the building go on, and at laſt be finiſhed; though no man is able to finiſh it of himſelf, yet thoſe hands which have laid the foundation, will raiſe up the ſuperſtructure, and compleat the whole building, through the power and efficacy of divine grace: but where there is a beginning, and which at firſt looks well, and there is no progreſs, but the work is dropped and left unfiniſhed, *all that behold* it, *begin to mock*; as follows;

Ver. 30. *Saying, this man began to build*, &c.] He ſet out well, he promiſed great things, and made a conſiderable bluſter and ſtir, as if he would carry things at once to a very high pitch: *and was not able to finiſh*; it was all noiſe and talk, and nothing elſe: falling off from a profeſſion of religion, expoſes men to contempt and ſcorn; ſuch are not only caſt out of churches with diſgrace, but are deſpiſed by men, by wicked men; and are a reproach, a proverb, and a taunt in all places; and even are mocked by devils too.

Ver. 31. *Or what king going to make war againſt another king*, &c.] Our Lord illuſtrates the ſame thing, the buſineſs of a profeſſion, by another ſimilitude, or parable; taking up a profeſſion of religion, is like to two kings engaging in a war. The king on the one ſide, is the chriſtian profeſſor; true believers are kings, they have the apparel of kings, the royal robe of Chriſt's righteouſneſs; they liv like kings, at the table of the king of kings; hav the attendance of kings, angels miniſtring unto them; have crowns and thrones as kings have, an greater than theirs; and have a kingdom of grac now, and are heirs of the kingdom of glory. Th king on the other ſide, is the devil; who is th king and prince of the reſt of the devils, and ov

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the men of the world; a kingdom is aſcribed to him, which is a kingdom of darkneſs; and he is ſaid to be a great king, and is repreſented as proud, cruel, and tyrannical: now the chriſtian profeſſor's life is a warfare; he is engaged with many enemies; the corruptions of his own heart within, and the world without; and eſpecially ſatan, who is to be reſiſted, and by no means to be yielded to, though there is a great inequality between them: and therefore what man that engages in ſuch a warfare, *ſitteth not down firſt, and conſulteth whether he be able with ten thouſand, to meet him that cometh againſt him with twenty thouſand?* and ſuch a difference there is between the chriſtian profeſſor and the devil; the one is fleſh and blood, the other a ſpirit; the one is raw and undiſciplined, the other a veteran ſoldier; the one a ſtripling, and the other the ſtrong man armed: their numbers are unequal; the people of Chriſt are few, and their force and ſtrength in themſelves ſmall; and they have a large number of devils, and of the men of the world, and of the luſts of their own hearts, to grapple with; wherefore it is neceſſary to ſit down and conſult, not with fleſh and blood, but with other chriſtians; and chiefly, and above all, with God himſelf; what will be the charges of this warfare; the hardſhips to be endured; in whoſe name and ſtrength they are to engage; what weapons to take, and how to uſe them; and how to get knowledge of the deſigns, methods, and ſtrength of the enemy, and take every advantage of him.

Ver. 32. *Or elſe, while the other is a great way off*, &c.] Upon his march, with reſolution to come up and give battle, though as yet at a diſtance: *he ſendeth an ambaſſage*; or men, with an embaſſy to him: *and deſireth conditions of peace*; greatly to his diſadvantage and reproach: ſo to give out, and leave off fighting with ſin, ſatan, and the world, and make peace with them, is ſhameful and ſcandalous; but on the other hand, ſuch who have engaged in this war, ſhould purſue it with vigour and courage; conſidering that God is on their ſide; that Chriſt is the captain of their ſalvation; that the Spirit of God that is in them, is greater than he that is in the world; that angels encamp around them; that it is a good cauſe they are engaged in; that they have good weapons, the whole armour of God provided for them; are ſure of victory, and ſhall at laſt enjoy the crown of life, righteouſneſs and glory.

Ver. 33. *So likewiſe whoſever he be of you*, &c.] Let him be ever ſo forward to follow me, to make a profeſſion of me and of my Goſpel, and to become a diſciple of mine: *that forſaketh not all that he hath*; when called to it, relations, friends, poſſeſſions, eſtates, and what not, which is an explanation of ver. 26. *he cannot be my diſciple*; he is not in fact one, and is not worthy to be called one.

Ver. 34. *Salt is good*, &c.] See the notes on *Matt.* v. 13. and *Mark* x. 50.

Ver. 35. *It is neither fit for the land*, &c.] For the manuring of it, when it has loſt its ſavour and ſpirit; otherwiſe it makes land fruitful, if too much is not uſed, and eſpecially fixt ſalts have this uſe; though *Pliny* ſays [*], "every place in which "ſalt is found, it is barren and brings forth no"thing." *Nor yet for the dunghill*; to mix with dung, and help it, that it may be the more ſerviceable for the earth and juſt ſuch uſeleſs things, are a mere external profeſſion of religion, and profeſſors of it, and miniſters of the word, without the grace of God; they are of no uſe, but hurtful to the church, and to the world; theſe phraſes are left out in the *Perſic* and *Ethiopic* verſions: but *men caſt it out*; into the ſtreets, as entirely uſeleſs: and ſo ſuch graceleſs profeſſors and miniſters, are to be caſt out of the churches of Chriſt now, and will be excluded the kingdom of heaven hereafter: *he that hath ears to hear, let him hear*; this being a point of great importance and conſequence; ſee the note on *Matt.* xi. 15.

# CHAP. XV.

Ver. 1. *THEN drew near to him*, &c.] To *Jeſus*, as the *Perſic* and *Ethiopic* verſions expreſs it: this was on the ſabbath-day, and either when he was in the *Phariſees* houſe, where he was invited to dinner, ch. xiv. 1. or rather when he came out of it, when the multitude, who could not come near him whilſt there, took the opportunity of gathering about him; even *all the publicans and ſinners*; whom the *Phariſee* would not admit into his houſe, it being contrary to their traditions to eat, and drink, and converſe with perſons of ſuch an infamous character; ſee the note on *Matt.* ix. 10, 11. The word *all* is omitted in the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions; but the *Arabic* verſion has it, and the *Greek* copies; and ſignifies that there were a very large number of them, even all that were in that place, and in the adjacent cities and towns, that got together *for to hear him*; or *from him*, as the *Arabic* verſion; or *doctrine* from him, as the *Perſic* verſion adds: theſe having heard much of him; and it may be, might be under ſome remorſe of conſcience on account of their vicious lives, came to hear him preach.

Ver. 2. *And the Phariſees and Scribes murmured*, &c.] When they ſaw the eaſy acceſs theſe wicked men had to Chriſt; and that he ſtopped and ſtaid with them, and very freely imparted inſtructions to them: *ſaying, this man receiveth ſinners*. The *Perſic* verſion reads, *publicans and ſinners*, as in the preceding verſe: the word *man* is not in the original text, 'tis only *this*; which is to be underſtood not by way of eminence, as this great perſon, this prophet, this maſter in *Iſrael*; but by way of diminution and reproach, this fellow; as it is ſometimes ſupplied: the word *man* may be very rightly inſerted, for they took him to be a mere man; tho' it is certain he was more than a man, even the true and mighty God; and therefore was able to ſave thoſe ſinners that came to him: and great condeſcenſion and grace did he ſhow in receiving them who were *ſinners*, not only by nature, but by practice; and not merely guilty of common infirmities, but were notorious ſinners, covetous, extortioners, oppreſſors of the poor, and very debauched perſons; and ſuch as theſe Chriſt *receives*: hence no man ſhould be diſcouraged from coming to Chriſt, on account of ſin; all that do come to him, ſhould come as ſinners, for he receives them as ſuch; nor does he receive any for any worthineſs there is in them: theſe perſons he received firſt at his Father's hand, as he did all the elect, as his portion, and to be preſerved and ſaved by him; with all gifts, grace, bleſſings, and promiſes for them; and in conſequence of this, he receives them upon their coming to him as ſinners, into his open love and affection, into his arms; which denotes communion and protection; into his houſe and family, and not only to hear him preach, or preached, but to converſe and eat with him at his table, and even to live by faith upon him; and when he has freed them from all their ſins, he'll receive them to himſelf in glory. And there is the greateſt reaſon imaginable to believe, that Chriſt ſtill does, and will receive ſinners; ſince he came to ſave the chief of ſinners; and has bore their ſins, and died for them; and now makes interceſſion for tranſgreſſors; and by the miniſters of the word calls ſinners to repentance. *And eateth with them*; as he did in the houſes of *Matthew* the publican, and of *Zaccheus*; ſee *Matt.* ix. 10. *Luke* xix. 7. each of which occaſioned great murmurings among the *Phariſees*; and who therefore traduced him as a friend of publicans and ſinners; and he is indeed ſo in the beſt ſenſe: and not only did he eat with them corporally, but in a ſpiritual ſenſe, as he ſtill does; admitting them into his houſe to eat of the proviſions of it, to live on him the bread of life, to ſup with him, and he with them; and feeding and delighting himſelf in the exerciſe of thoſe graces, which he himſelf is the donor and author of, in them.

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[*] Nat. Hiſt. l. 31. c. 7.

Ver. 3. *And he ſpake this parable unto them*, &c.] To the *Phariſees*, for their conviction and confutation; and to the publicans and ſinners for their encouragement; and in vindication of himſelf; and not only this, but the other two, concerning the loſt piece of money, and the prodigal ſon, which were ſaid at this time, and on the ſame occaſion; *ſaying*, as follows,

Ver. 4. *What man of you having an hundred ſheep*, &c.] A flock of ſheep, conſiſting of ſuch a number; ſee the note on *Matt.* xviii. 12. *if he loſe one of them*, by ſtraying from the flock, *doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderneſs*, upon the common where they were feeding, *and go after that which is loſt until he find it?* by which parable Chriſt vindicates his conduct in converſing with ſinners, and neglecting the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*; for if it was right for an owner of an hundred ſheep, when he had loſt one of them, to leave all the reſt, and go in ſearch after that one till he had found it; then it was right in Chriſt to do what he did. The *Jewiſh* nation ſeems to be deſigned by *the hundred ſheep*, who are frequently repreſented as a flock of ſheep, *Pſ.* lxxvii. 20. and xcv. 7. and c. 3. *Ezek.* xxxiv. 2, 3, 30, 31. which are divided into ninety-nine, and one: for by *the ninety-nine* left in the wilderneſs, cannot be meant angels, as ſome have thought; for angels are never called ſheep; and beſides, the one loſt ſheep is of the ſame kind with the ninety and nine; and, according to this ſenſe, muſt deſign an angel, or angels likewiſe; whereas none of the fallen angels are ſought up, recovered, and ſaved. Moreover, when Chriſt became incarnate, he did not leave the angels; they accompanied and attended him in his ſtate of humiliation; and much leſs in a wilderneſs, and ſtill leſs can heaven be ſo called; to which may be added, that the angels in heaven are diſtinguiſhed from the ninety-nine, as well as from the one loſt ſheep in ver. 7, 10. nor can elect men be deſigned by them, who are already called by grace, whether they be in heaven or on earth; for tho' they in heaven are the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect, and are in a ſtate that need no repentance, yet it can't be ſaid of them, that they went not aſtray, as in *Matt.* xviii. 13. for all God's people have been like ſheep going aſtray, and were as ſuch conſidered when Chriſt was here on earth, and bore their ſins; and eſpecially thoſe could never be ſaid to be left in a wilderneſs: nor the ſaints on earth; for tho' they are juſt perſons, being juſtified by the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, yet they daily need repentance; nor can it be ſaid of them that they went not aſtray; nor are they left by Chriſt in the wilderneſs of this world; nor can there be more joy in heaven over one repenting ſinner, than over theſe; but the ſelf-righteous *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, that murmured at our Lord's receiving ſinners, are meant. Theſe were ſheep, at leaſt were in ſheeps cloathing; they were nominal profeſſors, and belonged to the *Jewiſh* fold, or national church-ſtate; their number was ninety-nine, to one; which is not be taken ſtrictly, as though only one in a hundred of them were ſaved; but it ſhows, that the greater part of the *Jews* were of this ſort. The dividing of an hundred after this manner, into ninety-nine and one, was uſual with the *Jews*; ſo in their traditions [p], concerning diſtributing filberts to the poor, "*R.* "*Simeon* ſays, if *ninety-nine* ſay *divide*, and *one* ſays "ſpoil, or ſcatter, they hearken to him, becauſe "he ſpeaks according to the conſtitution; but of "a vine and date, it is not ſo: if *ninety and nine* "ſay ſpoil, and *one* ſays divide, they hearken to "him, for he ſpeaks according to the conſtitution." And elſewhere [q] they ſay, "*ninety and nine* die by "an (evil) eye, and *one* by the hand of heaven; "*R. Chanina* and *Samuel*, both of them ſay, *ninety and nine* die by cold, and one by the hand of "heaven——*R. Samuel bar Nachman*, in the name "of *R. Jonathan* ſays, *ninety and nine* die by heat, "and *one* by the hand of heaven; and the *Rabbans* ſay, *ninety and nine* die by tranſgreſſion, and "*one* by the hand of heaven——Says *R. Eleazar*, "*ninety and nine* die by bitterneſs, and *one* by the "hand of heaven." And in another place [r] it is ſaid, "*ninety and nine* die by an evil eye, and *one* "by the way of the earth;" in the common way: once more it is ſaid [s], "of the *hundred* cries which "a woman cries, when ſhe ſits upon the ſtool (in "travail,) *ninety and nine* are for death, and *one* "for life." And this way of ſpeaking alſo prevailed in other eaſtern nations, as in *Arabia*; in the *Alcoran* of *Mahomet* [t] there is ſuch an expreſſion as this; "this my brother had *ninety nine* ſheep, and "I had only *one* ewe." The *one loſt ſheep* in this parable, though it may include all the elect of God, and be accommodated to a ſingle elect ſinner, yet chiefly reſpects the choſen of God among the *Jews*; which were very few, a remnant according to the election of grace; and which lay among the profane part of them, the publicans and ſinners, who are particularly pointed out here, as appears from the context: theſe are called *ſheep*, even before converſion; not becauſe they had the agreeable properties of ſheep, for they were all the reverſe; nor could ſome things be ſaid of them before as after, as, that they heard the voice of Chriſt, and followed him; nor becauſe they were unprejudiced againſt, and prediſpoſed to receive the Goſpel: but they are ſo called by anticipation, becauſe they would be ſo; or rather in virtue of electing grace, by which they were choſen, and ſeparated from others, and made the care and charge of Chriſt the great ſhepherd, and were the ſheep of his hand: theſe are repreſented as going aſtray from the ſhepherd, and from the fold, and out of the right way; and who being like ſheep, ſtupid and inſenſible of their danger, wander about, and never return of themſelves till they are returned to, and by the great ſhepherd and biſhop of ſouls. And in their unregenerate eſtate they are loſt ſheep, not irretrievably and eternally loſt, as the world's goats; for tho' they are loſt in *Adam*, yet not in Chriſt; and tho' loſt in themſelves, ſo as there is no poſſibility of ever recovering and ſaving themſelves; yet as they were preſerved in Chriſt, they are recovered and ſaved by him; who is the owner and proprietor of the whole flock, of all the *hundred* ſheep, of the whole body of the *Jewiſh* nation; who were his by creation, and by being choſen from, and above all other people; and were diſtinguiſhed by peculiar favours, had the *Shekinah*, and preſence of God among them, and his worſhip, word, and ordinances. Chriſt was peculiarly promiſed to them, and were born of them; and was a miniſter of the circumciſion, being ſent only to the loſt ſheep of the houſe of *Iſrael*: though the *ninety and nine* were not his ſheep in the moſt peculiar ſenſe, or in ſuch ſenſe as the *one* loſt ſheep, which were his by his Father's gift, as all the elect are; hence he knows them, calls them, and receives them, and keeps them, and highly values them: he had them, they were put into his hands, he took the care and charge of them, he undertook to bring them in, to feed them, to die for them, and ſave them; and they are his by purchaſe, and he aſſerts his right to them, by calling them by his grace, and will diſtinguiſh them as his own, at the laſt day: and now, becauſe of the different intereſt Chriſt has in the ninety and nine, and the one, different regards are had to them; the ninety and nine, the ſelf-righteous *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, he *leaves in the wilderneſs*, in a ſtate of unregeneracy; ſo called, becauſe in thoſe that are in ſuch a ſtate, nothing is ſown or planted, what grows there is natural; there's no ſeed of grace, no plants of pleaſure, no engrafted word, no fruits of righteouſneſs, nothing but thorns and briars, of ſins and corruptions: and alſo becauſe of the want of proviſions; no bread of life, nor water of life; no ſincere milk of the word, no breaſts of conſolation; nothing but huſks, and bread of deceit: and it is like a wilderneſs, becauſe of ſolitarineſs; ſuch as are in this ſtate, are alone, without God, and Chriſt, and the bleſſed Spirit; they are aliens from the people of God, and converſe with none but wicked men, comparable to ſavage beaſts of the deſart: moreover, it may be ſo called, becauſe of the various perplexing croſs ways in it; the ways of ſin are many, and crooked and dark; and indeed, ſuch are the religious ways of unregenerate men: to which may be added, that it bears this name, becauſe of the danger of it; for ſuch as are in it, are expoſed to beaſts of prey; particularly to ſatan, the red dragon, and roaring lion; and to pits, gins, and ſnares, to hell-fire, deſtruction, and miſery. Chriſt's *leaving* perſons in ſuch a ſtate, ſuppoſes they were in it, antecedent to their being left: man was originally placed in a garden, ſinning againſt God, he forfeited his happy ſituation, and was drove out from it; and wandering from God, he fell into this wilderneſs ſtate. Chriſt does not lead any into it, but leaves them in it; which is done in conſequence of his father's act of preterition, or paſſing them by when he choſe others; and this he does, when he does not call them by his grace, as he does others; does not manure, till, and cultivate them as he does his own huſbandry and vines; makes no proviſion of food and paſture for them; leaves them to themſelves, and without the enjoyment of himſelf; to follow their own ways, without a guide, and to beaſts of prey without a guard. Now the perſons he thus leaves are ſuch whom the father has left out in his choice and covenant; and who left Chriſt, rejected and deſpiſed him; and were perſons that made great pretenſions to religion, were righteous in their own eyes; and in their own account never went aſtray, nor needed repentance. On the other hand, the one loſt ſheep, the choſen of God among publicans and ſinners, a ſpecial regard is had to them: Chriſt *goes after that which is loſt until he find it*; not after all mankind; for tho' they are all loſt, yet they are not all redeemed by Chriſt; nor are they made ſenſible of their loſt condition; nor effectually called by grace; nor brought home: nor does he go after the ninety-nine, for Chriſt came not to call the righteous; tho' theſe were loſt, and irretrievably too, yet they were not ſenſible of their condition: but God's elect among the *Jews* are the perſons here ſaid to be loſt; to ſhew their common condition with the reſt of mankind; to expreſs the love of Chriſt towards them the more; and to magnify the riches of his grace in their ſalvation: theſe he went after in redemption, he came forth from his father, and came down from heaven for their ſakes; he died to gather them together, and repreſented them all in his ſufferings and death; he bore all their ſins, and made reconciliation for them, and procured the full pardon of them; he ſatisfied the law and juſtice of God, wrought out an everlaſting righteouſneſs, and obtained eternal redemption, and a complete ſalvation for them: and he went after them in effectual vocation; before converſion an elect ſinner is without Chriſt, and goes aſtray from him; nor does he ever come to Chriſt till Chriſt comes after him, and lays hold upon him; he ſends his miniſters after ſuch, and his Spirit into them, and comes himſelf, and takes poſſeſſion of them. To find his loſt ſheep by redeeming grace he came into this world, a world of wickedneſs, ſorrow, and trouble, of cruelty, and barbarity; and the reaſon of his coming here was, becauſe his ſheep were here; he came after them, and on their account: and to find them by effectual calling, he ſtill comes into the world by his word and Spirit; God's elect are in the world, Chriſt ſends his Goſpel into it, and by his Spirit and grace comes and ſeparates them from the men of it. In *Matt.* xviii. 12. he is ſaid to go *into the mountains* after his loſt ſheep; which, with reſpect to redemption, may denote the difficulties that lay in the way of it; ſuch as his incarnation, obedience, ſufferings, and death, and the many enemies he had to grapple with and ſubdue; and with reſpect to calling-grace, may expreſs the ſtate and condition God's elect are in by nature, being on the mountains of ſin, of *Sinai*, of the law, and of their own righteouſneſs. Now Chriſt goes after them *till he finds* them; which denotes continuance, his indefatigable induſtry and diligence, his reſolution and courage, and his ſucceſs. The reaſons why he thus goes after them are not their number, for they are the feweſt of all; nor their nature, which is no better than others; nor any previous diſpoſitions, or good characters, for thoſe deſigned here were publicans and ſinners; nor any future improvements and ſervice by them, for they were the baſe and fooliſh things of this world; nor becauſe near at hand, and ſo eaſily looked up, for they were afar off; but becauſe of his love to them, and the relation between them as ſhepherd and ſheep; and becauſe of his father's will, and his own obligation by covenant; and becauſe of his own intereſt and glory.

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[p] Miſn. Peach. c. 4. §. 1, 2.

[q] T. Hieroſ. Sabbat, fol. 14. 3. Vajikra Rabba, §. 16. fol. 158. 4.

[r] T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 107. 2.

[s] Vajikra Rabba, §. 27. fol. 168. 3.

[t] C. 38.

Ver. 5. *And when he hath found* it, &c.] In a ſad plight and condition; ſo Chriſt finds his ſheep in a moſt deſolate one, in a pit, in the mire and clay of nature; in the paw of the roaring lion, ſatan; helpleſs, hopeleſs, wretched, miſerable, and naked; and not only ſtarving, famiſhing, and dying, but even dead in treſpaſſes and ſins: and finding them with reſpect to redemption, deſigns his procuring eternal ſalvation for them; and with regard to vocation, his laying hold upon them by his Spirit and grace, and bringing them to a ſenſe of themſelves, and to the knowledge of himſelf. There are ſeveral things which Chriſt does to his ſheep when he has found them, which are not here expreſſed, but underſtood: finding them dead in ſin he ſpeaks life into them; he calls them by name, and aſſerts his property in them; he takes them out of the pit of nature; he reſcues them out of the hands of ſatan; he waſhes them from their filthineſs, and heals all their diſeaſes; he feeds and refreſhes them; he covers them with his robe of righteouſneſs; he beautifies and adorns them, and brings them home in the manner after deſcribed: *he layeth* it *on his ſhoulders*; he does not put them on their own legs to go alone; nor does he lead them, and much leſs drive them before him; but he takes them up in his arms, and lays them on his ſhoulders: which ſhows the paſſiveneſs of men in converſion, and their weakneſs and impotency to any thing that is ſpiritually good of themſelves; they can't think a good thought, nor do a good action, and ſtill leſs begin and carry on the work of grace in their hearts; as alſo the ſtrength of Chriſt in bearing and carrying them, as he does, thro' all afflictions, temptations, and difficulties, ſafe to glory; and likewiſe his great love and affection for them; he loved them before the world began, and he ſhewed it in dying for them, and manifeſts it to them, when he calls them by his grace: and this alſo expreſſes the ſafety of his ſheep; for being on him, they are in no danger from the law and juſtice of God; nor from ſatan, or any other enemy; nor of a final and total falling away: and moreover this ſignifies the ſpiritual eaſe and reſt which ſuch have in Chriſt: the manner in which Chriſt the ſhepherd carries them, having found them, and laid them on his ſhoulders, is *rejoicing*; not upbraiding them with going aſtray; nor complaining of, or groaning under the burden; but rejoicing in a kind of triumph, and carrying them as a trophy of victory, and a ſpoil obtained.

Ver. 6. *And when he cometh home*, &c.] The houſe, or home, to which Chriſt comes and brings thither his loſt ſheep on his ſhoulders when found, is either the church of God, which is Chriſt's houſe and home, and into which he himſelf comes; it is his by gift and purchaſe, and which he has built, and here comes and dwells as a ſon over it, as king in it, and as prieſt and prophet there, and as the maſter of it; and hither he brings his people when he has called them by his grace, where they have a good fold and green paſtures, and where they delight to be; or elſe heaven is this home, which is an houſe of God's building, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens; and which is Chriſt's Father's houſe, and his own houſe and home, and alſo the ſaints houſe and home, whither they are all brought by Chriſt; for they can't go there alone, and of themſelves: they are brought by the power of divine grace as trophies of it, as to their own home; and ſuch that Chriſt takes into his arms, and on his ſhoulders, he never drops them till he has brought them ſafe to heaven: *he calleth together his friends and neighbours*: the *friends* of Chriſt are the ſaints, ſo called, becauſe of their ſhare in his friendſhip to them; ſhown by his becoming a ſurety for them; by his aſſuming their nature, and dying in their room and ſtead; by his paying their debts, and redeeming their perſons; by his interceſſion for them, and preparing a place for them in his Father's houſe; by ſupplying all their wants, and by his kind and comfortable viſits to them; by his free and familiar converſes with them, and by unfolding his ſecrets, and giving wholeſome advice and counſel to them: as alſo on account of their bearing and ſhewing friendſhip to him; as by their great affection to his perſon; by their attachment to his cauſe and intereſt; by their ſtrict regard to his Goſpel, and the truths of it; and by their diligent obſervance of his commands and ordinances; and by their regard to his people, and diſregard to his enemies: and theſe are alſo Chriſt's *neighbours*, they dwell near to each other; he dwells in them, and they in him; they love each other as themſelves, and perform every office chearfully in love to one another: moreover, the angels may be meant by the friends and neighbours of Chriſt, as may be collected from ver. 10. theſe are his *friends* whom he has ſhown himſelf friendly to, in the confirmation of them in the ſtate in which they were created; in the choice of them to eternal happineſs; and in being an head of protection to them, as well as of eminence over them: and theſe are friendly to him; as they were at his incarnation, and when tempted in the wilderneſs, and when in an agony in the garden, and at his reſurrection and aſcenſion; and will attend him at his ſecond coming: and they are friendly to his; are miniſtring ſpirits to them, rejoice at their converſion, encamp about them in life, and at death carry their departed ſouls to heaven: and theſe are likewiſe his *neighbours*; their habitation is in heaven where he is, and they always behold the face of his father there, and will come along with him when he appears a ſecond time. Now ſaints are called together to hear what great things Chriſt has done for poor ſinners when he brings them to *Zion*; and angels are alſo made acquainted with their converſion; and both ſaints and angels will be called together, when the ſheep of Chriſt ſhall be brought home to glory. *Saying unto them, rejoice with me, for I have found my ſheep which was loſt*: the joy of Chriſt, and his friends, is mutual on this occaſion; Chriſt rejoices himſelf, and his friends with him: he rejoiced in his people from everlaſting; they were the objects of his Father's love, and of his own; and he took delight in them, as he ſaw them in the glaſs of his Father's purpoſes, as they were choſen in him, and given to him; and this joy in them ſtill continued, notwithſtanding their fall in *Adam*, and their own actual ſins and tranſgreſſions; but whereas they were loſt in the fall, and by their own ſins, there were ſome new expreſſions of joy upon Chriſt's finding them in redemption: it was with the utmoſt pleaſure he engaged in that work; and with the greateſt readineſs did he come into the world to do it; and he went thro' it with great delight; he was, as it were, ſtraitned until it was accompliſhed; the conſideration of it made him eaſy under the apprehenſions of what he was to endure, and ſupported him under his moſt dolorous ſufferings; his riſing again from the dead as the repreſentative of his people, filled him with gladneſs, and he aſcended to heaven in a triumph: but yet ſtill theſe perſons, tho' redeemed, are in a loſt eſtate with reſpect to themſelves; wherefore in converſion there are freſh breakings forth of joy in Chriſt; for that is the day of his open eſpouſals to them, and ſo the day of the gladneſs of his heart; when he ſees of the travail of his ſoul with ſatisfaction; and large expreſſions of love are made to him; and his people are brought to ſome conformity to him: and communion with him, but ſtill they are not yet at home; wherefore with joy he brings them into his church, which is his houſe, and their home, where he rejoices over them to do them good; and will expreſs ſtill more joy in the new *Jeruſalem* church-ſtate, and ſtill more when he ſhall have brought them to glory, and have preſented them to himſelf, and to his Father, which will be done with exceeding joy. Chriſt's friends and neighbours, his ſaints and people, alſo rejoice at the converſion of a ſinner; becauſe the glory of the Father, Son, and Spirit, is diſplayed therein; and becauſe ſatan has loſt his prey, and Chriſt has got a new ſubject; and becauſe of the grace of God beſtowed upon the ſinner, and the addition that is made to their number; particularly this is matter of joy to the miniſters of the Goſpel; and angels alſo rejoice at it, becauſe of the glory of God that is advanced thereby.

Ver. 7. *I ſay unto you, that likewiſe joy ſhall be in heaven,* &c.] In the church below, and among the members of it; which is ſometimes called heaven, eſpecially in the book of the *Revelations*; or in heaven above, and among the angels there; ſee ver. 10. *Over one ſinner that repenteth*; for the joy in heaven, is not over ſinners as ſuch; for as ſuch, they are not grateful to God, nor to Chriſt, nor to the angels, nor to ſaints; only ſinners delight in each other, as ſuch; but as repenting ſinners, who are truly ſo: and theſe are not ſuch, who only legally and outwardly repent; nor all that declare a ſenſe of ſin; or that are externally ſorry for it; or are terrified about it, and ſhed tears on account of it; or that ceaſe from groſſer ſins of life, and outwardly reform: but ſuch who repent in an evangelical way; who are turned to God, and are inſtructed by his Spirit; who believe in Chriſt, and have views, at leaſt hopes, of pardon through his blood; and have the love of God and Chriſt, ſhed abroad in their hearts; from whence ariſe a true ſight and ſenſe of ſin, a godly ſorrow for it, an hearty loathing of it, ſhame on account of it, an ingenuous confeſſion, and a real forſaking of it. Now the reaſon why there is joy in heaven over ſuch perſons is, becauſe without ſuch a repentance, they muſt periſh; and by this they appear to be openly in a ſtate of grace; and become proper ſubjects of the ordinances of Chriſt; and this repentance is unto life and ſalvation; or theſe are inſeparably connected with it: and this joy is abundantly *more, than over ninety and nine juſt perſons, which need no repentance*; by whom are meant, either ſuch who are really righteous perſons; not naturally and of themſelves, nor legally by the deeds of the law, but by the imputation of Chriſt's righteouſneſs to them: and who need no repentance to be added to their righteouſneſs, it being perfect of itſelf; nor the grace and principle of repentance, becauſe they have it, and it can't be loſt; or change of life and manners, which is not to be ſeen in ſuch: and the more joy over repenting ſinners, than over theſe is, becauſe the ſalvation of the one is before certain to them, and the other is unexpected: but to this ſenſe it may be objected, that ſaints, even righteous perſons, need frequent converſions, and the continual exerciſe of the grace of repentance; nor does it ſeem feaſible, that there ſhould be more joy over a repenting ſinner, than over one, whoſe life, through grace, is a ſeries of righteouſneſs: rather therefore, ſuch who ſeem to be juſt, or are ſo in their own opinion, are here meant; for only ſuch ſort of righteous perſons and repenting ſinners, are oppoſed to each other, as in *Matt.* ix. 13. moreover, the occaſion and ſcope of the parable, determines this to be the ſenſe; the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, that murmured at Chriſt's receiving ſinners, are the ninety and nine juſt perſons, who were only outwardly righteous before men, and truſted in themſelves that they were righteous, perfectly righteous, and without ſin, and ſo ſtood in no need of repentance for it; now there is more joy in heaven over one repenting ſinner, than over all theſe: hence learn, that a ſelf-righteous perſon, is an impenitent one; that a repenting ſinner, is more regarded in heaven, than a ſelf-righteous man: our Lord here ſeems to have regard to a conceit of the *Jews*, who diſtinguiſh between penitents that were allowed to be righteous, and ſuch who never were guilty of any notorious crime, and ſo were perfectly righteous, and needed no repentance, and were preferred to penitent ſinners: ſome of them ſay[u], that "the prophets did not propheſy (good things and comforts,) but, לבעלי תשובה, *to penitents*; but as for, צדיקים גמורים, *the perfect righteous*, to them belongs that, *eye hath not ſeen, O God, beſides thee.*——But *R. Abbu* ſays, "the place in which *penitents* ſtand, the *perfect righteous* do not ſtand." Though *Maimonides* ſeems[w] to underſtand this, as if it gave the preference to penitents, his words are theſe; "let not a penitent man imagine that he is afar off from the excellency, or degree of the righteous, becauſe of the ſins and iniquities he has committed, the thing is not ſo; but he is beloved and deſired before the Creator, as if he had never ſinned; for his reward is great; for lo, he hath taſted the taſte of ſin, and hath ſeparated from it, and hath ſubdued his evil imagination: the wiſe men ſay, the place where *penitents* ſtand, the *perfect righteous* cannot ſtand; which is as if it was ſaid, their degree or excellency is greater, than thoſe who never ſinned, becauſe they have ſubdued their imagination more than they." However, theſe inſtances, with others that might be produced ſhew, that the *Jews* had a notion of ſome men, being perfectly righteous and without ſin; which they oppoſe to penitent ſinners, and which our Lord here deſigns, and ſeems to deſcribe in their own language, and ſerves to confirm the ſenſe given; ſee the note on *Heb.* xii. 23.

Ver. 8. *Either what woman, having ten pieces of ſilver,* &c.] Or *drachma's*; a *drachma* was the fourth part of a ſhekel, and of the ſame value with a *Roman* penny; and was worth of our money, ſeven-pence halfpenny; ſo that the ten pieces amounted to ſix ſhillings, and three-pence; the *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *ten rings*: this parable is delivered, with the ſame view as the former; the ſcope and deſign of them are alike, being occaſioned by the ſame circumſtance, only the paſſiveneſs of a ſinner in converſion, is here more fully ſignified; who can contribute no more to the firſt act of converſion, which is purely God's work, than a loſt piece of ſilver to its being found: by the *ten pieces of ſilver* are deſigned, all the *Jews*, or the whole body of that people; as they were before ſignified, by the hundred ſheep; they having been God's peculiar treaſure, though they were now in general become reprobate ſilver: and by the *woman* the proprietor of them, is meant Chriſt; and in what ſenſe he was the owner of them, has been ſhown on ver. 4. The *nine* pieces deſign the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*; and the one loſt piece, expreſſed in the next clauſe, *if ſhe loſe one piece*, intends the elect among the *Jews*, and who chiefly conſiſted of publicans and ſinners; and the regard had to theſe, is ſignified by the following expreſſions, *doth not light a candle:* by which is meant, not the light of nature or reaſon in man; for though this is called a candle, and is of Chriſt's lighting, yet not that by which he looks up his loſt people, for this is become very dim: and though by it men may know there is a God, and the difference between moral good and evil, by it they can't come at the knowledge of things ſpiritual; as of God in Chriſt, of the ſin of nature, and of the plague of the heart; nor of the way of ſalvation by Chriſt, nor of the work of the Spirit, and the nature and need of it; nor of the ſcriptures of truth, and of the doctrines of the Goſpel, nor of the things of another world: neither is the law of *Moſes* intended; for though there was light by it into the knowledge of ſin, yet not clear; and though the ceremonial law was a ſhadow of Chriſt, and did give ſome inſtructions about him, and the doctrines of the Goſpel, and bleſſings of grace, yet but very obſcure hints: but by this candle is meant, the Goſpel itſelf; which, like a candle, is lighted up in the evening of the world; and may be removed, as it ſometimes is, from place to place; and where it is ſet, and bleſſed, it gives light, and is uſeful both to work and walk by; it does not always burn alike clear, or is always held forth in the ſame purity; and it will give the greateſt light at laſt, as a candle does, even at the end of the world: now Chriſt is the lighter of this, and from him it has all its light, who is the maker of it; he keeps it light, and by it he looks up and finds out his elect ones; though this is not a direction to him, who perfectly knows who they are, and where they be, but is rather a light to them, that they may know and find him: *and ſweep the houſe*; which phraſe ſometimes deſigns outward reformation, as in *Matt.* xii. 44. and ſometimes God's judgments upon a people, as in *Iſa.* xiv. 23. but here the preaching of the Goſpel, and the power that goes along with it, to the effectual vocation of the elect: the *houſe* in which Chriſt's loſt piece of ſilver, or his choſen ones were, may deſign the nation of the *Jews*, who are often called the houſe of *Iſrael*; this was a houſe of God's building and chuſing, and where he dwelt; and among theſe people for a long time, God's elect lay, though all of them were not ſo; and about this time the Lord was about to break up houſe-keeping with them; yet as there were ſome few among them, that were to be looked up and called, therefore this houſe muſt be ſwept, as it was by the miniſtry of *John* the *Baptiſt*, by Chriſt himſelf, and by his apoſtles: and this ſuggeſts, what muſt be the ſtate and condition of God's elect, being in this houſe, before it was ſwept, and they found out; they were out of ſight, in great obſcurity and darkneſs, with a deal of rubbiſh and dirt upon them, and pollution in them; and impotent to that which is good, and to their own recovery, and yet capable of being recovered: and this phraſe hints at the power and efficacy of divine grace, that goes along with the word, in looking up and finding loſt ſinners; in enlightning their dark minds, quickening them, being dead in ſin, taking away their ſtony hearts, regenerating them, enſtamping the divine image upon them, removing every thing from them they truſted in, and working faith in them, to look to, and believe in Chriſt: and as in ſweeping of an houſe, a great ſtir is made, a duſt raiſed, and things are moved out of their place; ſo by the preaching of the Goſpel, an uproar is made in the ſinner himſelf; in his conſcience, which is filled with a horrible ſight of ſin; which is very loathſome, and cauſes uneaſy reflections, fills with ſhame and confuſion, and greatly burdens and diſtreſſes, and with the terrors of the law, and with dreadful apprehenſions of hell and damnation; in his will there's a reluctancy to part with ſinful luſts and pleaſures, with ſinful companions, and with his own righteouſneſs, and to be ſaved by Chriſt alone, and to ſerve him, and bear his croſs; and in his underſtanding, things appear in a different light than they before did: and great ſtir and oppoſition is made by ſatan, to hinder the preaching of the Goſpel, as much as in him lies, and perſons from coming to hear it; and if they do, he endeavours to hinder, by catching it from them, or diverting them from that; by inſinuating, 'tis either too ſoon or too late, to mind religion; or that ſin is either ſo great that it can't be forgiven, or ſo trivial, that a few prayers, tears, alms-deeds, *&c.* will make amends for it; by diſtreſſing them about their election, or about the willingneſs of Chriſt to ſave them; or by ſtirring up others to diſſuade and diſcourage them. Moreover, when the Goſpel is preached in purity and with power, and ſouls are converted, there is a great ſtir and uproar in the world, and among the men of it; becauſe the doctrines of it are fooliſhneſs, and ſtrange things to them; and oppoſe their ſenſe of things, and ſtrip them of what is valuable; and men are hereby diſtinguiſhed from them, and taken from among them: and there is alſo a ſtir and an uproar made by it, among carnal profeſſors of religion, as there was at this time among the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*; and all this buſtle is made, for the ſake of a ſingle piece of money: *and ſeek diligently till ſhe find it?* not only a light is ſet up, an hand of power put forth in uſing the beſom, but a quick ſharp eye, looks out for the piece of ſilver: this diligent ſeeking and finding, are to be underſtood not of the grace of Chriſt in redemption; nor of his reſtoring backſliders; but of his converting ſinners, through the preaching of the Goſpel, both in his own perſon, and by his miniſters, his Spirit making their miniſtrations effectual: the diligence, care, and circumſpection of Chriſt, to find out loſt ſinners, while the Goſpel is preaching, are here ſignified: 'tis not the preacher that looks out for them, though he that is a faithful miniſter of the word, performs his office diligently and carefully, and he deſires nothing more earneſtly than the converſion of ſinners; but then he knows not who are, and who are not the elect of God, and is ignorant of what Chriſt is doing, whilſt he is preaching: Chriſt's eye is upon his loſt piece; he perfectly knows the perſons of the elect, as they are his Father's choice, and his gift to him; he knew them in the counſel of peace, and covenant of grace, in the fall of *Adam*, and their natural eſtate; he knows the places where they all are, and the time when they are to be converted; and diſtinguiſhes them amidſt all the filth that attends them, and the crowd among which they are; and he continues ſeeking, till he finds them; which ſhews the perpetuity of the Goſpel miniſtry, the indefatigableneſs of Chriſt, and his ſure and certain ſucceſs: the reaſons of all this care and diligence, are his love to them, his propriety in them, his Father's will, and his own engagement; and becauſe they muſt be for ever loſt, did he not ſeek after them.

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[u] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 34. 2. & Sanhedrim, fol. 99. 1. & Jarchi in Iſa. xliv. 5. & Zohar in Lev. fol. 7. 2.

[w] Hilchot Teſhuba, c. 7. §. 4. Vid. Kimchi in Iſa. lvii. 19.

Ver. 9. *And when ſhe hath found it, ſhe calleth her friends*, &c.] See the note on ver. 6. a parable ſomewhat like to this, the *Jews*[x] have on thoſe words in *Prov.* ii. 4. *If thou ſeekeſt her as ſilver*, &c. "it is like to a man that has loſt a *ſhekel*, (a piece of money) or beryll rings, within his houſe; he lights up many lamps and many candles, until he lights on them; and lo, theſe things much more: for if a man for the things of the temporary life of this world, lights many lamps and candles, until he lights upon them and finds them; the words of the law, ſince they are the life of this world, and the life of the world to come, ſhouldſt thou not ſearch after them as for hidden treaſure?"

Ver. 10. *Likewiſe I ſay unto you*, &c.] As before, in ver. 7. *there is joy in the preſence of the angels of God*; who are the friends and neighbours of Chriſt; ſee the note on ver. 6. *over one ſinner that repenteth*; which they have knowledge of, either by immediate revelation from God, or by obſervation in the church where they attend: the reaſon of this joy is, becauſe there is one reſcued out of the hands of ſatan and his angels, between whom and them, there is an implacable enmity; and becauſe another ſubject is added to Chriſt's kingdom, and by which it is enlarged, the proſperity of which they greatly deſire; and becauſe another heir is born in that family, to which they belong, and they have another ſocial worſhipper with them: and this joy is ſaid to be *in the preſence of* them; and ſo may deſign the joy of others, as of Father, Son, and Spirit, which is in their ſight and knowledge; and alſo the joy there is among themſelves;

Ver. 11. *And he ſaid*, &c.] The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read, *and Jeſus ſaid again*; he added another parable to the two former, at the ſame time, of the ſame import, with the ſame view, and on the ſame occaſion; ſetting forth the different characters of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, and of the publicans and ſinners; and what little reaſon the one had to murmur, at his converſation with the other: *a certain man had two ſons*; by *the certain man* is meant, God the Father: God indeed is not a man, nor is he to be repreſented by any human image; but inaſmuch as man is the image of God, God is ſometimes compared to man, and is called a man of war, an huſbandman, *&c.* which no ways contradict his being a ſpirit; and true it is, that the ſecond perſon only aſſumed human nature; and therefore, whenever a divine perſon is ſpoken of as man, Chriſt is commonly intended: but though the Father never appeared in an human form, yet he ſeems here to be deſigned; becauſe the character of a father, and having ſons, more properly belong to him; and the reception of ſinners, and the forgiveneſs of them for Chriſt's ſake, agree with him: and beſides, Chriſt is diſtinguiſhed from the Father in this parable; and he and his bleſſings of grace, are ſignified by other things: by the *two ſons* are meant, not angels and men, as that angels are the elder, and men the younger ſon; for though angels are called the ſons of God, and may be ſaid to be elder than men, with reſpect to creation; and good angels may be ſaid to have been ever with God, and always ſerving him, and never ſinned againſt him; yet they are never called the brethren of men, nor men their brethren; and beſides, are never angry at the return and reception of repenting ſinners; for this would be to repreſent them juſt the reverſe of what they are ſaid to be, in the preceding verſe: nor are the *Jews* and *Gentiles* here intended, which is the more received and general ſenſe of the parable: thoſe who go this way, ſuppoſe the *Jews* to be the elder brother; and indeed they were ſo, with reſpect to external privileges; and were with God, being his houſhold and family; all he had were theirs, that was external; and the character of the elder brother throughout the parable, agrees with the far greater part of that nation; and it is certain, that they did reſent the calling of the *Gentiles:* and theſe ſuppoſe the *Gentiles* to be the younger brother, who indeed were brought into a church-ſtate, later than the *Jews*; and might be ſaid to be afar off, in a far country, and to have ſpent their ſubſtance in idolatry and wickedneſs; to have been in the utmoſt diſtreſs, and in the moſt deplorable condition: but to this ſenſe it may be objected, that the Goſpel was not as yet preached to the *Gentiles*; nor were they brought to repentance; nor were they openly received into the divine favour; nor as yet had the *Jews* murmured at, and reſented the kindneſs of God to them: rather ſtanding and fallen profeſſors, may be deſigned; ſince the former are very apt to carry it toward the latter, in like manner as the elder brother is repreſented in this parable, as carrying himſelf towards the younger: but the true ſenſe, and which the context and occaſion of the parable at once determine, is, that by the elder ſon are meant, the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, and ſelf-righteous perſons, among the *Jews*; and by the younger, the publicans and ſinners among the ſame people; as it is eaſy to obſerve, the ſame are meant by the two ſons in the parable in *Matt.* xxi. 28—32. Now theſe are called the ſons of God, becauſe the *Jews* in general were ſo by national adoption; and the ſelf-righteous *Phariſees* looked upon themſelves as the children of God, and favourites of heaven, in a ſpecial ſenſe; and God's elect among them, even thoſe that lay among publicans and ſinners, were truly ſo, and that before converſion; for they were not only predeſtinated to the adoption of children, but were really taken into the relation of children, in the covenant of grace; and as ſuch were given to Chriſt, and conſidered by him, when he aſſumed their nature, and died for them; and are ſo antecedent to the ſpirit of adoption, who is ſent to witneſs their ſonſhip to them; and which is conſiſtent with their being children of wrath, as the deſcendants of *Adam*, and their being the children of God openly and manifeſtatively, by faith in Chriſt Jeſus.

Ver. 12. *And the younger of them ſaid to his father*, &c.] God's choſen ones among the publicans and ſinners, are fitly ſignified by the *younger* ſon, ſince man, as a ſinner, is younger than man as righteous; and ſince there are inſtances of God's choice of the younger, before the elder, as *Jacob* before *Eſau*, *&c.* and the characters and conduct of young men agree with God's elect, in a ſtate of nature; who are imprudent and ignorant, without any knowledge of divine and ſpiritual things, and of themſelves, their ſtate and condition, and of Chriſt, and ſalvation by him; and yet are conceited of themſelves, and fancy themſelves very wiſe and knowing, and capable of acting for themſelves, independent, and without any aſſiſtance or advice; don't care to be under reſtraints, withdraw from all yokes, and break all bands aſunder; and ſo become

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[x] Shirhaſhirim Rabba, fol. 1. 4.

children of diſobedience, prone to every vice, and ſervants and ſlaves to every luſt; by which they are deceived, and in which they take a great deal of imaginary pleaſure; and are often envious and ſpiteful, and live in malice, hateful, and hating one another: the requeſt made by this younger ſon, is *to his father*; to God, who was his Father by creation, by providential care, and by national adoption, and by ſpecial grace; though as yet he knew it not, nor could he call him ſo in faith: many call God father, who ſhould not, and many that ſhould, do not: the requeſt follows; *father, give me the portion of goods that falleth* to me: this portion may be conſidered, either as internal or external; as internal, and ſuch who think the *Gentiles* are meant by the younger ſon, underſtand it of the light of nature, and of natural gifts and talents. The ancients generally interpret it, of man's free-will: it may intend natural knowledge in general, to which there is in man a natural deſire, and in which he is ſelf-ſufficient: or rather as external, ſuch as the outward bleſſings of life, food, raiment, health, *&c.* the honours, pleaſures, and riches of the world: the good things of this world belonged to men by right of creation, and according to the laws and dues of it, but have been all forfeited by the ſin of man; and yet this is a portion, which in the apprehenſions of men, of right belongs to them; and which ſuits their nature, which is carnal and worldly: *and he divided unto them* his *living*; natural gifts, external privileges, and worldly good things; which of all men in the earth, the *Jewiſh* nation ſhared; ſee *Pſal.* cxv. 16. and cvi. 15.

Ver. 13. *And not many days after the younger ſon gathered all together*, &c.] That his father had divided to him, all his goods and ſubſtance: as ſoon as a man has any internal ſubſtance, any conſiderable degree of natural knowledge, he immediately ſets out from God, and employs it againſt him, in reaſoning againſt him; againſt his being, his works, his providence, his purpoſes, his revelation, and will; as ſoon as a man has the exerciſe of his reaſon, as ſoon as he can think and ſpeak, nay, as ſoon as he is born, he goes aſtray from God, ſpeaking lies; and as ſoon as a wicked man has of this world, what his carnal heart deſires, he's for living independent of God, and his providence; he's for gathering together all for himſelf, in order to ſpend it on his luſts, and at a diſtance from his father, the father of his mercies, of whom he is not mindful; and to whom he ſays, depart from me, having no regard to his worſhip and ſervice, to his honour and glory, to his cauſe and intereſt: *and took his journey into a far country*; which ſets forth the ſtate of alienation a ſinner is in, while unconverted; he is afar off from God, from God the Father; from the preſence of God, and communion with him; from the knowledge of God, and deſire after it; from love to him, or fear of him; and from the life of God, or a living ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly; and from Chriſt, from the knowledge of him, from faith in him, love to him, fellowſhip with him, and ſubjection to his ordinances; and from the Spirit of God, and every thing that is ſpiritual; and from all that is good, from the law of God, and from the righteouſneſs of it, and from righteous men: *and there waſted his ſubſtance in riotous living*; his internal ſubſtance, his knowledge and underſtanding, even in natural things, and became brutiſh, and even like the beaſts that periſh; and his worldly ſubſtance in rioting and drunkenneſs, in chambering and wantonneſs, with harlots, as in ver. 30. whereby he was brought to a piece of bread, and to the want of it.

Ver. 14. *And when he had ſpent all*, &c.] Sin ſtrips a man of all that is good and valuable; of the image of God, of the knowledge of divine things, of natural holineſs, of moral righteouſneſs, and of ſtrength to perform moral good; hence man is in a wretched and miſerable condition, he's poor, and blind, and naked: and if man has ſpent all, and ſin has ſtript him of all, where's his free-will? there's no good thing in man, but what comes from the grace of God; nor has he any thing to recommend him to God, or to offer to his creditor, to compound his debts with; nor can he prepare himſelf for converſion, or any good work: *there aroſe a mighty famine in that land*; ſin brings men into a ſtarving and famiſhing condition; for in the far country, the land of ſin, there's a famine of the word: though the Goſpel is preached, it is only food to ſpiritual perſons; unregenerate men have no deſire to it, but neglect and deſpiſe it; and if they attend it, it has no place in them: they that are in this land, are aliens from the ordinances of God, the breaſts of conſolation, the goodneſs and fatneſs of his houſe; they are in a pit, wherein is no water; their taſte is vitiated to every thing that is ſpiritually good; they live on bread of deceit, and labour after that which ſatisfies not; wherefore they look like ſkeletons, and are as the dry bones in *Ezekiel*'s viſion: *and he began to be in want*; or was in want: when the above is the caſe, the ſinner may be truly ſaid to be in want; an unregenerate man, is in want of every thing that is good; of wiſdom and knowledge, of grace and holineſs, of righteouſneſs or cloathing, of food, and of all the neceſſaries of life: and he may be ſaid to *begin* to be in want, becauſe man was not originally ſo, but was poſſeſſed of a natural fulneſs; and becauſe ſin is the beginning of want, as ſoon as one takes place, the other does: moreover, this man now began to ſee and feel himſelf to be in want, though as yet he was not rightly and truly ſenſible of his wants, at leaſt of the way to redreſs them.

Ver. 15. *And he went and joined himſelf to a citizen of that country*, &c.] Not to any one of the ſaints, for they are not citizens of the far country, but of the church of God below, and of heaven above; beſides, carnal men don't like the company of ſuch citizens: nor is the devil intended, for though he dwells in this country, he is more than a citizen, than an inhabitant; he's king and governour, the prince of the world, and the God of it; nor is it feaſible, that a man under conviction, and beginning to be ſenſible of his want, ſhould go and join himſelf to the devil: but an unregenerate, *pharaſaical*, legal preacher, is deſigned; a man may be a preacher, and yet in the far country of ſin and unregeneracy; there may be large gifts, where there is no grace; and a man may have a form of religion and godlineſs, and know nothing of the power of it; and a great ſtir and bluſter may be made about good works, as were by the *Phariſees*, when few or none are done: now 'tis common for perſons under legal convictions, to ſeek after ſuch a preacher, and ſuch a miniſtry, and to ſuch an one this man *went*; he went not out of the land of ſin, nor to his father's houſe, but to one in the ſame country, where the famine was, and he was ſtarving: *he went*; it was his own choice, he took his own way; he went and told him his caſe, how he had ſpent all he had, and in what manner, and what condition, he now was in; and he aſked his advice and aſſiſtance: and he *joined himſelf* to him; he ſat under his miniſtry, and became a member with him, and ſtuck cloſe to him, as the word ſignifies; and was a ſtickler for him, and his principles: *and he ſent him into his field to feed ſwine*; he did not give him the leaſt bit of bread to ſatisfy his hunger; nor did he ſay one word to him of Chriſt, the bread of life; nor did he adviſe him to go to his father's houſe, where there was bread enough, and to ſpare: but he *ſent him into his fields*; to work, to cleanſe his heart, to reform his life, to fulfil the law, to perform the conditions of the covenant, to make his peace with God, and get an intereſt in his love and favour; and go through a round of duties continually, and all would be well: he ſent him *to feed ſwine* there; to converſe with ſelf-righteous perſons, who may be compared to ſwine, becauſe of their ſelfiſhneſs; doing all they do for themſelves, and not for God and his glory; becauſe they prefer dung before pearls, their own righteouſneſs before Chriſt, the pearl of great price; and live upon the huſks of their own duties; and never look upwards to heaven, as this creature does not, but always downwards on the earth; and though they were outwardly reformed, yet inwardly filthy, and often return to wallowing in the mire again: he ſent him there alſo to gratify the ſelfiſh principles of nature; to pleaſe himſelf with his wiſdom, righteouſneſs, holineſs, and other excellencies he fancied he had attained unto. In ſhort, the expreſſion ſhows the baſe employment of a ſelf-juſtitiary amidſt all his pretenſions to religion and virtue: for feeding of ſwine was very diſagreeable to the *Jews*, and with them ſcandalous; to whom the eating of ſwine's fleſh was forbidden by the law of God, and the breeding of ſwine by their traditions; and this is ſaid to be done in a far country, out of *Judea*.

Ver. 16. *And he would fain have filled his belly with the huſks*, &c.] חרובא, the fruit of the *Charub* tree, as the *Syriac* verſion interprets it; and which the *Jews* [y] ſay is, מאכל בהמה, *the food of beaſts*: though, according to what is elſewhere ſaid of it, it ſhould be the food of men alſo. It is ſaid [z] of *R. Simeon ben Jochai*, and his ſon, that they hid themſelves in a cave for fear of the king, and a miracle was wrought for them, איברי להו חרובא, a *Charub* tree was created for them, and a fountain of water; the one, as the *Gloſs* obſerves, was to eat the fruit of, and the other to drink of: but be they what they will, by them are meant, not worldly riches and honours, and carnal luſts and pleaſures; tho' theſe are the principal things of the far country, of this world, or an unregenerate eſtate; and are greatly deſired by carnal minds, and are but ſwine's meat, very mean food, yea, pernicious, empty, unſatiſfying, and periſhing; but theſe were the things this man had been deſirous of, and lived upon before, and had ran thro' them, and had ſpent all his ſubſtance in the purſuit and enjoyment of them; and now he felt the gripes of a natural conſcience for them, and found himſelf in want of ſomething elſe: wherefore by theſe *huſks* are meant works of righteouſneſs done by men; which are like huſks, external things, done only before men; empty things that have nothing within them; mere traſh, and not food; and which can give no ſatiſfaction; mere ſordid food, fit only to be caſt to dogs or ſwine; of an ill ſavour, hard to eat, and difficult of digeſtion, and which affords no real nouriſhment; theſe this man greatly deſired to fill his belly with: he found himſelf empty, and in want; as yet he had no thought of, at leaſt not any deſire after the bread in his Father's houſe; but would fain have ſatisfied himſelf with his own doings, and have quieted his mind and conſcience with a few external performances, a negative holineſs, a legal repentance, and outward reformation: he laboured hard to make his own righteouſneſs do; which was but ſtriving to fill his belly with the eaſt-wind; and is what can never ſatisfy, becauſe it is not anſwerable to the law and juſtice of God; and was no other than *that the ſwine did eat*, ſelf-righteous perſons, like himſelf; for ſuch an one was now the publican and ſinner become, tho' he did not continue ſo. Chriſt's lambs and ſheep don't eat ſuch food, nor will, nor can they, only ſwiniſh, ſelfiſh perſons; this is ſuitable to their nature, they eat it, and live upon it; which ſhows them to be unrenewed, and that their taſte is not changed. *And no man gave unto him*; not the huſks, tho' this is the ſenſe of the *Arabic* verſion, which renders it, *neither did he obtain them*; and ſo it ſeems to be ours and others: but theſe were at hand, which he might have taken himſelf, and did; nor is it reaſonable to think he ſhould wait to have them given him by another; or that he ſhould be reſtrained from them; but it is to be underſtood of bread, or proper food, and that no man gave that unto him: and the words, as *Calvin* obſerves, may be read cauſally, *for no man gave to him*; and ſo are a reaſon why he craved huſks, becauſe no man gave him any bread: the citizen, or legal preacher, to whom he joined himſelf, gave him none; nor the ſwine, the ſelf-righteous perſons, to whom he was ſent, and with whom he converſed, gave him none; he had nothing under the miniſtry, nor in converſation, that was proper food to him; there were nothing but theſe huſks that preſented, and he tried to ſatisfy himſelf with them; and indeed none but Chriſt can give the true bread, the bread of life, to thoſe that are hungry, and in want.

Ver. 17. *And when he came to himſelf*, &c.] An unregenerate man, whether while a voluptuous man, or a ſelf-righteous man, is not himſelf; he's beſides himſelf, and is no other than a mad man. The man that purſues his worldly luſts and pleaſures, promiſes himſelf liberty, while he is a ſlave; he ruins himſelf, his ſoul, body, and eſtate, and chuſes to do it, rather than part with his luſts; he takes delight in doing miſchief himſelf, and in ſeeing it done by others; he proclaims his folly publickly, declares his ſin, and glories in it; all which a man in his right mind would never do. The ſelf-righteous perſon truſts in his own heart, which is the greateſt madneſs and folly in the world; he compaſſes himſelf about with ſparks of his own kindling, and ſacrifices to his own net; he dreſſes himſelf in his rags, and pleaſes and prides himſelf with them, when a robe of righteouſneſs, and garments of ſalvation, are provided; which no man in his ſenſes would ever do. But when the Spirit of God comes to work upon a ſinner's heart in converſion, he brings him to himſelf; which a man may be ſaid to be, when he is brought to true evangelical repentance for ſin; and that is, when he has a true ſenſe of it, as committed againſt God, and a godly ſorrow for it, and makes an hearty and ingenuous acknowledgment of it, and forſakes it; and when he is brought to a ſenſe of the inſufficiency of his own righteouſneſs, and is made willing to part with it, and deſires to be found in Chriſt, and in his righteouſneſs alone, which he is encouraged to lay hold on, and receive by faith, truſt to, and rejoice in;

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[y] T. Hieroſ. Maaſerot, fol. 50. 2.

[z] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 33. 2.

when he has his ſpiritual ſenſes exerciſed on Chriſt, and to diſcern between good and evil; and is brought to the feet of Jeſus, as to ſubmit to his righteouſneſs, ſo to ſerve him; when he is all this, then, like the man in the Goſpel, he is clothed, and in his right mind: *he ſaid, how many hired ſervants of my father's*; who, according to ſome, were the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, men of a ſervile diſpoſition, and of mercenary views; and were, by profeſſion, the ſervants of God, and had plenty of bread, becauſe they had all the external means and ordinances: but theſe are deſigned by the elder brother in the parable; and beſides, this man had endeavoured to live as they did in this far country. It may be queried, whether the miniſters of the Goſpel are not intended, ſince theſe are the ſervants of the moſt high God; are labourers hired by him, and are worthy of their hire, and abound with Goſpel proviſions for the ſervice of others. But to this it may be objected, the deſire of this man to be made as one of them, ver. 19. which petition expreſſes his humility; whereas to be a ſervant, in this ſenſe, is to have the higheſt place and office in his father's houſe. Rather therefore the meaneſt of the ſaints, and houſhold of God, are here meant, who have the leaſt degree of evangelical light, whoſe faith is weak, and their conſolation ſmall; and who, tho' they are ſons, yet by reaſon of that legality and mercenarineſs that appear in their frames and ſervices, differ little from ſervants: and yet theſe, in compariſon of him, who was in a hungry and ſtarving condition, *have bread enough, and to ſpare*; as the doctrines, promiſes, and ordinances of the Goſpel, the fulneſs of grace that is in Chriſt, and Chriſt himſelf the bread of life; which are more than enough for them, and ſufficient for the whole family in heaven, and in earth: and even the meaneſt and weakeſt believer may be ſaid to have enough and to ſpare, becauſe he has an intereſt in all theſe; though by reaſon of the weakneſs of his faith, 'tis but now and then he has a full and comfortable meal; but this is infinitely better than to be ſtarving, as this man was: *and I periſh with hunger*. The *Vulgate Latin*, and all the *Oriental* verſions add, *here*; in this far country, in the citizens fields, among his ſwine, and their huſks: all mankind are in a loſt and periſhing condition; for having ſinned againſt God, they have expoſed themſelves to the curſes of the law, and are deſtitute of a juſtifying righteouſneſs, and are in the way to ruin and deſtruction; but all are not ſenſible of it, being ignorant of God, and his righteouſneſs, of the exceeding ſinfulneſs of ſin, and of the inſufficiency of their own righteouſneſs; but ſome are ſenſible of it, and in their own apprehenſions, are ready to periſh: theſe ſee ſin in its true light, without a view of pardon; an angry God without a ſmile; injured juſtice without a righteouſneſs; and a broken law without a ſatisfaction for the violation of it; and ſuch was this man's caſe. The *Jewiſh* writers[a] ſay, "a ſinner is like to a ſon that runs away "from his father, and turns his back upon him, "who yet afterwards repents, and has a mind to "return to his father's houſe:" ſo it was now with the publicans and ſinners, ſignified by this man.

Ver. 18. *I will ariſe*, &c.] This is the reſolution which at laſt, thro' divine grace, he came into: he determines to quit the country, and his companions; he had left his harlots, and his old courſe of living before, but was in the ſame country ſtill; for this a man may do, and yet remain unregenerate: but he is now for leaving the country itſelf, and his new acquaintance; he is now determined to drop his legal preacher, to be gone out of his fields, and from under his miniſtry, and to leave his ſwine and huſks; *and go to my father*: not to his old companions in debauchery and ſin; nor to his elder brother, the *Phariſees*; he had made trial of both theſe to his coſt already; nor to his father's ſervants, but to his father himſelf; to which he was moved and encouraged, from his being ready to periſh, from the fulneſs of bread in his fathers's houſe, and from the relation he ſtood in to him; notwithſtanding all that had paſſed, he was his father, and a kind and merciful one: this ſhows, that he knew him as his father, having now the ſpirit of adoption ſent down into him; and the way unto him, which lies thro' Chriſt the mediator: *and will ſay unto him, father*; or, *my father*, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read: *I have ſinned againſt heaven*; by preferring earthly things to heavenly ones; and have ſinned openly in the face of the heavens, who were witneſſes againſt him; and againſt God, who dwells in heaven. It was uſual with the *Jews* to call God, שמים, *heaven*; ſee the note on *Matt*. xxi. 25. They have this very phraſe; "there is a man, "ſay[b] they, who ſins againſt earth, and he does "not, חטא בשמים, *ſin againſt heaven*; againſt "heaven, and he does not ſin againſt earth: but "he that ſpeaks with an ill tongue ſins againſt "heaven and earth, as it is ſaid, *Pſ*. lxxiii. 9. *they "ſet their mouth againſt the heavens, and their "tongue walketh through the earth*." And ſo the ſenſe is, that he had ſinned againſt God himſelf, and not merely againſt men, and human laws. All ſin is a tranſgreſſion of the law of God; and the thought of ſin being committed againſt a God of infinite holineſs, juſtice, goodneſs, grace, and mercy, is cutting to a ſenſible ſinner: and this being the caſe, this man determined to go to God his Father, and him only, for the pardon of his ſin, againſt whom it was committed. 'Tis added, *and before thee*; for he was now convinced of his omniſcience. Sin may be committed againſt a man, and not before him, or he not know it; but whatever is committed againſt God, is before him, 'tis in his ſight, he knows it: he is God omniſcient, tho' ſinners take no notice of this perfection of his, but go on in ſin, as if it was not ſeen, known, and obſerved by God. But when God works powerfully and effectually upon the heart of a ſinner, he convinces him of his omniſcience, as this man was convinced: hence he determined to go to God, and acknowledge his ſin before him; and that it was committed before him, and was in his ſight; and that he could not be juſtified in his ſight by any righteouſneſs of his own; and therefore humbly deſires pardon at his hands. This man's ſenſe of ſin and ſorrow for it, and confeſſion of it, appear very right and genuine, which he determined to expreſs; they appear to be the convictions of the Spirit of God: it was not a ſenſe of ſin, and ſorrow for it, as done before men, but God; and the concern was not ſo much, for the miſchief that comes by ſin, as for the evil that was in it; and this did not drive him to deſpair, as in the caſes of *Cain* and *Judas*, but brought him home to his father; and his confeſſion appears to be hearty, ſincere, and without excuſe.

Ver. 19. *And am no more worthy to be called thy ſon*, &c.] As all the *Jews* were; not only by creation, and providential care, as all men are; but by national adoption: and however worthy this man might think himſelf to be called a ſon' of God before, and value himſelf upon it; he now ſees, and was ready to own his unworthineſs to be called ſo in any ſenſe; and much more to be called and accounted a ſon of God by ſpecial adoption: *make me as one of thy hired ſervants*; this is ſaid not from a ſervile ſpirit, but to expreſs the mean thoughts he had of himſelf, and the great deſire he had to be fed from his father's table, in the meaneſt way; and what an happineſs and honour it would be to him, could he be the meaneſt in his family, a door-keeper in his houſe; which was more eligible to him, than to dwell in the tents of ſin, or continue in this hungry and ſtarving condition.

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[a] R. Chayim in Lib. Chayim, par. 4. c. 6. apud Maii Jud. Theolog. loc. 15. p. 243.

[b] Midraſh Kohelet, in c. 9. 12. fol. 79. 4.

Ver. 20. *And he aroſe*, &c.] This ſhews that his reſolution to ariſe was not of nature, but of grace, by its being put into execution; for it was made and executed, not in his own ſtrength, but in another's: he did not confer with fleſh and blood; nor liſten to diſcouragements which might preſent; as the diſtance of the way, the danger in it, the cold reception, if not rejection, he might expect from his father: but he aroſe immediately; he aroſe and ſtood upon his feet, in obedience to the heavenly call, being aſſiſted by divine grace; he aroſe, and quitted the far country, the citizen, ſwine, and huſks, and denied both ſinful and righteous ſelf: *and came to his father*; his own father; *the father of himſelf*, as in the *Greek* text, who was ſo before he came to him; a ſenſe of which he had, and was what encouraged him the rather to go to him: and this coming to him denotes a progreſſion towards him; for as yet he was not come to him, but was at ſome diſtance, as the next clauſe expreſſes; and means not ſo much attendance on ordinances, as ſome inward ſecret deſires after God: *but when he was yet a great way off.* This is not to be underſtood of his ſtate of alienation from God, which is before ſignified by his being in a far country; but the diſtance he obſerved, as conſcious of his vileneſs, and unworthineſs; and the humility he expreſſed on a view of himſelf; and a ſenſe he had of his need of divine grace: and which is grateful to God; he looks to ſuch that are of an humble, and of a contrite ſpirit, and dwells among them, and gives more grace to them: *his father ſaw him*; he ſaw him when in the far country, ſpending his ſubſtance with harlots, and in riotous living; he ſaw him when among the ſwine and huſks; he ſaw him when he came to himſelf, and all the motions and determinations of his heart; he ſaw him in his progreſs towards his, and looked upon him with an eye of love, pity, and compaſſion, as it follows, *and had compaſſion*: God is full of compaſſion, and pities him, as a father does his children; yea, as a woman's bowels of compaſſion yearn after the ſon of her womb: he had compaſſion on him, and his bowels of pity moved towards him, he being as one grieved in ſpirit for his ſins, and wounded with a ſenſe of them, and wanting a view of pardon, as ſtarving and famiſhing, and as naked, and without clothing. *And ran*; to him, which ſhows the quick notice God takes of the firſt motions of his own grace in the hearts of ſenſible ſinners; the ſpeedy relief he gives to diſtreſſed ones; and this points out his preventing grace and goodneſs. *And fell on his neck*; expreſſive of the ſtrength of his affection to him, *Gen.* xlv. 14. and xlvi. 29. *Acts* xx. 37. and of his great condeſcenſion and grace to fall on that neck which had been like an iron ſinew, ſo ſtiff and rebellious; though now, thro' divine grace, was made flexible and pliable, and ſubject to him, and willing to bear the yoke, and to do whatever he would have him; and this was grateful to his father: *and kiſſed him*; as a token of love; and as owning the relation he ſtood in to him; as a ſign of reconciliation and friendſhip; and was an admiſſion of him to great nearneſs to his perſon; and an application and manifeſtation of great love indeed to him; and a ſtrong incentive of love in the ſon to him again; ſee 1 *John* iv. 19.

Ver. 21. *And the ſon ſaid unto him, father*, &c.] Or, *my father*, as the *Syriac* verſion reads; and the *Perſic* verſion adds, *pardon me*: ſin lay heavy on him, and he wanted a view and application of pardoning grace, tho' he ſeems to be prevented making this requeſt by the kiſs he received from his father: *I have ſinned againſt heaven, and in thy ſight*; this is what he determined to ſay, and was allowed to ſay, having a deep ſenſe of his ſin and vileneſs, and which was encreaſed by the love and kindneſs his father had ſhown him. The phraſe is *Jewiſh*; ſee the note on ver. 18. to which may be added, what is elſewhere ſaid [c], “what is the ſenſe of that “paſſage, *Pſal.* xii. 4. *who have ſaid, with our* “*tongues we will prevail?* &c. it deſigns all the “tranſgreſſions a man ſins againſt earth; and if, “חוטאין בשמים, *they ſin againſt heaven*, and “earth; what is the ſenſe of that in *Pſ.* lxxiii. 9?” *and am no more worthy to be called thy ſon*: ſo much he was ſuffered to ſay, which fully expreſſes his ſenſe of his vileneſs and unworthineſs: but he was not allowed to ſay, *make me as one of thy hired ſervants*; becauſe this could not granted; for a ſon is always a ſon, and cannot become a ſervant; ſee *Gal.* iv. 6, 7.

Ver. 22. *But the father ſaid to his ſervants*, &c.] The word *but*, with which thoſe words begin, is expreſſive of much grace, as it often is; ſee 1 *Cor.* vi. 11. *Eph.* ii. 4. 1 *Tim.* i. 13. *Tit.* iii. 4. and ſignifies, that tho' the ſon had behaved ſo badly, and was now ſo ſenſible of it himſelf, as that he deſired to be a hired ſervant, being unworthy to be called a ſon; but *the father*, againſt whom he had ſinned, would hear nothing of it: but *ſaid to his ſervants*; not the angels, but the miniſters of the Goſpel; who are the ſervants of the moſt high God; and whoſe buſineſs it is to ſet forth, in the miniſtry of the word, the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and the everlaſting love of God; and to direct ſouls to a life and converſation becoming the Goſpel of Chriſt; and to ſet before them the rich proviſions of the Goſpel for their nouriſhment, joy, and comfort. Theſe ſervants, the father of the ſon ordered, not to take him away from his preſence, as one whoſe perſon he could not endure in his ſight; nor to terrify and affright him with the curſe and condemnation of the law, and to fill his mind with wrath and terror; nor even to chaſtize and correct him for his former courſe of living, and to upbraid him with it; but to confer upon him all the honour, and high favours, and bleſſings that could be expreſſed in the following language: *bring forth the beſt robe*; out of the ward-robe, that it is in. The *Vulgate Latin* verſion adds, *quickly*; which increaſes the father's regard to him, and ſhows that he was in haſte to have his ſon appear in a better condition: the *Arabic* verſion adds it in the next clauſe, *and put it on him quickly*; which expreſſes the ſame thing: and the *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *haſten ye, bring*, &c. By the *beſt robe* is meant, not water-baptiſm; nor an holy life and converſation; nor any particular grace, as faith, or hope, or charity; or the whole of ſanctification; nor *Adam*'s robe of innocence; but the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, which is often compared to a robe, or garment, *Iſ.* lxi. 10. *Zech.* iii. 4. *Rev.* xix. 8. becauſe it is not any thing in believers, but what is unto them, and upon them, and is put there by an act of God's grace in imputation; and is what covers their naked ſouls, and hides their ſins from the avenging eye of divine juſtice; protects them from all injuries, and ſaves them from wrath to come; as well as beautifies and adorns them, and renders them acceptable in the ſight of God; and keeps them warm and alive; and gives them a right and title to eternal life. This is as in the *Greek* text, the *firſt robe*; and ſo it is rendered by the *Vulgate Latin*, and *Arabic* verſions; becauſe it was firſt in God's deſignation and counſel, and in Chriſt the head of his people, in whom they are bleſſed with all ſpiritual bleſſings before the foundation of the world, and ſo with this bleſſing; and it was alſo provided and ſecured in the everlaſting covenant of grace, long before *Adam*'s robe of innocence and righteouſneſs was made and wore by him: the reference is not to the firſt that ſhould be come at in the ward-robe; or to that which the ſon wore before he went into the far country; but to the טלית, *Talith*, which was the firſt and uppermoſt garment wore by the *Jews*, and anſwers to the *Greek* word ϛολη, *the ſtole*, here uſed: ſo the *Babyloniſh* garment is called, איצטלא דמילתא [d], which the *Gloſs* interprets *a Talith*, made of pure wool. The *Ethiopic* verſion renders the phraſe, *fragrant garments*; and ſuch are Chriſt's garments of ſalvation, and robe of righteouſneſs; ſee *Pſ.* xlv. 8. the *Perſic* verſion renders it, *the ſplendid robe*; and the *Syriac*, as ours, the *chief*, or *beſt robe*; and ſuch is Chriſt's righteouſneſs: it is a better righteouſneſs, not only than that of a ſelf-righteous *Phariſee*; but better than the outward converſation-garment of a real good man, which, at beſt, is imperfect; or than the inward ſanctification of the Spirit of God, which, though pure, is not yet perfect: it is better than the robe of innocence wore by *Adam* in his ſinleſs ſtate; for that was but a natural righteouſneſs, and the righteouſneſs of a creature, and was loſeable, as the event has ſhown; and had he kept it, would not have given him a title to eternal life: yea, it is better than the righteouſneſs of the angels in heaven; for what is ſaid of *Adam*'s, may be ſaid of theirs, that it is natural, the righteouſneſs of a creature; and had it not been for confirming grace, a loſeable one: but Chriſt's righteouſneſs is pure and perfect; the righteouſneſs of God, and an everlaſting one: and when the ſervants of God, the miniſters of the Goſpel, are ordered to bring it out, *and put* it *on him*; this is done, not by the imputation of it to men, for that is the father's act; nor by application of it to them, that is, the Spirit's work; but by a declaration of it, ſetting it forth in a miniſterial way before them; declaring it to be a juſtifying one, and encouraging their faith to lay hold upon it as ſuch: *and put a ring on his hand*; on one of the fingers of his hand: by which is intended not the grace of faith; that is, rather the hand on which the ring is put; and tho' this grace is both precious and ornamental, as will be allowed, yet it does not unite to Chriſt, this muſt be denied; it being a grace which flows from union, as all grace does; and by which ſouls have communion with Chriſt: nor are good works deſigned; ſuch indeed who are called by grace, are to be ſet to work from a right principle, to a right end; and true grace does ſhew itſelf by works; and good works are the ſeal and token of grace to the world; but then, as before, theſe are rather meant by the hand; ſince that is the inſtrument of action: nor is the ſeal and earneſt of the Spirit meant by the ring. The Spirit of God is certainly the ſeal of grace, and the earneſt of glory; and to have this is a high favour, and a precious benefit indeed, and what will never be taken away; but as faith, ſo not the Spirit is the bond of union between God and his people, but the fruit of it: by the *ring* is meant the everlaſting love of God; and which, as a ring, is round, and has neither beginning nor end; it does not begin with the obedience of his people, nor with their love to him; nor with their converſion; nor with the miſſion, ſufferings, and death of Chriſt; but was from all eternity; nor will it have any end, nor can there be any ſeparation from it: this is the bond of union, that can never be diſſolved; and this being manifeſted to the ſoul, is a token of freedom; it ſets a man free from the bondage of corruption, and from the ſlavery of ſatan, and introduces into the liberty of the children of God: it is a mark of great honour, a ſign of riches, both of grace and glory; it is a declaration of ſonſhip, and heirſhip; and is a ſeal and pledge of everlaſting happineſs: now the putting on of this ring does not deſign the ſhedding abroad of this love in the heart by the Spirit of God; but the declaration of it by his ſervants in a miniſterial way; ſetting it forth in its nature and effects, to the great joy and comfort of ſouls; when believers receive it by the hand of faith, and which conſtrains them, and makes them active, and puts them upon doing good works to the glory of God. *And ſhoes on his feet*: by *feet* are meant the outward walk and converſation; which in perſons called by grace ſhould be different from what it was before, and from that of others: it ſhould not be looſe and naked, as thoſe that walk barefoot, but ſhould be upright, ſtrait, and regular; not carnal and earthly, but ſpiritual and heavenly; and ſhould be with prudence, care, and circumſpection, and worthy of their vocation, and as becomes the Goſpel of Chriſt: and by *the ſhoes* may be meant, the preparation of the Goſpel of peace, *Eph.* vi. 15. The Goſpel is as ſhoes to the feet; it beautifies and adorns, *Cant.* vii. 1. it keeps the feet tight and ſtrait, the converſation regular and upright; preſerves from ſlipping and falling; ſtrengthens and makes more fit for walking; directs, guides, and influences in walking, and protects from the ſtones, thorns, and ſcorpions of the world's reproaches; and the doctrines of it are ſhoes that will never wear out: and to walk according to the Goſpel of Chriſt, is what Goſpel-miniſters direct and exhort unto, and may be meant by their putting on thoſe ſhoes; they preſſing a good life and converſation from, and by the doctrines of grace. A perſon with all theſe things on him was reckoned, among the *Jews*, as one thoroughly dreſſed: a canon of theirs, relating to the defilement of leproſy, runs thus [e]; “a man of *Iſrael* that goes “into a houſe infected with the plague of leproſy, “לבוש בבגדיו וסנדליו ברגליו וטבעותיו בידיו, “*clothed with his garments, and his ſandals on his* “*feet, and his rings on his hands*, lo, that man is “immediately defiled.”

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[c] T. Hieroſ. Peah, fol. 16. 1.

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[d] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 44. 1. Vid. Targum in Joſ. vii. 21. T. Bab. Cholin, fol. 71. 2.

[e] Maimon. Hilch. Tumaot Tzaraath, c. 16. §. 6.

Ver. 23. *And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it, &c.*] By which Chriſt is deſigned, in alluſion to the calves offered in ſacrifice, which were offered for ſin-offerings, and for peace-offerings, and for burnt-offerings; and were one of the ſacrifices on the day of atonement: ſo Chriſt has offered up himſelf in ſoul and body, freely and voluntarily, in the room and ſtead of his people, an offering and ſacrifice to God, of a ſweet-ſmelling ſavour; which is well-pleaſing to him, and effectual to the purpoſes for which it was offered, and therefore will never be repeated; and has hereby ſatisfied law and juſtice, procured peace and reconciliation, and made full atonement and expiation for all their ſins and tranſgreſſions: or elſe in alluſion to the feaſts and liberal entertainments of friends, when the fatted calf made a conſiderable part, *Gen.* xviii. 7, 8. 1 *Sam.* xxviii. 24, 25. *Amos* vi. 4. *Mal.* iv. 2. Chriſt is the beſt proviſion that can be ſet before a believer, or he can feed upon; yea, the beſt that God can give, or ſaints deſire: he is true and real food, ſpiritual, ſavoury, ſatisfying, and durable; what both gives and preſerves life; nouriſhes, ſtrengthens, refreſhes, delights, and fattens. Now by *bringing it hither*, is meant preaching Chriſt; opening the ſcriptures concerning him; ſetting him before believers, as their only proper food, both in the miniſtry of the word, and in the Lord's ſupper: and *killing* him does not deſign either the ſlaying of him in purpoſe, promiſe, and type, from the foundation of the world; nor the actual crucifixion of him by the *Jews*; but the ſetting him forth in the Goſpel in a miniſterial way, as crucified and ſlain, for ſaints by faith to feed and live upon: *and let us eat and be merry*; for as the *Jews*[f] ſay, "there is no "mirth without eating and drinking:" this is a mutual invitation or encouragement to eat of the fatted calf: the parties called upon to eat of it are the father, the ſervants, and the returned ſon. The father, to whom the ſalvation of his people, by the death of Chriſt, is as a feaſt; his heart was ſet upon this from everlaſting; and he was infinitely well pleaſed with Chriſt, as the ſurety of his people from all eternity; his eye was upon him as ſuch throughout the ſeveral diſpenſations before his coming; he ſent him forth with great pleaſure in the fulneſs of time; and not only did not ſpare him, but it even pleaſed him to bruiſe him; and he accepted of his ſacrifice with delight; and takes pleaſure in ſeeing his people feed upon their crucified Saviour; and this is expreſſive of that communion which God admits his people to with himſelf, and which, as it is ſignified by walking and talking, and ſitting and dwelling, ſo by eating together; and is in conſequence of union to him; and is only enjoyed by true believers; and is the greateſt bleſſing on earth, and what is next to heaven. The ſervants, the miniſters of the Goſpel, they are among the *us*, who are to eat; and it is but reaſonable they ſhould, and it is even neceſſary that they do eat, and live upon a crucified Chriſt themſelves, whoſe buſineſs it is to ſet him forth as ſuch to others: and eſpecially the returned ſon makes a principal gueſt at this entertainment; for whom it is made, and for whoſe ſake chiefly the invitation to *eat* is given: by which is meant not corporal eating, but eating by faith; which ſuppoſes food to eat, of which there is plenty in the Goſpel-proviſion; a principle of life infuſed, for a dead man can't eat; and ſpiritual hunger and thirſt, otherwiſe there will be no appetite; and the grace of faith, which is the hand that takes, and the mouth that receives, and eats ſpiritual food: and believers have full and free liberty to eat of it; nor ſhould they object their own unworthineſs, but conſider the ſuitableneſs of the food unto them; that it is on purpoſe prepared for them; that they are in their father's houſe, and at his table; and the invitation to eat is hearty and cordial; and both the Father and Chriſt give this food, and bid welcome to it; and there is a neceſſity of eating it, for without this there can be no living in a ſpiritual ſenſe: 'tis hereby that life is ſupported and maintained; without this the ſaints muſt be ſtarving; 'tis this which preſerves from hunger, and ſatisfies it, and nouriſhes up unto eternal life. The manner of eating, or the circumſtance attending it, is *mirth*, both in father, ſon, and ſervants; and as corporal, ſo ſpiritual eating ſhould be with joy, and with a merry heart, *Eccl.* ix. 7. and indeed is the moſt proper means of ſtirring and increaſing ſpiritual joy and pleaſure; ſee the note on the latter part of the following verſe.

Ver. 24. *For this my ſon was dead, &c.*] Theſe words contain the reaſons of the above entertainment, and of all that ſpiritual joy and mirth; in which the father acknowledges the returning penitent as his ſon; though he had behaved ſo wickedly before, and though he judged himſelf unworthy of the relation; and this he did, by ſending the Spirit of adoption into his heart, to witneſs his ſonſhip to him; and takes notice of his paſt ſtate and condition, to ſhew the great reaſon there was for joy, at his preſent one: for before he was *dead*, dead in *Adam*, in whom all died; dead in law, being under a ſentence of condemnation and death; and dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, which is a ſpiritual or moral death: in which all mankind by nature are: and which lies in a ſeparation from God, Father, Son, and Spirit; in an alienation from the life of God; in a deformation of the image of God; in a loſs of original righteouſneſs; in the darkneſs of the underſtanding; in the inordinateneſs of the affections; in the pollution of the mind and conſcience; in the ſtubornneſs of the will; and in an impotency to that which is ſpiritually good; and in a privation of ſpiritual ſenſe and motion: this had been the caſe, but now it was otherwiſe: *and is alive again*; the ſpirit of life from Chriſt had entered into him, and Chriſt was formed in his heart; and a principle of life was infuſed into him; a divine image was enſtamped upon his ſoul; the underſtanding was enlightened in divine things; the affections were ſet upon them; the will was ſubjected to God, to his will and law, and to Chriſt and his righteouſneſs, and the way of ſalvation by him, and to his commands and ordinances; and principles of grace, and holineſs were wrought in him, to do as well as to will; a ſpiritual ſenſe of things were given him; a ſpiritual ſight, hearing, taſting, and feeling, and ſavouring; he lived a life of holineſs from Chriſt, of faith upon him, and of communion with him, and to his glory: and he came to be ſo, not of himſelf, nor by any creature; for no man can quicken himſelf, nor can any creature do it for him; it was entirely owing to the power and grace of God: and great reaſon here was for joy and mirth, as there is for every one, that is quickened by the Spirit of God; for ſuch ſhall never enter into condemnation, nor die again, but ſhall live and reign with Chriſt for ever: *he was loſt*; loſt in *Adam*, and in himſelf; ſo he was when in the far country, and when among the ſwine and huſks; ſo as that he knew not where he was, nor what a condition he was in; nor did he know how to get out of it, nor could he help himſelf, nor could any other creature; though not irretrievably and irrecoverably loſt; not to the love of God, his knowledge of him, care and proviſion for him in Chriſt, in his counſel and covenant: hence the following mercy, *and is found*; not only by Chriſt in redemption, but by the Spirit of Chriſt in effectual vocation; when he was brought and came to himſelf, and ſaw his loſt ſtate and condition by nature; and when he was directed and brought home to his father's houſe, and entertained with all the proviſions of it; and ſuch have reaſon to rejoice and be glad, for they ſhall be found in Chriſt at death and at judgment, and ſhall be with him to all eternity: *and they began to be merry*; all parties. The father expreſſed his joy, and the gladneſs of his heart, upon the return of his ſon to him; he exhorted to be merry on this account, ver. 23. and enforces it with reaſons in this verſe, taken from the relation he ſtood in to him, and the wonderful change that had paſſed upon him, and the finding of him; and he rejoices himſelf at his converſion, in the exerciſe of that grace which he himſelf implanted, and in the performance of duty by his aſſiſtance: not that any new joy ariſes in God's heart at ſuch a time; for he always rejoiced in the perſons of his elect, as they were the objects of his love, as choſen in Chriſt, and given to him, and as intereſted in the covenant of grace; and he rejoiced in the accompliſhment of their ſalvation, by his Son: but in converſion, there are new expreſſions of joy; he rejoices over them to do them good, and rejoices in the good he does them; and this is the open beginning of his joy, and but the beginning of it; for it will continue, it is not all over, nor all expreſſed, but will be in the fulleſt manner hereafter, to all eternity: the returned ſon began to be merry, as he had good reaſon for it; as that he was come back from the far country, where a mighty famine had been; and from the citizen of that country, his fields, and ſwine; that he was come to his father, and his father's houſe, where was bread enough and to ſpare; an houſe well furniſhed with all ſuitable proviſions; a family made up of ſaints, where miniſters of the Goſpel are ſtewards, and angels guards, and where Chriſt is ſon, prieſt, and maſter; and that he was received here, and owned as a ſon; not only was one ſecretly, but was owned as ſuch openly; and was not only called ſo by the ſervants, but by the father himſelf; and that after he had behaved ſo vilely, and in his own conſcience knew he was unworthy of the relation; and that he was received immediately, as ſoon as ever he came, and that in the moſt tender manner; and was entertained in the moſt free, generous, and ſumptuous way; though he went away from his father of himſelf, and had ſpent his ſubſtance in a ſcandalous manner; and was in a moſt filthy, ragged, and piteous condition; and that he ſhould be clothed with the beſt robe, the robe of Chriſt's righteouſneſs; and ſo had nothing to fear from law and juſtice; nor was he in any danger of wrath to come becauſe of his ſins; nor had he any reaſon to doubt of his right and admiſſion to the heavenly glory; and that he had the ring of love on the hand of faith, and could believe his intereſt in it, which is better than life, and will continue for ever; and that his feet were ſhod with the preparation of the Goſpel of peace; that he underſtood the Goſpel, and was brought to a ſubmiſſion to Goſpel ordinances, and had his converſation agreeable to it; and that the fatted calf was killed, and ſet before him to eat of, and feed upon: and now he began to live and fare ſumptuouſly, and to have ſpiritual joy and pleaſure, which he never knew before; and this was but the beginning of joy to him: ſpiritual joy is not all over at once, it continues and increaſes; nor is it full and perfect in this life, but in heaven it will be compleat, and without interruption: the ſervants alſo, the miniſters of the Goſpel, began to be merry on this occaſion; who expreſs their joy at the converſion of ſinners, becauſe of the glory of Father, Son, and Spirit, concerned in it; becauſe of the grace beſtowed then on ſinners themſelves; and becauſe the intereſt of Chriſt is ſtrengthened, and his churches increaſed, and ſatan's kingdom weakened; and becauſe their own miniſtry is bleſſed; and which ſtrengthens their hands and hearts, and encourages them to go on in their work: and this is but the beginning of their joy; for they continue to rejoice at the growth of grace in believers, and when they are in a thriving and flouriſhing condition; when they walk becoming the Goſpel of Chriſt, and live in peace among themſelves; and perſevere in faith and holineſs to the end; and theſe will be their joy and crown of rejoicing, at the coming of Chriſt Jeſus.

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[f] T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 9. 1.

Ver. 25. *Now his elder ſon was in the field*, &c.] By *the elder ſon* is meant, not angels, as has been obſerved on ver. 11. nor truly converted perſons, of ſome ſtanding in the church; for though theſe may be ſaid to be elder than young converts, and are more ſolid and ſettled, yet they are not ignorant of ſpiritual mirth; nor of the Goſpel ſound; nor are they angry at the converſion of ſinners; nor will they ever ſpeak in ſuch commendation of themſelves; or ſay that they never had a kid, much leſs a fatted calf, as this elder brother does: nor the *Jews* in general, in diſtinction from the *Gentiles*, as has been remarked in the above place: the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* in particular are meant, in oppoſition to the publicans and ſinners: now theſe are ſaid to be *in the field*; in the world, which is comparable to an uncultivated field; being over-run with the briars and thorns of ſin, and ſinful men; where beaſts of prey inhabit, and who are fitly ſignified by lions, whoſe teeth are ſpears and arrows, and their tongue a ſharp ſword; and out of which the garden of the church is taken and ſeparated, and fenced by diſtinguiſhing grace: now this elder brother, the *Scribe* and *Phariſee*, notwithſtanding all his ſobriety and morality, was in a ſtate of nature and unregeneracy, in the ſame condition he came into the world; and was under the influence of the God of the world; and was taken up with the things of the world, the honours, riches, and profits of it: and though he was in the *Jewiſh* church-ſtate, yet was in the field of the world; the ceremonies of that ſtate, were the rudiments of the world; and the ſanctuary in it, was a worldly ſanctuary; and the chief men in it, were the princes of the world: and this elder ſon was in the field at work, working for life: to work is right, when men work from a principle of grace, in the name, faith, and ſtrength of Chriſt, to the glory of God and religion, and their own and others good; and aſcribe all they do to the grace of God, and acknowledge their own unworthineſs; but to work, in order to obtain righteouſneſs, life, and ſalvation, proceeds from wretched ignorance, and is an inſtance of the pride and vanity of human nature; and is not only a vain and fruitleſs attempt, but a piece of wickedneſs, it being a denial of Chriſt, as God's ſalvation: now while the younger ſon, the publicans and ſinners, were received and entertained in the houſe and kingdom of God their father, the elder ſon, the *Scribe* and *Phariſee*,

*riſee*, were without in the field, labouring to obtain life by doing; *and as he came and drew nigh to the houſe*. The *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *to the border of the city*: he *came* out of the field, the world; not that he was come out from the world, and had left the company of the men of it, or parted with the ſins and luſts of it; but he came from his labour, having done his day's work, and the taſk of duty he had ſet himſelf; and was now going for his hire, for what he imagined he had merited: and *drew nigh to the houſe*; for he did not go in, ver. 28. he only made ſome advances to it, and took ſome ſteps towards entrance into it; namely, into a viſible church; he came to hear the word, as the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* did; and to attend on ordinances, particularly at the adminiſtration of the ordinance of baptiſm, and ſeemed deſirous of ſubmitting to it in *John*'s time; but never came to Chriſt in a ſpiritual way; nor entered into the kingdom of heaven, the Goſpel diſpenſation; and did all that could be, to hinder others, eſpecially publicans and ſinners; *he heard muſic and dancing*. The *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, leave out *dancing*; the former only reads, *the voice of the ſinging of many*; and the next, *the voice of ſinging*; and the laſt, *pipes and ſongs*: by *muſic* is meant, not the inſtrumental muſic uſed in the Old Teſtament church; nor vocal ſinging in the new; but the preaching of the Goſpel by the miniſters of it, the ſervants, in ver. 22, 23. ſetting forth the love of God, the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, peace, pardon, and ſalvation by him; in which, as in muſic, there is a diſtinction of ſounds: the voice of Chriſt in the Goſpel, and the ſeveral doctrines of it, are diſtinctly pronounced, diſcerned, and underſtood: and there is alſo, as in muſic, an harmony and agreement; the Goſpel does not give an uncertain ſound, nor contradict itſelf; it is not yea and nay: and, like muſic, 'tis delightful and charming; it is a ſound of love in all the three perſons, Father, Son, and Spirit; of free grace, and rich mercy; of liberty, reconciliation, forgiveneſs, righteouſneſs, and eternal life: and as muſic, has a powerful and attractive virtue in it; ſo the Goſpel is mighty and efficacious in the hand of the Spirit of God to quicken, even dead ſinners, to draw them to Chriſt, to allure, charm, and comfort them: *dancing* may deſign thoſe expreſſions of joy, which are delivered by young converts at hearing the Goſpel, as by the three thouſand, in *Acts* ii. 41. by the inhabitants of *Samaria*, *Acts* viii. 6, 8. and by the jailor and his houſhold, *Acts* xvi. 34. and by many others: now all this the elder brother, the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, *heard*; not ſo as to know the true meaning of it, as appears from the following verſe; nor as to approve of it; or ſo as to feel the power, and enjoy the ſweetneſs of it; nor as to practiſe what was heard; only externally hearing, they heard, but underſtood not, their eyes were blinded, and their hearts were hardened.

Ver. 26. *And he called one of the ſervants*, &c.] One of the miniſters of the word, one of the diſciples of Chriſt, as the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* ſometimes did; chuſing rather to ſpeak to one of the diſciples, than to Chriſt himſelf, when they were offended; ſee *Mark* ii. 16. *And aſked what theſe things meant*; for ſelf-righteous perſons, as theſe *Scribes* and *Phariſees* were, are ignorant of the truths of the Goſpel; they don't underſtand them, nor conceive what is meant by them: they can't take in the doctrine of God's everlaſting love, that it ſhould be ſo early; be towards ſome, and not others; that it ſhould be independent of men's works, both in the riſe and continuance of it; that it ſhould be exerciſed towards ſinners, and yet be no licentious doctrine: and as much at a loſs are they about the doctrine of election; as that it ſhould be eternal, perſonal, diſcriminating, irreſpective of works, and yet give no liberty to ſin: they know nothing of the covenant of grace, nor have any other notion but of a covenant of works; and if of any other, yet a conditional one, made with them upon their converſion; or rather, one of their own making, and which depends on their good behaviour: they are ignorant of ſalvation by Chriſt; of juſtification by his righteouſneſs; of peace and pardon by his blood; of the doctrine of regeneration, and of living by faith on Chriſt; and of eternal life, as God's free-gift; and ſo likewiſe of ſpiritual joy, and mirth: they are ſtrangers to themſelves, their loſt ſtate and condition, and a deliverance out of it; to the kingdom of God, or an internal work of grace, the fruits of which are peace and joy in the Holy Ghoſt; and to the perſon, offices, and grace of Chriſt; to juſtification and atonement by him; to the promiſes of the Goſpel, and to that itſelf which is the joyful ſound; all which produce ſpiritual joy, delight, and pleaſure in ſenſible ſouls: the rejoicing of ſuch perſons is only in themſelves, and in their own works and duties; but as for true ſolid ſpiritual joy, they intermeddle not with it, nor know they what it means.

Ver. 27. *And he ſaid unto him*, &c.] The *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions, leave out the copulative *and*, and the latter reads, *they ſaid unto him*; the ſervants, one or other of them: *thy brother is come*; for in the relation of a *brother*, the younger ſon ſtood to him; being of the ſame nature and ſpecies, of the ſame nation, and both ſons by national adoption; who was *come* to his father, and to his father's houſe; not as a righteous and worthy perſon in himſelf, but as a ſinner, a ſenſible and penitent one; as hungry, naked, and ready to periſh; and as unworthy in his own opinion, of the leaſt mercy and favour, and eſpecially to be called a ſon: *and thy father*; who was ſo by creation, by national adoption, and by profeſſion: *hath killed the fatted calf*; by which Chriſt is meant; ſee the note on ver. 23. and deſigns either the concern the father had in the death of Chriſt; or rather, his orders to his miniſtring ſervants, to preach a crucified Chriſt, to the comfort of poor ſinners; and in general, expreſſes the large and rich entertainment God makes for ſouls, when they are brought home to him by repentance: and the *Perſic* verſion adds, *and hath made a feaſt*; the reaſon of which, is given in the next clauſe: *becauſe he hath received him ſafe and ſound*; or *in good health*. This is left out in the *Perſic* verſion, but rightly retained in all others: the word tranſlated *received*, ſignifies the recovery, or enjoyment of any thing before had, but ſince loſt, and the taking it at the hands of another: the elect of God, ſignified by the younger ſon, were his in a peculiar ſenſe, being choſen by him; but through the fall of *Adam*, and their own tranſgreſſions, were in ſome ſenſe loſt unto him; but in conſequence of redemption by Chriſt, and through efficacious grace in vocation, are found, received, and enjoyed again; and ſo the *Ethiopic* verſion reads it, *becauſe he found him alive*; and ſo took him again, as he did, at the hands of his Son: all the elect of God were put into the hands of Chriſt, as the ſurety of them; and being redeemed by his blood in effectual vocation, they are brought by him to the Father, and come to God by him; as they are alſo received by the Father from the hands of of his Spirit, who convinces them of ſin, cauſes them to believe in Chriſt, witneſſes their adoption to them; in a view of which, they come to God, and are received by him; and even from their own hands too, for under the power of divine grace, they are made willing to give up themſelves to the Lord, and do ſo; who kindly and graciouſly receives them into his arms; into his heart's love, and affection, into the open enjoyment of it; into his care and protection, into his family, and into communion with himſelf, and will afterwards receive them to glory: the caſe and condition in which he was received is, *ſafe and ſound*; there is but one word in the original; ſome tranſlate it *ſafe*, as the *Arabic* verſion; and others *ſound*, as the *Syriac*; and ours both: he was received *ſafe*, though he had been in a far country, and in a mighty famine, and almoſt ſtarved: God's elect fell in *Adam*, as others; their nature is corrupted by ſin, and they are guilty of actual tranſgreſſions, which deſerve death; yet they were preſerved in Chriſt, and being redeemed by him, are ſafe; ſo that the law cannot lay hold on them, nor ſin, nor any thing elſe condemn them, nor ſatan deſtroy them: and he was received *ſound*; in his right mind, being come to himſelf, and brought to true repentance for his ſin; and willing to part with his own righteouſneſs, and to be cloathed with the beſt robe; and having his ſpiritual ſenſes exerciſed, to diſcern between good and evil, and upon the perſon and grace of Chriſt; or he was received *ſound*, being in good health, and as oppoſed to being ſick or diſeaſed: ſins are diſeaſes, and as all men, ſo God's elect, are attended with them; but being made ſenſible of them, they come to Chriſt for healing; and they are perfectly cured by him; by his ſtripes and wounds, all their iniquities are forgiven; ſo that they have no reaſon to ſay any more, they are ſick: and hence the father receives them ſafe and ſound; and which is matter of joy, and was the occaſion of all this muſic, dancing, and feaſting.

Ver. 28. *And he was angry*, &c.] Particularly that the fatted calf was killed, ver. 27, 30. the preaching of a crucified Chriſt, and of free and full ſalvation by him, is highly diſpleaſing and provoking to ſelf-righteous perſons; they are angry at it, that it ſhould be free, that election to ſalvation ſhould be of grace, that juſtification ſhould be freely by the grace of God, and that pardon of ſin ſhould be according to the riches of God's grace, and ſalvation be by grace, and not by works; and that it ſhould be diſcriminating, that God ſhould appoint ſome, and not all unto ſalvation; that Chriſt ſhould redeem ſome, and not all; and that all men are not called unto it, by his Spirit and grace; and that it ſhould be full and compleat, ſo as nothing can be added to it; and that it ſhould be for ſinners, and alone by Chriſt, and by him as crucified: it would be agreeable, was it taught that ſalvation was by Chriſt in a doctrinal way, by giving laws and rules to men, whereby to ſave themſelves; or that Chriſt ſaves by example, and not by his ſacrifice, in a way of ſatiſfaction for ſin. Now, though no grievous words were uſed, nor any thing ſaid that might juſtly provoke, yet ſuch was the pride of his heart, that he could not bear that his brother ſhould be taken ſo much notice of, who had acted and lived ſo ſcandalouſly; and beſides, his own character as a righteous perſon, was neglected by this doctrine; and his own righteouſneſs laid aſide, in the buſineſs of juſtification and ſalvation, which was intolerable by him: *and would not go in*; into his father's houſe, nor to the feaſt, nor into the kingdom of heaven, or Goſpel diſpenſation; the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* ſhut it up to themſelves, and others; would neither go in themſelves, nor ſuffer others; they did not believe Jeſus to be the Meſſiah, nor did they receive, but reject him; nor did they give any credit to the doctrines, nor ſubmit to the ordinances of that diſpenſation: *therefore came his father out*; not in a way of wrath and judgment, but in the miniſtry of the word; for though the *Jews* rejected it, it was not at once taken away from them, but was continued time after time, and for ſome conſiderable time: the *Jews* of old had the miniſtry of the word, both by angels and men; God frequently went forth to them by his prophets, and at laſt by his ſon; and though they were angry with him, and rejected him, yet ſtill the miniſtry of the word, by the diſciples of Chriſt, were continued a good while to them; which ſhews the condeſcending goodneſs and grace of God, and his patience and long-ſuffering towards them: *and intreated him*; the *Perſic* verſion reads, *and ſaid unto him, why doſt thou not go in?* this regards the external call by the miniſtry of the word, to the outward duties of religion, to means of grace; to give credit to the doctrines, and to attend the ordinances of the Goſpel.

Ver. 29. *And he anſwering, ſaid to his father*, &c.] Commending himſelf, and reflecting on his father: *lo, theſe many years do I ſerve thee*; for though he was called a ſon, yet differed little from a ſervant; he was of a ſervile diſpoſition, and under a ſpirit of bondage; he ſerved his father, not in the Goſpel, but in the law, moral and ceremonial; in the letter of it, and not in the newneſs of the Spirit; externally, and not internally; from fear, and not from love; with mercenary views, and not freely; with truſt in, and dependance on his ſervice, ſeeking juſtification and eternal life by it, and not with a view to the glory of God; and this he had done *many years*; from his youth upwards, as the *Phariſee* in *Matt.* xix 20. whereas his younger brother had never ſerved him, but his own luſts; and yet as ſoon as ever he was come home, before he could enter upon ſervice, this entertainment was made for him, and which he therefore reſented: moreover, he does not ſay I have ſerved thee, but *I do*; denoting the continuance and conſtancy of his ſervice; and intimating that his life had been, and was one continued ſeries of obedience: *neither tranſgreſſed I at any time thy commandment*; which though true of the elect angels, can never be ſaid of any of the ſons of men; and which ſhows, that he had never been under a work of the Spirit of God, who convinces of ſin; and had never ſeen himſelf in a true light, in the glaſs of that law, he pretended to ſerve God in; that he was a ſtranger to the plague of his own heart, and was a ſelf-deceiver, and the truth of grace was not in him: he could not be a good man, for ſo to ſay, is contrary to the experience of all good men; to their groans, complaints, and confeſſions; to their prayers, for freſh application of pardoning grace; and to the obſervation of all wiſe and good men in all ages; and moſt fully proves him to be a *Phariſee*: *and yet thou never gaveſt me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends*; ſome by *a kid*, or *goat*, as *Theophylact*, underſtand a perſecutor, as *Saul* was of *David*, and *Ahab* of *Elijah*; and ſo means that God had not delivered up ſuch an one into his hands; or took him away by death, that he might have ſome peace and reſt, amidſt his labours and ſervice; and others underſtand this of the *Jews*, deſiring *Barabbas*, a goat, and not Jeſus, the Lamb of God; but his meaning ſeems to be, that he had never received any favour in proportion to the ſervices he had done; and ſo charges his father with ingratitude.

Ver. 30. *But as ſoon as this thy ſon was come,* &c.] He won't own him in the relation of a brother, tho' the father had owned him in that of a ſon; and the offence he took was, that the fatted calf ſhould be killed, or that a crucified Chriſt ſhould be preached; that he ſhould be preached at all, and much leſs that he ſhould be preached to ſinners; and ſtill leſs that he ſhould be preached ſo ſoon to them, as ſoon as ever they became ſenſible of their ſin, as it was the will of his father it ſhould be: for ſuch are not to be ſent away to cleanſe themſelves from ſin by any thing they do, and then apply to Chriſt; or to heal themſelves, and then come to him for a cure; or to get peace by doing ſo, and then come to him for reſt; or to do any thing to fit themſelves for him, for their caſe requires preſent help: now at this the ſelf-righteous man is diſpleaſed. The elder brother would have had another method taken with this younger ſon: he would have had him ſoundly whipped with the rod of the law, for his former ſins; and ſent into the fields along with him to work out his ſalvation; and not to have a rag put upon him, or a ſhoe on his foot, or a morſel of bread given him, till he had earned them; but inſtead of this, to be received and entertained in the manner he was, and ſo ſoon, highly provoked him: for he thought ſuch a conduct was unbecoming God, and his moral perfections; and what his brother was undeſerving of; and opened a door to licentiouſneſs; and highly reflected on his ſervices, as of no value and regard. *Which hath devoured thy living*; given to his ſon; that part of his goods he had divided to him, ver. 12, 13. *with harlots*; in rioting and drunkenneſs, in chambering and wantonneſs, in gluttony and debauchery: *thou haſt killed for him the fatted calf*; ſee the note on ver. 23.

Ver. 31. *And he ſaid to him, ſon,* &c.] For ſo he was, as before obſerved, by creation, national adoption, and profeſſion: *thou art ever with me*; not in ſuch a ſenſe as Chriſt the Son of God was: nor can it deſign the gracious preſence of God, or communion with him; for this man did not walk with God; and beſides, this is more frequently expreſſed by God's being with his people, than by their being with him; nor are good men always with God, or God with them, in this ſenſe: ſometimes the phraſe deſigns the ſaints being with God, or Chriſt, in heaven; but here it intends only attendance on publick worſhip, in the place where the ſymbol of God's preſence was, the temple; and the *ever* denotes the term of the legal diſpenſation, which in many branches of it, as circumciſion, the paſſover, and other ordinances and ſtatutes, is ſaid to be for ever. *And all that I have is thine*; which muſt be underſtood with a limitation; for it can't mean, that he had all the perfections of God, as Chriſt the Son of God has; nor all ſpiritual bleſſings, as the adopted ſons of God have; nor indeed any of them, but all the outward ordinances of the legal diſpenſation, which belonged to the *Jews*; particularly thoſe that are enumerated in *Rom.* ix. 4, 5. as the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the ſervice of God, the promiſes, their deſcent from the Fathers, and the Meſſiah's deſcent from them; they had him in perſon among them, and his perſonal miniſtry, the word and ordinances of the Goſpel; and had as much as they could have, or deſire to have, in an external way.

Ver. 32. *It was meet that we ſhould make merry,* &c.] Both father, ſon, and ſervants; ſee the notes on ver. 23, 24. and this elder brother alſo, becauſe of the relation he ſtood in to him: and if he had had the ſame ſpiritual affection the Apoſtle had for his brethren and kinſmen, according the fleſh, *Rom.* ix. 3. and x. 1. he would have rejoiced at the converſion and return of ſinners by repentance: and *be glad*; as his Father was, and the Angels in heaven be; ſee ver. 10. *for this thy brother*, tho' he would not own him as ſuch, *was dead, and is alive again, and was loſt, and is found*; ſee the note on ver. 24. and ſo the parable is concluded, the elder brother being ſilenced, and having nothing to ſay againſt ſuch ſtrong reaſoning.

## CHAP. XVI.

Ver. 1. AND *he ſaid alſo to his diſciples,* &c.] The *Syriac* verſion adds, *a parable*, as the following is; and which is directed to the diſciples, as thoſe in the preceding chapter are to the *Phariſees*; and who alſo are deſigned in this; tho' it is particularly ſpoken to the diſciples, becauſe it might be of ſome uſe to them, with reſpect to the ſtewardſhip they were in. The *Perſic* and *Ethiopic* verſions read, *Jeſus*, or *the Lord Jeſus ſaid*; and which is to be underſtood, tho' not expreſſed; for the parable was delivered by him, and is as follows: *there was a certain rich man*; by whom God is meant, who is rich in the perfections of his nature, in the works of his hands, in his government, and the adminiſtration of it, in providential goodneſs, and in the large revenues of glory due to him from his creatures; for all temporal riches are from him; and ſo are all the riches of mercy, grace, and glory: *which had a ſteward*; by whom is deſigned, not all mankind; for tho' all men are, in a ſenſe, ſtewards under God, and are entruſted with the good things of life, the gifts of nature, endowments of mind, health, ſtrength of body, time, *&c.* yet all can't be meant, becauſe ſome are diſtinguiſhed from this ſteward, ver. 5, 8. nor are the diſciples intended, tho' the parable is directed to them; and they were ſtewards of the myſteries and manifold grace of God; and one among them was an unfaithful one, and was turned out of his ſtewardſhip; but the character of an unjuſt man will not ſuit with them: and beſides, this ſteward was of the children of this world, ver. 8. but the *Phariſees* are meant; for theſe are taken notice of as gravelled at this parable, ver. 14, 15. and to them agrees the character of the men of this world, who were worldly wiſe men; as alſo that of a ſteward; theſe are the tutors and governours mentioned in *Gal.* iv. 2. who had the care of the houſe of *Iſrael*, the family of God, under the legal diſpenſation; and to whom were committed the oracles of God, the writings of *Moſes*, and the prophets; and whoſe buſineſs it was to open and explain them to the people. *And the ſame was accuſed unto him, that he had waſted his goods*; put falſe gloſſes upon the ſcriptures; fed the family with bad and unwholeſome food, the traditions of the elders, called the leaven of the *Phariſees*; made havock of the ſouls of men; and made the hearts of the righteous ſad; and hardened ſinners in their wicked ways; and fed themſelves, and not the flock; and plundered perſons of their temporal ſubſtance; of all which they were accuſed by *Moſes*, in whom they truſted; by his law which they violated; and by their own conſciences, which witneſſed againſt them; and by the cries of thoſe whom they abuſed, which came into the ears of the Lord of ſabaoth.

Ver. 2. *And he called him*, &c.] By the prophets, ſent one after another; by *John* the *Baptiſt*, by Chriſt himſelf, and by his Apoſtles: *and ſaid unto him, how is it that I hear this of thee?* of thy corrupting the word; of thy covetouſneſs, rapine, and theft; of thy adultery and idolatry, and ſad violation of the law; ſee *Rom.* ii. 21, 22, 23. *give an account of thy ſtewardſhip:* what improvement is made of thy gifts; what care has been taken of my vineyard, the *Jewiſh* church; and where are the fruits that might be expected to have been received at your hands: *for thou mayſt be no longer ſteward.* This was foretold by the prophets, that God would write a *Loammi* upon the people of the *Jews*; that he would cut off three ſhepherds in one month, and particularly lay aſide the idol-ſhepherd, by whom the *Phariſees* may be meant, *Zech.* xi. 8, 17. and by *John* the *Baptiſt*, who declared the ax was laid to the root of the tree, and it was juſt ready to be cut down, *Matt.* iii. 11, 12. and by Chriſt, that the kingdom of God ſhould be taken from them, *Matt.* xxi. 43. and by the Apoſtles, who turned from them to the *Gentiles*, *Acts* xiii. 46.

Ver. 3. *Then the ſteward ſaid within himſelf*, &c.] As the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* were wont to do, *Matt.* iii. 9. and ix. 2. *Luke* vii. 39, 49. *what ſhall I do?* he does not ſay, what will become of me? I am undone, and what ſhall I do to be ſaved? or what ſhall I do for my Lord and Maſter I have ſo much injured? or what ſhall I do to make up matters with him? or what account ſhall I give? but what ſhall I do for a maintenance? how ſhall I live? what ſhall I do to pleaſe men, and gain their opinion and good-will, and ſo be provided for by them? of this caſt were the *Phariſees*, men-pleaſers, and ſelf-ſeekers: *for my Lord taketh away from me the ſtewardſhip:* the prieſthood was changed, and there was a change alſo of the law; the ceremonial law was abrogated, and the ordinances of the former diſpenſation were ſhaken and removed; ſo that theſe men muſt of courſe turn out of their places and offices: *I cannot dig*; or *plough*, as the *Arabic* verſion renders it; or do any part of huſbandry, particularly that which lies in manuring and cultivating the earth; not but that he was able to do it; but he could not tell how to ſubmit to ſuch a mean, as well as laborious way of life; for nothing was meaner among the *Jews* than huſbandry: they have a ſaying, that אין לך אומנות פחותה מן הקרקע, *you have no trade*, or buſineſs, *leſſer*, or meaner *than huſbandry*[g]: *and to beg I am aſhamed*; for nothing could be more diſagreeable to one who had lived ſo well in his maſter's houſe, and in ſo much fulneſs and luxury, as the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* did. The *Jews* have a ſaying, that[h] "want of neceſſaries, טוב משאלתו, *is better than begging*; (and ſays one) I have taſted the bitterneſs of all things, and I have not found any thing more bitter *than begging*:" and which was literally true of the *Jews*, after the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*; when multitudes of them were condemned to work in the mines; and vaſt numbers were ſcattered about every where as vagabonds, begging their bread; both which were very irkſome to that people: tho' both theſe phraſes may be myſtically underſtood: and *digging* may intend a laborious ſearching into the ſcriptures, and a diligent performance of good works; neither of which the *Phariſees* much cared for, tho' they made large pretenſions to both; nor did they dig deep to lay a good foundation whereon to build eternal life and happineſs; nor could they attain to the law of righteouſneſs by all their toil and labour, they would be thought to have taken: and as for *begging*, they were above that; read the *Phariſees*'s prayer in *Luke* xviii. 11, 12. and you wont find one petition in it. To aſk any thing at the throne of grace, in a way of mere grace and favour, and not merit; or to beg any thing at the hands of Chriſt, as life, righteouſneſs, pardon, cleanſing, healing, food, *&c.* they were aſhamed of, and cared not for.

Ver. 4. *I am reſolved what to do*, &c.] Or *I know what to do*; I have a ſcheme in my head, and I am determined to execute it, which will provide for me, and ſecure me a maintenance; *that when I am put out of the ſtewardſhip*; drove from *Jeruſalem*, and from the temple and the ſynagogues: *they may receive me into their houſes*; either *Jews* or *Gentiles*, after their diſperſion.

Ver. 5. *So he called every one of his Lord's debtors*, &c.] Either the *Gentiles*, who were greatly indebted to God, having ſinned againſt him, and the law, and light of nature, at a great rate; into whoſe affections, houſes, and palaces, the *Jews* found ways and means to introduce themſelves; and, in proceſs of time, got leave to have ſynagogues built, and their worſhip ſet up again: or elſe the *Jews*, their countrymen; ſince theſe were under thoſe ſtewards, tutors, and governours, and were debtors to do the whole law; and had, by breaking the law, contracted large debts; and againſt whom the ceremonial law ſtood as an hand-writing: theſe the ſteward called *unto him, and ſaid unto the firſt, how much oweſt thou unto my Lord?* and it is obſervable, that the debts of theſe men, of the firſt, lay in oil, and of the other, in wheat; things much uſed in the ceremonial law, in the obſervance of which they had been greatly deficient; ſee *Exod.* xxix. 40, 41. *Numb.* xv. 4—12. *Ezek.* xlv. 13, 14.

Ver. 6. *And he ſaid an hundred meaſures of oil*, &c.] Or *baths of oil*, the ſame quantity as in *Ezra* vii. 22. where *Aben Ezra*[i] calls them, מדות, *meaſures*, as we do here; and *Jarchi*[k] obſerves, that they were, לבלול מנחות, *to mingle with the meat-offerings*; which illuſtrates the above obſervation, that they were for the temple ſervice; and the bath was the meaſure of oil, as the ephah was of wheat[l]; and they were both of the ſame quantity, *Ezek.* xlv. 11. According to *Godwin*[m] it held four gallons and a half; ſo that a hundred of them contained four hundred and fifty gallons; tho' ſome make the meaſure much larger. Some ſay the *bath* held ſix gallons, one pottle, and half a pint; and others, ſeven gallons, two quarts, and half a pint; and others, nine gallons, and three quarts. *Take thy bill*, or *writing*; which ſhowed the bargain made for ſo many meaſures; and which acknowledged the receipt of them, and promiſed payment: *and ſit down quickly*; for his caſe required haſte; *and write fifty*; juſt half; that it might appear he had bought but fifty, and was accountable for no more.

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[g] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 63. 1.

[h] Miſchar Hapeninim apud Buxtorf. Florileg. Heb. p. 262.

[i] In Ezr. vii. 22.

[k] In ib.

[l] Kimchi in Ezek. xlv. 14.

[m] Moſes & Aaron, l. 6. c. 9.

Ver. 7. *Then ſaid he to another, and how much oweſt thou?* &c.] To my Lord, as before: *and he ſaid, an hundred meaſures of wheat*, or *cors of wheat*; the ſame with *Homers*, *Ezek.* xlv. 14. the ſame quantity as in *Ezra* vii. 22. where, as here, they are called an hundred meaſures of wheat; and were, as *Jarchi* on the place obſerves, למנחות, *for the meat-offerings*: according to the above writer [n], this meaſure held five buſhels, and five gallons; ſo that the whole was five hundred, ſixty buſhels, and a half: ſome make the meaſure to hold eight buſhels and a half; and others, fourteen buſhels and a pottle, which greatly increaſes the quantity. *And he ſaid unto him, take thy bill and write fourſcore.* The *Perſic* verſion reads *ſeventy*. Inaſmuch now as oil and wheat were things expended in the obſervance of the ceremonial law, and theſe mens debts lay in them, it may have regard to the deficiency of the *Jews* in thoſe things: wherefore by *the bill* may be meant the law; and which is ſometimes called by the ſame name as here, γϱαμμα, the *writing*, or *letter*, 2 *Cor.* iii. 6. *Rom.* ii. 29. and vii. 6. and is ſo called, not merely becauſe it was written in letters; but becauſe it is a mere letter, ſhewing only what is to be done and avoided, without giving ſtrength to perform, or pointing where it is to be had; and it is ſo as obeyed by an unregenerate man; and as abſtracted from the ſpirituality of it; and as weak, and without efficacy, to quicken, juſtify, or ſanctify: and whereas the ſteward, the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, ordered the debtors to write a leſſer ſum; this may regard the leſſening, and even laying aſide of many things in the law, after the deſtruction of the temple; as particularly the daily ſacrifice, and other things; ſee *Dan.* ix. 27. *Hoſ.* iii. 4. and the doctrine of the *Phariſees* was always a curtailing of the law, and making leſs of it than it was; as appears from the gloſſes they put upon it, refuted by our Lord in *Matt.* v. They compounded the matter with the people, as ſome men do now, and taught them, that an imperfect righteouſneſs would do in the room of a perfect one; a doctrine very pleaſing to men, and which never fails of gaining an acceſs into the hearts and houſes of carnal men; tho' very injurious to God, and to his divine perfections, particularly his juſtice and holineſs; as the methods this ſteward took were unjuſt to his Lord, tho' very agreeable to his debtors, and were well calculated to anſwer the end he propoſed, an after proviſion for himſelf. I am much indebted to a learned writer [o], whoſe name is in the margin, for ſeveral thoughts and hints in the explanation of this parable; and alſo of that of the rich man and *Lazarus*, in the latter part of this chapter.

Ver. 8. *And the Lord commended the unjuſt ſteward*, &c.] Not the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who delivered this parable, as the *Syriac* verſion ſeems to ſuggeſt, rendering it, *our Lord*; but the Lord of the ſteward, or *God*, as the *Ethiopic* verſion reads: not that he commended him for the fact he did, or the injuſtice of it; for this is contrary to his nature and perfections; but for his craft and cunning in providing himſelf a maintenance for time to come: for he is on that account branded as an *unjuſt ſteward*, as he was, in waſting his Lord's goods; putting falſe gloſſes on the ſcriptures; doing damage both to the ſouls and worldly eſtates of men; and in neglecting and deſpiſing lawful and honeſt ways of living, by digging or begging, aſking favours at the hand of God; and doing good works; and in falſifying accounts; breaking the leaſt of the commandments, and teaching men ſo to do; and in corrupting others, making proſelytes two-fold more the children of hell than himſelf; and in being liberal with another's property, to wrong objects, and for a wrong end. It was not therefore becauſe he had done juſtly to his Lord, or right to others, that he is commended; but *becauſe he had done wiſely* for himſelf: the wit, and not the goodneſs of the man is commended; which, in the language and ſenſe of the *Jews*, may be thus expreſſed [p]: "becauſe a man, עושה טובה לעצמו, "*does good for himſelf* with *mammon* which is not "his own." *For the children of this world are in their generation wiſer than the children of light*: by *the children of this world* may be meant the *Iſraelites*, who belonged to the *Jewiſh* nation and church, called *the world*, and *this world*, 1 *Cor.* x. 11. and ii. 6, 8. eſpecially the princes of it, the eccleſiaſtical doctors and rulers: and who alſo were the men of this preſent world; in general they were ſuch who were, as they were born into the world; in their ſins, in the pollution, and under the guilt of them; were carnal, in the fleſh, or unregenerate, and in darkneſs and blindneſs: they were ſuch as were not only in the world, but of it; they belonged to it, having never been called out of it; and were under the influence of the God of it; and were taken with the things of it, its riches, honours, and pleaſures; and had their portion in it, and were of worldly ſpirits; all which agrees with the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*; ſee *Pſ.* xvii. 14. and *Aben Ezra* on it, who has the very phraſe here uſed: איניש דעלמא, *a man of the world*, is ſometimes [q] diſtinguiſhed from a ſcholar, or a wiſe man; but בני עלמא, *the children of the world*, as they frequently intend the inhabitants of the world [r], are ſometimes diſtinguiſhed from בן עלמא דאתי, *a ſon of the world to come* [s]; and from *the children of faith* [t], the ſame as *the children of light* here; by whom are meant the children of the Goſpel-diſpenſation; or perſons enlightened by the Spirit and grace of God, to ſee the ſinfulneſs of ſin, and their wretched ſtate by nature; the inſufficiency of their own righteouſneſs to juſtify them before God; the way of life, righteouſneſs, and ſalvation by Chriſt; who ſee that the ſeveral parts of ſalvation, and the whole, are of grace; have ſome light into the ſcriptures of truth, and doctrines of the Goſpel; and ſome glimpſe of heaven, and the unſeen glories of another world, tho' attended with much darkneſs in the preſent ſtate; and who ſhall enjoy the light of glory. Now, the men of the world, or carnal men, are, generally ſpeaking, wiſer than theſe; not in things ſpiritual, but in things natural, in the affairs of life, in worldly matters. The phraſe ſeems to anſwer to תולדות, *generations*, uſed in *Gen.* vi. 9. and xxxvii. 2. *theſe are the generations of Noah*, &c. and *the generations of Jacob*; by which are meant, not the genealogies of them, but their affairs; what befel them in life: and ſo the *Jewiſh* writers [u] explain the phraſe by הקורות, *the things which happened* unto them in this world, in the courſe of their pilgrimage: or they are wiſer, εις την γενεαν την εαυτων, *for their own generation*; for the temporal good of their poſterity, than ſaints are for the ſpiritual good of theirs: or they are wiſer for the time that is to come in this life, than good men are concerning themſelves for the time to come in the other world: or they are wiſer, and more prudent in diſpoſing of their worldly ſubſtance for their own ſecular good, and that of their offspring, than men of ſpiritual light and knowledge are, in diſpoſing of their worldly ſubſtance for the glory of God, the intereſt of Chriſt, the honour of religion, their own ſpiritual good, and that of their poſterity.

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[n] Moſes & Aaron, l. 6. c. 9.

[o] Teelmanni Specimen Explicat. Parabolarum.

[p] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 121. 1.

[q] T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 27. 2.

[r] Zohar in Exod. fol. 26. 2. & 58. 3, 4. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 99. 3. & 101. 2, & 102. 4.

[s] Zohar in Exod. fol. 59. 4.

[t] Zohar in Numb. fol. 50. 4.

[u] Aben Ezra in Gen. vi. 9. & xxxvii. 2. Sol. Urbin Ohel Moed, fol. 85. 1.

Ver. 9. *And I ſay unto you*, &c.] Theſe are the words of Chriſt, as are alſo the latter part of the preceding verſe, accommodating and applying the parable to his diſciples, and for their inſtruction: *make to yourſelves friends of the mammon of unrighteouſneſs*: by *mammon* are deſigned riches, wealth, and ſubſtance; ſee the note on *Matt*. vi. 24. and is called *mammon of unrighteouſneſs*, becauſe ſuch wealth is often unrighteouſly detained, and is not made uſe of to right and good purpoſes, by the owners of it; or becauſe, generally ſpeaking, it is poſſeſſed by unrighteous men; and, for the moſt part, uſed in an unrighteous manner, in luxury, pride, and intemperance, and is the root, inſtrument, and means of much unrighteouſneſs: or it may be rendered *mammon of hurt*, or *hurtful mammon*; as it often is to thoſe who are over-anxious and deſirous of it, or either diſuſe or miſuſe it: or, as beſt of all, *mammon of falſhood*, or *deceitful mammon*; ſo in the *Targum* [w] frequent mention is made of, ממון דשקר, *mammon of falſity*; and ſtands oppoſed to *true riches*, in ver. 11. for worldly riches are very empty and fallacious; wherefore deceitfulneſs is aſcribed to them; and they are called uncertain riches, which are not be depended upon, *Matt*. xiii. 22. 1 *Tim*. vi. 17. unleſs it ſhould be rather thought that it is ſo called, becauſe gotten in an unrighteous way; as it was by *Zaccheus*, and might be by *Matthew*, one of the diſciples, Chriſt now ſpeaks to, and the publicans and ſinners, who were lately become his followers, and whom he adviſes, as the higheſt piece of wiſdom and prudence, to diſpoſe of in ſuch a manner, as of it to *make* themſelves *friends*; not God, Father, Son, and Spirit. Theſe indeed are friends to the ſaints, but they are not made ſo by money; reconciliation and redemption are not procured this way; nor is the favour of the judge to be got by ſuch means; the only means of reconciliation, are the blood and death of Chriſt; tho' indeed acts of beneficence, rightly performed, are well pleaſing to God: nor are the angels meant, who are very friendly to all good men; nor rich men to whom riches are not to be given, *Prov*. xxii. 16. but rather riches themſelves, which, if not rightly uſed, and ſo made friends of, will cry, and be a witneſs againſt the owners of them, *Jam*. v. 1, 2, 3. tho' it may be the poor ſaints are intended; who by their prayers are capable of doing either a great deal of hurt, or a great deal of good; and it is the intereſt of rich men to make them their friends: *that when ye fail*; of money; or *that fails*, as the *Ethiopic* verſion reads; or rather, when ye leave that, that is, when ye die: ſo in *Jer*. xlii. 22. *know certainly that ye ſhall die*; the *Septuagint* renders it, εκλειψετε, *ye ſhall fail by the ſword*, &c. *they may receive you into everlaſting habitations*; the manſions of glory, which are many, and of an eternal duration: this to be underſtood of their being received thither, not by the poor, to whom they have been benefactors; for tho' theſe may now pray for their reception to glory when they die, and will hereafter rejoice at their reception thither; yet they themſelves will not be receivers of them, or their introducers into the everlaſting tents, or tabernacles: nor are the angels intended, who carry the ſouls of the righteous into *Abraham*'s boſom, and will gather the elect together at the laſt day; for not they, but God and Chriſt receive the ſaints to glory: the words may be rendered imperſonally, *you may be received*; in a way of well doing, tho' not for it: mention is made of *the everlaſting tabernacles*, in 2 *Eſdras* ii. 11. and ſo the phraſe may be rendered here, as oppoſed to the earthly and periſhing tabernacles of the body, 2 *Cor*. v. 1. 2 *Pet*. i. 13, 14.

Ver. 10. *He that is faithful in that which is leaſt*, &c.] In quantity and quality, eſpecially the latter; in that which is of little value and worth, at leaſt when compared with other things: *is faithful alſo in much*; in matters of greater conſequence and importance: the ſenſe of the proverb is, that, generally ſpeaking, a man that acts a faithful part in a ſmall truſt committed to him, does ſo likewiſe in a much larger; and being tried, and found faithful in things of leſs moment, he is intruſted with things of greater importance; tho' this is not always the caſe: for ſometimes a man may behave with great integrity in leſſer matters, on purpoſe that he might gain greater confidence, which, when he has obtained, he abuſes in the vileſt manner; but becauſe it is uſually otherwiſe, our Lord uſes the common proverb; and of like ſenſe is the following; *and he that is unjuſt in the leaſt, is unjuſt alſo in much*: that man that acts the unfaithful part in a ſmall matter, and of little worth, generally does the ſame, if a greater truſt is committed to him.

Ver. 11. *If therefore ye have not been faithful*, &c.] This is the application of the above proverbial expreſſions, and ſeems to be directed to the diſciples of Chriſt, tho' not without a view to the covetous *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, who were in hearing of it, and were diſturbed at it, ver. 14. and the meaning is, that whereas ſome of them might have been unfaithful, and have acted the unjuſt part in gathering of riches, as *Matthew*, and other publicans, that were now become the followers of Chriſt; if therefore they ſhould be unfaithful *in the unrighteous mammon*; in the diſpoſing of it to improper uſes, which was either unrighteouſly gotten, and therefore called, as it ſometimes was, ממון דרשע, *mammon of ungodlineſs*, or *ungodly mammon* [x]; or, which was fallacious, deceitful, vain, and tranſitory: *who will commit to your truſt the true* riches; or *mammon?* that is, how ſhould you expect to be entruſted with the riches of grace, as the bleſſings and promiſes of the covenant of grace, the graces of the Spirit of God, which truly enrich perſons, and are ſolid and durable? or the riches of glory, the better and more enduring ſubſtance in heaven, ſignified by a kingdom, and an inheritance that fadeth not away? ſo the *Jews* call the good things of another world, and ſay [y], that "all the good "things of this world are not, טובות אמתיות, "*true good things*, in compariſon of the good things "of the world to come." And they uſe the ſame diſtinction with reſpect to *mammon*, as here: "the holy, bleſſed God, they ſay [z], gives him, "ממון של אמת, *mammon of truth*, or true mam"mon; and he makes it, שקר, *falſe*, or deceitful:" "or rather the rich treaſure of the Goſpel is meant, called a treaſure in earthen veſſels, and the unſearchable riches of Chriſt; and is comparable to, and of more worth than gold, ſilver, and precious ſtones. And ſo the *Syriac* verſion renders it, *who will*

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[w] Targum in Job xxvii. 8. & in Iſ. v. 23. & xxxiii. 15. & in Ezek. xxii. 27. & in Hoſ. v. 11.

[x] Targum in Hab. ii. 9.

[y] Tzeror Hammor, ſol. 23. 2.

[z] Shemot Rabba, §. 31. fol. 134. 4.

*will truſt you with the truth?* with the truth of the Goſpel.

Ver. 12. *And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's*, &c.] Which is not a man's own, but what is committed to him by another; בממון אחרים, *with the mammon of others* [a], to ſpeak in the language of the *Jews*; and of mammon, our Lord is ſpeaking, and here of another man's, of which they were only ſtewards, as he in the preceding parable was: hence we read [b] of שומרי ממון, *keepers of mammon*, who were entruſted with another's ſubſtance; and ſuch are here ſuppoſed, which, if unfaithful in, *who ſhall give you that which is your own?* that is, ſhould you unjuſtly detain, or make an ill uſe of another man's ſubſtance lodged in your hands, how can you expect but that you will be dealt with in like manner by others, who will not pay you yours, they have in their poſſeſſion, but convert it to their own uſe. A like diſtinction of another's, and a man's own, may be obſerved among the *Jews*: "there are, "ſay they [c], four ſorts of men in reſpect of giv"ing alms; he that would give, but would not "have others give, his eye is evil, בשל אחרים, "*in that which is other mens* (*i. e.* as the commen"tator obſerves [d], leſt the goods of others ſhould "be increaſed, and they get a good name); he "that would that others ſhould give, but he will "not give himſelf, his eye is evil, בשלו, *in that* "*which is his own*; he that gives, and would have "others give, he is a *good man*; he that neither "gives, nor would have others give, he is an *un*"*godly man*;" ſee *Rom.* v. 7, 8. Interpreters generally underſtand by *that which is another man's*, in the firſt clauſe, the things of this world, which men are poſſeſſed of, becauſe theſe are not of themſelves, but from another, from God; and they are but ſtewards, rather than proprietors of them; and they are for the good of others, and not for themſelves; and are not laſting, but in a little while will paſs from them to others: and by *that which is your own*, they underſtand the good things of grace and glory, which, when once beſtowed on a man, are his own property, and for his own uſe, and will never be alienated from him, but will always abide with him: but if he is unfaithful in the former, how ſhould he expect the latter to be given to him?

Ver. 13. *No ſervant can ſerve two maſters*, &c.] See the note on *Matt.* vi. 24.

Ver. 14. *And the Phariſees alſo who were covetous*, &c.] Or lovers of money, the love of which is the root of all evil; and that they were, is evident from their devouring widows houſes, under a pretence of making long prayers for them, *Matt.* xxiii. 14. *heard all theſe things*; as well as the diſciples, being in company with them, ch. xv. 2. even the parable concerning the unjuſt ſteward, and the application of it; and the directions given about uſing the things of this world, and the diſtributing of them to the poor, and ſhewing a greater concern for riches of an higher nature: *and they derided him*; lift up their noſe, or drew it out to him, as the word ſignifies, in a ſneering way; they rejected and deſpiſed what he ſaid about their injuſtice, in their ſtewardſhip; the calling of them to an account for it, and the turning of them out of it; and concerning the true uſe of worldly riches, and the contempt of them; they looked upon themſelves ſafe and ſecure in the good opinion of the people, and happy in the enjoyment of worldly things; and looked upon him as a weak man, to talk in the manner he did.

Ver. 15. *And he ſaid unto them*, &c.] That is, *Jeſus* ſaid unto them, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions expreſs it: *ye are they which juſtify yourſelves before men*; from the ſins of injuſtice, unfaithfulneſs, covetouſneſs, and all others; and would be thought, and appear to be righteous; but 'tis only in the ſight of men, who can only ſee the outſide of things, and judge thereby: *but God knoweth your hearts*; and what is in them, the deceitfulneſs, hypocriſy, covetouſneſs, and cruelty of them, which are hid from the eyes of men: *for that which is highly eſteemed among men*; or what is high in the account and eſteem of men, as the outward appearance of theſe men for morality, religion, and holineſs; their zeal for the ceremonies of the law, and the traditions of the elders: *is abomination in the ſight of God*; who knew full well from what principles, and with what views they acted, to gain popular applauſe, and amaſs riches to themſelves, without any concern for the glory of God, and the good of men; ſee *Iſa.* lxv. 5.

Ver. 16. *The law and the prophets were until John*, &c.] Till the time that *John* the *Baptiſt* began his miniſtry; for till then, the law and the prophets, with the *Hagiographa*, or holy writings, for into theſe three parts, the *Jews* divided the books of the Old Teſtament, were the only writings they had; and which contained the whole of the revelation granted to them; and which they wreſted, and put falſe gloſſes on; and therefore it was no wonder that they derided Chriſt, and deſpiſed his miniſtry: and whereas ſpiritual things were promiſed in theſe writings, under the notion of temporal ones; which they not underſtanding, might imagine the doctrine of Chriſt concerning the contempt of worldly riches, was contrary to: and ſince they valued themſelves on having the law and the prophets, Chriſt obſerves, that *ſince that time, the kingdom of God is preached*; the Goſpel, and the myſteries of it, relating to the kingdom of the Meſſiah, his perſon, office, and grace; and to the kingdom of grace, which lies not in outward, but in inward and ſpiritual things; and to the kingdom of heaven, or glory hereafter; and which is a ſuperior diſpenſation to that of the law and the prophets, and ſets things in a clearer, plainer, and better light: *and every man preſſeth into it*; the Goſpel diſpenſation, the kingdom of the Meſſiah; *that he may enter into it*, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions add; which the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* did all they could to hinder; ſee *Matt.* xxiii. 13. large multitudes crouded the miniſtry of *John*, of Chriſt, and of his apoſtles; the people flocked in great numbers to hear the word, and ſeemed diſpoſed to embrace the doctrines of the Goſpel, and the ordinances of it; they preſſed on one another to hear it, and through many difficulties, diſcouragements, and obſtacles, the *Phariſees* threw in their way; there was ſcarce a man but ſeemed very deſirous of attending upon the preaching of it, and preſſed hard for it; and with much force and violence, with great eagerneſs and endeavour broke his way to it; though a different ſenſe is given by others reading the words, and *every one ſuffers violence to himſelf for it*, as the *Arabic* verſion; or *is oppreſſed for it*, as the *Ethiopic*; that is, ſuffers reproach, contradiction, and perſecution, for the ſake of hearing it.

Ver. 17. *And it is eaſier for heaven and earth to paſs*, &c.] This is ſaid by Chriſt, leſt it ſhould be thought by his ſaying, that the law and the prophets were until *John*, that they were no longer, nor of any more uſe; but were now abrogated and laid aſide; whereas heaven and earth might ſooner paſs away, and the whole frame of nature be diſſolved: *than one tittle of the law to fail*; which, and the prophets, in all the precepts, promiſes, types, figures, prophecies, &c. thereof, had their full accompliſhment in the perſon, miracles, obedience, ſufferings, and death of Chriſt; ſee *Matt.* v. 18.

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[a] Jarchi in Pirke Abot, c. 5. §. 13.

[b] T. Hieroſ. Succa, fol. 53. 1.

[c] Pirke Abot, c. 5. §. 13.

[d] Jarchi in ib.

Ver. 18. *Whoſoever putteth away his wife*, &c.] For any other cauſe than for adultery, as the *Jews* uſed to do upon every trifling occaſion, and for every little diſguſt: by which inſtance our Lord ſhews, how the *Jews* abuſed and depraved the law, and as much as in them lay, cauſed it to fail; and how, he on the other hand, was ſo far from deſtroying and making it of none effect, that he maintained the purity and ſpirituality of it; putting them in mind of what he had formerly ſaid, and of many other things of the like kind along with it; how that if a man divorces his wife, for any thing elſe but the defiling his bed, *and marrieth another, committeth adultery*; with her that he marries; becauſe his marriage with the former ſtill continues, and cannot be made void by ſuch a divorce: *and whoſoever marrieth her that is put away from her huſband*; the phraſe *from her huſband*, is omitted in the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions: *committeth adultery*; with her that he marries, becauſe notwithſtanding her huſband's divorce of her, and his after marriage with her, ſhe ſtill remains his lawful and proper wife; ſee the note on *Matt.* v. 32. The *Ethiopic* verſion reads this laſt clauſe, quite different from all others thus, *and whoſoever puts away her huſband, and joins to another, commits adultery*, agreeable to *Mark* x. 12. ſee the note there.

Ver. 19. *There was a certain rich man*, &c.] In *Beza*'s moſt ancient copy, and in another manuſcript of his 'tis read by way of preface, *he ſaid alſo another parable*; which ſhows, that this is not a hiſtory of matter of fact, or an hiſtorical account of two ſuch perſons, as the *rich* man and the beggar, who had lately lived at *Jeruſalem*; though the *Papiſts* pretend, to this day, to point out the very ſpot of ground in *Jeruſalem*, where this rich man's houſe ſtood: nor is it to be underſtood parabolically of any particular rich man, or prince; as *Saul* the firſt king of *Iſrael*; or *Herod*, who now was reigning, and was cloathed in purple, and lived in a ſumptuous manner: nor of rich men in general, though it greatly deſcribes the characters of ſuch, at leaſt of many of them; who only take care of their bodies, and neglect their ſouls; adorn and pamper them, live in pleaſure, and grow wanton, and have no regard to the poor ſaints; and when they die go to hell; for their riches will not profit them in a day of wrath, nor deliver from it, or be regarded by the judge, any more than hills and mountains will hide them from his face: but by the rich man are meant, the *Jews* in general; for that this man is repreſented, and to be conſidered as a *Jew*, is evident from *Abraham* being his father, and his calling him ſo, and *Abraham* again calling him his ſon, ver. 24, 25. of which relation the *Jews* much boaſted and gloried in; and from his brethren having *Moſes* and the prophets, ver. 29. which were peculiar to the *Jewiſh* people; and from that invincible and incurable infidelity in them, that they would not believe, though one roſe from the dead, ver. 31. as the *Jews* would not believe in Chriſt, though he himſelf roſe from the dead, which was the ſign he gave them of his being the Meſſiah: and the general deſign of the parable, is to expoſe the wickedneſs and unbelief of the *Jews*, and to ſhew their danger and miſery, for their contempt and rejection of the Meſſiah; and particularly the *Phariſees* are deſigned, who being covetous, had derided Chriſt for what he had before ſaid; and, who though high in the eſteem of men, were an abomination to God, ver. 14, 15. Theſe more eſpecially boaſted of *Abraham* being their father; and of their being the diſciples of *Moſes*, and truſted in him, and in his law; and thought they ſhould have eternal life through having and reading the books of *Moſes* and the prophets: theſe may be called *a man*, becauſe this was the name by which the *Jews* ſtile themſelves, in diſtinction from the *Gentiles*, whom they compare to beaſts; ſee the note on *Matt.* xv. 26. and this they ground on a paſſage in *Ezek.* xxxiv. 31. *and ye my flock, the flock of my paſture*, are *men*; upon which their note is [e], "ye "are called, אדם, *men*, but the nations of the "earth are not called men." And they may be called a *certain* man, a famous man, a man of note, as the *Jews*, and eſpecially the *Phariſees*, thought themſelves to be; and therefore coveted the chief places in the ſynagogues, and at feaſts, and loved ſalutations and greetings in market-places, and to be called of men *Rabbi*, and maſter: as alſo a *rich* man; for the *Jews* in general were a wealthy people, lived in a very fruitful country, and were greatly indulged with the riches of providential goodneſs; and particularly the *Phariſees*, many of whom were of the great *Sanhedrim*, and rulers of ſynagogues, and elders of the people; and who by various methods, amaſſed to themſelves great riches, and even devoured widows houſes; ſee *Luke* vi. 24. and xviii. 18, 23. and they were alſo rich in outward means and ordinances, having the oracles of God, his word, worſhip, and ſervice; and as to their ſpiritual and eternal eſtate, in their own eſteem; though they were not truly rich in grace, not in faith, nor in ſpiritual knowledge, nor even in good works, of which they ſo much boaſted; but in appearance, and in their own conceit, they were rich in the knowledge of the law, and in righteouſneſs, which they imagined was perfect, and ſo ſtood in need of nothing; no, not of repentance, and eſpecially of Chriſt, or of any thing from him: *which was clothed in purple and fine linnen*; or *byſſus*, which is ſaid to [f] grow on a tree, in height equal to a poplar, and in leaves like a willow, and was brought out of *India* into *Egypt*, and much uſed there, as it alſo was among the *Jews*: hence we often read [g] of, בוצא, or, לבושין דבוץ, *garments of byſſus*, or fine linnen: the *Jews* in general dreſſed well; their common apparel were fine linnen and ſilk; ſee *Ezek.* xvi. 10, 13. and ſo the *Arabic* verſion here renders it, *ſilk and purple*; and the *Perſic* verſion, *ſilks and bombycines*: and the prieſts particularly, were arrayed in ſuch a habit; the robe of the ephod, and alſo its curious girdle, were of blue, purple, ſcarlet, and fine linnen, and at the hem of it were pomegranates of blue, purple, and ſcarlet, *Exod.* xxviii. 6, 8, 33. And as for the *Phariſees*, they loved to go in long robes, and to make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, which were fringes of blue, joined unto them; and which may figuratively expreſs the fine outſide ſhow of holineſs and righteouſneſs, they made; *and fared ſumptuouſly every day*. The *Jews* in common lived well, being in a land that flowed with milk and honey; ſee *Ezek.* xvi. 13. and eſpecially the prieſts, who offered ſered up lambs every day, beſides other offerings, of which they had their part; as alſo the *Phariſees*, who were often at feaſts, where they loved the chief places: and this may ſignify the eaſy and jocund life they lived; knowing no ſorrow upon ſpiritual accounts, having no ſenſe of ſin, nor ſight of the ſpirituality of the law, nor view of danger; but at perfect eaſe, and not emptied from veſſel to veſſel.

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[e] T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 114. 2. & Kimchi in loc.

[f] Philoſtrat. Vit. Appollon. l. 2. c. 9.

[g] Targum in Gen. xli. 42. in 2 Chron. v. 12. & in Ezek. xliv. 17.

Ver. 20. *And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus*, &c.] By whom is deſigned, not any particular beggar in the times of Chriſt, that went by this name; though there were ſuch perſons in *Iſrael*, and in the times of our Lord; as blind *Bartimeus*, and others: nor *David*, in the times of *Saul*, who was poor and needy; and who ſometimes wanted bread, and at a certain time went to *Abimelech* for ſome: nor the godly poor in common, though the heirs of the heavenly kingdom, are generally ſpeaking, the poor of this world; theſe receive Chriſt and his Goſpel, and have their evil things here, and their good things hereafter; they are now ſlighted and neglected by men, but ſhall hereafter have a place in *Abraham*'s boſom, and be for ever with the Lord: nor are the *Gentiles* intended; though they may be ſaid to be poor and helpleſs, as they were without Chriſt, aliens from the commonwealth of *Iſrael*, and ſtrangers to the covenants of promiſe, and without hope and God in the world; and were deſpiſed and rejected by the *Jews*, and not ſuffered to come into their temple, and were called and treated as dogs; though, as the *Syrophœnician* woman pleaded, the dogs might eat of the crumbs which fall from their maſter's table; and who, upon the breaking down of the middle wall of partition, were called by grace, and drawn to Chriſt, and were bleſſed with faithful *Abraham*, and made to ſit down with him in the kingdom of heaven: but our Lord Jeſus Chriſt himſelf is here meant; as appears from the cauſe and occaſion of this parable, which was the deriſion of Chriſt by the covetous *Phariſees*, who, though high in the eſteem of men, were an abomination to God; and from the ſcope and deſign of it, which is to repreſent the mean and deſpicable condition of Chriſt in this world, whilſt the *Phariſees*, his enemies, lived in great pomp and ſplendor; and the exaltation of Chriſt hereafter, when they would be in the utmoſt diſtreſs; and alſo the infidelity of that people, who continued in their unbelief, notwithſtanding the reſurrection of Chriſt from the dead: the name *Lazarus* well agrees with him. The *Syriac* verſion calls him *Loozar*, as if it ſignified one that was helpleſs, that had no help, but wanted it, and ſo a fit name for a beggar; and well ſuits with Chriſt, who looked, and there was none to help, *Iſa*. lxiii. 5. nor did he receive any help from men; though rather, the word is the contraction of *Eleazar*, and ſo the *Ethiopic* verſion reads it here: and it is eaſy to obſerve, that he who is called *R. Eleazar* in the *Babylonian Talmud*, is in the *Jeruſalem* called, times without number, ר״לעזר, *R. Lazar* [h]; and *R. Liezer*, is put for *R. Eliezer*: it is a rule given by one of the *Jewiſh* writers [i], that "in the *Jeruſalem Talmud*, "wherever *R. Eleazar* is written without an *aleph*, "*R. Lazar ben Azariah* is intended." And Chriſt may very well be called by this name; ſince this was the name of one of his types, *Eleazar* the ſon of *Aaron*, and of one of his anceſtors, who is mentioned in his genealogy, *Matt*. i. 15. and eſpecially as the name ſignifies, that the Lord was his helper; ſee *Exod*. xviii. 4. Help was promiſed him by God, and he expected it, and firmly believed he ſhould have it, and accordingly he had it; God did help him in a day of ſalvation: and which was no indication of weakneſs in him, who is the mighty God, and mighty to ſave; but of the Father's regard to him as man, and mediator; and of the concern that each of the divine perſons had for, and in man's ſalvation: and on account of his circumſtances of life, he might be called πτωχος, a *poor man*, as he is in 2 *Cor*. viii. 9. and frequently in prophecy; ſee *Pſal*. xxxiv. 6. and xl. 17. and xli. 1. and lxix. 29. *Eccl*. ix. 14. *Iſa*. lxvi. 2. *Zech*. ix. 9. and though by aſſuming human nature, he did not ceaſe to be God, or to loſe the riches of his divine nature and perfections, yet his divine perfections, and the glory of them, were much hid and covered in his ſtate of humiliation; and he was much the reverſe of many of them in his human nature; in which he was expoſed to much outward poverty and meanneſs: he was born of poor parents; had no liberal education; was brought up to a trade; had not a foot of ground to call his own, nor where to lay his head; and lived upon the miniſtrations of others to him; and when he died, had nothing to bequeath his mother, but left her to the care of a diſciple: and he is further deſcribed, by his poſture and ſituation, *which was laid at his gate*; that is, at the *rich man's*, as is expreſſed in the *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions: this was the place where beggars ſtood, or were laid, and aſked alms; hence is that rule with the *Jews* [k], and in many other places the following phraſe; "if a "man dies and leaves ſons and daughters——if he "leaves but a ſmall ſubſtance, the daughters ſhall "be taken care of, and the ſons, ישאלו על הפתחים, "*ſhall beg at the gates*." This denotes the rejection of Chriſt by the *Jews*; he came to them, and they received him not; he had no entrance into their hearts, and was admitted but into few of their houſes; they put thoſe that confeſſed him out of their ſynagogues; and cauſed him himſelf to depart out of ſome of their cities; they delivered him up into the *Gentiles* that were without; and at laſt led him without the gate of *Jeruſalem*, where he ſuffered: *full of ſores*; ſo *Nahum Gamzu* [l] is ſaid to have his whole body, מלא שחין, *full of ulcers*: ſometimes the *Jewiſh* phraſe, which anſwers to the word here uſed is, מוכת שחין, *one ſtricken with ulcers* [m]; and this by the commentators [n], is explained of a *leprous* perſon; ſo one of the names of the Meſſiah is with the *Jews* [o], חיורא, which ſignifies *leprous*; in proof of which, they produce *Iſa*. liii. 4. *Surely he hath born our griefs*, &c. By theſe *ſores* may be meant, ſins; ſee *Pſal*. xxxviii. 5, 7. *Iſa*. i. 6. Chriſt was holy and righteous in himſelf, in his nature, life, and converſation; he was without both original and actual ſin; yet he was in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh, and was reproached and calumniated by men as a ſinner; and had really and actually, all the ſins of his people on him, by imputation; and was made even ſin itſelf, for them; ſo that in this ſenſe he might be ſaid to be full of them, though in himſelf he was free from them: they may alſo intend the temptations of ſatan, thoſe fiery darts which were flung at him, and by which he ſuffered; as alſo the reproaches and perſecutions of men, which attended him more or leſs, from the cradle to the croſs; together with all his other ſorrows and ſufferings, being ſcourged, buffeted, and beaten, and wounded for our ſins, and bruiſed for our tranſgreſſions; of which wounds and bruiſes he might be ſaid to be full.

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[h] T. Hieroſ. Biccurim, fol. 63. 3, 4. & 64. 1. & 65. 3, 4. & Sheviith, fol. 36. 3. & paſſim.

[i] Juchaſin, fol. 81. 1.

[k] Miſn. Bava Bathra, c. 9. §. 1. & T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 140. 2. Piſke Toſaph. in Cetubot, art. 138, 372.

[l] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 21. 1.

[m] Miſn. Cetubot, c. 3. §. 5. & 7. 10.

[n] Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

[o] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 98. 2.

Ver. 21. *And deſiring to be fed with the crumbs,* &c.] The offal food, broken bread, fragments of meat; that food which falls from the knife, or plate, in eating, and from thence on the ground; and literally underſtood, may expreſs the low condition Chriſt was in, in his human nature: he aſſumed a true body, like to ours, and partook of the ſame fleſh and blood with us, and was liable to the ſame infirmities as ours, which are ſinleſs; and among the reſt, was ſubject to hunger and thirſt, and was obliged to the miniſtration of others for a ſubſiſtence: and it may alſo expreſs his contentment in ſuch a condition; he never murmured at the providence of God, but was entirely reſigned to his will; he did not deſire to live in fulneſs and affluence, but avoided and ſhunned every ſtep that led unto it; nor did he envy the plenty of others, and was fully ſatiſfied with his meanneſs; nor did he ever work a miracle for the ſake of feeding himſelf. Moreover, the words being underſtood myſtically, may deſign the elect of God among the *Jews*, who, like crumbs, were few in number, a ſeed, a remnant, according to the election of grace: there were but few among them that were choſen of God, and effectually called by his grace; and but a little flock to whom he gave the kingdom; and a ſmall number, who entered in at the ſtrait gate, and were ſaved; and theſe few were very mean and deſpicable for their outward poverty; for the poor had the Goſpel preached to them, and they received it, when the rich, and the rulers of the people, rejected it: and they were like crumbs for their ſmall degree of worldly wiſdom and knowledge, being babes, ſimple and fooliſh, who followed Chriſt, while the learned, wiſe, and prudent deſpiſed him; and for their ſinfulneſs and vileneſs, being, generally ſpeaking, notorious ſinners, publicans and harlots; and of theſe it may be ſaid what follows, *which fell from the rich man's table*; being originally of the *Jews*, but ſeparated from them by the grace of God, and rejected by them with ſcorn and contempt. Theſe Chriſt *deſired*; ſee *Cant.* vii. 10. his deſire was towards them from everlaſting, when he aſked them of his father, and they were given to him; and it was not only after their perſons, but after their ſalvation, and that both in eternity and in time; and which he ſignified by various words and actions: and it is towards them, while in a ſtate of unregeneracy, that they may be converted, and believe in him; and when they are called, he delights in the grace he puts in them, and in the righteouſneſs he puts upon them; he takes pleaſure in their company; he deſires them for his habitation; he ſtands at the door and knocks for admiſſion to them; and nothing is he more earneſtly ſollicitous for, and eager after, than their being with him in glory to all eternity; and his end in all, is *to be fed* or *ſatiſfied with* them; ſee *Iſ.* liii. 11. he came into the world to gather theſe ſcattered crumbs and fragments together; it was his meat and drink, to work out their ſalvation; and it will be his higheſt joy and pleaſure to preſent them to his father, and himſelf, compleat and perfect, and introduce them into his kingdom and glory; he will be fully ſatiſfied in them, and they in him, when they ſhall awake in his likeneſs. Then will all Chriſt's deſires, prayers, and interceſſions, have their full accompliſhment. The *Vulgate Latin* adds, *and no man gave to him*; which ſeems to be tranſcribed from ch. xv. 16. and is not ſupported by any copy or verſion. *Moreover, the dogs came and licked his ſores*: by *the dogs* are meant not the *Jews*, though they are ſometimes ſo called, and eſpecially the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, Pſ. xxii. 16, 20. *Iſ.* lvi. 10, 11. *Phil.* iii. 2. for theſe made his ſores and wounds, or were the authors of his ſorrows and ſufferings; but rather the *Gentiles*, who were ſo called by the *Jews*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xv. 26. becauſe theſe creatures were unclean by the law, and had in the greateſt contempt by the *Jews*; and for their barbarity, malice, and cruelty, *Deut.* xxiii. 18. 1 *Sam.* xxiv. 14. 2 *Kings* viii. 12, 13. as the *Gentiles* were by the *Jews* eſteemed unclean and unfit, either for civil or religious converſation; and were treated as aliens by them; and were indeed in their heatheniſh ſtate, barbarous and inhuman, and lived in malice, hateful, and hating one another: theſe, ſome of them came to Chriſt in perſon, as the *Centurion*, and *Syrophœnician* woman, many of the *Samaritans*, who, with the *Jews*, were all one as heathens, and ſeveral *Grecians* at the feaſt; and many of them alſo came to him by faith, through the miniſtry of his ſervants, under the influence of divine grace, and that according to various prophecies in the Old Teſtament, concerning the calling and gathering of the *Gentiles* to him: theſe embraced a crucified Chriſt; and fed upon the ſlain lamb of God; eat his fleſh, and drank his blood; ſtretched forth the hand of faith, and thruſt it into his bleeding wounds; and lived by faith on him, who was wounded and bruiſed for their ſins, and whoſe blood was ſhed for the remiſſion of them.

Ver. 22. *And it came to paſs that the beggar died,* &c.] The death of Chriſt was not a caſual thing, a fortuitous event; it was agreed unto, and ſettled in the covenant of grace; it was ſpoken of by the prophets of the Old Teſtament; it was typified by the ſacrifices of the law, and other things; it was foretold by Chriſt himſelf, and was the end of his coming into this world, wherein the great love, both of him and of his father, is expreſſed; and is the main article of the chriſtian faith; ſo that this came to paſs according to the decrees of God, the counſel, and covenant of peace, the will of Chriſt, and his predictions, and as the accompliſhment of the law, and prophets: it was not a natural, but violent death which Chriſt died; and yet it was both voluntary and neceſſary; it was but once, and is of an eternal efficacy, and is a ſacrifice acceptable to God; it was not for himſelf, or any ſin of his, who knew none, nor for the angels, and their redemption, whoſe nature he did not aſſume; but for men, and for their ſins. Chriſt died not merely as an example to them, or only to confirm his doctrines; but as a ſubſtitute, in the room and ſtead of his people; to atone for their ſins, and ſatisfy divine juſtice; to procure the pardon of them in a way of juſtice; to take them away, and utterly aboliſh them; to bring in an everlaſting righteouſneſs; to obtain eternal redemption, and bring ſuch nigh to God who were afar off, and that men might live through him now, and have eternal life by him hereafter: *and was carried by the angels into Abraham's boſom*: by *Abraham*'s boſom is meant heaven, a phraſe well known to the *Jews*, by which they commonly expreſſed the happineſs of the future ſtate: of *Abraham*'s happy ſtate they had no doubt; and when they ſpake of the happineſs of another's, they ſometimes ſignified it by going to *Abraham*;

as when the mother of the ſeven ſons, ſlain by *Cæſar*, ſaw her youngeſt going to be ſacrificed[p], " ſhe fell " upon him, and embraced him, and kiſſed him, and " ſaid unto him, my ſon, לך אצל אברהם אביכם, " *go to Abraham your father*, and tell him, thus " ſaith my mother, *&c.*" and ſometimes, as here, by being in his boſom. So it is ſaid[q], that *Eliezer* his ſervant, (*Abraham*'s, the ſame name with *Lazarus*) מונח בחיקו, *is laid in his boſom*: and which may refer to the account in the *Talmud*[r], that when *R. Benaah*, the painter of caves, came to the cave of *Abraham*, he found *Eliezer*, the ſervant of *Abraham*, דקאי קמיה, *ſtanding before him.* And it is alſo ſaid[s] of *Rabbi*, when he died, היום יושב בחיקו של אברהם, *this day he ſits in the boſom of Abraham*; for as it was uſual with them to repreſent the joys of heaven by a feaſt, ſo the partaking of them, by ſitting down at a table with *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*; ſee *Matt.* viii. 12. and as their manner at meals was by lying along on couches at eating; he that lay next another might be ſaid to lie, or lean, in his boſom: hence *Abraham*'s boſom came to ſignify the near and intimate enjoyment of happineſs with him in the other world. The aſcenſion of Chriſt is expreſſed by a being *carried up into heaven*, *Luke* xxiv. 51. and here he is entered, and has been received, and will be retained, until the time of the reſtitution of all things; here he is glorified in human nature, ſits at the right hand of God, and appears in his preſence, on the behalf of his people; and indeed, the ends of his going there, were to receive gifts for them, to be their advocate and interceſſor, to take poſſeſſion of heaven in their name, and prepare that for them, and them for that; and hither he was *carried by angels*: theſe were the chariots in which he rode; and theſe the guard that attended him, when he was ſeen, looked upon, and gazed at by them with adoration, faith, and wonder; which ſhows the miniſtration of angels to him, and ſeems to ſet forth the glory and magnificence in which he aſcended: and this agrees with the notions of the *Jews*, that when good men die, their ſouls are immediately received by angels, and taken under their care, and carried to heaven. So one of their *paraphraſts*[t], having mentioned the garden of *Eden*, which is but another name for heaven with them, adds, " into which no man can enter but " the righteous, whoſe ſouls are *carried* thither, " ביד מלאכיא, *in the hand*, or *by the means* of angels." And elſewhere they ſay[u], " with the *Shekinah* " come three miniſtring angels to receive the ſoul of " a righteous man." Particularly it is ſaid of *Moſes*, at the time of his death[w], that " the holy, bleſſed " God deſcended from the higheſt heavens, to take " the ſoul of *Moſes*, and three miniſtring angels " with him." And ſometimes they ſay[x], not only three angels, but three companies of angels attend at ſuch a time: their words are theſe; " when a " righteous man departs out of the world, three " companies of miniſtring angels meet him; one " ſays to him, *come in peace*; and another ſays, " *walking in his uprightneſs*; and the other ſays, " *he ſhall enter into peace*, &c." No mention is made in this parable of the burial of this man nor any words uſed expreſſive of it, or that in the leaſt hint it. The reaſon is, becauſe Chriſt lay ſo ſhort a time in the grave, and he was not left there, nor did he ſee corruption; but in a very little while was raiſed from the dead, and delivered from the power of the grave; when, after ſome ſtay on earth, he was attended by angels to the higheſt heavens: for this is to be underſtood, not of his ſoul being had to paradiſe immediately upon his ſeparation from the body; but of his aſcenſion to heaven after his reſurrection, when he was eſcorted by angels thither. *The rich man alſo died.* This may be underſtood both of the natural death of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*; who, tho' they were dignified perſons, were as Gods, yet were mortal, and died like men; ſee *Pſ.* lxxxii. 6, 7. compared with *John* x. 34, 35. and they died in their ſins, in their unbelief of the Meſſiah, and ſo were damned; in their impenitence and hardneſs of heart, for as they thought they needed no repentance, they were not called unto it; and in the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, blaſpheming the miracles of Chriſt done by him, and which was a ſin unto death; and under the power and guilt of all their other ſins, and ſo were loſt and periſhed. And it may alſo be underſtood of the political and eccleſiaſtical death of the *Jewiſh* people; which lay in the deſtruction of the city of *Jeruſalem*, and of the temple, and in the abolition of the temple-worſhip, and of the whole ceremonial law; a *lo-ammi* was written upon their church-ſtate, and the covenant between God and them was broken; the Goſpel was removed from them, which was as death, as the return of it, and their call by it, will be as life from the dead; as well as their place and nation, their civil power and authority were taken away from them by the *Romans*; and a death of afflictions, by captivity and calamities, of every kind, have attended them ever ſince. And it is to be obſerved, that *Lazarus* died before the rich man, as Chriſt died before the deſtruction of the *Jewiſh* polity and church-ſtate: the city and ſanctuary were not deſtroyed, nor the daily ſacrifice made to ceaſe, nor the conſummation, and that determined, poured upon the deſolate, until ſome time after the Meſſiah was cut off, according to the prophecy in *Dan.*
~~vii~~. 26, 27. Moreover, no mention is made of the 9
rich man being carried by angels, as *Lazarus* was; and if he was, he was carried, not by the good, but by the evil angels, and not into *Abraham*'s boſom, but to hell. So the *Jews*[y] ſay, " if a ſoul is " worthy, how many holy troops, or companies, " are ready to join it, and bring it up into paradiſe? but if not worthy, how many ſtrange " troops are ready to bring it in the way of hell? " theſe are the troops of the deſtroying angels." However, this is ſaid of him, as is not of *Lazarus*, *and was buried*; as wicked men are, when ſometimes the ſaints are not; ſee *Eccl.* viii. 10. *Pſ.* lxxix. 2, 3. The *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, who were ſo diligent to build and garniſh the ſepulchres of the prophets, among their other inſtances of pride and vanity, took care, no doubt, to provide and erect ſtately monuments for themſelves; and who were buried in great pomp and ſplendor. Tho' this may reſpect their church-ſtate, ſervice, and ceremonies, which received their death's blow at the crucifixion of Chriſt, but remained for ſome time unburied, it being with difficulty that theſe things were got under the feet of the church; and may alſo refer to the political ſtate of the *Jews*, who, as a nation, are repreſented as in their graves, where they are to this day, and will be until they ſhall be turned unto the Lord, when they ſhall be brought

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[p] Echa Rabbati, fol. 49. 4.

[q] In Sepher Emanah, c. 1. p. 20.

[r] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 58. 1.

[s] T. Bab. Kidduſhin, fol. 72. 2. Juchaſin, fol. 75. 2.

[t] Targum in Cant. iv. 12.

[u] Midraſh Haneelam in Zohar in Gen. fol. 65. 1.

[w] Debarim Rabba, §. 11. fol. 245. 4.

[x] T. Bab Cetubot, fol. 104. 1.

[y] Zohar in Exod. fol. 39. 3.

out of their graves, and ſhall live and return to their own land, *Ezek.* xxxvii. 12, 13, 14. The *Vulgate Latin* adds, *in hell*; but this belongs to the following verſe.

Ver. 23. *And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments,* &c.] Which may deſign the place of torment, and the miſerable ſtate the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, as all wicked men, enter immediately into upon death, *Pſal.* ix. 17. who in their life-time were blind, and are called blind guides, blind watchmen, blind leaders of the blind, and who were given up to judicial blindneſs and hardneſs of heart; but in hell their eyes are opened, and they ſee their miſtakes about the Meſſiah, and find themſelves in torments, under dreadful knawings, and remorſe of conſcience; and having a terrible ſenſation of divine wrath, their worm dies not, and their fire is not quenched: or this may regard the vengeance of God on the *Jews*, at the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*; when a fire was kindled againſt their land, and burned to the loweſt hell; and conſumed the earth with her increaſe, and ſet on fire the foundations of the mountains; and the whole land became brimſtone, ſalt, and burning; and they were rooted out of it in anger, wrath, and great indignation; ſee *Deut.* xxix. 23, 27, 28. and xxxii. 22. or rather, the dreadful calamities which came upon them in the times of *Adrian* at *Bither*; when their falſe Meſſiah *Bar Cochab* was taken and ſlain, and ſuch multitudes of them were deſtroyed in the moſt miſerable manner [z]; when that people, who before had their eyes darkened, and a ſpirit of ſlumber and ſtupidity fallen upon them, in thoſe calamities began to be under ſome convictions: *and ſeeth Abraham afar off*; the covenant of circumciſion given to him, and to them his natural ſeed, now of no uſe to them; their deſcent from him, of which they boaſted, and in which they truſted, now of no avail; and him in the kingdom of heaven, and themſelves thruſt out; ſee *Luke* xiii. 28. *And Lazarus in his boſom*; they now found the Meſſiah was come, and was gone to heaven, whither they could not come, *John* vii. 33, 34. The *Jews* are convinced that the Meſſiah is born, though not revealed; and they ſometimes confeſs, that he was born the ſame day *Jeruſalem* was deſtroyed; and ſometimes they ſay, he ſits at the gates of *Rome* among the lepers, and at other times, that he is in the walks of paradiſe [a]. This is ſaid in agreement with the notions of the *Jews*, that wicked men will ſee the righteous in happineſs, and themſelves in torment; by which the latter will be aggravated, to which the alluſion is; for they ſay [b], "the gates of paradiſe are fixed over-againſt the "gates of hell, ſo that they can ſee the righteous "in reſt, and themſelves in diſtreſs."

Ver. 24. *And he cried and ſaid, father Abraham,* &c.] The *Jews* uſed to call *Abraham* their father, and were proud of their deſcent from him, *Matt.* iii. 9. *John* viii. 33, 39. and ſo perſons are after death repreſented by them, as ſpeaking to, and diſcourſing with him; as in the paſſage cited in the note on ver. 22. to which the following may be added [c]; "ſays *R. Jonathan*, from whence does "it appear that the dead diſcourſe with each "other? it is ſaid, *Deut.* xxxiv. 4. *And the Lord* "*ſaid unto him, this is the land which I ſware unto* "*Abraham, unto Iſaac, and unto Jacob, ſaying,* "&c. what is the meaning of the word *ſaying?* "the holy bleſſed God ſaid to *Moſes*, go ſay to "*Abraham*, &c." And here the *Jews*, in their diſtreſs, are repreſented as applying to him, ſaying, *have mercy on me, and ſend Lazarus*; which ſeems to have reſpect to the mercy promiſed to *Abraham*, the covenant made with him, and the oath ſwore unto him, to ſend the Meſſiah, *Luke* i. 72, 73. and which now too late, theſe wretched *Jews* plead, the Meſſiah being ſent already: *that he may dip the tip of his finger in water*; in alluſion to the waſhings and purifications among the *Jews*, and the ſprinkling of blood by the finger of the high-prieſt; which were typical of cleanſing, pardon, comfort, and refreſhment, by the grace and blood of Chriſt: *and cool my tongue*; which had ſpoken ſo many ſcurrilous and blaſphemous things of Chriſt; ſaying that he was a ſinner, a glutton, and a wine-bibber, a *Samaritan*, and had a devil; that he caſt out devils by *Beelzebub*, the prince of devils; and that he was a ſeditious perſon, and guilty of baſphemy: ſo the *Jews* repreſent perſons in hell, deſirous of cooling water, and as ſometimes favoured with it, and ſometimes not: they ſay [d], he that reads *Keriat Shema*, (i. e. *hear, O Iſrael,* &c.) and very accurately examines the letters of it, מצננין, *they cool hell for him*, as it is ſaid, *Pſ.* lxviii. 14. And elſewhere [e], they ſpeak of a diſciple, or good man, that was ſeen after death amidſt gardens, and orchards, and fountains of water; and of a publican, or wicked man, ſeen ſtanding by the bank of a river, ſeeking, ממטי מיא ולא מטי, *to come to the water, but could not come at it.* So *Mahomet* [f] has a paſſage, that is ſomewhat like to this text; "the inhabitants of hell-fire, ſhall call to the inhabitants "of paradiſe, ſaying, pour upon us ſome water, or "of thoſe refreſhments God hath beſtowed on you." This man could not ſo much as get a drop of water to cool his tongue, not the leaſt refreſhment, nor mitigation of the anguiſh of his conſcience, for the ſins of his tongue: *for I am tormented in this flame*; in the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, and calamities at *Bither*, and other afflictions; together with the wrath of God poured into the conſcience, and the bitter remorſes of that for ſpeaking againſt the Meſſiah; and which are ſtill greater in hell, where the worm dies not, and the fire is not quenched.

Ver. 25. *But Abraham ſaid, ſon,* &c.] He calls him *ſon*, not in a ſpiritual ſenſe; he was not one of *Abraham*'s ſpiritual ſeed, that trod in the ſteps of his faith; but becauſe he was ſo according to the fleſh; and in return to his calling him father: good men have not always good children, nor is any truſt to be put in birth and parentage: *remember, that thou in thy life-time receivedſt thy good things*; temporal good things; a land flowing with milk and honey; all the outward bleſſings of life that could be wiſhed for, the *Jews* had, whilſt they were in their own land; and alſo eccleſiaſtical good things, as the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, and the ſervice of God, and the promiſes, the fathers, and the Meſſiah according to the fleſh, even all external privileges and ordinances, *Rom.* ix. 4, 5. *And likewiſe Lazarus evil things*; Chriſt was ſurrounded with the infirmities of human nature, he aſſumed; was attended with much outward meanneſs and poverty; was loaded with calumnies and reproaches; and followed with the wrath, hatred, and perſecution of men; and ſuffered many evil things, as buffetings, ſcourging, ſpitting, and cruel mockings, and at laſt death itſelf: *but now he is comforted*; ſee *Pſal.* xvi. 9, 10, 11. compared

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[z] Vid. Buxtorf. Lex. Talmud. col. 372.

[a] Synagog. Jud. c. 50. T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 98. 1. Aben Ezra in Cant. vii. 5. T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 5. 1.

[b] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 125. 3.

[c] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 18. 2.

[d] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 15. 2.

[e] T. Hieroſ. Sanhedrin, fol. 23. 3. & Chagiga, fol. 77. 4.

[f] Koran, c. 7. p. 121.

compared with *Acts* ii. 25—28. Chriſt being raiſed from the dead, and ſet in human nature at the right hand of God, is comforted with the preſence of God, which for a while he was deprived of, when on the croſs; and is delighted with the glory that is put upon him as man; and with pleaſure ſees the travail of his ſoul continually, his elect and redeemed ones, called and gathered by the grace of God, who are his jewels, his portion, and goodly heritage: *and thou art tormented*; as were many of the *Jews*, his implacable enemies and perſecutors in hell, and others in captivity, bondage, and diſtreſs.

Ver. 26. *And beſides all this*, &c.] The different circumſtances of each, both paſt and preſent, which ſhould be obſerved and conſidered: *between us and you there is a great gulf fixed*; as this may regard the ſtate of the *Phariſees* after death, it intends not the natural diſtance between heaven and hell; though there may be an alluſion to the notions of the *Jews* concerning that, who on thoſe words in *Eccl.* vii. 14. *God hath ſet the one over-againſt the other*, ſay [f], "this is hell and paradiſe, what ſpace is there between them? an hand's breadth; *R. Jochanan* ſays a wall, but the *Rabbans* ſay, they are both of them even, ſo that they may look out of one into another." Which paſſage is cited a little differently [g], thus; "wherefore did the holy bleſſed God create hell and paradiſe? that they might be one againſt another; what ſpace is there between them? *R. Jochanan* ſays, a wall, and *R. Acha* ſays an hand's breadth; but the *Rabbans* ſay, two fingers." And elſewhere it [h] is ſaid, "know that hell and paradiſe are near to one another, and one houſe ſeparates between them; and paradiſe is on the north-eaſt ſide———and hell on the north-weſt." *Mahomet* ſeems to have borrowed this notion from them, who ſays [i], "between the bleſſed and the damned, there ſhall be a vail; and men ſhall ſtand on *Al Araf*, (the name of the wall or partition, that ſhall ſeparate paradiſe from hell) who ſhall know every one of them by their mouths." But not this natural ſpace, be it what it will, but the immutable decree of God is intended here, which has unalterably fixed the ſtate of the damned, and of the bleſſed: *ſo that they which would paſs from hence to you cannot, neither can they paſs to us that would come from hence*; not that thoſe in heaven, can deſire to go to thoſe in hell; though thoſe in hell, may wiſh to be in heaven; but the ſenſe is, that by this irrevocable decree of God, the ſaints in heaven are eternally happy, and the wicked in hell eternally miſerable: and this alſo agrees with the notions of the *Jews* [k], who repreſent it impoſſible for a man, after he has deſcended into hell, to come up from thence any more: but as this may regard the *Jews* ſtate of captivity and affliction, ſince the deſtruction of their city and temple, upon, and for their rejection of the Meſſiah; it may denote the impoſſibility of Chriſt's coming again upon the ſame errand, he came on before, to be a ſaviour of ſinners, and a ſacrifice for ſin; and of the *Jews* believing in him, ſo long as they lie under the ſpirit of ſlumber, and are given up to judicial blindneſs and hardneſs of heart.

Ver. 27. *Then he ſaid, I pray thee therefore father*, &c.] The *Cambridge* copy of *Beza*'s, and the *Ethiopic* verſion read, *father Abraham*; finding he could have no redreſs of his miſery, nor any relief for himſelf, he applies for others: *that thou wouldſt ſend him to my father's houſe*; the houſe of *Iſrael* and *Jacob*, the ſurviving *Jews*: and this agrees alſo with a notion of theirs, that the dead ſeek for mercy for them [l]. The *Perſic* and *Ethiopic* verſions read, *that thou wouldſt ſend Lazarus*, &c. whom the one calls *Gazarus*, and the other *Eleazar*.

Ver. 28. *For I have five brethren*, &c.] Meaning his brethren and countrymen, according to the fleſh; who when he was alive, ſtood in ſuch a relation to him; ſaid to be *five*, in alluſion it may be to the children of *Iſrael* coming out of *Egypt*, חמשים, *by fives*, or five in a rank, *Exod.* xiii. 18. as a learned man [m] conjectures, to whom I am beholden for ſeveral hints, in the explanation of this parable; and certain it is, that theſe five brethren were *Jews*, ſince they had the writings of *Moſes* and the prophets with them, ver. 29. Wherefore I ſhall venture to propoſe another conjecture, though it may be liable to exception, as all conjectures uſually are: it is plain that there were *ſix* brethren in all; let it be obſerved then, that the *Jewiſh* nation were uſually divided into *three* parts, *prieſts*, *Levites*, and *Iſraelites*; of theſe three the great *Sanhedrim* uſually conſiſted [n]; and theſe read the law every ſabbath-day; firſt a prieſt, then a *Levite*, and then *five Iſraelites* [o], (let that number alſo be remarked;) now theſe were again divided into *three* ſects, *Phariſees*, *Sadducees*, and *Eſſenes*. The former of theſe, are repreſented in this parable; this I only propoſe, I lay no ſtreſs on it: it may be, that the twice five, or ten tribes of *Iſrael*, which were not known where they were, nor are they to this day, may be deſigned by a *ſynechdoche*, of a part for the whole; whoſe return the *Jews* are yet expecting, and for whoſe welfare they are greatly concerned. *That he may teſtify unto them*; that is, preach unto them, as the word is uſed in *Acts* ii. 40. and x. 42. and xx. 21, 24. Chriſt, when here on earth, did teſtify to that people of their ſins, ſhewed them the heinouſneſs of them, inveighed againſt them, and reproved for them; and of their righteouſneſs, and ſhewed the hypocriſy, deficiency, and inſufficiency of it to juſtify them; of himſelf as the Meſſiah; of truth in general; and of their ruin, temporal and eternal; but he had now finiſhed his teſtimony, and which, though faithful, was not heard nor received by them: the reaſon of this requeſt is, *leſt they alſo come into this place of torment*; as hell is, and which theſe brethren of his, he left behind, were deſerving of, and in danger of coming into: and his concern for them did not ariſe from any regard to Chriſt, and the enlargement of his intereſt; nor from any love to his teſtimony, the Goſpel; nor from any real notion or deſire of converting grace for his brethren; nor from true love to them; but from a ſelfiſh principle, leſt his own torments ſhould be aggravated by their coming: this, as it may regard the *Jews* in their affliction, and if the ten tribes ſhould be meant by the five brethren, may deſign the very paſſionate concern the *Jews* had, and ſtill have for them, who yet to this day, hope for the return of them; ſee *Manaſſeh ben Iſrael*'s book, called, *Spes Iſraelis*.

Ver. 29. *Abraham ſaid unto him*, &c.] In reply to this his requeſt: *they have Moſes and the prophets*; that is, their writings; which ſhows, this man and his five brethren, to be *Jews*; for to them were the oracles of God committed; and theſe had the writings of *Moſes* and the prophets, read to them every ſabbath-day; and is true, whether the cotemporaries and immediate ſucceſſors of the *Phariſees* are meant, or the ten tribes: and alſo ſhows, that one view of the parable, is to eſtabliſh the authority of theſe writings; ſee ver. 16, 17. and that it is a peculiar privilege to have them; and that they ought to be attended to and regarded: *let them hear them*; for they teſtified concerning Chriſt, and concerning the ſins of the *Jews*, and the calamities, both temporal and eternal, that ſhould come upon them; and which teſtimony was ſufficient, to leave them without excuſe: and indeed, the word of God, read, explained, and heard, is the ordinary means of converſion, or of bringing men to faith and repentance.

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[f] Midraſh Kohelet, fol. 76. 1.

[g] Niſhmat Chayim Orat. 1. §. 12. fol. 31. 1.

[h] Raziel, fol. 15. 1.

[i] Koran, c. 7. p. 120.

[k] Caphtor, fol. 70. 2.

[l] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 16. 1.

[m] Teelmannus.

[n] Maimon. Hilchot Sanhedrin, c. 2. §. 2.

[o] Ib. Hilchot Tephilla, c. 12. §. 16.

Ver. 30. *And he ſaid, nay, father Abraham*, &c.] He contradicts his father *Abraham*, or at leaſt deſires it might not be ſo; this way he ſuggeſts, was not ſo right, and would not ſucceed; for he knew his brethren were a rebellious and ſtiff-necked people, and would not hear *Moſes* and the prophets, notwithſtanding all their outward boaſt of them, and pretenſions of regard to them: *but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent*; but alas! repentance is not of man's will, but a gift of God's grace; nor could theſe men repent, becauſe in a judicial way their eyes were ſhut, their ears were ſtopped, and their hearts were hardened; and though Chriſt came in perſon to them, and preached, as never man did, with power and authority, and confirmed his doctrine with miracles, yet they repented not, nor did they when he aroſe from the dead.

Ver. 31. *And he ſaid unto him*, &c.] That is, *Abraham* ſaid unto him, as the *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions expreſs it: *if they hear not Moſes and the prophets*; as they did not, nor regarded what they ſaid of Chriſt, but diſbelieved both him and them: *neither will they be perſuaded*; or brought to repent and believe: *though one roſe from the dead*; as Chriſt did; whoſe reſurrection, the truth of it they endeavoured to baffle, ſtifle, and ſuppreſs: this was the ſign Chriſt gave them, of the truth of his Meſſiahſhip; and yet they repented not of what they had done to him, that they might believe in him; but remained ſtill in their impenitence and infidelity, and ſo died. This ſhows the regard that ought to be had to the written word, as read, or preached; and that it is a ſad ſign of a deſperate condition, when men reject divine revelation. *Beza*'s ancient copy adds, *and ſhould go unto them.*

## C H A P. XVII.

Ver. 1. THEN *ſaid he unto his diſciples*, &c.] In the *Alexandrian* copy, and in *three* of *Beza*'s Exemplars it is read, *his diſciples*; and ſo read the *Vulgate Latin*, and all the *Oriental* verſions; that is, *Jeſus* ſaid to his diſciples what follows, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions expreſs, and the latter reads, he ſaid *again*. About the time that he delivered the above parable concerning the rich man and *Lazarus*, he repeated to his diſciples what he had before ſaid to them on another occaſion, *Matt*. xviii. 7. *it is impoſſible but that offences will come*; conſidering the decree of God, the malice of ſatan, the wickedneſs of men, the corruption both of their principles and practices. The *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *temptation will come*; that which will be trying to the faith of the ſaints, and a ſtumbling-block to weak minds, as reproach and perſecution, errors and hereſies, and the evil lives of profeſſors: *but wo* unto him *thro' whom they come*; ſee the note on *Matt*. xviii. 7.

Ver. 2. *It were better for him that a milſtone*, &c.] See the notes on *Matt*. xviii. 6. and on *Mark* ix. 42.

Ver. 3. *Take heed to yourſelves*, &c.] Or *to one another*, that ye neither give, nor take offence. Take heed to your ſpirits, to your doctrines, walk, and converſation, that you give no offence to any, and that you are not ſtumbled by what you ſhall ſee in, and meet with from others: *if thy brother treſpaſs againſt thee*; ſee the note on *Matt*. xviii. 15. *rebuke him*; privately, and proceed according to the rules there directed to; lay his ſin before him; endeavour not only to convince him of the fact, but of the evil of it; how contrary to the will of God; how unbecoming the Goſpel of Chriſt, and the profeſſion he makes; how hurtful to himſelf, as well as injurious to his brother; and how ſuch evils give the enemy occaſion to reproach the ſaints, to ſpeak evil of the ways of God, and blaſpheme the name and doctrines of Chriſt, and harden ſinners in their ſins, as well as ſtumble weak chriſtians, and ſadden the hearts of the righteous. *And if he repent*; if he is made ſenſible of his evil, and is truly ſorry for it, and ingenuouſly acknowledges it: *forgive him*; the injury committed againſt a man's ſelf; and pray to God for him, for an application of his pardoning grace and mercy to him; and comfort him with the hope of forgiveneſs with God, by the gracious promiſes and declarations of pardon made to ſuch perſons; drop all reſentment and anger, and behave towards him with all ſweetneſs of temper, and affability, and reſpect: and this is to be done immediately, as ſoon as a man repents: and ſo ſay the *Jews* [p]; “ ſays *R. Chanina bar Papa*, whoever commits a thing, and repents of it, they forgive him directly; as it is ſaid, *Mal*. iii. 5. *and fear not me*; lo, they that fear me, forgive immediately:” ſuch were reckoned good men, men fearing God.

Ver. 4. *And if he treſpaſs againſt thee ſeven times in a day*, &c.] For good men are frequently apt to fall into ſin, and offend both God and man; ſee *Prov*. xxiv. 16. *and ſeven times in a day turn again to thee, ſaying, I repent*; as often as he ſins, and appears to be truly ſenſible of it, and humble for it, and makes acknowledgments of it; and not only barely in words profeſſes his concern for it, but there is reaſon to believe that he is heartily grieved for it, and to hope that he will behave better for the future: *thou ſhalt forgive him*; this ſeems to be occaſioned by *Peter*'s putting ſuch a queſtion to Chriſt, how often a brother might ſin againſt him, and he forgive him; ſee *Matt*. xviii. 21, 22. The *Jews* plead for great tenderneſs and readineſs to forgive penitents, when they aſk for forgiveneſs; which they inſiſt upon ſhould be done: they ſay [q], it “ is forbidden an injured perſon to be cruel, and not forgive; this is not the way of the ſeed of *Iſrael*: but when he that has done the injury aſks of him, and prays him once and again, and he knows that he has returned from his ſin, and hath repented of his evil, he ought to forgive him;

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[p] T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 5. 1.

[q] Maimon. Hilchot Chobel Umezik, c. 5. §. 10.

“and whoever makes haſte to forgive, is praiſe-worthy.” But then, they ſay [r], “if he brings all the rams of *Nebaioth* that are in the world, he is not to have pardon, unleſs he aſks it of him.” And they ſeem alſo to have ſet times for it, as well as reſtrain the frequent repetition of it: they obſerve [s]; “if a man returns by repentance, in the intermediate time, (*i. e.* as the *Gloſs* explains it, between the beginning of the year, or new-year's-day, and the day of atonement) they pardon him; but if he does not return in the intermediate time, though he brings all the rams of *Nebaioth* in the world, they do not pardon him.” A man that was always forgiving, was reckoned by them an extraordinary man: it is ſaid [t] of *Mar Zutra bar Nachman*, that he was, מוחל בכל יום, *forgiving every day*; but yet they don't ſeem to care to carry it to ſo great a length, and to repeat it ſo often as our Lord directs; they allow a man to forgive three times, but not a fourth; ſee the note on *Matt.* xviii. 22.

Ver. 5. *And the apoſtles ſaid unto the Lord*, &c.] Either on account of what was now ſaid by Chriſt concerning offences, and forgiving injuries; being conſcious to themſelves of their own weakneſs to withſtand temptations; and fearful leſt they ſhould be ſtumbled and offended with what they ſhould meet with; or that they ſhould give offence to others; and being alſo ſenſible of what ſpirits they were of, and of the difficulties of conquering them, and maſtering the reſentment of their minds, when injured and provoked; and alſo the neceſſity of divine aſſiſtance, of having freſh ſupplies of grace, and of having their graces, and particularly faith, ſtrengthened, and drawn into a lively exerciſe; or on account of their not being able to caſt out a devil from one that was poſſeſſed, *Matt.* xvii. 19, 20. when words, to the ſame purpoſe, were ſpoken by Chriſt, as in the following verſe; on occaſion of one or other of theſe, tho' more likely the former, the apoſtles addreſſed Chriſt in this manner, *increaſe our faith*; both the faith of working miracles, and the grace of believing in him: by which, as they expreſs their ſenſe of the weakneſs, and imperfection of their faith, and their great deſire to have it increaſed, which might be for their comfort, and his glory; ſo they acknowledge his divine power, and that he is the author and finiſher of faith; and that as the beginning, ſo the increaſe of it is from him: wherefore faith is not of a man's ſelf, or the produce of man's free-will and power, but is the gift of God; and even where it is, it is not in man to increaſe it, or add to it, or to draw it forth into exerciſe; this alſo is the operation of God. And if the apoſtles had need to put up ſuch a petition to Chriſt, much more reaſon have other men.

Ver. 6. *And the Lord ſaid*, &c.] In anſwer to the diſciples. The *Syriac* verſion leaves out the word *Lord*; and the *Perſic* verſion, in the room of it, reads, *Jeſus: if ye had faith as a grain of muſtard ſeed*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xvii. 20. *ye might ſay unto this ſycamine tree*; which was near at hand; for in *Galilee*, where Chriſt now was, ſuch trees grew, eſpecially in lower *Galilee*: hence thoſe words [u]; “from *Caphar-Hananiah*, and upwards, all the land which does not bear, שקמין, *ſycamines*, is upper *Galilee*; and from *Caphar-Hananiah*, and downwards, all which does bear *ſycamines*, is lower *Galilee*.” This, by *Maimonides* [w], is ſaid to be a wild fig-tree; but the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions render it, the *mulberry tree*: and that the ſycamine and mulberry tree are the ſame, *Beza* ſhows from *Dioſcorides*, *Athenæus*, and *Galen*; tho' whether it is the ſame with the ſycamore in chap. xix. 4. is not certain. The firſt of theſe writers makes them to be the ſame; and the laſt aſſerts they are different, and ſo they ſhould ſeem by their different names. *Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the ſea, and it ſhould obey you*: for ſuch a tree to be plucked up by the root at a word ſpeaking, is very wonderful and miraculous, and beyond the power of nature; and much more for it to remove into the ſea, and plant itſelf there, where trees grow not; and to believe this ſhould be done, and ſuch a word of command obeyed, one ſhould think required very great faith; and yet, if it was but as a grain of muſtard-ſeed, which is very ſmall, it might be done. The deſign is to ſhow, what great things are done by faith, and what an increaſe of it they ſhould have.

Ver. 7. *But which of you having a ſervant plowing*, &c.] In order to keep the diſciples humble in the performance of ſuch miraculous works; and that they might not imagine they could have any thing at the hands of God by merit; and to excite them to go on from one duty to another; and never think they have done, or done enough, or more than what is their duty, Chriſt delivers the following parable. *Which of you having a ſervant plowing, or feeding cattle*; or *ſheep*, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions render it; or a *plowman*, or a *ſhepherd*, as the *Ethiopic* verſion; which are both ſervile works, and done in the field: not that the diſciples had any ſuch ſervants under them, tho' the words are directed to them, for they had left all, and followed Chriſt; nor were they brought up to huſbandry, but moſt of them in the fiſhing trade; Chriſt only puts this for inſtance, and ſuppoſes ſuch a caſe: *will ſay unto him by and by*; or ſtraightway, immediately, directly, *when he is come from the field*; and has done plowing, and feeding his cattle, ſheep, or cows, or whatever they are; as ſoon as ever he comes home; or *firſt*, as the *Perſic* verſion; the firſt thing he ſhall ſay to him, upon his return from thence, *go*; to the other ſide of the room, and to the table there ready ſpread, and furniſhed; or *go up*, as the *Arabic* and *Ethiopic* verſions render it; go up to the upper room where they uſed to dine or ſup; ſee *Luke* xxii. 12. or *come in*, as the *Perſic* verſion renders it; and which ſome learned men obſerve, is the ſenſe of the *Greek* word here uſed; come into the houſe, *and ſit down to meat?* or fall, and lie down on the couch, as was the cuſtom in thoſe countries at eating.

Ver. 8. *And will not rather ſay to him*, &c.] Or, *will he not ſay to him?* it is very likely, it is more agreeable to the language of a maſter, and the condition of a ſervant, that he ſhould ſay to him, *make ready wherewith I may ſup*; by dreſſing the food, ſpreading the table, and putting the food on it; for it was the buſineſs of ſervants to prepare, as at the paſſover, ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 17. ſo at ordinary ſuppers: *and gird thyſelf and ſerve me*; by giving him drink, or whatſoever he called for: and as they uſed to wear long garments in thoſe countries, ſervants girded them up about their loins, that they might be fit for ſervice, expedite in it, and perform it more readily, and with greater eaſe and diſpatch: *till I have eaten and drunken*; finiſhed his meal: *and afterward thou ſhalt eat and drink:* the *Perſic* and *Ethiopic* verſions read in the imperative, *then eat thou and drink.* If he was an *Hebrew* ſervant, he eat and drank the ſame as his maſter did: for ſo one of the *Jewiſh* canons runs [x]; “every *Hebrew* ſervant, or handmaid, their maſter is obliged to make them equal to himſelf *in food and in drink*, in clothing, and in dwelling, as it is ſaid, *Deut.* xv. 16. *becauſe he is well with thee:* wherefore, thou ſhalt not eat fine bread, and he eat coarſe bread, nor drink old wine, and he drink new wine, *&c.*” And even a *Canaanitiſh* ſervant was to be provided with proper food and drink: they ſay indeed [y], “it is lawful to cauſe a *Canaanitiſh* ſervant to ſerve with rigour; but though the law is ſuch, the property of mercy, and the ways of wiſdom are, that a man ſhould be merciful, and not make his yoke heavy on his ſervant, nor oppreſs him; but cauſe him to *eat and drink* of all ſorts of food and drink; and the former wiſe men uſed to give their ſervants of all ſorts of food that they themſelves eat of;” which was uſing them as they did their *Hebrew* ſervants: yea, 'tis added; “and they gave their beaſts, and their ſervants, food, before they eat their own meal;” but this was not commonly done: it does not appear to have been the practice in Chriſt's time; nor was it neceſſary.

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[r] T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 92. 1.

[s] T. Bab. Roſh Haſhana, fol. 17. 2.

[t] Juchaſin, fol. 90. 2.

[u] Miſna Shevi ith, c. 9. §. 2.

[w] In Miſna Demai, c. 1. §. 1. & in Bava Bathra, c. 2. §. 11.

Ver. 9. *Doth he thank that ſervant*, &c.] As if he had done him a favour, and what he was not obliged to: *becauſe he did the things that were commanded him?* for, as a ſervant, he ought to do them, and in ſo doing does but his duty: he may indeed be commended for it, but not thanked: *I trow not*; or *I think not*; it don't ſeem ſo to me, as if he would, or as tho' it was proper and neceſſary he ſhould. The *Ethiopic* verſion leaves out this laſt clauſe.

Ver. 10. *So likewiſe ye*, &c.] This is the accommodation and application of the parable to the diſciples of Chriſt, who, whether miniſters or private believers, are as ſervants, and ſhould be as laborious as the plowman, and the ſhepherd; and as their condition is, ſo their conduct ſhould be like theirs: the employment of the miniſters of the word lies in reading, prayer, meditation, and ſtudy; in preaching the word, and adminiſtring the ordinances; and in performing other duties of their office: and every private believer has buſineſs to do, which lies in the exerciſe of grace, as the work of faith, the labour of love and patience, of hope; and in the diſcharge of duty with regard to themſelves, in their families, the church, and the world; and theſe ſervants ſhould be continually employed; and when one work is done, another is to be taken in hand: ſaints ſhould be always believing, hoping, waiting, loving, and doing one good work or another; as preaching or praying, reading, hearing, and doing acts of benevolence and charity; and God and Chriſt are to be ſerved by them in the firſt place, and then themſelves: but ſome that would be called the ſervants of Chriſt, mind their own bellies, and not the ſervice of Chriſt at all; others in the ſervice of Chriſt, ſeek nothing but themſelves; others are for the ſerving themſelves firſt, and then Chriſt; but the true ſervants of Chriſt, ſerve him in the firſt place, and ſeek firſt his righteouſneſs, and his kingdom, and the honour of it, believing that all other things ſhall be added to them: and when theſe have done all that are commanded them, they are not to think their ſervice thank-worthy; as for inſtance, if the ſervice be preaching the word, a man ſo employed, ought to be thankful to God, that has beſtowed miniſterial gifts upon him, and makes his labours uſeful, and uſes him as an inſtrument, to do much good to the ſouls of men, and for his glory, and has put ſuch an honour upon him; but he is not to expect thanks from God, for his moſt diligent and faithful performance of his work, or imagine that he merits any thing at his hand thereby: or if the buſineſs be hearing the word, a man ſhould be thankful to God, for the word, ordinances, and miniſters; for liberty of waiting upon God in ſuch a way; for health of body, and inclination of mind, for ſuch ſervice; and for all the good, profit, and advantage, he gains hereby; but he is not to think that he lays God under any obligation to him by ſo doing, or deſerves thanks, or a favour from him, on account of it: or if the employment be prayer, a man ſhould be greatly thankful to the God of all grace, that there is a throne of grace for him to come to; and for a mediator, who is the way of acceſs to God; and for the aſſiſtance of the Spirit in prayer; and for all the bleſſings which are given, as an anſwer of prayer; but he is never to entertain ſuch a thought, that God is obliged to him for his prayers, or ſhould thank him for them: or if the work be doing of good with worldly ſubſtance, ſuch ſhould be thankful to God for their ſubſtance he has given them, and for hearts to make uſe of it; but ought not to conclude, that they hereby merit his favour, or that this is any gain to him: but on the other hand, Chriſt directs his diſciples, ſaying, *when ye ſhall have done all thoſe things which are commanded you*; as preaching, or hearing, or reading, or praying, and every other act of divine and religious worſhip; or all acts of juſtice and benevolence among men; every duty both for matter and manner, as it ſhould be, according to the will of God, from right principles, and to right ends, and by the aſſiſtance of the Spirit and grace of God: *ſay we are unprofitable ſervants*; not in ſuch ſenſe as unregenerate men are, who are diſobedient, and to every good work reprobate and unfit, *Rom.* iii. 12. *Tit.* i. 16. or as the ſlothful ſervant, who did not what his Lord commanded, *Matt.* xxv. 30. Nor is this the ſenſe, that they are unprofitable to men; for they may be, and are, very uſeful and ſerviceable to men, and to the ſaints; but that they are ſo to God, by whoſe grace and ſtrength they are what they are, and do what they do; and can give nothing to him but what is his own, and his due; and ſo can lay him under no obligation to them, nor merit any thing from him; no, not even thanks, and much leſs heaven and eternal life. The *Perſic* verſion, quite contrary to the ſenſe of the words reads, *we are pure or clean ſervants, for we have done*, &c. and the *Ethiopic* verſion leaves out the word *unprofitable*, and reads, *we are ſervants*; we acknowledge ourſelves to be ſervants: *we have done that which is our duty to do*; wherefore, as diligence is highly proper, and reaſonable in doing the work of the Lord, humility is neceſſary, that a man may not arrogate that to himſelf, which don't belong to him; or boaſt of his performances; or place any dependance on them; or have his expectations raiſed on account of them; ſince when he has done the moſt and beſt, he has done but what he ſhould, and what he was obliged to, and in that is greatly deficient; a ſaying ſomewhat like this, is uſed by *R. Jochanan ben Zaccai* [z];

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[x] Maimon. Hilch. Abadim, c. 1. §. 9. Vid. T. Bab. Kidduſhin, fol. 22. 1.

[y] Maimon. ib. c. 9. §. 8.

[z] Pirke Abot, c. 2. §. 8.

“ if thou haſt learned the law much, do not aſcribe “ the good to thyſelf; for, for this waſt thou “ created.”

Ver. 11. *And it came to paſs as he went to Jeruſalem*, &c.] That is, *Jeſus*, as the *Perſic* verſion expreſſes it; though the *Ethiopic* verſion reads in the plural, *they going to Jeruſalem paſſed*, &c. that is, the diſciples, or Chriſt with his diſciples; who was now going thither to eat his laſt paſſover, and ſuffer and die for his people: *that he paſſed through the midſt of Samaria and Galilee*; or *between Samaria and Galilee*, as the *Syriac* and *Arabic* verſions render it; he ſteered his courſe through the borders of both theſe countries; and as he paſſed, *Samaria* was on his right hand, and *Galilee* on the left.

Ver. 12. *And as he entered into a certain village*, &c.] Whether in *Samaria* or *Galilee*, is not certain; perhaps it bordered on both, ſince there were both *Jews* and *Samaritans* in it, as appears by what follows; and ſince Chriſt was paſſing between both places: *there met him ten men that were lepers*; who either were confined to this place, this village, for they might not be in the larger cities, and walled towns; ſee the note on *Matt.* viii. 2. or elſe having heard that Jeſus of *Nazareth* was going to ſuch a place, got together, and met him as he entered in it, in hope of being cured by him: *which ſtood afar off*; from Chriſt, by reaſon of their uncleanneſs, as they were obliged to by the law, in *Levit.* xiii. 46.

Ver. 13. *And they lifted up their voices*, &c.] Together, and cried aloud, being at a diſtance, that they might be heard; as well as to expreſs their vehement deſire, and great importunity to be cleanſed; ſee *Judges* ix. 9, 7. *And ſaid, Jeſus, Maſter*; or *Rabbi, Jeſus*, thou great maſter in *Iſrael*; who art a teacher come from God, and who doſt ſurpriſing miracles, and art able to cure us: *have mercy on us*; and cleanſe us from our leproſy; we believe thou art able, if thou wilt; ſhew compaſſion to us, miſerable objects, as they were; their faith was the ſame with that of the other leper, in *Matt.* viii. 2.

Ver. 14. *And when he ſaw them, he ſaid unto them*, &c.] When upon their loud cry he looked up, and towards them, and ſaw what a condition they were in, his compaſſion moved towards them, and he ordered them to do as follows; *go ſhew yourſelves unto the prieſts*. The *Ethiopic* verſion reads in the ſingular number, *to the prieſt*, as in *Matt.* viii. 4. whoſe buſineſs it was to inſpect into this matter, to ſee whether a perſon was healed, or no; and if he was, to pronounce him clean, when a gift was offered according to the law, in *Levit.* xiv. 2, 3, 4. So careful was Chriſt that the ceremonial law, which was as yet in force, might be ſtrictly obſerved: though theſe ten lepers could not be viewed and examined by the prieſt together, but one after another; for ſo is the tradition of the *Jews*[a]; “ two leproſies are not looked upon together, whether they be in one man, or in two “ men; but he views one, and either ſhuts him “ up, or declares or diſmiſſes him, and then goes “ to a ſecond.” *And it came to paſs that as they went, they were cleanſed*; before they came to the prieſts, whilſt they were in the way, they at once found themſelves entirely healed of their diſeaſe; as Chriſt very likely gave them reaſon to believe they ſhould; whereby his power was ſeen in it; and it was a clear caſe, that it was owing to him, and not the prieſts, that they had their cleanſing. Of the nature of the diſeaſe of leproſy, and of the likeneſs there is between that and ſin, and of the agreement between the cleanſing of a leper, and the cleanſing of a ſinner by the blood of Chriſt, ſee the note on *Luke* v. 12. Here it may be obſerved, that as theſe lepers had a cure while they were in the way of their duty, going, as Chriſt ordered them; ſo generally ſpeaking, it is in the way of means, in an attendance on ordinances, that ſouls receive a ſpiritual cure from Chriſt: the man at *Betheſda*'s pool waited long, and had healing at laſt; it is good to watch at wiſdom's gates, and wait at the poſts of her door; faith in Chriſt, whereby the heart is purified, comes by hearing the word of God.

Ver. 15. *And one of them, when he ſaw that he was healed*, &c.] When he felt perfect ſoundneſs in his body, and perceived that he was reſtored to his health, and ſaw with his eyes that the leproſy was gone from him, which muſt be viſible enough: *turned back*; either immediately, before he went to the prieſts; or afterwards, came back to Jeſus, when he had been with them: *and with a loud voice glorified God*; Jeſus Chriſt, who is truly God, and whoſe proper divinity might be ſeen in this miracle; ſee 2 *Kings* v. 7. Or God the Father, through Chriſt, and for his ſake, by aſcribing his cure to his power, and by returning thanks for it, and acknowledging with gratitude, Chriſt to be the author of it; which he did, with as loud a voice, as he cried to him for mercy; that all might know the miracle that was wrought, and join in giving glory to Chriſt: and it was but one of them that did ſo; gratitude is a rare thing, it is found but in few; unthankfulneſs cleaves to moſt perſons; it is the general character of men to be unthankful and unholy; multitudes, even all men, ſhare in the providential goodneſs of God, yet few take notice of, and are thankful for it; God is therefore ſaid to be good, to the unthankful and to the evil, *Luke* vi. 35. Few there are who are of *Jacob*'s ſpirit, that judge themſelves unworthy of the leaſt of mercies, and are heartily thankful for every favour: and this the leper did, when he was ſenſible that he was healed; no man will ſeek after a cure, till he ſees, or is ſenſible of his ſickneſs and his wound; and when he does, he will enquire after, and make uſe of the proper means of healing; and when he has got a cure, he is, or at leaſt ought to be, thankful for it: and ſo it is in ſpiritual things, the whole need not a phyſician, or ſee no need of the phyſician, Chriſt; but thoſe who are ſick, and ſenſible of the ſickneſs of ſin, do; and when they perceive that their diſeaſes are healed, and their ſins forgiven, then they call upon their ſouls, and all within them, to bleſs the Lord, who has done this for them: and it becomes ſuch who are cured of the leproſy of ſin, to glorify God; not only with their mouths, by bringing their offering and ſacrifice of praiſe to him, as the leper by the law was obliged to bring his offering, at the time of his cleanſing; but by deeds alſo, with their bodies, and with their ſpirits; by a holy, humble, and ſpiritual converſation before men, ſignified by the lepers waſhing himſelf, and cloaths, and ſhaving off all his hair; and by attending on the word and ordinances, by a profeſſed ſubjection to the Goſpel of Chriſt, ſignified by the blood being put upon the tip of the right ear of the leper, and on the thumb of his right hand, and on the great toe of his right foot, *Levit.* xiv.

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[a] Miſn. Negaim, c. 3. §. 1.

Ver. 16. *And he fell down on his face at his feet,* &c.] For being cleanſed, he might draw nigh unto Jeſus; and which he did, with the moſt profound reſpect unto him, and reverence of him; and having a deep ſenſe of the favour he had received from him, he proſtrated himſelf in this manner before him: *giving him thanks*; who had ſhewn compaſſion to him, had exerted his power on him, and had favoured him with ſuch a ſingular mercy, as reſtoring him to health: *and he was a Samaritan*; this is particularly remarked by the Evangeliſt, becauſe the *Samaritans* were reckoned by the *Jews*, to be ignorant and irreligious perſons, and no better than heathens; and yet this man behaved as a religious good man, who had a ſenſe of his mercy, knew his duty, and his obligations, and performed them; when the other nine, who very likely were all *Jews*, acted a very ſtupid and ungrateful part.

Ver. 17. *And Jeſus anſwering, ſaid,* &c.] After the *Samaritan* had paid his reſpects to him, and made his acknowledgments in this grateful way: *were there not ten cleanſed?* ſo many applied for a cure, and ſo many had it: *but where are the nine?* or nine of them; here was one, but where were the reſt? they went and ſhowed themſelves to the prieſts, and then returned to their ſeveral places of abode, and took no notice of their phyſician and ſaviour, to make any returns to him. They are many, that are cleanſed by the blood of Chriſt; his blood was ſhed for many, for the remiſſion of ſins; and by his righteouſneſs, he juſtifies many; at leaſt there are many who profeſs themſelves to be cleanſed by him, and yet there are but few that glorify him, by keeping cloſe to the rule of his word, by giving up themſelves to the churches of Chriſt, and by walking with them in the ordinances of the Goſpel: Chriſt's flock, which is ſeparated from the world, and walks in Goſpel order, within the incloſures of it, is but a little flock; they are but a few names in *Sardis*, who have not defiled themſelves, with corruptions in doctrine and diſcipline; and theſe few are often ſuch, who have been the worſt of men, the vileſt of ſinners, from whom it has been leaſt expected, they ſhould glorify Chriſt: publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of heaven, the Goſpel church-ſtate, embrace its doctrines, and ſubmit to its ordinances, when the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, ſelf-righteous perſons, do not: ingratitude is a crime many are guilty of, and it is highly reſented by Chriſt; inſtances of gratitude are few, but as one in ten; now and then a ſingle *Samaritan*, a ſtranger, one that has been a vile ſinner, comes and acknowledges the grace of Chriſt in cleanſing him; comes to the miniſters of Chriſt, and to the churches, and tells them what God has done for his ſoul: but where are the reſt, the many others, who have received ſpiritual advantages, and never come to relate them, and expreſs by words and deeds, thankfulneſs for them?

Ver. 18. *There are not found that returned,* &c.] Or it don't appear, that any have returned: *to give glory to God*; for inaſmuch as they did not return to give thanks to Chriſt, and acknowledge him the author of their cure and cleanſing, they did not give glory to God: *ſave this ſtranger*; for ſo the *Samaritans* were reckoned by the *Jews*, even as the *Gentiles*, aliens from the commonwealth of *Iſrael*, and ſtrangers to the covenants of promiſe. Chriſt ſpeaks in the language and dialect of the nation, and yet we find ſometimes, that, כותי, *a Cuthite*, or a *Samaritan*, is diſtinguiſhed from, נכרי, a *ſtranger*, or a *Gentile*: they might ſet up their beaſts in the inns of the *Samaritans*, but not in the inns of *ſtrangers*; and a man might let out his bath to a *Samaritan*, but not to a *ſtranger* [b]; but this muſt be underſtood of them in times paſt, before they were found out to be idolaters; when, as *Rabban Simeon ben Gamaliel* ſays [c], they were as *Iſraelites* in all things, and kept the law and the precepts of it, and even more exactly than the *Iſraelites* themſelves did [d]; but afterwards a *Samaritan* was reckoned a *Gentile*, and ſo he was in the times of Chriſt; and therefore he calls a *Samaritan* a ſtranger: that tradition of the *Jews*, requires ſome notice and conſideration [e]; "all are defiled with leproſies, except, הנכרים, "*ſtrangers*, and the proſelyte of the gate." And yet here's a ſtranger among the *Jews*, and reckoned unclean, on account of leproſy, and ſent with them to ſhew himſelf to the prieſt.

Ver. 19. *And he ſaid unto him ariſe,* &c.] For, as yet, he lay at his feet upon his face, adoring and praiſing him; nor did he attempt to riſe till Jeſus bid him: adding, *go thy way*; to thine own country, town, or city, and to thy friends and relations, and about thy buſineſs: *thy faith hath made thee whole*; or *ſaved thee*, in ſoul, as well as body; that is, Chriſt, the object of faith, had ſaved him; for his ſalvation is aſcribed to his faith, not as the efficient cauſe of it, but as that was wrought in him, and drawn forth from him, and exerciſed by him, in receiving this bleſſing from Chriſt, the author of it, even both corporal and ſpiritual ſalvation.

Ver. 20. *And when he was demanded of the Phariſees,* &c.] Or *aſked* by them; who expected the Meſſiah, and that when he was come he would ſet up a temporal kingdom, and deliver them from the *Roman* yoke; when they ſhould enjoy great liberty, peace, and proſperity; ſo that they might put the following queſtion to Chriſt in a ſerious manner, agreeable to theſe expectations: or it may be occaſioned by the frequent mention that had been made of the kingdom of God by *John*, and Chriſt, and his diſciples in their miniſtry, and ſo be put in a way of deriſion; or, as moſt of their queſtions were, with a view to enſnare or puzzle: *when the kingdom of God ſhould come*; either the kingdom that God had promiſed, or the kingdom of the Meſſiah, who is truly God, that had been ſo often ſpoken of by *John* the *Baptiſt*, Chriſt, and his Apoſtles. The *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *the kingdom of heaven*, which is the ſame with the kingdom of God; for theſe phraſes are promiſcuouſly uſed. This queſtion they need not have aſked, had they carefully attended to the writings of the Old Teſtament they had in their hands; and had they diligently obſerved the ſigns of the times, in which they lived; and had they ſeriouſly regarded the miniſtry and miracles of Chriſt among them; from theſe things, they might have concluded, not only that the time was at hand, when the kingdom of God ſhould be ſet up, but that it was already come: they might have obſerved, that not only the harbinger of the Meſſiah was come, who was *John* the *Baptiſt*; but that the Meſſiah himſelf was among them, by the many wonderful things which he wrought among them, and by the many ſcripture propheſies which were fulfilled in him; they might have ſeen that the ſceptre was manifeſtly departing from *Judah*; that all power and authority were falling into the hands of the *Romans*; and that only a mere ſhadow and appearance of it were among them; they might have

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[b] T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 15. 2. & 21. 2.

[c] T. Hieroſ. Shekalim, fol. 46. 2.

[d] Maimon. in Miſn. Beracot, c. 8. §. 8. & Bartenora in ib. c. 7. §. 1.

[e] Miſn. Negaim, c. 3. §. 1. Maimon. Tumaot Tzaraot, c. 9. §. 1.

have known, by calculation, that the time fixed in *Daniel*'s prophecy, for the coming of the Meſſiah, was now up, and therefore he muſt be come; and they had very good reaſon to believe that Jeſus was he. *He anſwered them and ſaid, the kingdom of God cometh not with obſervation*; or ſo as to be obſerved by the eye, or to be diſtinguiſhed when it comes as the kingdoms of this world, by outward pomp and ſplendor, by temporal riches, external honours, and worldly power and grandeur; tho' it ſo far came with obſervation, that had they had eyes to ſee, they might have obſerved that it was come, by what they ſaw done by Chriſt, particularly the power that he ſhowed in the diſpoſſeſſing devils out of the bodies of men; ſee *Matt.* xii. 28. The *Syriac* verſion reads, *with obſervations*; and ſome underſtand the words of the obſervances of the ceremonies of the law, of days, months, and years, and the difference of meats, and the like, which the kingdom of God is not in, and which were to ceaſe upon its coming; but the former ſenſe is beſt.

Ver. 21. *Neither ſhall they ſay*, &c.] Or *ſhall it be ſaid* by any, making their obſervations, and pointing to this, or that place: *lo here, or lo there*; in this, or that place, country or city, the kingdom of God is ſet up; the throne of the Meſſiah is there; and there are the *regalia*, or enſigns of his regal power; no ſuch thing will fall under the obſervations of man: not but that this would be ſaid, and was ſaid by ſome perſons, as it is ſuggeſted it ſhould, ver. 23. and it appears from *Matt.* xxiv. 26. that ſome would ſay he was in ſuch a wilderneſs, and others, that he was in ſome private retirement in a houſe, or that he was in ſuch a town, or city; as, particularly it was ſaid in *Adrian*'s time, that he was in a place called *Bither*, where *Bar Cochab* ſet up himſelf for the Meſſiah: but the ſenſe of the words is, that no ſuch thing ought to be ſaid; and if it was ſaid, it would not be true; nor ſhould it be credited: and the *Cambridge* copy of *Beza*'s adds, *believe not*, as in *Matt.* xxiv. 26. *for behold the kingdom of God is within you*; in the elect of God among the *Jews*, in their hearts; it being of a ſpiritual nature, and lying in righteouſneſs, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghoſt; in the diſpoſſeſſion of ſatan, the ſtrong man armed; in the putting down of the old man, ſin, with its deceitful luſts, from the throne; and in ſetting up a principle of grace, as a governing one; and ſo eſcapes the obſervation of natural men, and can't be pointed at as here, or there: hence it appears, that the work of grace is an internal thing; it is wrought in the hearts of men; it has its ſeat in the inward parts, and is therefore called the inner, and the hidden man: it does not lie in words, in an outward profeſſion of religion: it is oil in the veſſel of the heart, and is diſtinct from the lamp of a viſible profeſſion: it does not lie in external works and duties, but it is an inward principle of holineſs in the ſoul, or ſpirit of man, produced there by the Spirit of God, and is therefore called by his name, *John* iii. 6. and it alſo appears to be a very glorious thing, ſince it is ſignified by a kingdom: it is a rich treaſure; it is gold tried in the fire, which makes rich; it is an eſtate, that good part, and portion, which can never be taken away; it is preferable to the greateſt portion on earth men can enjoy; even the largeſt and richeſt kingdom in the world is not to be compared with it; it is a kingdom which cannot be moved; and as it is glorious in itſelf, it makes ſuch glorious who are partakers of it: *the king's daughter is all glorious within*, *Pſ.* xlv. 13. and it is high in the eſteem of God; it is the hidden man of the heart, but it is in his ſight; it is in his view, and is in his ſight of great price: it is likewiſe evident from hence, that it has great power and authority in the ſoul; it has the government in it; it reigns, thro' righteouſneſs, unto eternal life; and by it, Chriſt, as king of ſaints, dwells and reigns in his people. Now this is not to be underſtood of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, as if they had any ſuch internal principle in them, who were as painted ſepulchres, and had nothing but rottenneſs and corruption in them: but the ſenſe is, that there were ſome of the people of the *Jews*, of whom the *Phariſees* were a part, who had been powerfully wrought upon under the miniſtry of *John*, Chriſt, and his Apoſtles; and were ſo many inſtances of efficacious grace, and of the kingdom of God, and of his Goſpel coming with power to them. Tho' the words may be rendered, *the kingdom of God is among you*; and the meaning be, that the king Meſſiah was already come, and was among them, and his kingdom was already ſet up, of which the miracles of Chriſt were a full proof; and if they could not diſcern theſe ſigns of the times, and evident appearances of the kingdom of God among them, they would never be able to make any obſervation of it, hereafter, or elſewhere.

Ver. 22. *And he ſaid unto his diſciples*, &c.] Who alſo were expecting a worldly kingdom, and external honours, and temporal emoluments, and riches; and therefore to take off their minds from theſe things, and that they might not have their expectations raiſed this way, but, on the other hand, look for afflictions and perſecutions, he obſerves to them, *the days will come when ye ſhall deſire to ſee one of the days of the ſon of man*; ימות המשיח, *the days of the Meſſiah*, a phraſe frequently uſed in *Jewiſh* writings; that is, when they ſhould be glad to enjoy one ſuch a day in the perſonal preſence of Chriſt, as they now did; and inſtead of looking forward for happy days, in a temporal ſenſe, they would look back upon the days they have enjoyed with Chriſt, when he was in perſon among them, and wiſh they had one of thoſe days again; when beſides his corporal preſence, and ſpiritual communion with him, and the advantage of his miniſtry and miracles, they had much outward peace and comfort: whereas in thoſe days nothing but afflictions and perſecutions abode them, where-ever they went; ſo that by theſe words Chriſt would have have them to underſtand, that they were not to expect better times, but worſe, and that they would be glad of one of the days they now had, and in vain wiſh for it: *and ye ſhall not ſee it*, or enjoy it. Moreover, days and opportunities of publick worſhip, of praying to the Lord, of ſinging his praiſe, of hearing his word, and of attending on his ordinances, may be called days of the ſon of man, or Lord's days; ſee *Rev.* i. 10. even the firſt days of weeks, on which days the Apoſtles, and primitive churches, met together for religious worſhip: and theſe may very well be called days of the ſon of man, ſince, on thoſe days, he firſt appeared to his diſciples, after his reſurrection, *John* xx. 19, 26. and on the ſame days his diſciples and followers met together to preach in his name, to hear his Goſpel, and to commemorate his ſufferings and death, *Acts* xx. 7. 1 *Cor.* xvi. 1, 2. and ſtill continue to do ſo; and ſeeing he often meets with his people at ſuch ſeaſons and opportunities, fills them with his Spirit, communicates his grace, and indulges them with fellowſhip with himſelf, which make thoſe days deſirable ones: but ſometimes ſo violent has been the perſecution of the ſaints, that they have not been able, for a long time, to enjoy one of thoſe days openly, and with freedom, tho' greatly deſired by them; which may be conſidered as a fulfilment, at leaſt in part of this prediction of our Lord's: and therefore, whenever this is the caſe, it ſhould not be thought ſtrange; it is no other than what Chriſt has foretold ſhould be: and it may teach us to prize, make uſe of, and improve ſuch days and opportunities, whilſt we have them, we know not how ſoon our teachers may be removed into corners, when we ſhall wiſh in vain for them, and ſeaſons of hearing them, as is here ſuggeſted: ſad it is to know the worth of Goſpel opportunities, by the want of them!

Ver. 23. *And they ſhall ſay unto you, ſee here, or ſee there*, &c.] That is, there is Chriſt; and in two of *Beza*'s Exemplars, the word Chriſt is added, as in *Matt.* xxiv. 23. from whence it ſeems to be tranſcribed: and the ſenſe is, it ſhall be ſaid by one or another; Chriſt is in ſuch a place, or he is in ſuch a place, and he will quickly appear, and deliver the people of the *Jews* out of all their diſtreſſes and calamities by the *Romans*. *Go not after* them, *nor follow* them: the laſt clauſe, *nor follow them*, is left out in the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions; the meaning is, give no credit to them; as if Chriſt was come again in perſon, and was in ſuch a place; don't go along with them, where they direct, as into the deſart, or into the ſecret chambers; for to follow them will be very dangerous, of bad conſequence, as well as vain and fruitleſs; ſee *Acts* v. 36, 37.

Ver. 24. *For as the lightning that lighteneth out of the one* part *under heaven*, &c.] The *Syriac* verſion reads, *out of heaven*, and the *Arabic* verſion, *in heaven*; which is the ſeat of lightning, and from whence it ariſes: *and ſhineth unto the other part under heaven*; enlightens the earth, which is under the heaven: tho' the ſenſe of the words, as they lie in the original text, ſeems to be, that as the lightning lightens at one end of the heavens, and ſhines to the other; which is done at once, in a moment, in a twinkling of the eye, and to which agrees the *Ethiopic* verſion; *ſo ſhall alſo the ſon of man be in his day:* which is not to be underſtood of the ſwift progreſs of the Goſpel, after his reſurrection and aſcenſion, and the pouring forth of his ſpirit; but of his ſudden coming, firſt to take vengeance on the *Jewiſh* nation for their rejection of him, and then, at the laſt day, to judge both quick and dead. By *his day*, is meant his kingdom and glory, or his appearance with power, and great glory: Thus we read [f] of *Solomon*, בשעתו, *in his hour*, that is, in his glory, in the time of his kingdom, when he was in his greateſt magnificence.

Ver. 25. *But firſt muſt he ſuffer many things*, &c.] By cruel mockings, ſpitting, buffeting, ſcourging, and, at laſt, death itſelf; all which muſt be, and were before his day came, or he entered into his glory, or came in it: *and be rejected of this generation*; as the Meſſiah, and be treated with the utmoſt ſcorn and contempt, and in the moſt baſe and ignominious manner; being put to the death of the croſs, and hanged upon the accurſed tree: all which were neceſſary, *muſt* be; on account of the purpoſes and decrees of God; the covenant engagements of Chriſt; the predictions of the prophets of the Old Teſtament, and his own; and the ſalvation of his people.

Ver. 26. *And as it was in the days of Noe, &c.*] Whilſt he was building the ark, and before he went into it; for this reſpects the days of *Noah* before the flood, and not after it; for he lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years, *Gen.* ix. 28. *ſo ſhall it be alſo in the days of the ſon of man*; ſome time before, and at his coming in power, and great glory, to deſtroy the *Jews*, their nation, city, and temple; and as then, ſo it will be when he ſhall come in perſon, at the laſt day, to deſtroy the world: the times of *Noah*'s flood, of *Jeruſalem*'s deſtruction, and of the end of the world, bear a great reſemblance to each other: and when the ſon of man comes in either of theſe ſenſes, then will the kingdom of God come; or then will it appear that the Meſſiah is come, and has took to himſelf his great power, and reigns.

Ver. 27. *They did eat, they drank*, &c.] That is, the inhabitants of the old world eat and drank, not merely in a common way, with moderation, and for the ſupport and comfort of life, which is not blameworthy, nor inconſiſtent with religious exerciſes; but they lived in an extravagant and luxurious manner; they indulged their ſenſual appetites, and put away the evil day far from them, that *Noah* told them of: *they married wives, they were given in marriage*; not as ſhould have been done by profeſſors of religion among themſelves; but the ſons of God, or profeſſors of the true religion, the poſterity of *Seth* took them wives of the daughters of men, of the wicked, of the ſeed of *Cain*; and very likely gave their daughters in marriage to the ſons of men; ſee *Gen.* vi. 2, 4. and ſo they went on in a ſecure manner, notwithſtanding all the remonſtrances, warnings, and threatenings of God, by his ſervant: *until the Day that Noe entered into the ark*; which he had built by divine direction, for the ſaving of himſelf and family, and the creatures that were with him, from the waters of the flood; and this was in the ſix hundredth year of his life, in the ſecond month, the month of *October*, and in the ſeventeenth day of that month; *Gen.* vii. 11, 13. *and the flood came and deſtroyed them all*; all the inhabitants of the earth, every living ſubſtance, men, cattle, creeping things, and fowls of the heaven; all but *Noah*, and his wife, and his three ſons, and their wives, and the creatures that were with him in the ark: the flood came not of itſelf, or by chance, or through the influence, or by the concurrence of ſecond cauſes merely; though theſe were uſed, ordered, and directed by the firſt cauſe of all things; but it came by the power of God, according to his will; he brought it on the world of the ungodly; ſee 2 *Pet.* ii. 5. The mode of expreſſion is *Jewiſh*; it is ſaid of *Cain*, who is ſuppoſed by the *Jews* to have lived till the flood, באמבול ושטפו, *the flood came*, and waſhed him away [g].

Ver. 28. *Likewiſe alſo as it was in the days of Lot, &c.*] When he lived in *Sodom*, and before, and at the time of the deſtruction of that city with other neighbouring ones: *they did eat, they drank*; ſee the note in the preceding verſe, and *Ezek.* xvi. 49. This is to be underſtood of the inhabitants of *Sodom* and the other cities that periſhed with it: *they bought, they ſold*; they traded among themſelves, and with their neighbours; and, as it appears from the text referred to, they had no regard to the poor and needy; they made no conſcience of defrauding and oppreſſing them: *they planted*; vineyards, and fruit trees; living in a very fruitful ſoil, like the garden of God, *Gen.* xiii. 10. *they builded*; houſes for themſelves and poſterity; and thus, as a *Jewiſh* writer [h] obſerves of them, in agreement with our Lord's deſign in all this, being filled with the increaſe of the earth, they lived in ſecurity, peace, and tranquillity.

Ver.

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[f] Miſna Bava Metzia, c. 7. §. 1. & Jarchi & Bartenora in ib. Vid. Shirhaſhrim Rabba, fol. 15. 4. & 16. 1.

[g] Bereſhit Rabba, §. 32. fol. 27. 2. & Shemot Rabba, §. 31. fol. 134. 4.

[h] Pirke Eliezer, c. 25.

Ver. 29. *But the ſame day Lot went out of Sodom, &c.*] Being plucked and brought from thence by the angels early in the morning; and a fine morning it was; the ſun was riſen, and ſhone out upon the earth, as *Lot* got into *Zoar*, *Gen.* xix. 15, 16, 23. The *Jews* [i] ſay it was the ſixteenth day of *Niſan*: *it rained fire and brimſtone from heaven*; the *Syriac* verſion reads, *the Lord rained*; ſo it is ſaid in *Gen.* xix. 24. *the Lord rained from the Lord*; Jehovah the Son, rained from Jehovah the Father; or the word of the Lord, as *Targums* of *Jonathan*, and *Jeruſalem* render it; and which is no inconſiderable proof of the deity of Chriſt: and the *Perſic* verſion here reads, *God rained*; and ſo this amazing ſhower of fire and brimſtone, and which was a violent ſtorm of thunder and lightning, is aſcribed to God in 2 *Pet.* ii. 6. ſee the note there. The *Hebrew* word, גפרית, uſed in *Gen.* xix. 24. though it is rendered in the *Targum* of *Jonathan*, כבריתא, and by the *Septuagint*, θειον; both which words ſignify *ſulphur*, or *brimſtone*; and which laſt word is uſed here, following the *Greek* verſion; yet it is obſerved, by ſome learned men, that it rather ſignifies *pitch*, or *roſin*, which proceeds from ſome ſort of trees; and indeed, by its derivation, it ſeems to ſignify ſomething belonging to, or that comes out of the wood of *Gopher*, of which the ark was made, *Gen.* vi. 14. which ſome think to be the pine-tree, from whence comes pitch: and this, though it comes from the inſide of a tree, may as well be ſaid to be rained from heaven, as brimſtone, which is taken out of the bowels of the earth; and the rather, ſince pitch is ſometime fluid; and eſpecially it being combuſtible, may be joined with fire, as well as ſulphur, or brimſtone; though a ſhower of neither, can be accounted for in an ordinary way, but muſt be extraordinary and miraculous: the deſtruction of this city, with others, by fire from heaven, and the lake *Aſphaltites*, being a bituminous and ſulphurous one, into which the tract of land they ſtood upon was converted, are confirmed by the teſtimonies of heathen writers; as *Tacitus* [k], *Solinus* [l], *Strabo* [m], *Juſtin* [n], and *Pliny* [o]; as well as by *Joſephus* [p], and *Philo* the *Jew* [q]. *And deſtroyed them all*; all the inhabitants of *Sodom*, and all of *Gomorrah*, *Admah*, and *Zeboim*; and which was an enſample of the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, and the land of *Judea*, *Deut.* xxix. 23. and of the burning of the world, and of the perdition of the wicked in hell, 2 *Pet.* ii. 6. *Jude* 7.

Ver. 30. *Even thus ſhall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.*] In his power, when he comes to avenge himſelf on the *Jews*; and when he is revealed from heaven in flaming fire, at the laſt day. As in the days of *Noah* and *Lot*, men lived in great carnality and ſecurity, thoughtleſs and fearleſs of danger, ſo were the *Jews* before the deſtruction of their city and temple, buoying themſelves up with deliverance to the laſt; and ſuch will be the times of indolence and ſupineneſs, before the coming of the day of the Lord to judgment: and as the deſtruction of the old world, and men of *Sodom*, and the adjacent parts, was ſudden and unexpected, ſo was the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, and ſo will be the burning of the world; that day will come, as a thief in the night: and as in the above calamities, there was a remnant ſaved, who were taken care of; as *Noah* and his family in the ark, and as *Lot*, and his wife and daughters were ſnatched out of *Sodom*, when the reſt were deſtroyed; ſo when the chriſtians removed from *Jeruſalem*, and went to *Pella*, being directed by a divine oracle, then came on the ſiege of *Jeruſalem* [r]; and when all the elect will be gathered in, and brought to faith and repentance, then ſhall the earth, and the works in it be burnt up: and as theſe judgments were univerſal, ſo was that upon the people of the *Jews*; and ſuch will be the general deſolation in the laſt day.

Ver. 31. *In that day, he which ſhall be upon the houſe-top*, &c.] Either for diverſion or devotion, when he ſhall hear that the *Roman* armies are approaching to *Jeruſalem*, to beſiege it: *and his ſtuff in the houſe*; or *his veſſels*, his goods and furniture; or his utenſils, and inſtruments of trade and buſineſs: *let him not come down*; the inner way of the houſe, from the top: *to take it away*; with him in his flight, but let him deſcend by the ſteps, or ladder, on the outſide of the houſe, and make his eſcape directly to *Pella*, or the mountains: *and he that is in the field*; at work, and has laid down his clothes in ſome certain part of the field, or at home: *let him likewiſe not return back*; to fetch them, but make the beſt of his way as he is; ſee the notes on *Matt.* xxiv. 17, 18.

Ver. 32. *Remember Lot's wife.*] Whoſe name by the *Jews*, is ſaid to be *Adith*, as ſome [s]; or *Irith*, as others [t]: and who, they alſo ſay, was a native of *Sodom*; and that the reaſon of her looking, was either to ſee what would be the end of her father's houſe and family [u]; or as others [w], becauſe her heart yearned after her daughters, and ſhe looked back to ſee if they followed her; upon which ſhe became a pillar of ſalt, *Gen.* ix. 26. They ſay [x], that her bones were burnt with the brimſtone, and along with which was ſalt, into which ſhe was turned, according to *Deut.* xxix. 23. They often ſpeak of, מלח סדומית, *ſalt of Sodom* [y]; where the *Gloſs* ſays, it is thick and hard, as a ſtone; and to which they ſometimes [z] aſcribe this virtue, that it blinds the eyes: and there is a ſort of ſalt, which they call [a] *Galilean* ſalt, of like hardneſs; and *Pliny* [b] ſpeaks of ſalt in the *Indies*, which they cut out, as ſtones out of quarries; and that, at *Carrhis*, a town in *Arabia*, is ſalt with which they build houſes and walls: of a very durable nature 'tis certain, was this pillar of *ſalt*, *Lot*'s wife became; for *Joſephus* reports [c], that he ſaw this pillar of ſalt in his time; and *Irenæus* aſſerts [d], that it was in being when he lived; and modern writers, as *Burchardus* and *Adrichomius*, ſpeak of it as ſtill exiſting; and the *Jeruſalem paraphraſt* on *Gen.* xix. 26. ſays, it ſhall endure till the time the reſurrection comes, in which the dead ſhall live: the reaſon of her becoming a pillar of ſalt, the *Jews* ſay is, that ſhe ſinned by ſalt, and ſo was puniſhed by ſalt; and which is differently related, and in a very fanciful way: one writer [e] reports, that when the angels came, *Lot* ſaid to her, give me a little ſalt for theſe travellers, ſhe replied to him, truly this is a bad cuſtom, which thou bringeſt to be uſed in this place; and elſewhere [f] 'tis ſaid, that upon their coming, ſhe went to all her neighbours, and ſaid to them, give me ſome ſalt, for we have travellers; but her intention was, that the men of the city might know them: but leaving thoſe things, our Lord's deſign in theſe words, is to inſtruct his followers by this inſtance, not to look back in their flight, or to turn back to their houſes, to ſave their goods, when the deſolation of *Jeruſalem* was coming on, leſt they ſhould ſuffer in it; and to warn all profeſſors of religion, in all ages, againſt looking back to things that are behind, or turning their backs on him, in a time of diſtreſs and perſecution; ſince ſuch are not fit for the kingdom of God; and in theſe God has no delight and pleaſure.

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[i] Bereſhit Rabba, §. 50. fol. 45. 3. [k] Hiſt. l. 5. [l] Polyhiſtor. c. 48. [m] Geograph. l. 16. [n] Hiſtor. l. 36. c. 3. [o] Nat. Hiſt. l. 5. c. 16. [p] Antiqu. l. 1. c. 11. §. 4. & de Bello Jud. l. 5. c. 21. [q] De Vita Moſis, l. 2. p. 662. [r] Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccl. l. 3. c. 5. [s] Pirke Eliezer c. 25. [t] Baal Hatturim in Gen. xix. 26. [u] Targum Jon. & Hieroſ. in ib. [w] Pirke Eliezer ib. [x] Aben Ezra in Gen. xix. 26. [y] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 20. 2. & Menachot, fol. 21. 1. [z] Bartenora in Miſn. [illegible], c. 1. §. 10. [a] T. Bab. Kidduſhin, fol. 62. 1. [b] Nat. Hiſt. l. 31. c. 7. [c] Antiqu. l. 1. c. 12. [d] Adv. Hæreſ. l. 4. c. 51. [e] Jarchi in Gen. xix 26. [f] Bereſhit Rabba, §. 51. fol. 46. 1.

Ver. 33. *Whoſoever ſhall ſeek to ſave his life*, &c.] By fleeing to ſome ſtrong hold, or by continuing in the metropolis, and ſtrongeſt city in the nation *Jeruſalem*: *ſhall loſe it*; there he'll be in the greateſt danger: *and whoſoever ſhall loſe his life*; or expoſe it to danger, by fleeing to the mountains, or going to *Pella*, a ſmall town beyond *Jordan*, of no ſtrength, and where there might be thought no ſecurity: *ſhall preſerve it*; he ſhall be ſafe; ſee the note on *Matt.* xvi. 25.

Ver. 34. *I tell you, in that night*, &c.] Of affliction and calamity, that ſhall be upon the *Jewiſh* nation, and which is before called that day, ver. 36. and therefore is not to be underſtood literally of the night: *there ſhall be two* men *in one bed*; this is ſaid agreeable to the time, the night before-mentioned, that being the time to be in bed, at reſt and aſleep; for they that ſleep, ſleep in the night; and ſtill ſuggeſts the ſecurity, the people of the *Jews* would be in, at the time of their deſtruction. The word *men* is not in the text, it is only, *there ſhall be two in one bed*; and may as well be underſtood of a man and his wife, ſince it is not ſo uſual for two men to lie in one bed; and this the rather more ſtrongly expreſſes the diſtinguiſhing providence of God in ſaving one, and ſuffering the other to be taken and loſt: the words may be rendered, *there ſhall be two upon one couch*; that is, ſitting together at ſupper, which was alſo in the night ſeaſon: it was the cuſtom of the ancients, to ſit upon beds, or couches, at meals; and they had a bed, or couch, which held two perſons only, and was called *Biclinium*[h]: and ſo this likewiſe intimates, that the deſtruction of the *Jews*, would be at a time when they were thoughtleſs of it, and were eating and drinking, as in the days of *Noah* and of *Lot*, ver. 27, 28. *The one ſhall be taken*; by the *Roman* ſoldiers: *and the other ſhall be left*; being by one providence or another, preſerved; which is mentioned, to ſhew the diſtinction God will make in his providence, and to encourage believers to truſt in it.

Ver. 35. *Two* women *ſhall be grinding together*, &c.] In *Matt.* xxiv. 41. it is added, *in the mill*; in the houſe where the mill was, and at one and the ſame mill; and ſo the *Ethiopic* verſion here, *two ſhall grind in one mill*: and it was common for two women, to grind at one hand-mill; and though the word *women* is not in the text, it is rightly put into the tranſlation; ſince the word uſed is of the feminine gender, and ſince grinding was the buſineſs of women; and ſo the *Perſic* verſion here ſupplies it, as we do; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 41. *The one ſhall be taken and the other left*; the *Roman* ſoldiers entering the mill, will lay hold on the one, and carry her away with them, and leave the other; and for which no other reaſon can be given, but the ſovereign will and providence of God, which ſhould overule and diſpoſe the minds of theſe men, to act in ſuch a manner.

Ver. 36. *Two men ſhall be in the field*, &c.] At work there, tilling the ground, or ſowing the ſeed in it, or reaping the corn; which of them ſoever was the work of the field, at the time of *Jeruſalem*'s deſtruction: *the one ſhall be taken, and the other left*: the circumſtances attending theſe ſeveral inſtances ſhew, that they can't be conſidered as expreſſive of the uſe and effect of the preaching of the Goſpel, that being the ſavour of life unto life to ſome, and the ſavour of death unto death to others, ſome being effectually called by it, and others being left to die in their ſins; ſince theſe men and women are ſaid to be either in a bed aſleep, or on a couch feaſting, or grinding in a mill, or at work in the field, and ſo not in proper places, and at leiſure to hear the Goſpel preached. The whole verſe is left out in the *Ethiopic* verſion, and in ſome *Greek* copies; though it is in the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions, and in the *Complutenſian* edition, and in ſome ancient copies, as *Beza* obſerves.

Ver. 37. *And they anſwered and ſaid unto him, where, Lord?* &c.] That is, either the *Phariſees* put this queſtion to Chriſt, who demanded of him when the kingdom of God would come, ver. 20. or rather the diſciples, to whom Chriſt more eſpecially directed his diſcourſe, ver. 22. who hearing of the diſtinction that would be made of perſons in theſe diſmal times, aſk where it ſhould be; not where the perſons would be left, but whither the others would be taken, and by whom: *and he ſaid unto them, whereſoever the body is*; the carkaſs of the *Jewiſh* nation, as at *Jeruſalem* chiefly, and in whatſoever place: *thither will the eagles be gathered together*; the *Roman* army, whoſe enſign was the eagle; theſe will come, ſeize upon them, and take them and devour them, as they did: the *Perſic* verſion renders it, *vultures*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 28. Theſe words can by no means be underſtood of ſinners fleeing to Chriſt for eternal life and ſalvation; nor of the gathering of ſaints to him, at the laſt day; for how fitly ſoever ſuch perſons may be compared to *eagles*, the word *body*, or *carkaſs*, as in *Matt.* xxiv. 28. and which is ſo read in ſome copies here, is not ſo ſuitable to Chriſt; and eſpecially at his glorious appearing; and beſides, the words are an anſwer to a queſtion, where ſuch perſons would be, who would be taken and deſtroyed, when others would be left, or preſerved; and manifeſtly refer to the body, or carkaſs of the *Jewiſh* people at *Jeruſalem*, and other fortified places; where they ſhould think themſelves ſafe, but ſhould not be ſo, the *Roman* armies gathering about them, and ſeizing them as their prey: it is yet a more ſtrange interpretation, which is propoſed by a very learned man[i]; that by the *eagle* is meant, Chriſt; and by *the body*, or *carkaſs*, the church in the times of antichriſt; and by *gathering* to it, the coming of Chriſt: for though Chriſt may be ſaid to bear and carry his people, as the eagle bears and carries its young upon its wings, which he obſerves from *Exod.* xix. 4. *Deut.* xxxii. 11. *Iſa.* lxiii. 9. yet not a ſingle eagle, but *eagles*, in the plural number, are here mentioned; which ſhows, that not a ſingle perſon, as Chriſt, but many are here intended, even legions of *Roman* ſoldiers: nor can the church of Chriſt be compared to a dead and filthy carkaſs, in the worſt of times, even in the times of antichriſt; for however forlorn, diſtreſſed, and afflicted her condition is, ſhe is kept alive, and in ſome meaſure pure from antichriſtian pollutions; and is repreſented by a woman, to whom two wings of a great eagle are given (wherefore ſhe ſhould rather be deſigned by the eagles) to fly with into the wilderneſs, where ſhe is preſerved and nouriſhed for a time, and times, and half a time, *Rev.* xii. 14. Nor is Chriſt's coming ever expreſſed by the gathering of him to his people; but on the other hand, they are always ſaid to be gathered unto him; ſee 2 *Theſſ.* ii. 1.

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[h] Vid. Alſtorph. de Lectis Veter. c. 15. p. 90, 91.

[i] Teelmannus.

## CHAP. XVIII.

Ver. 1. AND *he ſpake a parable unto them,* &c.] To his own diſciples, as the *Ethiopic* verſion reads, in order to encourage them to prayer, with perſeverance in it; ſince ſuch ſore times of trial and affliction were coming upon the *Jews*, of which he had ſpoken in the preceding chapter; and ſuch times more eſpecially call for prayer; ſee *Pſal.* l. 15. to this end, *that men ought always to pray*. This is oppoſed to them, who pray not at all, or have left off prayer before God, or who pray only in diſtreſs; and ſuggeſts, that a man ſhould pray as often as he has an opportunity; ſhould be conſtant and aſſiduous at the throne of grace, and continue putting up his requeſts to God, though he does not preſently return an anſwer: *and not to faint*; by reaſon of afflictions, temptations, deſertions, and delays in anſwering prayer; and prayer itſelf is an admirable antidote againſt fainting under afflictive providences: 'tis with the *Jews* an affirmative precept, that a man ſhould pray, בכל יום, *every day* [k]; it was uſual with them to pray three times a day; ſee *Pſal.* lv. 17. *Dan.* vi. 10. there is no ſet time fixed by Chriſt; men ſhould be always praying. This is not to be underſtood, that a man ſhould be always actually engaged in the work of prayer; that he ſhould be continually either in his cloſet, in private devotion to God, or attending exerciſes of more public prayer, with the ſaints; for there are other religious exerciſes to be performed, beſides prayer; and beſides, there are many civil affairs of life, it is every man's indiſpenſable duty to regard: nor does our Lord mean in the leaſt to break in upon, or interrupt the natural and civil duties of life; but his meaning is, that a man ſhould perſevere in prayer, and not leave off, or be dejected, becauſe he has not an immediate anſwer; and this is clear from the following caſe.

Ver. 2. *Saying, there was in a city a judge,* &c.] In every city in the land of *Iſrael*, there was a *Sanhedrim*, or court of judicature; in *Jeruſalem* was the great *Sanhedrim*, conſiſting of ſeventy-one; and in every city where there were an hundred and twenty men, or more, there was a leſſer *Sanhedrim*, conſiſting of twenty-three; and in a city in which there were not an hundred and twenty men, were three judges; for there was no *Sanhedrim*, or court of judicature, that conſiſted of leſs than three [l]: but “ although there is no judicature leſs than three, “ מותר לאחד לדון, *it is lawful for one to judge*, “ according to the law, as it is ſaid, *Levit.* xix. 15. “ *In righteouſneſs ſhalt thou judge thy neighbour*; but “ according to the words of the *Scribes* (only,) “ when there are three, and two that judge, their “ judgment is no judgment: one who is publickly “ approved or authorized, or who has taken a licence “ from the *Sanhedrim*, it is lawful for him to judge “ alone, but it is not accounted a judicature; and “ though it is lawful, it is the command of the “ wiſe men, that he ſet others with him; for lo, “ they ſay, don't judge alone, for there is none “ that judgeth alone, but one [m].” It may be, this judge was, מומחה, an authorized and approved one; however, we have inſtances of ſingle judges, or of perſons that have judged alone, at leaſt by the conſent of parties. “ *R. Abbu* was ſitting “ judge, in a ſynagogue in *Cæſarea*, by himſelf; “ his diſciples ſaid to him, did not *Rabbi* ſo teach “ us, do not judge alone? he replied to them, “ when ye ſee me ſit judge by myſelf, and ye come “ to me, as thoſe that have taken upon themſelves “ (or agreed to be judged by me;) for the tra- “ dition is, of things in which they do not take “ upon them; but if they take upon them, (or “ agree to be judged) one may judge, though “ alone [n].” And again elſewhere [o]; “ if he is “ publickly authorized or approved, he judges, “ though alone; ſays *R. Nachman*, as I judge pe- “ cuniary cauſes alone; and ſo ſays *R. Chijah*, as I “ judge pecuniary judgments alone.——*Mar Zutra*, “ the ſon of *R. Nachman*, judged a cauſe, and erred; “ he came to *R. Joſeph*, who ſaid to him, if they have “ received thee upon them (agreed to be judged by “ thee) thou needſt not finiſh; but if not, go and “ finiſh.” The qualifications of one to be a judge, even of the bench of three, were theſe [p]; “ wiſ- “ dom, meekneſs, (or modeſty,) and fear, (*i. e.* “ of God,) and hatred of mammon, (or money,) “ love of truth, and to have the love of men, and “ to be maſters of a good name, (or to be of good “ report.”) But the judge in the text, came greatly ſhort of theſe qualifications: his character follows, *which feared not God, neither regarded man*; and therefore, according to the above canon, was diſqualified from being a judge, ſince he was deſtitute of the fear of God; and ſeeing he regarded not men, he could neither have any love to men, nor any ſhare in the affections of men, and ſuch an one is very unfit to be a judge, for he cannot be thought to have any regard to his conſcience, or his credit, and ſo not to juſtice and equity. The former of theſe characters, is what belongs to every man in a ſtate of unregeneracy; there's no true fear of God before the eyes, or in the heart of any unconverted man; wherever it is, it is put there by the grace of God: this is one of the firſt things which appears in converſion, and ſhews itſelf in an hatred of ſin, and in the performance of duties; and is increaſed, by the diſcoveries of the grace and goodneſs of God; but the want of this, is more viſible in ſome, than in others: ſome, though they have not the grace of fear, yet are under ſome awe of the divine being, and pay a regard to the word of God; and what through the force of education, and the dictates of a natural conſcience, dare not go ſuch lengths in ſin, as ſome do: but there are others, who even ſay there is no God, and at leaſt live as if there was none; they endeavour to work themſelves, and others, into a diſbelief of the being of God; and ſet their mouths againſt the heaven, deny his providence, and deſpiſe his word; ſtretch out their hands, and ſtrengthen themſelves againſt the Almighty; and in a fearleſs manner, run upon the thick boſſes of his bucklers; they declare their ſin as *Sodom*, and hide it not, yea, glory in it; they promiſe themſelves impunity, and laugh at a future judgment; and of ſuch a

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[k] Maimon. Hilch. Tephilla, c. 1. §. 1.

[l] Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 1. §. 3, 4.

[m] Ib. c. 2. §. 10, 11.

[n] T. Hieroſ. Sanhedrin, fol. 18. 1.

[o] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 5. 1.

[p] Maimon. Hilch, Sanhedrin, c. 2, §. 7.

caſt was this judge, and therefore a very improper perſon for ſuch an office; for civil magiſtrates, and rulers of every ſort, ought to be juſt, ruling in the fear of God: and as for the other part of his character, it is not to be wondered at; for ſuch that fear not God, will have little regard to men; no otherwiſe, or further, than they are obliged to it: indeed, judges ought not to regard men in judgment; that is, to reſpect the perſons of men, and thro' affection, or flattery, or bribes, wreſt judgment: but this is not the ſenſe of the phraſe here, ſince this agrees not with the other part of the character, and ſince he is called an unjuſt judge; but the meaning is, that he had no regard to the laws of men, any more than the laws of God; but made his own will the rule of his actions, and had no regard to doing juſtice between man and man; nor did he care what any man ſaid of him; he had no concern about his reputation and character, having none to loſe.

Ver. 3. *And there was a widow in that city*, &c.] Poor and helpleſs, and none among men to counſel, direct, and aſſiſt her, and take her part: now as in the accommodation of this parable, the elect of God anſwer to this widow; ſuch an one is rather pitched upon to repreſent the helpleſs, deſolate, and forlorn condition they are in among men in this world, though they are eſpouſed to one huſband, Chriſt; and eſpecially to ſignify the ſtate and condition of God's elect among the *Jews* in thoſe ſad times, before the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, this parable has reſpect unto. Chriſt is the bridegroom of his church and people; he is their huſband, the Lord of hoſts is his name; and they are eſpouſed as a chaſte virgin to him; and whilſt he was here on earth, his diſciples, who were the children of the bridegroom, could not faſt and mourn, for which they had no reaſon; but upon the death of Chriſt, when he was removed from them, they had great ſorrow of heart; they were left like widows and orphans; hence thoſe words of Chriſt, *John* xiv. 18. and were perſecuted by the *Jews* in their own land; and where-ever they went, they ſtirred up the *Gentiles* againſt them; and ſo things continued till near the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*; during which time many a requeſt was made to God, the judge of the widows and fatherleſs, to the following purport: *and ſhe came unto him, ſaying, avenge me of mine adverſary*; or do me juſtice in the cauſe depending between me, and him that has wronged me; hear the cauſe, and do right; vindicate, and deliver me. Many are the adverſaries of God's people, as the ſins and corruptions of their own hearts, ſatan, and his angels, wicked oppreſſors, and perſecutors; the laſt ſeem, in the myſtical ſenſe, to be deſigned here: it's lawful to pray for vengeance on them; it's right to apply to God, and leave it with him, to whom it belongs; and it has been the ſuit and cry of the beſt of men; ſee *Rev.* vi. 9, 10. It does not become the people of God to avenge themſelves, even when it is in the power of their hands; nor ſhould they deſire it for their own ſakes, ſo much as for the glory of God; they ſhould aſk it, not to gratify a revengeful ſpirit in them, but for the honour of divine juſtice; and this ſhould be always with ſubmiſſion to the will of God, leaving it to his own time and way, to whom vengeance belongs, and who has ſaid it is mine, and I will repay it; as he certainly will ſooner or later: the purity of his nature, his abhorrence of ſin, and ſinful men, and his love to his own people engage him to it.

Ver. 4. *And he would not for a while*, &c.] He would give no ear to her cries, nor take her cauſe in hand, nor right her wrongs, and clear her of her adverſary: *but afterward he ſaid within himſelf*; as he was conſidering the matter in his own mind, and reflecting on this woman's caſe, and the frequent application ſhe had made to him: *tho' I fear not God, nor regard man*; a monſter in iniquity he was, to ſay ſo of himſelf; for tho' the character belongs to many, there are few that are ſo impudent in ſin, as to take it to themſelves, and glory in it.

Ver. 5. *Yet becauſe this widow troubleth me*, &c.] By often knocking at his door, by loud cries and earneſt entreaties, with ſtrong arguments, and floods of tears, and could not eaſily be removed from his preſence, or got out of his houſe: *I will avenge her*; I will hear her cauſe, do her juſtice, and deliver her from her troubleſome adverſary: *leſt by her continual coming ſhe weary me*; ſo that it was not from a conſcience of duty in him, as a judge, or from commiſeration of the poor widow's caſe; but from a ſelfiſh end, for his own eaſe, in perfect agreement to his character, that his houſe might not be diſturbed, and his ears ſtunned with her noiſe and cry, and he be peſtered with her company day after day. The character of this judge, his reaſoning with himſelf upon it, his principles from which he acted, and the ends he had in view, are wholly to be left out in the accommodation of this parable; and no further to be conſidered than as the argument from the leſſer to the greater, may be ſtrengthened by them; the intention of the parable being only to ſhow the force, efficacy, and uſefulneſs of importunity in prayer, as appears by the application of it, by our Lord, in the verſes following.

Ver. 6. *And the Lord ſaid*, &c.] The Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who delivered out this parable to his diſciples: *hear what the unjuſt judge ſaith*; and take encouragement from hence to be frequent and importunate in prayer with God; for if ſuch a cruel, mercileſs, and unjuſt judge is to be wrought upon by importunity, to do juſtice, who has no principle to influence him, how much more will not God, who is a juſt judge, the judge of widows, and of the oppreſſed, a God of great mercy and compaſſion, who delights in the prayers of his people, knows their caſes, and is able to help them, and who has an intereſt in them, and they in him? how much more will not he regard their importunate requeſts, and ariſe, and ſave them? much ſuch like reaſoning as this is uſed by the *Jews*: "ſays *R.* "*Simeon ben Chelphetha*, an impudent man over- "comes a good man, or a modeſt man, (by his im- "portunity), how much more the goodneſs of the "world itſelf [q]?" that is, how much more will a man, by his continual prayer, prevail with God, who is goodneſs itſelf? And they have another ſaying [r], that agrees with this: "ſays *R. Nachman*, "impudence (*i. e.* importunity) even againſt God is "profitable." The application of this parable follows:

Ver. 7. *And ſhall not God avenge his own elect*, &c.] Who are a ſelect number, a ſpecial people, whom he has loved with an everlaſting love, ſo as of his own ſovereign good will and pleaſure to chuſe in his Son Jeſus Chriſt unto everlaſting life and ſalvation, thro' certain ways and means of his own appointing, hence they are peculiarly his: and theſe he will avenge and vindicate, right their wrongs, do them juſtice, and deliver them from their adverſaries, and take vengeance on them; as may be concluded from his hatred of ſin, his juſtice, and his holineſs, from his promiſes, and from his power, and from the efficacy of prayer, and the regard he has to it: for it follows, *which*

*cry*

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[q] T. Hieroſ. Taaniot, fol. 65. 2.

[r] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 105. 1.

*cry unto him day and night*; whoſe prayers he always hears; whoſe tears he puts up in his bottle; and whoſe importunity muſt ſurely be thought to have more regard with him, than that of the poor widow with the unjuſt judge: *tho' he bear long with them?* either with their adverſaries, their oppreſſors, and perſecutors, who are veſſels of wrath, fitted for deſtruction, whom he endures with much long-ſuffering, till the ſufferings of his people are accompliſhed, and the iniquities of theſe men are full; or rather with the elect, for the words may be rendered, *and is long-ſuffering towards them:* delays his coming, and the execution of his vengeance, as on the *Jewiſh* nation, ſo upon the whole world of the ungodly, till his elect are gathered in from among them; ſee 2 *Pet.* iii. 9.

Ver. 8. *I tell you that he will avenge them ſpeedily,* &c.] As he did in a few years after the death of Chriſt, when God's elect among the *Jews* were ſingled out, and gathered in from them, and were delivered from their perſecutors, and ſaved from temporal ruin and deſtruction, whilſt the *Roman* army made ſad havock of their enemies; and ſo will he do in the end of the world. *Nevertheleſs, when the ſon of man cometh*; either to deſtroy *Jeruſalem*, or to judge the world: *ſhall he find faith on the earth?* either in the land of *Judea*, the believers being removed from thence, and ſcattered among the *Gentiles*, and not a man, at leaſt in *Jeruſalem*, that had any faith in Jeſus, as the Meſſiah; or in the world at the laſt day: there will then be little of the doctrine of faith, and leſs of the grace of faith, and ſtill leſs of the exerciſe of faith, particularly in prayer, and eſpecially about the coming of Chriſt; it will be little thought of, and expected, or faith little exerciſed about it. With this agree ſome expreſſions in the *Jewiſh* writings [s]: “Says *R.* “ *Joſe*, the holy, bleſſed God, will not be revealed to “ *Iſrael*, but in the time, דלא אשתכח מהימנותא, “ *that faith is not found* among them.” And elſewhere [t], ſpeaking of the times of the Meſſiah, and of a ſtar that ſhall then appear, it is ſaid, “ when “ that ſtar ſhall be ſeen in the world, at that time “ mighty wars ſhall be ſtirred up in the world, on “ all the four ſides, ומהימנותא לא ישתכח, *and* “ *faith will not be found* among them.” They ſeem to regard the firſt coming of the Meſſiah; and which was true with reſpect to the majority of their nation; and the ſame holds good with regard to his ſecond coming; ſee 2 *Eſdras* v. 1.

Ver. 9. *And he ſpake this parable unto certain,* &c.] Or with reſpect to certain men; having a view to them, in order to expoſe their pride, vanity, arrogance, and ſelf-confidence: *which truſted in themſelves that they were righteous*; or, as if they were righteous; or becauſe they were ſo, in their own eyes, and in the eſteem of others: the ground of their truſt and confidence were themſelves, their hearts, and the ſuppoſed goodneſs of them, their outward holineſs, their moral behaviour, their duties, and good works, their alms-deeds, and religious exerciſes, their ceremonial obſervances, and fleſhly privileges; on account of which they thought themſelves very righteous perſons, ſuch as could not fail of being accepted with God, and juſtified in his ſight; whereas there are none righteous in, and of themſelves, no, not one. All the deſcendants of *Adam*, as ſuch, are ſinners, deſtitute of a righteouſneſs, and filled with all unrighteouſneſs, and are enemies to true righteouſneſs: no man is naturally righteous, nor is he capable of making himſelf ſo, by any thing he can do: none are righteous by their obedience to the law of works, for that is imperfect, and can't juſtify before God, in whoſe ſight no fleſh living can be juſtified on this account, however righteous they may appear before men, or may be in their own eyes; for this is contrary to God's way of making men righteous, and would diſannul the death of Chriſt, and encourage boaſting in men. Such truſt and confidence muſt be very vain, and ariſe from ignorance; from ignorance of God, of the perfection of his juſtice, and of the nature of his righteous law; and of themſelves, of the impurity of their hearts, and the imperfection of their obedience. Theſe were of the *phariſaical* ſort, and of which complexion were the generality of the *Jews*; and many of theſe were now ſtanding by Chriſt, and within the hearing of this parable, and for whoſe ſake it was delivered: *and deſpiſed others*; or, *every man*, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read; all the reſt of mankind, all but themſelves; they made nothing of them, had them in no account; treated them as perſons unworthy of the regard of God, and not fit to ſtand near them, or to be named with them.

Ver. 10. *Two men went up into the temple to pray,* &c.] Which is called an houſe of prayer, *Iſ.* lvi. 7. the *Jews* had a mighty notion of praying in a place of religious worſhip, as in the temple, or in a ſynagogue; imagining that their prayers were more acceptable to God, and ſooner heard by him in ſuch a place than in private: “ the prayers of the con- “ gregation, they ſay [u], are heard always; and “ though there are ſinners among them, the holy, “ bleſſed God, does not deſpiſe the prayer of many; “ wherefore, a man ought to join himſelf with the “ congregation, and not pray alone, whenever he “ can pray with that: and let a man go always, “ morning and evening, to the ſynagogue; for “ there is no prayer heard at all times but in the “ ſynagogue; and whoever has a ſynagogue in his “ city, and does not pray in it with the congrega- “ tion, is called an ill neighbour.——A divinity- “ ſchool is greater than a ſynagogue; and the great “ wiſe men, though they had many ſynagogues in “ their cities, did not pray but where they ſtudied “ in the law.” And they ſay [w], that “ he that “ prays (in the ſynagogue) is as if he offered a pure “ offering.——Says *R. Abbu*, in the name of *R.* “ *Abbu*, *ſeek the Lord where he may be found*; where “ is he to be found? in the ſynagogues, and in the “ ſchools.” Theſe two men had, doubtleſs, both of them a notion of the ſanctity of the place, and acted according to the prevailing ſenſe of the people. They went up hither, not by conſultation, agreement, and appointment; for they were of a different caſt from each other; but ſo it happened. Had they went by conſent, there was a rule for them [x]: “ two men that go to a ſynagogue to pray, and “ one has finiſhed his prayer before his neighbour, “ if he ſtays for him, his reward is double; and if “ he does not ſtay for him, his prayer is not heard.” And they had rules alſo for the manner of their going to, and from the place of prayer: when they went thither, they were to go nimbly, in haſte, and even run; but when they came back, they were to go very ſlowly and gently [y]. “ The commandment, “ they ſay [z], is to run to a ſynagogue; for it is ſaid, *Hoſ.* vi. 3. *we ſhall know, we ſhall follow on to know the Lord:* but when a man comes out of the ſynagogue, let him not take large ſteps; but let him walk, little by little, or take ſhort ſteps.” How far theſe rules were complied with by theſe men, is of no great moment to know; who they were follows; *the one a Phariſee*; one of thoſe that truſted in themſelves, as righteous, and deſpiſed all others, eſpecially publicans and ſinners; of theſe ſee the note on *Matt.* iii. 7. This was the ſtricteſt ſect among the *Jews*; they were men that prayed, and faſted much, and were great ſticklers for the ceremonies of the law, and the traditions of the elders, and did all they did to be ſeen of men: *and the other a publican*; a gatherer of the *Roman* tax, though by nation a *Jew*; and therefore ſuch were had in great contempt by the *Jews* in general; nor would they eat and drink and converſe with them; ſee the notes on *Matt.* ix. 10, 11.

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[s] Zohar in Gen. fol. 118. 1.

[t] Ib. in Num. fol. 86. 1.

[u] Maimon. Hilch. Tephilla, c. 8. §. 1, 3. Piſke Haroſh Beracot, c. 1. art. 7.

[w] T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 8. 4.

[x] Piſke Haroſh, ib.

[y] Piſke, ib. & T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 9. 1.

[z] Maimon. ib. §. 2.

Ver. 11. *The Phariſee ſtood,* &c.] Standing was a praying poſture; ſee the note on *Matt.* vi. 5. nor is this obſerved, as if it was ſomething amiſs: but the ſenſe is, either, that he ſtood in ſome place of eminence, that he might be ſeen of others; or he ſtood in a ſet, fixed poſture, in a very grave and ſolemn manner, ſhewing great devotion and ſeriouſneſs; or he ſtood with great boldneſs and confidence: *and prayed thus with himſelf*; the phraſe, *with himſelf*, may be read either with the word *ſtood,* as it is in the *Syriac* verſion; and then the ſenſe is that he ſtood alone, apart from the publican, at a diſtance from him, as deſpiſing him; and leſt he ſhould be polluted by him; ſee *Iſ.* lxv. 4. or with the word *prayed*, and does not deſign internal prayer, which was what the *Phariſees* did not uſe; for all they did was to be ſeen, and heard of men: but the meaning is, that he prayed only with reſpect to himſelf; he was wholly intent upon himſelf; his own ſelf, and the commendation of himſelf, were the ſubject of his prayer; his whole dependance in it was on himſelf; and he was only ſeeking by it his own glory: he had no regard to the people of God, to all the ſaints, nor did he put up one petition for them; nor had he any reſpect to Chriſt, the mediator, through whom acceſs is had to God, and acceptance with him; nor to the Holy Spirit for his aſſiſtance; and though he addreſſed himſelf to God, yet in praiſe of himſelf, ſaying, *God I thank thee:* there is no petition in this prayer of his for pardoning grace and mercy; nor for larger meaſures of grace; nor for ſtrength to perform duties, and to hold on to the end; nor for any favour whatever; nor is there any confeſſion of ſin in it. So that it ſcarce deſerves the name of a prayer, for in it is only a thankſgiving: indeed, thankſgiving in prayer is right; and had he been a man that had received the grace of God, it would have been right in him to have given thanks to God for it, by which he was made to differ from others: nor would he have been blameworthy, had he thanked God for the good things which he had received from him, or which by his aſſiſtance he had done; but nothing of this kind is ſaid by him; he thanks God, in order to exalt himſelf, and places his righteouſneſs in his own works, and treats all other men in a cenſorious and diſdainful manner; thanking God, or rather bleſſing himſelf, ſaying, *that I am not as other men are*; and yet he was as other men, and no better: he was a ſinner in *Adam*, as other men; and a ſinner by nature, as others are; and had the ſame iniquities and corruptions in his heart, as others; and had no more goodneſs in him than other men, and as far from true real righteouſneſs. Perhaps he means the *Gentiles*, whom the *Jews* looked upon as ſinners, and the worſt of men; and yet they were in no wiſe better than the *Gentiles*, as to their ſtate and condition by nature: it was uſual to call the *Gentiles*, אחרים, *other men*; which phraſe is ſometimes explained by *the nations of the world*[a]; and ſometimes by the *Cuthites*, or *Samaritans*[b]; ſee the note on *Luke* v. 29.—He goes on, *extortioners, unjuſt, adulterers*; and yet all theſe characters belonged to the men of his ſect: the *Phariſees* were oppreſſors of the poor, devoured widows houſes, and extorted money from them, under a pretence of long prayers: they are aptly repreſented by the unjuſt ſteward, in ch. xvi. 1, 8. and they were an unclean, unchaſte, and an adulterous generation of men, *Matt.* xii. 39. *John* viii. 8, 9. *or even as this publican*; pointing to him at ſome diſtance, with great ſcorn and diſdain. This was his prayer, or thankſgiving. It may gratify the curioſity of ſome to have ſome other prayers of the *Phariſees*; and it may be worth while to compare them with this, between which there will appear a pretty deal of likeneſs. “*R. Nechunia ben Hakkana* uſed to pray, when he went into the ſchool, and when he came out, a ſhort prayer: they ſaid unto him, what is the goodneſs (or the excellency) of this prayer? he replied to them, when I go in, I pray, that no offence might come by means of me; and when I go out, *I give thanks* for my portion: when I go in, this is what I ſay, let it be thy good pleaſure before thee, O Lord, my God, the God of my fathers, that I may not be angry with my collegues, nor my collegues be angry with me; that I may not pronounce that which is pure defiled, and that which is defiled, pure; that I may not forbid that which is lawful, nor pronounce lawful that which is forbidden; and that I may not be found aſhamed in this world, and in the world to come: and when I come out, this is what I ſay; I confeſs before thee, (or I thank thee) O Lord God, and the God of my fathers, that thou haſt given me my portion among thoſe that ſit in the ſchools, and ſynagogues, and haſt not given me my portion in the theatres and ſhows; for I labour, and they labour; I watch, and they watch; I labour to inherit paradiſe, and they labour for the pit of corruption[c].” And theſe two prayers the *Jews* were obliged to recite at their going in, and coming out of the ſynagogue. “It is a tradition of *R. Juda*, ſaying, three things a man ought to ſay every day; bleſſed be thou, שלא עשאני גוי, *that thou haſt not made me a Gentile*; bleſſed art thou, that thou haſt not made me an unlearned man, (or one that is vain and fooliſh, uncivil and uncultivated;) bleſſed art thou that haſt not made me a woman[d].” In their prayer-books[e], theſe thankſgivings ſtand thus: “bleſſed art thou, O Lord our God, the king of the world, that thou haſt made me an *Iſraelite*; (in ſome books it is, as before, that thou haſt not made me a *Gentile*) bleſſed art thou, O Lord our God, the king of the world, that thou haſt not made me a ſervant; bleſſed art thou, O Lord our God, the king of the world, that thou haſt not made me a woman:” when the women, inſtead of this laſt, ſay; “bleſſed art thou, O Lord our God, the king of the world, who has made me as he pleaſes.” And very agreeable to one of theſe benedictions does the *Ethiopic* verſion render the prayer of the *Phariſee* here; *I thank thee, O Lord, that thou haſt not made me as other men.*

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[a] Gloſſ. in T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 111. 2.

[b] Gloſſ. in T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 52. 2.

[c] T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 7. 4. Vid. Miſna Beracot, c. 4. §. 2. & Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

[d] T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 13. 2.

[e] Seder Tephillot, ed. Baſil. fol. 2. 2. ed. Amſt. fol. 4. 1.

Ver. 12. *I faſt twice in the week*, &c.] Not *on the ſabbath*, as the words may be literally rendered, and as they are in the *Vulgate Latin* and *Ethiopic* verſions; for the ſabbath was not a faſting, but a feaſting-day with the *Jews*; for they were obliged to eat three meals, or feaſts, on a ſabbath-day, one in the morning, another at evening, and another at the time of the meat-offering: even the pooreſt man in *Iſrael*, who was maintained by alms, was obliged to keep theſe three feaſts [f]. It was forbidden a man to faſt, until the ſixth hour, on a ſabbath-day; that is, till noon [g]: wherefore, 'tis a great miſtake in *Juſtin* [h], and *Suetonius* [i], that the ſabbath was kept by the *Jews* as a faſt. But the word is rightly rendered, *in the week:* the whole ſeven days, or week, were by the *Jews* commonly called the ſabbath; hence, אחד בשבת, *the firſt of the ſabbath*, and the ſecond of the ſabbath, and the third of the ſabbath [k]; that is, the firſt, ſecond, and third days of the week. Now the two days in the week on which they faſted were *Monday* and *Thurſday*, the ſecond and fifth days; on which days the law of *Moſes*, and the book of *Eſther* were read, by the order of *Ezra* [l]; and faſts for the congregation were appointed on thoſe days [m]; and ſo a private perſon, or a ſingle man, as in this inſtance, took upon him, or choſe to faſt on the ſame [n]: the reaſon of this is, by ſome, ſaid to be, becauſe *Moſes* went up to mount *Sinai* on a *Thurſday*, and came down on a *Monday* [o]. But though theſe men faſted ſo often, they took care not to hurt themſelves; for they allowed themſelves to eat in the night till break of day. 'Tis aſked [p], "how long "may a man eat and drink, *i. e.* on a faſt-day? "until the pillar of the morning aſcends (day "breaks); theſe are the words of *Rabbi (Judah): "R. Eliezer ben Simeon* ſays, until cock crowing." So that they had not ſo much reaſon to boaſt of theſe performances: he adds, *I give tithes of all that I poſſeſs*; not only of what was titheable by the law of *Moſes*, as the produce of his ground; and by the traditions of the elders, as the herbs in his garden, *Matt.* xxiii. 23. but of every thing he had, which was not required by either of them; upon which he thought himſelf a very righteous perſon, and more than a common man: 'tis aſked [q], "who is a plebeian? (one of the people of the "earth, or the common people) whoever does not "eat his common food with purity (with hands "waſhed); theſe are the words of *R. Meir:* but "the wiſe men ſay, whoever does not tithe his "fruit." This man would not be thought to be ſuch an one.

Ver. 13. *And the publican ſtanding afar off*, &c.] Not at the outermoſt porch, or at the door; for "a man might not fix his place at the door of the "ſynagogue, but, ירחיק, *he muſt go afar off*, the "ſpace of two doors, and then pray [r]," it may be in the court of the *Gentiles*, when the *Phariſee* was in the court of the *Iſraelites*; at leaſt he was afar off from him: and indeed, thoſe who came to humble themſelves before the Lord, and confeſs their ſins, were obliged to ſtand at the diſtance of four cubits one from another, that one might not hear the prayers and confeſſions of the other [s]: and it might be, that this poor man might ſtand at a greater diſtance than was required, that he might not diſpleaſe the *Phariſee*, who, he knew, would reſent it, ſhould he ſtand near him; or rather this was done, to teſtify the ſenſe he had of his ſtate and condition, and of his unworthineſs; as that he was afar off from God, and unworthy to draw nigh unto him, and deſerved to be kept at a diſtance from him for ever. So it is ſaid [t] of the *Iſraelites*, that they trembled at mount *Sinai*, and *ſtood afar off*, להורות ענותנותם, *to ſhew their humility*; and under a work of the law, and under ſuch a like diſpenſation was this publican; and therefore *would not ſo much as lift up his eyes unto heaven:* and which, as it was an humble poſture he ſtood in, agrees with the rules the *Jews* give [u]; "the order "(or poſture) of the body, how is it? when a man "ſtands in prayer he ought to ſet his feet one by "the ſide of the other, and fix his eyes, למטה, "*below*, as if he looked to the earth; and his "heart muſt be open above, as if he ſtood in the "heavens; and lay his hands upon his heart, put-"ing the right hand over the left; and muſt ſtand "as a ſervant before his maſter, with trembling, "and fear, and dread, and may not put his hands "upon his loins." And agreeable to this, 'tis elſewhere [w] ſaid, "he that prays, ought to fix "his eyes below, and his heart above." And the *Jews* uſed to look downward, or ſhut their eyes, for the ſake of attention in prayer; and it was even forbidden them to open their eyes to look upon the wall [x]. This ſhewed in the publican, that the guilt of his ſins lay heavy on him; that he could not look up; that ſhame filled him with bluſhing; that ſorrow cauſed his countenance to fall; and that fear of divine wrath, and diſpleaſure, poſſeſſed him; and that he looked upon himſelf as unworthy of the ſmiles of heaven: *but ſmote upon his breaſt*; pointing at the fountain of his ſin; expreſſing, by this action, his ſorrow, and repentance for it; and an averſion and abhorrence of himſelf on account of it, joined with indignation and revenge; and he did this to arouſe, and ſtir up all the powers, and faculties of his ſoul, to call upon God. The *Perſic* verſion renders it, *he fell on his knees, and beat the earth with his head*; taking a ſort of revenge on himſelf for ſin: *ſaying, God be merciful to me a ſinner.* This is his prayer; a ſhort, but a very full one, and greatly different from that of the *Phariſee:* in which is a confeſſion that he was a *ſinner*; a ſinner in *Adam*, who had derived a ſinful nature from him, being conceived and born in ſin; and a ſinner by practice, having committed many actual tranſgreſſions, attended with aggravating circumſtances; a guilty and filthy ſinner, a notorious one, deſerving of the wrath of God, and the loweſt hell: he ſpeaks of himſelf, as if he was the only ſinner in the world; at leaſt, as if there was none like him: and there is in this prayer alſo a petition; and the object it is put up to, is *God*, againſt whom he had ſinned; with whom there is mercy and forgiveneſs; and who only can forgive ſin; and who has promiſed that he will; and has proclaimed his name, a God, pardoning iniquity, tranſgreſſion, and ſin; and has given inſtances of his forgiving-grace and mercy; and therefore the publican was right in addreſſing him by confeſſion: the petition he makes to him is, to be *merciful*, or *propitious* to him; that is, to ſhew mercy to him, through the propitiatory ſacrifice of the Meſſiah, which was typified by the ſacrifices under the law: the firſt thing a ſenſible ſinner wants, is an application of pardoning-grace and mercy; and forgiveneſs ſprings from mercy; and becauſe the mercy of God is free and abundant, therefore pardon is ſo: but this is not to be expected from an abſolute God, or God out of Chriſt. God is only propitious in Chriſt: hence it may be obſerved, that God pardons none but thoſe to whom he is propitious in his ſon; and that he forgives ſin upon the foot of a reconciliation, and ſatisfaction made to his law, and juſtice, and ſo pardon is an act of juſtice, as well as of mercy; and that there is no pardoning-mercy but through Chriſt. The *Arabic* verſion renders it, *ſpare me, becauſe I am a ſinner*; ſee *Pſ.* xxv. 11.

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[f] Maimon. Hilch. Sabbat, c. 30. §. 9.
[g] T. Hieroſ. Nedarim, fol. 40. 4.
[h] L. 36. c. 2.
[i] Octav. Aug. c. 76.
[k] Maimon. Hilch. Mechoſre Caphara, c. 2. §. 8.
[l] T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 82. 1. Megilla, fol. 31. 1, 2.
[m] Maimon. Hilchot Taaniot, c. 1. §. 5.
[n] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 12. 1.
[o] Godwin Moſes & Aaron, l. 1. c. 10. Vid. T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 88. 1.
[p] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 12. 1.
[q] T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 61. 1.
[r] Piſke Haroſh Beracot, c. 1. art. 7. Vid. T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 9. 1.
[s] Jarchi & Bartenora in Pirke Abot, c. 5. §. 5.
[t] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 80. 1.
[u] Maimon. Hilch. Tephilla, c. 5. §. 4. & Moſes Kotſenſis Mitzvot Tora, pr. affirm. 19.
[w] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 105. 2.
[x] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 25. 3.

Ver. 14. *I tell you that this man*, &c.] The *Publican* that ſo freely owned himſelf to be a ſinner, and by his carriage acknowledged he was unworthy of any favour; and who was treated with ſo much contempt by the *Phariſee: went down to his houſe*; from the temple which was built on a mountain, *juſtified*, rather *than the other*; accounted as a righteous perſon in the ſight of God; juſtified from all his ſins, and accepted by him, when the other was abhorred and neglected. The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions, and ſo *Beza*'s moſt ancient copy, read, *than the Phariſee*, who had ſuch an high opinion of himſelf, and deſpiſed others: not that the *Phariſee* was juſtified at all, when the publican really was; but the ſenſe is, that if judgment had been to have been made, and ſentence paſſed according to the then conduct and behaviour of both parties, the publican had greatly the advantage, in the ſight of God; a humble demeanour being well-pleaſing and acceptable to him, when pride, and arrogance, boaſting of, and truſting in a man's own righteouſneſs, are abhorred by him; *for every one that exalteth himſelf, ſhall be abaſed, and he that humbleth himſelf, ſhall be exalted.* This was a proverbial expreſſion, often mentioned by Chriſt on different occaſions, and frequently uſed by the *Jews*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiii. 12. to which may be added the following paſſages; "whoever is of a haughty "ſpirit, at laſt ſhall be made low [y]." And again, "whoſoever humbleth himſelf, the holy, bleſſed "God will lift him up [z]."

Ver. 15. *And they brought unto him alſo infants*, &c.] As well as grown perſons, that were ſick, to be healed by him: *that he would touch them*; in order, as ſome learned men think, to cure them, of diſeaſes that attended them; for one of the ways by which Chriſt healed perſons, was by touching them; nor do we read of his touching in common for any other purpoſe, or of perſons deſiring him to touch them, or theirs, but for this end; in *Matthew* it is read, *that he ſhould put his hands on them*; and ſo the *Arabic* and *Perſic* verſions here read, in order to pray over them, and bleſs them: but neither in one place, or the other, is any mention of their baptiſm, or of their being brought for ſuch a purpoſe; nor can it be concluded from hence: *but when his diſciples ſaw it, they rebuked them*; the perſons that brought the infants; ſee the note on *Matt.* xix. 13.

Ver. 16. *But Jeſus called them unto him*, &c.] Not the diſciples, as the *Ethiopic* verſion reads, nor the perſons that brought the children, but the children themſelves; for the antecedent to the relative αυτα, *them*, can be no other; which ſhews, that theſe infants were not new-born babes, or children at the breaſt, but ſuch as were more grown up, ſince they were capable of being called to, and of coming to Chriſt: *and ſaid*; that is, to the diſciples; ſo the *Perſic* verſion expreſſes it: *ſuffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xix. 14. *for of ſuch is the kingdom of God*; or *of heaven*, as the *Syriac* verſion reads, and as in *Matt.* xix. 14. that is, the kingdom of God belongs to ſuch, *who are as theſe*; or, *like to theſe*, as the *Syriac*, *Arabic* and *Perſic* verſions render the words; ſee the note as before.

Ver. 17. *Verily I ſay unto you*, &c.] Chriſt takes an occaſion from hence to teach his diſciples humility, and guard them againſt pride and vanity: *whoſoever ſhall not receive the kingdom of God*; the king Meſſiah, the doctrines of the Goſpel, and the ordinances of it, even the whole Goſpel-diſpenſation: *as a little child*; without prejudice, pride, ambition, and vanity, with meekneſs, and humility: *ſhall in no wiſe enter therein*; he is a very unfit and improper perſon to be a profeſſor of the Goſpel; or to be admitted to Goſpel-ordinances; or be a member of a Goſpel-church; or be reckoned a ſubject of the Meſſiah's kingdom, which is of a ſpiritual nature; and as he has not a meetneſs for, and a right unto, the kingdom of Glory, he ſhall never ſee it, and enjoy it.

Ver. 18. *And a certain ruler aſked him*, &c.] A young man, *Matt.* xix. 20. a ruler among the *Jews*, a civil magiſtrate, and a very rich man; he ran after *Jeſus*, and overtook him in the way, as he was going towards *Jericho*, *Mark* x. 17. *ſaying, good maſter*; *Rabbi*, or doctor, *what ſhall I do to inherit eternal life?* ſee the note on *Matt.* xix. 16.

Ver. 19. *And Jeſus ſaid unto him*, &c.] In anſwer to his queſtion, beginning with the character he gave him: *why calleſt thou me good?* it being unuſual to addreſs men, even their *Rabbins*, under ſuch a title: *none is good, ſave one*, that is, *God*; or *but God alone*, as the *Vulgate Latin* and *Arabic* verſions render it; or, *but the one God*, as read the *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions; ſee the note on *Matt.* xix. 17.

Ver. 20. *Thou knoweſt the commandments*, &c.] The ten commandments given to *Moſes*, and delivered to the people; and which they were careful to teach their children; though five are only here mentioned, and not in the order in which they ſtand: ſuggeſting hereby that theſe muſt be kept, or the law muſt be fulfilled, and ſatisfaction made for the violation of it, or there can be no inheriting eternal life. The five commandments mentioned, are, the ſeventh, ſixth, eighth, ninth, and fifth: *do not commit adultery*; *do not kill*; *do not ſteal*; *do not bear falſe witneſs*; *honour thy father and thy mother*; ſee the notes on *Matt.* xix. 17. and *Mark* x. 19.

Ver. 21. *And he ſaid*, &c.] That is, the ruler ſaid *to him*, as the *Syriac* and *Ethiopic* verſions add; *to Jeſus*, as the *Perſic* verſion expreſſes it; *all theſe have I kept from my youth up*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xix. 20. where it is added, *what lack I yet?*

Ver. 22. *Now when Jeſus heard theſe things*, &c.] That he had kept all theſe commandments, and that ever ſince he was a child, and to that very time: *he ſaid unto him, yet lackeſt thou one thing*; not but that he lacked many other things, and even every thing; for he had performed no one thing as it ſhould be; but Chriſt ſaid, partly in anſwer to his pert queſtion, *what lack I yet?* and partly by an ironical conceſſion, granting he had kept them all, as he had ſaid, yet one thing was wanting; and chiefly with a view to mortify his pride and vanity: *ſell all that thou haſt, and diſtribute unto the poor, and thou ſhalt have treaſure in heaven, and come and follow me*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xix. 21.

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[y] T. Bab. Sota, fol. 5. 1.

[z] Zohar in Lev. fol. 39. 1.

Ver. 23. *And when he heard this,* &c.] That one thing was wanting, and what that was, which was to part with all his worldly ſubſtance, and follow Chriſt; *he was very ſorrowful, for he was very rich*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xix. 22.

Ver. 24. *And when Jeſus ſaw that he was very ſorrowful,* &c.] As he might, by his looks and geſtures; and perceived that he was determined not to part with his poſſeſſions, and follow him: *he ſaid,* to his diſciples, *how hardly ſhall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!* embrace the Goſpel, and ſubmit to the ordinances of it; deny themſelves, part with their worldly ſubſtance for the cauſe of Chriſt, and intereſt of religion. Riches, which ſhould be a reaſon for, are often a bar unto a profeſſion of Chriſt, and his Goſpel. This is delivered as an affirmation, or by way of aſſertion, in *Matt.* xix. 23. ſee the note there.

Ver. 25. *For it is eaſier for a camel,* &c.] Theſe words were ſpoken to the diſciples again, and were a ſecond addreſs to them, after they had ſhewn aſtoniſhment at the former; ſee the notes on *Matt.* xix. 24. and *Mark* x. 24, 25.

Ver. 26. *And they that heard it, ſaid, who then can be ſaved?*] Theſe were the diſciples of Chriſt, who ſo ſaid; ſee *Matt.* xix. 25.

Ver. 27. *And he ſaid,* &c.] That is, *Jeſus,* as the *Syriac, Perſic,* and *Ethiopic* verſions expreſs it: *the things which are impoſſible with men, are poſſible with God*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xix. 26.

Ver. 28. *Then Peter ſaid,* &c.] *To him,* as the *Syriac* and *Arabic* verſions add; that is, to the Lord Jeſus, as the *Ethiopic* verſion expreſſes it; who was always the moſt forward to ſpeak on any occaſion: he obſerving what was required of the young man, and how unwilling he was to comply with it, and the difficulty in every rich man's way of entrance into the kingdom of God, ſpoke as follows; *lo, we have left all:* the *Arabic* verſion reads, *all ours*; all we had, our friends, trades, and worldly ſubſtance; *and followed thee:* in *Matt.* xix. 27. 'tis added, *what ſhall we have therefore?* referring to the promiſe of Chriſt, to the young man, that ſhould he ſell all he had, and give it to the poor, he ſhould have treaſure in heaven; ſee the note there.

Ver. 29. *And he ſaid unto them,* &c.] To his diſciples, as the *Ethiopic* verſion reads; tho' the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read, *and Jeſus ſaid to him*; that is, to *Peter*; he particularly replied to him: *verily I ſay unto you, there is no man*; not only you ſhall have peculiar honour done you, as to ſit on thrones, and judge the twelve tribes of *Iſrael*; but there is not a ſingle perſon of a more private character, *that hath left houſe,* or *houſes,* as read the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions; *or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's ſake*; that is, for Chriſt's ſake, and for the ſake of his Goſpel, as the other Evangeliſts have it; and which teaches us how to underſtand the kingdom of God here, and elſewhere.

Ver. 30. *Who ſhall not receive manifold more in this preſent time,* &c.] Not more houſes, parents, brethren, *&c.* but that which is abundantly preferable to them; ſuch comfort, peace, ſatisfaction, and pleaſure, as are not to be found in ſuch enjoyments: *and in the world to come life everlaſting*; which was what the young man was deſirous of inheriting, v. 18. ſee the note on *Matt.* xix. 29.

Ver. 31.] *Then he took unto him the twelve,* &c.] His twelve diſciples, as the *Ethiopic* verſion expreſſes it; he took them aſide from the reſt of the company, as they were travelling on the road, and privately delivered to them, what follows; ſee *Matt.* xx. 17. *and ſaid unto them, behold, we go up to Jeruſalem*; to the feaſt of the paſſover, which was drawing near, and the laſt Chriſt was to eat with his diſciples, the time of his ſufferings, and death, being now at hand; and of which he though fit to give his diſciples notice: and therefore he called them aſide, and, in a private manner, told them, *that all things that are written by the prophets, concerning the Son of man, ſhall be accompliſhed*; particularly, *Pſ.* ii. 1, 2. and xxii. 6, 7, 8. *Iſ.* l. 6. *Micah* v. 1. *Iſ.* liii. 5, 6, 12. *Pſ.* xxii. 15. and xvi. 10. *Hoſ.* vi. 2. for to theſe the following things have reſpect.

Ver. 32. *For he ſhall be delivered unto the Gentiles,* &c.] As he was by the chief prieſts, *Scribes,* and elders, to *Pilate,* the *Roman* governour, and by him to the ſoldiers: *and ſhall be mocked*; as he was by the latter, when they crowned him with thorns, arrayed him in a purple-robe, and put a reed into his hand, and bowed the knee to him, ſaying, hail king of the *Jews*; and likewiſe by the *Jews* when he hung upon the croſs: *and ſpitefully intreated.* The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions leave out this clauſe here, and read it in the next verſe. It may regard the injuries done him, the abuſes and affronts he received, both by words and blows: *and ſpitted on*; as he was both by the officers in the high-prieſt's palace, and by the *Roman* ſoldiers in *Pilate*'s hall; ſee *Iſ.* l. vi.

Ver. 33. *And they ſhall ſcourge him,* &c.] As he was by *Pilate*'s order, before he was crucified: *and put him to death*; a ſhameful, and a painful one, the death of the croſs: *and the third day he ſhall riſe again*; as he accordingly did.

Ver. 34. *And they underſtood none of theſe things,* &c.] *Not one of them,* as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions render it; every article of his ſufferings and death were unintelligible by them; they knew not how to underſtand him in any one point; or how to reconcile theſe things to the notions they had entertained of the temporal grandeur, and glory, of the Meſſiah, and his kingdom; and which ſhews their great ignorance of the prophecies of the Old Teſtament concerning theſe things. *And this ſaying,* or *thing*; for it anſwers to the *Hebrew* word דבר, which ſignifies any affair, or matter, as well as a word, or ſaying: and ſo here, the whole of this affair *was hid from them*; unleſs it ſhould have a peculiar regard to that part of it, which expreſſes his reſurrection from the dead; ſee *Mark* ix. 10. or the delivery of him to the *Gentiles, Luke* ix. 44, 45. *neither knew they the things which were ſpoken*; the meaning of them. The *Ethiopic* verſion leaves out this, and puts the former clauſe, by way of queſtion, *and he ſaid unto them, and is this ſaying hid from you?*

Ver. 35. *And it came to paſs that as he was come nigh unto Jericho,* &c.] Which lay in his way to *Jeruſalem: a certain blind man ſat by the way-ſide begging*; this was not blind *Bartimeus,* nor his companion, for they were cured by Chriſt as he went out of *Jericho*; but this man before he came to it; for we afterwards read of his entrance into, and paſſing thro' *Jericho,* ch. xix. 1. tho' much the ſame things are related in this account, as in that of the other two blind men; ſee the note on *Matt.* xx. 30.

Ver. 36. *And hearing the multitude paſs by*, &c.] Their *voice*, as the *Syriac* verſion expreſſes it; the noiſe of their feet, and eſpecially of their tongues; *he aſked what it meant?* what was the meaning of this concourſe of people, and of this clamorous noiſe; or, as the *Syriac* verſion reads, *who it ſhould be?* what perſon of note was paſſing by, that there was ſuch a multitude after him? to which the anſwer beſt agrees.

Ver. 37. *And they told him, that Jeſus of Nazareth paſſeth by.*] Some of the company anſwered him, that Jeſus, the prophet of *Nazareth*, ſo much talked of, and ſaid to be the Meſſiah, who was become ſo famous for his doctrines and miracles, for healing diſeaſes, and diſpoſſeſſing devils, was juſt *then* paſſing by; and this occaſioned the noiſe and clamour.

Ver. 38. *And he cried, ſaying, Jeſus thou Son of David*, &c.] Believing him, at once, to be the Meſſiah; whence he calls him the ſon of *David*, which was a character and title of the Meſſiah, well known to the *Jews*; ſee the note on *Matt.* i. 1. and therefore immediately called out unto him, being willing to take that opportunity as he paſſed, and whilſt he was within hearing, to make his ſuit to him for his ſight: *ſaying, have mercy on me*; a poor, blind, and miſerable creature, and reſtore me to my ſight, which will be an act of ſingular mercy, and goodneſs, and will always be gratefully owned as ſuch.

Ver. 39. *And they that went before*, &c.] In the company that preceded Chriſt; for he, as yet, was not come right over-againſt the blind man: *rebuked him that he ſhould hold his peace*; being not well pleaſed that he ſhould call him the Son of *David*, which was acknowledging him to be the Meſſiah; or that he might not be troubleſome to Chriſt, and retard his journey: *but he cried ſo much the more, thou Son of David, have mercy on me*; he neither dropped the character of Chriſt, nor his requeſt to him; but called out more loudly, and with greater vehemence, earneſtneſs, and importunity: ſo perſons ſenſible of their need of Chriſt, and of his worth, excellency, and ability, are not to be diſcouraged from an application to him, by whatſoever they meet with from men, or devils.

Ver. 40. *And Jeſus ſtood*, &c.] He ſtood ſtill; he made a full ſtop, and went no further, when, it is very likely, he was juſt over-againſt him: *and commanded him to be brought unto him*; either by the diſciples, or by ſome of the multitude: *and when he was come near he aſked him*; the following queſtion.

Ver. 41. *Saying, what wilt thou that I ſhall do unto thee?* &c.] Is it alms thou aſkeſt? or is it thy ſight thou wouldſt have reſtored? *and he ſaid, Lord, that I may receive my ſight*; this he choſe, this was his requeſt, and what he cried ſo vehemently for; and which he believed Chriſt, the Son of *David*, was able to do for him.

Ver. 42. *And Jeſus ſaid unto him, receive thy ſight*, &c.] Be it to thee, as thou deſireſt, look up and ſee: thus by a word ſpeaking, and power going along with it, without making uſe of any means, he fulfilled his deſire. *Thy faith hath ſaved thee*; or has received ſalvation for thee, a temporal ſalvation; and it may be alſo a ſpiritual and an eternal one: for that is the concern faith has in ſalvation; it is the means of receiving and enjoying it: Chriſt the object of faith, is the author of it.

Ver. 43. *And immediately he received his ſight*, &c.] As ſoon as ever the word was gone out of Chriſt's mouth, virtue went forth from him, and cured the man of his blindneſs; his eyes were at once opened, and he ſaw as other men: *and followed him*; his kind benefactor, with a grateful ſenſe of his goodneſs, with ſtrong affection for him, and faith in him: *glorifying God*; who had ſent ſuch a Saviour to him; who had wrought ſuch a wonderful miracle for him; for he was ſenſible, that none but God could do this. *And all the people, when they ſaw it*; what was done, how, that the man they juſt before ſaw was blind, and begging by the way-ſide, now had his ſight reſtored to him, in an inſtant, and was following Jeſus, in the crowd, along with them: *gave praiſe unto God*; or, as *Beza*'s moſt antient copy reads, *glory*; they aſcribed the glory to God, and praiſed his name, that he had raiſed up the Meſſiah among them; of which this was a clear proof, inaſmuch as the eyes of the blind were opened, according to *Iſ.* xxxv. 5.

## CHAP. XIX.

Ver. 1. AND Jeſus *entered, and paſſed through Jericho.*] Though the word *Jeſus* is not in the original text, 'tis rightly ſupplied in our verſion; as it is alſo in the *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions; for of him the words are manifeſtly ſpoken: after he had healed the blind man he met with near to *Jericho*, he entered into it, but made no ſtay in it, paſſed thro' it at once without ſtopping, tho' a very populous city; but here he had no work, either to perform miracles, or to convert ſinners; tho' both, before he entered, and after he paſſed thro' it.

Ver. 2. *And behold* there was *a man named Zaccheus*, &c.] Or זַכָּאי, *Zaccai*, a name in uſe among the *Jews*; ſee *Ezra* ii. 9. We often read of ר׳ זכאי, *Rabbi Zaccai*, or *Zaccheus*[a], and very frequently of *R. Jochanan ben Zaccai*, a famous doctor that lived in the times of Chriſt, and even till after the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*. The *Jews* alſo make mention of one *R. Zaccai*, a prince of the ſeed of *David* the king, in later times[b]. So that this man, as appears by his name, was a *Jew*, though ſome have thought him to have been a *Gentile*[c], perhaps becauſe of his employment: but it does not follow from thence; for there were *Jews* that were publicans, as *Levi*, or *Matthew*, afterwards one of Chriſt's diſciples; and alſo in *Jewiſh* writings, mention is made, as of מוכס נכרי, *a ſtranger*, or *a Gentile publican*[d], ſo likewiſe of מוכס ישראל, *an Iſraelite publican*[e]; and ſuch an one was *Zaccheus*, as follows: *which was chief among the publicans*; the head of them in that place, to whom the reſt brought the tax, tribute, or toll; he was the receiver-general of the tax: at the toll-booths, at bridges, for peoples going over the water, there was, מוכס גדול, *the greater publican*, and מוכס קטן, *the leſſer publican*[f], who was deputy to the other. What ſort of tax *Zaccheus* was concerned in collecting, is not certain; however, he was a principal man in this employ, and had got great riches by it. *And he was*

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[a] T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 27. 2. & Yebamot, fol. 77. 2. Nazir, fol. 38. 1. & Nidda, fol. 41. 2. & Juchaſin, fol. 90. 2.

[b] R. Benjamin Itinerar. p. 61, 94.

[c] Tertull. contr. Marcion. l. 4. c. 37.

[d] T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 113. 1.

[e] Maimon. & Bartenora in Miſn. Bava Kama, c. 10. §. 1.

[f] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 78. 2.

*was rich*; was a perſon of figure among the publicans, and of ſubſtance, which he had gained in his poſt. And tho' the inſtances of rich men being called by grace, are few, yet there have been ſome; and the rather this circumſtance is mentioned, becauſe it had been obſerved in the preceding chapter, how difficult, but not impoſſible, as this inſtance proves, it was for rich men to enter into the kingdom of God.

Ver. 3. *And he ſought to ſee Jeſus who he was,* &c.] What ſort of a perſon he was for complexion, ſtature, and age: having heard much of him, he was very deſirous of indulging his curioſity with a ſight of him; having, as yet, nothing elſe that induced him to deſire to ſee him: his deſire to ſee Jeſus was not of the ſame kind with the kings and prophets, *Matt.* xiii. 16. but rather like that of *Herod*, *Luke* xxiii. 8. *and could not for the preſs*; the multitude of people that were flocking to meet Jeſus, or who came before him, or were about him; for one part of the multitude went before him, and the other followed after him; ſo that he was in the croud, and therefore could not eaſily be ſeen; *becauſe he was little of ſtature.* The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read, *becauſe Zaccheus was little of ſtature,* leſt it ſhould be thought that this is ſaid of Jeſus; for the reaſon why *Zaccheus* could not ſee him for the croud, was not becauſe Chriſt was little of ſtature, and ſo was hid among them, but becauſe *Zaccheus* was little of ſtature, and could not ſee over their heads.

Ver. 4. *And he ran before,* &c.] Jeſus, and the company that was with him; ſo very deſirous was he of ſeeing him: *and climbed up into a ſycomore-tree to ſee him*; which ſort of trees were very common about *Jericho*: hence we read of, קורות של שקמה, *beams of ſycomore* in *Jericho*, which thoſe that were ſtrong took up in their arms, and the owners ſtood and devoted them to God [g]; and among the things which the men of *Jericho* did, this was one, that they permitted the branches of trees devoted to ſacred uſes, and of the *charub* tree, and of *the ſycomore*, to be cut down and uſed [h]. This ſort of trees uſed to grow in plains and valleys, as appears from ſome paſſages of ſcripture, 1 *Kings* x. 27. 2 *Chron.* ix. 27. and from *Jewiſh* writings [i]; and certain it is, that *Jericho* was in ſuch a ſituation. *Joſephus* [k] ſays, it was ſeated in a plain; and *Strabo* ſays [l], that *Jericho* is a plain ſurrounded with mountains; to which agrees the account that [m] *Juſtin* gives of it. There is a valley, which is incloſed by mountains on all ſides, as with a wall, like a caſtle; the ſpace of the place is two hundred acres, and it is called *Jericho*. Hence we read of the plains and valley of *Jericho* in ſcripture, *Deut.* xxxiv. 3. 2 *Kings* xxv. 5. ſo that it is very probable ſycomore-trees grew there in great plenty; tho' the place was more famous for palm-trees: hence it is called the city of the palm-trees, *Deut.* xxxiv. 3. *Judg.* iii. 13. which the *Targumiſt*, in both places, interprets, the city of *Jericho*: to which agree the accounts given of it by *Pliny* [n], *Strabo* [o], and *Juſtin* [p], who all affirm, that it abounded with palm-trees; and the latter ſays alſo with balſam-trees, from the ſweet ſmell of which it might have its name: ſo the *Jews* ſay [q], the ointment of balſam is called the ointment of our land, becauſe it grows in *Jericho*, and becauſe of the ſmell of it, it is called *Jericho*; tho' ſome think it has its name from the plain, being in the form of a half-moon; the moon, in the *Hebrew* language, being called ירח [r]. This tree ſeems to have been without the city: and indeed, according to the *Jewiſh* canon, it ought to be, which runs thus [s]; "they ſet a tree at a diſtance from a city, "twenty and five cubits, but a *charub* tree, and "*ſycomore*, fifty cubits." The reaſon of the greater diſtance of the latter is, as one of their commentators ſays [t], becauſe their branches were large; and this is the reaſon why *Zaccheus* went up into one of theſe trees, becauſe it was large and able to bear him, and tall, from whence he could have a full view of Chriſt: *for he was to paſs that way*; or rather, *paſs by that*; for the word *way* is not in the text; and the ſenſe is, he was to paſs by that tree; or *under it*, as the *Arabic* verſion renders it. The tree ſtood by the road-ſide, in which Jeſus came, for which reaſon *Zaccheus* made choice of it, as for his purpoſe.

Ver. 5. *And when Jeſus came to the place,* &c.] Where the tree ſtood, in which *Zaccheus* was. Chriſt knows where his people are, and where to find them, where they commonly dwell, or where at any time they are, he being God omniſcient; beſides, the bounds of their habitations are fixed by the determination and appointment of God, and were foreknown by Chriſt, who, before the world began, was *rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth*, where he knew his ſaints would dwell, who are *the ſons of men*, with whom *his delights were*; and he knows where they are, when the time is come to call them: he knew *Zaccheus* was in the ſycomore-tree, as he ſaw *Nathanael* under the fig-tree, before *Philip* called him, *John* i. 48. and Chriſt comes to the very place where his people are, either in perſon, as here; and ſo he came to *Galilee*, and to the ſea there, and walked by it, and on the very ſpot, where he knew he ſhould meet with *Peter*, and *Andrew*, and *James*, and *John*, whom he called to follow him, *Matt.* iv. 13, 18, 21. He came to his own city *Capernaum*, and to the place of receipt of cuſtom near unto it, where *Matthew* was, and called him, *Matt.* ix. 1, 9. and he came to *Samaria*, and to *Jacob*'s well, where he knew the woman of *Samaria* would be at ſuch a time, in order to call her: or, tho' he comes not in perſon to others, where they are, yet by his word, and by his Spirit; and he comes to them before they come to him; and is found of them, and finds them, who ſought him not; and is made manifeſt to them, who aſked not for him; and in this he acts the part of the good ſhepherd, that leaves the ninety-nine in the wilderneſs, and goes after that which is loſt till he finds it; and agreeable to his character as a Saviour, and to the end of his coming into the world, which was to call ſinners to repentance, and to ſeek, and ſave that which is loſt, ver. 10. *He looked up and ſaw him*; he knew him, he being one of thoſe the Father had given to him, and he had loved and undertook for, and was come into the world to ſeek, and to ſave, and now, at this time, was come hither to call by his grace. He had ſeen him before in the glaſs of his father's purpoſes and decrees, he being choſen in him to grace and glory, and being a veſſel of mercy, afore prepared for glory: he had ſeen him when he was brought into the bond of the covenant; and paſſed under the rod of him, that telleth all the covenant ones, as they were put into it, and given to him the mediator of it: he had ſeen him among them that were loſt in *Adam*, whom he came to recover out of the ruins of their fall in him; and now he ſaw him in his ſtate of nature and unregeneracy; he ſaw him in his blood, and ſaid unto him, live: this look was a look of love, grace, and mercy; he looked upon him, and loved him, and was gracious to him, and had compaſſion on him; and it was a diſtinguiſhing look, he looked on him, and not on others. There was a great croud both before and behind him, and all about him; but he looked not on theſe, but he looked up to *Zaccheus*. *And he ſaid unto him, Zaccheus*; he knew him, and could call him by his name, as he did *Saul*, when he called him, and revealed himſelf to him. His name was written in the lamb's book of life, and ſo muſt be known to Chriſt, who was preſent at the making of that book, and was concerned in ſetting down the names in it, and has it in his keeping: he was one of the ſheep the father had given him, he came to lay down his life for, and of whom he had ſuch perfect knowledge, as to call them by name, as he does all the choſen and redeemed ones; ſee *Iſ*. xliii. 1. *John* x. 3. It muſt be very ſurprizing to *Zaccheus* to hear Chriſt call him by his name, who was an utter ſtranger to him, and whom he had never ſeen before; and it is a very conſiderable inſtance of the omniſcience of Chriſt, as well of his great condeſcenſion and affectionate regard he has to his own, and the familiar way in which he uſes them. *Make haſte, and come down*; from the tree. The dangerous eſtate and condition of a ſinner requires haſte; it is like that of *Lot* in *Sodom*, when it was juſt going to be deſtroyed; and like that of the manſlayer, when purſued by the avenger of blood; both whom it became to eſcape for their lives, and flee for refuge as faſt as they could: and ſo it became *Zaccheus* to come down with all ſpeed to Chriſt, who was come hither to call and ſave him; and the enjoyment of Chriſt, and his grace, calls for haſte; ſee *John* xi. 28, 29. Such who come to Chriſt muſt quit all their exalted thoughts of themſelves, of their riches, fulneſs, and ſelf-ſufficiency, and come to him as poor and needy, for ſuch only he fills with his good things; and of their health and ſoundneſs, and come to him the great phyſician, as ſick and diſeaſed; and of their purity and goodneſs, holineſs and righteouſneſs, and come to him as ſinners: but it muſt be mighty grace to caſt down imaginations, and high things, that exalt themſelves againſt Chriſt, and the knowledge of him, and to humble a proud ſinner, and bring him to the feet of Jeſus. *For this day I muſt abide at thy houſe*; for a little while; not ſo much for the ſake of refreſhment for himſelf, and his diſciples, as for *Zaccheus*'s good; to make known the great ſalvation to him, and to beſtow his grace upon him, and converſe with him in a ſpiritual way.

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[g] T. Bab. Peſachim, fol. 57. 1. & Juchaſin, fol. 69. 1.

[h] T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 71. 1. & Peſachim, fol. 56. 1.

[i] Miſn. Sheviith, c. 9. §. 2.

[k] De Bello Jud. l. 4. c. 27.

[l] Geograph. l. 16.

[m] Hiſt. l. 36. c. 3.

[n] Nat. Hiſt. l. 5. c. 14.

[o] Ut ſupra.

[p] Ib.

[q] Gloſſ. in T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 43. 1.

[r] Vid. Maſium in Joſh. c. 2. p. 37.

[s] Miſna Bava Bathra, c. 2. §. 7.

[t] Bartenora in ib.

Ver. 6. *And he made haſte*, &c.] Such power went along with the words of Chriſt, that they immediately reached his heart, awakened his conſcience, affected his mind, and drew his ſoul to Chriſt, and knit him to him, that he made all imaginable haſte to be with him. So ſouls ſenſible of their dangerous ſtate and condition by nature, and apprehenſive of impending ruin and deſtruction, and having ſome intimation of ſafety and happineſs in Chriſt, and being filled with love to him, and a liking of him, flee with all haſte to him for refuge, for righteouſneſs, peace, pardon, life, and ſalvation: *and came down*; from the tree he had climbed, merely to indulge his curioſity, little thinking that he ſhould be called by name by him; that he ſhould have him a gueſt at his houſe, and have ſuch a knowledge of him, and familiar acquaintance with him: ſo ſouls, when called by Chriſt, and made ſenſible of their need of him, and the worth there is in him, quit their former poſt and place, part with their carnal luſts and ſinful companions, and renounce their own righteouſneſs and works, and come as ſinners, humble and lowly, and venture upon Chriſt: *and received him joyfully*; not only into his houſe, but into his arms and heart: Chriſt was a welcome gueſt to him, as he is to every ſenſible ſinner, who by faith receives him, as the Father's free gift; as the alone Saviour and Redeemer; as the great Mediator, in all his offices, of prophet, prieſt, and king; and in every relation and character he bears; and embraces his doctrines, and ſubmits to his ordinances, and that with the greateſt joy; as there is reaſon for it, ſince with him, he receives the free and full forgiveneſs of his ſins, a juſtifying righteouſneſs, an abundance of grace, and a right unto, and meetneſs for heaven.

Ver. 7. *And when they ſaw it*, &c.] The *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, and *Arabic* verſions read, *when they all ſaw this*; that is, as the *Perſic* verſion rather paraphraſing than tranſlating, ſays, *the men and the multitude that were with him*; the *phariſaical* ſort, the prieſts and *Levites*, of which there were great numbers in *Jericho*; ſee the note on ch. x. 31. *They all murmured*; as the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* did, at his eating with publicans and ſinners, ch. xv. 2. *Saying, that he was gone to be gueſt with a man that is a ſinner*; a notorious one, an abandoned profligate creature; one of the worſt of ſinners, as being a publican, and the chief of them; who had amaſſed vaſt riches to himſelf, by extortion and oppreſſion; and they thought it was not agreeable to the character of an holy man, and a venerable prophet, which Chriſt bore, to go into ſuch a man's houſe, eat at his table, and have familiar converſation with him; ſee *Matt*. ix. 10.

Ver. 8. *And Zaccheus ſtood*, &c.] Before Chriſt, in reſpect to him, and reverence of him; and in the preſence of others, to make a public confeſſion before them, and that they might all hear it, when come to his own houſe: *and ſaid unto the Lord*; that is, *to Jeſus*, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions, and ſome copies read; he addreſſed himſelf to Chriſt, and made his confeſſion to him, as the *Iſraelite*, when he brought the baſket of the firſtfruits to the prieſt, confeſſed before the Lord his God, *Deut*. xxvi. 5. And the rather *Zaccheus* directed his ſpeech to Chriſt, being, as he was now convinced, the diſcerner of the thoughts, and intents of the heart; who knew the genuineneſs of his repentance, that it was hearty and real; and the ſincerity of his expreſſions and reſolutions, and upon what principles he acted, and propoſed to do as follows: *behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give unto the poor*; not to make ſatisfaction for the ſins he had committed, but to teſtify his ſenſe of them, and his repentance for them, and as willing to do good with what he had gotten; which ſhows, that the diſpoſition of his mind was altered, and of a covetous oppreſſor, he was become tender, kind, and liberal. According to an order made by the *Jews* in *Uſha*, a man might not give away more than a fifth part of his eſtate, unleſs in ſome extraordinary caſes[n]; and we read of one, that gave a *third* part of his goods to the poor[w]; and of another, that gave, as here, half of his mammon,

or

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[n] T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 50. 1. & Maimon. in Miſn. Peah, c. 1. §. 1.

[w] T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 44. 1.

or wealth [x]; and another, half of his food to the poor [y]; and of another, that gave away all his goods to them [z]; ſee 1 *Cor.* xiii. 3. to give a tenth part, was reckoned a medium [a]: *and if I have taken any thing from any man by falſe accuſation*; or by extorting any thing from him on any pretence, by making an unjuſt demand upon him; or in any oppreſſive way, by defrauding and tricking, and by doing him any injury, in any form or manner: *I reſtore him fourfold*; the ſame that was done in caſe of ſheep ſtealing, *Exod.* xxii. 1. but in ſuch a caſe as this, the law only required the principal, with the fifth part added to it; ſee *Levit.* vi. 5. *Numb.* v. 7. but *Zaccheus* propoſes as much, as in the caſe of theft, and which was rarely uſed. The *Jews* [b] ſay, "that the manner of paying double, was "more uſed than the manner of paying fourfold, "or fivefold; for the manner of paying double "was uſed, both in things animate and inanimate; "but the manner of paying fourfold and fivefold, "was uſed but with reſpect to an ox, and a ſheep "only." This was done by *Zaccheus*, to ſhew the truth and reality of his repentance; for with that nation, "the repentance of ſhepherds, and of collectors, and of *publicans*, is ſaid [c] to be very "difficult:" the reaſon given by the *Gloſs* is, becauſe they rob many, and don't know who to return to.

Ver. 9. *And Jeſus ſaid unto him*, &c.] The *Perſic* verſion reads, *Jeſus ſaid to the multitude, and to his diſciples*; to which well enough agree the following words: *this day is ſalvation come to this houſe*; to the maſter of it, and it may be to others in it; the *Arabic* verſion reads, *to the inhabitants of this houſe*. The *Perſic* verſion reads, *great ſalvation*; by which may be meant, the Goſpel, as in *Heb.* ii. 3. ſo called, becauſe it brings the account of ſalvation by Chriſt, which is not diſcoverable by the light of nature, nor made known by the law of *Moſes*; but the Goſpel publiſhes and proclaims it; the miniſters of it, ſhew unto men the way of ſalvation, and direct them, and encourage to go to Chriſt for it; likewiſe the Goſpel is the means of bringing near this ſalvation, and of applying it to them; and when it comes with the demonſtration of the Spirit, it is the power of God unto ſalvation: and this might be truly ſaid to come to *Zaccheus*'s houſe; inaſmuch as Chriſt the great preacher of it, and by whom it firſt began to be ſpoken, and was ſpoken by him, as it never was by any one beſides, was now in his houſe, preaching it; the ſum and ſubſtance of which, lies in the words delivered by him in the following verſe; and the Goſpel came to him to purpoſe, and was effectual: ſometimes it comes to a people, city, town, or family, and it is rejected, and becomes of no effect; but here it came to *Zaccheus*, and into him; and wrought effectually in him, as his words in the preceding verſe declare: moreover, the bleſſing of ſalvation itſelf, which is wrought out by Chriſt, and publiſhed in the Goſpel, was brought home to him; he was not only made ſenſible that he ſtood in need of ſalvation, but this was brought near unto him, and ſet before him, and applied to him; he had not only hopes of it, but faith of intereſt in it; it was made known unto him, that Chriſt was his ſalvation; and it was revealed and applied to the reſt of the family, as well as to him: ſometimes the Lord takes one of a city, and two of a family; and ſometimes whole families, as *Lydia*'s and the *jailor's*, and here *Zaccheus*'s, as ſeems probable; for by his houſe may be meant, his family: though this may be underſtood of Chriſt, the author of ſalvation; who came into his houſe in a literal ſenſe, as well as in a ſpiritual ſenſe; and was made known to *Zaccheus*, as his Saviour and Redeemer. The *Alexandrian* copy reads, *in this houſe*: it follows, *foraſmuch as he alſo is the ſon of Abraham*. Theſe words are to be conſidered, either as a reaſon, or evidence, of ſalvation being come to his houſe; and therefore can't be underſtood of him as a ſon of *Abraham*, by natural deſcent: he was indeed a *Jew*, as appears by his name, and by his knowledge of the *Jewiſh* law, concerning reſtoration; and which may be confirmed by the ſilence of the *Phariſees*, who murmured at Chriſt's going along with him; who, had he been a *Gentile*, would not have failed to have mentioned it; but then, though this might be a reaſon juſtifying Chriſt in going to his houſe, who did not exceed the bounds of his office, as the miniſter of the circumciſion, and as ſent, and that only to the loſt ſheep of the houſe of *Iſrael*; yet this could be no reaſon of ſpiritual ſalvation coming to him, which was not confined to *Abraham*'s natural ſeed, nor was it neceſſary to them, more than others, and much leſs general; and indeed, very few of them then in being, partook of it; for though ſalvation was of them, and Chriſt the Saviour came unto them, yet they rejected him, and died in their ſins: nor is this a reaſon of ſalvation coming to his family; for though by virtue of the covenant of circumciſion made with *Abraham* and his natural ſeed, there were many outward privileges beſtowed upon them, yet ſpiritual ſalvation was not inſured by it to them; and with regard to that, natural deſcent from *Abraham*, and circumciſion, were of no avail: but this is to be underſtood of him, as a ſon of *Abraham* in a ſpiritual ſenſe, he being now a believer in Chriſt, and ſo one that walked in the ſteps of the faith of *Abraham*; and this was an evidence of his intereſt in ſalvation by Chriſt, the bleſſing with which he was bleſſed, with faithful *Abraham*: and alſo his being a ſon of *Abraham*, which is no other than to be a child of the promiſe, *Rom.* ix. 8. or in other words, one of God's elect, a choſen veſſel of ſalvation, was a reaſon why Chriſt, the author of ſalvation, came to him, why the Goſpel of ſalvation was made known to him, and why the bleſſing of ſalvation was applied to him. The *Jews* uſe this phraſe, not only of one whoſe natural deſcent is from *Abraham*, but whoſe knowledge in divine things is conſiderable: ſo when *R. Eliezer ben Arach* taught the *Mercava*, (the myſtery of *Ezekiel*'s viſions,) "*R. Jochanan ben Zaccai*, ſtood and "kiſſed his head, and ſaid, bleſſed art thou, O "God of *Iſrael*, that has given, בן לאברהם, "*a ſon to Abraham*, who has knowledge to under- "ſtand, and to ſearch out, and to explain the "work of *Mercava* [d]." For *Abraham* is ſaid [e] to be a father in this ſort of knowledge, for which reaſon, this man was genealogized a ſon of *Abraham*.

Ver. 10. *For the Son of man*, &c.] Meaning himſelf, who was truly man, and the Meſſiah, and which was one of his names in the Old Teſtament: *is come*; from heaven, into this world, being ſent by the Father, and with the full conſent and goodwill of his own: *to ſeek and ſave that which was loſt*; as all his elect were in *Adam*, and by their own actual tranſgreſſions; and are conſidered as ſuch, whilſt in a ſtate of unregeneracy: and particularly the loſt ſheep of the houſe of *Iſrael* are meant, one of which *Zacheus* was; and ſo the words are a reaſon of Chriſt's looking him up, and calling him by his grace, and making a diſcovery of himſelf, and an application of ſalvation to him; ſee *Matt.* xviii. 11.

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[x] T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 67. 2.

[y] Juchaſin, fol. 105. 2.

[z] T. Hieroſ. Peah, fol. 15. 2.

[a] Maimon. Hilch. Mattanot Anayim, c. 7. §. 5.

[b] Miſna Bava Kama, c. 7. §. 1.

[c] T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 94. 2.

[d] T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 14. 2.

[e] Caphtor, fol. 69. 1.

Ver. 11. *And as they heard theſe things*, &c.] What *Zaccheus* ſaid to Chriſt, and what Chriſt ſaid to *Zaccheus*; particularly, that ſalvation, or the Saviour was then come to his houſe, and that he was come to ſave loſt perſons: *he added, and ſpake a parable*; that is, as the *Syriac* verſion renders it, *he added a parable to the word*, or to what he had ſaid: *becauſe he was nigh to Jeruſalem*; within ten *parſa's*, or large miles; for at ſuch a diſtance was *Jeruſalem* from *Jericho* [f], where Chriſt now was, according to the *Jewiſh* writers; but according to *Joſephus* [g], it was a hundred and fifty furlongs, which muſt be eighteen or twenty miles, and this may be ſaid to be nigh; and not long after this, we hear of Chriſt at the mount of *Olives*, which was about a mile from *Jeruſalem*, ver. 29. *And becauſe they thought that the kingdom of God ſhould immediately appear*; or be revealed, or made manifeſt: the phraſe is *Jewiſh*; ſo *Cant.* ii. 12. *the time of the ſinging of birds is come*, is interpreted [h], the time that *the kingdom of heaven*, שתגלה, *ſhall be revealed*, is come: and elſewhere [i], "ſay to the cities of "the houſe of *Judah*, אתגליאת מלכותא דאלהכון, "*the kingdom of your God is revealed*;" meaning in both places, as here, the kingdom of the Meſſiah: what induced the diſciples of Chriſt, or the multitude, or both, to imagine that the temporal kingdom of the Meſſiah, which they were expecting, would quickly be ſet up, might be what he had ſaid to *Zaccheus*, that ſalvation was that day come to his houſe, he being a ſon of *Abraham*; which they underſtanding of a temporal ſalvation, took it as a hint, that the outward proſperity of the ſeed of *Abraham* was at hand; as alſo what he had ſaid, concerning his coming to ſeek and ſave that which is loſt; which they were willing to interpret, of the civil ſtate of *Judea*, and that he was come to reſtore its loſt liberties and privileges; and partly, becauſe he was now not a great way from *Jeruſalem*, and was on his journey thither, in order to make his entrance in a very public manner; which was the metropolis of their nation, and the ancient ſeat of their kings, *David*, *Solomon*, and others: now the ſcope and deſign of the following parable, is to refute the notion of a temporal kingdom, and its near approach; by ſhewing, that his kingdom lay a great way off, and was not of this world; and that his ſervants and diſciples, had a great deal of buſineſs to tranſact for him, and muſt not think of pomp and grandeur, but of labour and ſervice; and that the *Jews* were ſo far from receiving any advantages by his kingdom, that they would not ſubmit to his government, and would be treated as enemies, and utterly deſtroyed; even their nation, city, and temple.

Ver. 12. *He ſaid therefore*, &c.] The following parable, with the abovesaid deſign and view: *a certain nobleman*; the ſon of a great family, as the *Syriac* verſion renders it; of noble deſcent, of an illuſtrious extract; by whom is meant Jeſus Chriſt, who was a *man*, as he agreed to be, and was propheſied of as ſuch; and who frequently appeared in an human form before his incarnation; and was now actually become man, though not a mere man; and he may truly be ſaid to be *noble*; not only as the word may ſignify, as it ſometimes does, a perſon of great authority and power, and of great generoſity and goodneſs, but one of a noble birth; for Chriſt, as man, deſcended from the kings of the houſe of *Judah*, and was the ſon of *David*; and from the *Jewiſh* fathers and anceſtors of the greateſt renown, as *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*; and he may be ſo called as man, becauſe of the union of the human nature to the Son of God; or becauſe of his divine relation, as the Son of God: this illuſtrious perſon, *went into a far country*; by which, heaven is meant; ſo called, not only becauſe of its diſtance from the earth, but in compariſon of the earth, as a place of pilgrimage; and becauſe that it is out of ſight, and the views which are had of it, are very diſtant ones: hither Chriſt went at his aſcenſion; he came from heaven at his incarnation, by the aſſumption of human nature; he ſtaid here a while, till he had done his work he came about, and then went up to heaven; where he is received, and from whence he is expected again: the end of his going there is, *to receive for himſelf a kingdom*; by which is intended, not the kingdom of nature and providence; for that he had, and did not receive from another; it was his of right, and by nature; nor the kingdom of grace, ſet up in the hearts of his people, and which was already within many of them; nor the kingdom of glory, prepared for them from the foundation of the world; though into this he entered at his aſcenſion, and took poſſeſſion of it for himſelf and them: but a more viſible diſplay of his mediatorial kingdom, he received from his Father; and which, upon his aſcenſion, became more manifeſt, by the diſpoſſeſſing of ſatan, and caſting him out of the *Gentile* world; by converting large numbers of his people, both among *Jews* and *Gentiles*; and by ruling in their hearts, ſubduing their enemies, and protecting and defending them; and by thus reigning till he has gathered them all in, either in *Judea*, or in the whole world, and then he'll come again: *and return*; either to deſtroy the *Jews*; the doing of which fully proved, he had received his kingdom, was veſted with power and authority, and was made, or declared Lord and Chriſt; or at the end of the world, to judge both quick and dead: and this is ſaid, to ſhow that his perſonal glorious kingdom on earth, or his kingdom in its greateſt glory here, will not be till he comes a ſecond time; and to engage diligence in his ſervants in the mean while; and to keep up the faith, hope, and expectation of his coming again.

Ver. 13. *And he called his ten ſervants*, &c.] By whom are meant, not all mankind; for though theſe are all his ſervants of right, yet not in fact; nor the elect of God, who are called by grace; for though theſe are the ſervants of Chriſt, and are peculiarly his, yet all that received the pound were not ſuch, for one of them was a wicked man; but the miniſters of the Goſpel, who are eminently and in a ſpecial manner, the ſervants of the moſt high God: but as for the number *ten*, this can't regard the apoſtles, for they were twelve; and though they are ſometimes called the eleven, after the apoſtacy and death of *Judas*, yet not the ten; and beſides, there was another choſe in his room; but this number being a large and perfect one, a round number, it is ſometimes made uſe of as a certain number, for an uncertain one; ſee *Matt.* xxv. 1. The call of theſe by their Lord, is not to be underſtood of the call of them by his grace, but of a call of them to the office and work of the miniſtry: *and delivered them ten pounds*; every one a pound: the, מנה, *Maneh*, or pound of the *Hebrews*, if of gold, which contained an hundred drachmas, was of the value of our money, *ſeventy-five pound*; if of ſilver, the old *Maneh*, or pound, which contained ſixty ſhekels, *Ezek*. xlv. 12. amounted to *ſeven pound ten ſhillings*; but the *Maneh*, or pound, mentioned in the *Miſna* [k], and which was in uſe in our Lord's time, contained an hundred pence, and was of the value of our money, *three pound two ſhillings and ſixpence*: and by theſe pounds are deſigned, not ſpecial grace; for they intend not any thing wrought in theſe ſervants, but ſomething delivered to them, and what might be taken away again, which can't be ſaid of ſpecial grace; and beſides, it is certain, that one of theſe ſervants that had the pound, was deſtitute of that: but gifts are meant, and theſe not merely natural, or the gifts of providence, as health, riches, wiſdom, &c. nor only the outward means of grace, as the word and ordinances, but miniſterial gifts, which are the greateſt in the church, and are therefore ſignified by pounds; and are what may be improved or neglected, and be loſt or taken away; and for which thoſe that have them, are accountable: but though each of theſe ſervants are repreſented, as having every man a pound delivered to him, this muſt not be underſtood, as if the gifts of miniſters were equal and alike, any more than the inequality of their rewards, proves degrees in glory; for which ſometimes this parable is produced: *and ſaid unto him, occupy*; negotiate, or trade, that is, with the pounds; make uſe of the miniſterial gifts, exerciſe them, lay them out, and trade with them: the miniſtry is a trade and merchandize, to be carried on, not in the name of the miniſters of Chriſt, nor on their own ſtock, nor for themſelves, but for Chriſt, and for the good of ſouls; which ſhows, that they muſt not be ſlothful, but laborious and diligent: *till I come*; which ſuggeſts the certainty of Chriſt's coming, the continuance of the Goſpel miniſtry to that time; and that there's no reſt nor eaſe for Chriſt's miniſters, but a continued ſeries of labour and ſervice, until then; when, for their encouragement, they ſhall receive their reward.

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[f] Bartenora in Miſn. Tamid, c. 3. §. 8.

[g] De Bello Jud. l. 4. c. 27.

[h] Shirhaſhirim Rabba, fol. 11. 4.

[i] Targum in Iſa. xl. 9.

Ver. 14. *But his citizens hated him*, &c.] Not thoſe who are fellow-citizens with the ſaints, and of the houſhold of God; whoſe citizenſhip is in heaven, and who are ſeeking the better country, and heavenly city; but the *Jews*, who were his own people and nation, among whom he was born, to whom he was ſent and came, and had an undoubted right to the government of them: theſe hated him with a mortal hatred, as appeared by their traducing his perſon in the moſt opprobrious manner; vilifying his doctrine as falſe; aſcribing his miracles to a diabolical influence; and by perſecuting his diſciples and followers: *and ſent a meſſage after him*; this ſeems to have reſpect to their outrage againſt the diſciples of Chriſt, after his aſcenſion; when they not only mocked them, as on the day of *Pentecoſt*, but laid hold on them, and put them in hold, even in the common priſon, and perſecuted them from place to place; and ſo virtually, *ſaying, we will not have this man to reign over us*: they would neither receive his Goſpel, nor ſubmit to his ordinances; but put them away from them, and judged themſelves unworthy of everlaſting life: and this is the language of every graceleſs ſoul; and is to be obſerved in their oppoſition to, and neglect of the truths of Chriſt, and his divine inſtitutions; which are a yoke they don't care to take upon them, though ſo mild and eaſy, and are cords which they caſt away from them.

Ver. 15. *And it came to paſs that when he was returned*, &c.] Which return was either in power to *Jeruſalem*, in the deſtruction of that city; or which will be in perſon to this earth, at the end of the world; and will be local and viſible, and in great glory, attended with the holy angels, and with all the ſaints: the time is fixed and certain, though unknown, and will be ſudden and unexpected; but will not be till after the Goſpel has had a general ſpread all over the world, and the *Jews* are converted, and the fullneſs of the *Gentiles* brought in, and then will Chriſt come: *having received the kingdom*; not only having been ſet down at the right hand of God, and crowned with glory and honour, and received gifts for men, which he beſtowed on them; and which proved him to be Lord and Chriſt; all which was done at his aſcenſion, after which his kingdom came, or he returned in power and glory, to take vengeance on the *Jews*; but alſo having received the kingdom of glory for all his ſaints, and particularly having received the kingdom of prieſts, or all the elect of God, theſe being all called by grace, and gathered to him, as they will every one of them before his ſecond coming; when this kingdom will be delivered to the Father compleat and perfect; and this will be a reckoning time, as follows; *then he commanded thoſe ſervants to be called, to whom he had given the money*. The *ſervants* are the miniſters of the word, who muſt all appear before the judgment ſeat of Chriſt; and give an account of themſelves to God, the judge of all; and of their gifts and talents, and miniſtrations, and the ſouls under their care: the perſons who are *commanded* to call them, are the angels, and who ſhall be employed in gathering all the elect together; the thing that will be enquired about, and muſt be accounted for, is the *money* given them; that is, the Goſpel they are entruſted with, and the gifts to preach it beſtowed on them: the end of this ſummons is, *that he might know how much every man had gained by trading*; not but that Chriſt, who is the omniſcient God, the ſearcher of the heart, and a diſcerner of the thoughts and intents of it, knows full well the uſe that is made of every man's gift, and the benefits and advantages ariſing from it, both for his own glory, and the good of ſouls; but theſe ſummons will be given, this account taken, and enquiry made, that theſe things which are known to him, might be made manifeſt to all, and every man have praiſe of God; whoſe will it is that he ſhould have it, and ſloth and negligence be juſtly puniſhed.

Ver. 16. *Then came the firſt*, &c.] Who were ſet in the firſt place in the church, the apoſtles of Chriſt, and who had the greateſt gifts, and laboured more abundantly, and were eminently uſeful; ſuch an one was the apoſtle *Paul*: *ſaying, Lord*; acknowledging the ſovereignty and dominion of Chriſt over them, owning they were accountable to him, and that he had a right to enquire, what uſe they had made of their gifts, and what advantages theſe had produced; *thy pound hath gained ten pounds*; it had been increaſed tenfold; or it has turned to a tenfold account, in the converſion of ſinners, in the edification of the ſaints, and in the advancement of the kingdom, and intereſt of Chriſt. This ſervant owns, that the gifts he had were

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[k] Peah, c. 8. §. 5. & Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

Chriſt's; he calls them, *thy pound*; and therefore did not glory in them as his own attainments, or, as if he had received them not; and aſcribes the great increaſe not to himſelf, but to the pound itſelf; to the gifts of Chriſt, as they were his, and as uſed by his grace and ſtrength, and as bleſſed, and owned by him, to theſe purpoſes.

Ver. 17. *And he ſaid unto him, well, thou good ſervant*, &c.] Signifying he had well done, and had approved himſelf to be an honeſt, diligent, and laborious ſervant; who, having the grace of God, which made him a good man, and gifts and abilities, which made him a good miniſter of Chriſt, he made a good uſe of them, freely communicated the good things of the Goſpel, and being employed in a good work, he performed it well: *becauſe thou haſt been faithful in a very little*; had preached the pure Goſpel of Chriſt, and the whole of it, and ſought not to pleaſe men, but the Lord only; not his own glory, but Chriſt's; and abode by him, and his intereſt, notwithſtanding all reproaches and perſecutions, and ſo acted a faithful part to Chriſt: *in a very little*; not that the Goſpel is in itſelf little, or of ſmall account; 'tis a treaſure in earthen veſſels; and contains the unſearchable riches of Chriſt: nor are gifts to preach it little things; they are inſtances of rich and amazing grace; but they are little, or rather, the uſe and exerciſe of them are little, in compariſon of the glory and happineſs ſuch faithful ſervants ſhall enjoy: from whence it appears, that ſince there is no proportion between what they do, and what they ſhall have, that therefore it is not of merit, but of grace; and which is expreſſed in the following clauſe: *have thou authority over ten cities*; which is to be underſtood, not in a literal ſenſe, as if the apoſtles ſhould have the juriſdiction over ſo many cities, or churches in ſo many cities among the *Gentiles*, after the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, which were planted by their means and miniſtry; for nothing of this kind appears in the word of God: and much leſs after the ſecond coming of Chriſt, ſhall faithful miniſters of the word have power over ſo many cities, literally taken; for both in the kingdom-ſtate and in the ultimate glory, there will be but one beloved city, the holy city, the new *Jeruſalem*: nor is any thing in particular, in a metaphorical ſenſe, intended; only in general, that the kingdom, and dominion, and the greatneſs of it, will be given unto them; and they ſhall reign with Chriſt on earth a thouſand years; and ſhall alſo have a crown of glory, life, and righteouſneſs beſtowed on them, and ſhall ſit on the throne with Chriſt; and beſides all this, the perſons they have been inſtrumental to, will be their joy, and crown of rejoicing. A learned writer [l] explains theſe ten cities, by the ten horns of the dragon, and beaſt in *Rev.* xii. 3. and xiii. 1. by which are meant ten kings, or kingdoms, *Rev.* xvii. 12. *Dan.* vii. 24. Theſe indeed will be overcome by Chriſt, and they that are with him, and will hate the *Romiſh* antichriſt, and deſtroy him; ſo that it ſeems, there will be revolutions in theſe kingdoms; and large converſions to the faith of Chriſt, which ſeems to be what this writer means by authority over them.

Ver. 18. *And the ſecond came*, &c.] Who was next, though leſs uſeful, yet equally diligent and active: *ſaying, Lord*; acknowledging alſo the power and authority of Chriſt over him: *thy pound hath gained five pounds*; is increaſed fivefold, or is turned to a fivefold account, to the intereſt of Chriſt, and good of immortal ſouls: the uſefulneſs of the miniſters of the Goſpel is not alike; as they have gifts different one from another, ſo their improvements are different, and their labours, tho' faithful, don't turn to the ſame account.

Ver. 19. *And he ſaid likewiſe to him*, &c.] He commended him as a good and faithful ſervant, tho' this is not expreſſed; and added, *be thou alſo over five cities*; which does not denote any inequality of glory in Chriſt's miniſters, who will all ſhine as the firmament, and as the ſtars for ever and ever; at leaſt, there will be no inequality in the ultimate ſtate of happineſs, when all the ſaints ſhall ſhine as the ſun in the kingdom of their father, whatever there may be in the kingdom-ſtate, or in Chriſt's perſonal reign with his ſaints on earth. The above learned writer would have this paſſage compared with *Iſ.* xix. 18.

Ver. 20. *And another came*, &c.] Who was one of the ſervants; had a gift, but did not uſe, and improve it, nor did it turn to any account: *ſaying, Lord*; owning alſo the lordſhip and dominion of Chriſt, as all will confeſs at the laſt day, even thoſe who have no intereſt in him, and cannot call him their Lord: *behold, here is thy pound*; he owns his gifts were the Lord's, and that he had received them from him, and now returns them: *which I have kept*; he had kept that which was committed to him, and that even till his Lord came; he had not loſt it, tho' it was not increaſed, or was of any advantage to Chriſt, or the ſouls of men, it being neglected by him; for it was *laid up in a napkin*: the *Greek* word, here uſed for a napkin, is adopted by the *Jews* into their language, and is uſed for a veil, and for a linnen cloth: this puts me in mind of what the *Jews* call, קנין סודר, *poſſeſſion by a napkin*, or linnen cloth: their cuſtom is this; when they buy, or ſell any thing, to uſe a piece of cloth they call *ſudar*, the word in the text, which the contractors lay hold upon, whereby they ratifie and confirm the bargain [m]: but this man made no uſe of his *ſudar*, or napkin, in buying and ſelling; he traded not at all; he wrapped up his money in it, and both lay uſeleſs; his gift lay dormant and unexerciſed, which was given him to profit withal.

Ver. 21. *For I feared thee*, &c.] Not with a right fear, with a fear of his goodneſs, who had beſtowed ſuch an excellent gift on him; for this would have taught him to have departed from evil, and have put him on doing his maſter's will, and making uſe of his gift to his glory: his fear was not of the right kind, and was ill-grounded, as appears by what follows: *becauſe thou art an auſtere man*; cruel and uncompaſſionate to his ſervants and hard to be pleaſed; than which nothing is more falſe, ſince it is evident, that Chriſt is compaſſionate both to the bodies and ſouls of men; is a merciful high-prieſt, and is one that has compaſſion on the ignorant, and them that are out of the way, and cannot but be touched with the feeling of his peoples infirmities; and is mild and gentle in his whole deportment, and in all his adminiſtrations: *thou takeſt up that thou layeſt not down, and reapeſt that thou didſt not ſow*; ſuggeſting, that he was covetous of that which did not belong to him, and withheld what was due to his ſervants, and rigorouſly exacted ſervice that could not be performed; a moſt iniquitous charge, ſince none ſo liberal as he, giving gifts, grace and glory, freely; impoſing no grievous commands on men; his yoke being eaſy, and his burden light; never ſending a man to a warfare at his own charge; but always giving grace and ſtrength proportionable to the ſervice he calls to,

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[l] Teelmanni Specimen Explic. Parabol. p. 51.

[m] Elias in Tiſhbi in voce קנין.

and rewarding his ſervants in a moſt bountiful manner, infinitely beyond their deſerts.

Ver. 22. *And he ſaith unto him,* &c.] By way of reply to his vile ſlander, and unrighteous charge; *out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked ſervant*; as he might be juſtly called: he was not only a wicked man, as all men are, even enemies by wicked works, and lie in wickedneſs; and a wicked profeſſor of religion, as there be ſome; but a wicked miniſter, and that not on account of his bad principles, and ſinful life and converſation, but for his ſloth and negligence, and the wrong thoughts he entertained of, and the falſe charges he brought againſt Chriſt; and Chriſt turns his own argument upon him, and by his own words condemns him: *thou kneweſt that I was an auſtere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not ſow*; not allowing this, but ſuppoſing it was as he ſaid; then Chriſt argues as follows, for his conviction.

Ver. 23. *Wherefore then gaveſt not thou my money into the bank,* &c.] Or *on the table,* at which the bankers ſat, and received and delivered money on intereſt. The *Complutenſian* edition reads, *to the tablers,* or *bankers:* had Chriſt been ſuch a perſon as he repreſents him, he ought to have been the more diligent, and made the greater uſe of his gifts, ſince he knew that he would, in a rigid manner, as he ſuggeſts, demand an account of them: *that at my coming I might have required mine own with uſury?* not that Chriſt approves of uſury in an unlawful way, by extortion, but reproves hereby the ſloth of this man, and expoſes his folly and wickedneſs upon his own principles.

Ver. 24. *And he ſaid unto them that ſtood by,* &c.] The angels, it may be; though this may not be ſtrictly taken, as if any perſons, angels, or men, will be employed in what follows, only that it will be done, or may be expected: *take from him the pound*; which ſhews, that it was not ſpecial grace, for that is a good part that ſhall never be taken away, but gifts which may be taken away from men, or they from them: *and give it to him that hath ten pounds*; not, that ſtrictly ſpeaking, the gifts of ſome men are taken from them and beſtowed on others; but the deſign of the expreſſion is to ſhew, that to diligent and laborious miniſters, there is an increaſe of gifts; their knowledge enlarges, and their light ſhines more and more to the perfect day, and they become more uſeful; and they appear brighter, and more illuſtrious, thro' the ſloth of others, or when compared with indolent, negligent, and uſeleſs miniſters.

Ver. 25. *And they ſaid unto him,* &c.] The byſtanders; *Lord, he hath ten pounds*; which they ſay either thro' envy, at his ſuperior gifts, and uſefulneſs; for it is generally the lot of the moſt eminent and uſeful ſervants of Chriſt to be envied by others; or in ſurpriſe, as wondring at the conduct of Chriſt in giving more to ſuch, who had ſo much already. The *Ethiopic* verſion reads the words by way of interrogation, *hath he not ten pounds?* is not that enough? why ſhould he have more? This verſe is left out in *Beza*'s moſt ancient copy. However, it is rightly put into a parentheſis in our verſion; for the following verſe is ſtrictly connected with ver. 24. and contains a reaſon of what is there ordered.

Ver. 26. *For I ſay unto you,* &c.] And it may be depended on as truth, and what will be found matter of fact: *that unto every one that hath, ſhall be given*; greater and larger gifts, fitting him for greater uſefulneſs: he that has gifts, and makes uſe of them, increaſes in them; they enlarge with their uſe, and become brighter, and he more uſeful. The *Vulgate Latin* verſion adds, *and he ſhall abound*; or *ſhall have abundance,* as in *Matt.* xxv. 29. *and from him that hath not, even that he hath ſhall be taken away from him*; that is, that which he ſeemed to have, or thought he had, as in chap. viii. 18. for from him that has really nothing, nothing can be taken away: though the ſenſe may be, that he that does not uſe the talent, or exerciſe the gift beſtowed on him, but lays it up in a napkin, which is all one as if he had it not, even the gift itſelf ſhall be taken away from him; and as others receive no benefit by it, he ſhall receive no honour from it; ſee the notes on *Matt.* xiii. 12. and xxv. 29.

Ver. 27. *But thoſe mine enemies,* &c.] Meaning particularly the *Jews,* who were enemies to the perſon of Chriſt, and hated and rejected him, as the king Meſſiah; and rebelled againſt him, and would not ſubmit to his government; and were enemies to his people, and were exceeding mad againſt them, and perſecuted them; and to his Goſpel, and the diſtinguiſhing truths of it, and to his ordinances, which they rejected againſt themſelves: *which would not that I ſhould reign over them*; ſee ver. 14. *bring hither, and ſlay* them *before me*; which had its accompliſhment in the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem,* when multitudes of them were ſlain with the ſword, both with their own, and with their enemies; and to this the parable has a ſpecial reſpect, and of which Chriſt more largely diſcourſes in this chapter; ſee ver. 41, 42, 43, 44. though it is true of all natural men, that they are enemies to Chriſt; and ſo of all negligent and ſlothful profeſſors, and miniſters of the word, who, when Chriſt ſhall come a ſecond time, of which his coming to deſtroy the *Jewiſh* nation was an emblem and pledge, will be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction by him; and then all other enemies will be ſlain and deſtroyed, ſin, ſatan, the world, and death: of the firſt of theſe the *Jews* ſay [a] "in the time to come the holy, bleſſed God, "will bring forth the evil imagination (or corruption of nature), ושוחטו, *and ſlay it before* the "righteous, and the wicked."

Ver. 28. *And when he had thus ſpoken,* &c.] When he had delivered the above parable, in order to remove the prejudices of his diſciples, and the multitude, concerning a temporal kingdom, and to give them true notions of his own kingdom, and the caſe of the *Jewiſh* nation: *he went before*; his diſciples: he was the foremoſt of them in the journey; he proceeded at the head of them, with great chearfulneſs and eagerneſs: *aſcending up to Jeruſalem*; through the lower lands of *Judea,* to the city of *Jeruſalem,* which was built on higher ground; where he was to eat his laſt paſſover, and ſuffer, and die, in the room, and ſtead, of his people; and this ſhews how willing, and greatly deſirous he was to finiſh the work of redemption he came about.

Ver. 29. *And it came to paſs when he was come nigh,* &c.] The other Evangeliſts, *Matthew* and *Mark,* add *unto Jeruſalem*; but this *Luke* deſigns afterwards, ver. 37. and therefore here means, as is expreſſed, that he was come nigh *to Bethphage and Bethany*; two tracts of land which reached from mount *Olivet* to *Jeruſalem*; ſo that when he was there, he was nigh unto the city: *at the mount, called* the mount *of Olives*; or *Elaion,* as the *Ethiopic* verſion, which retains the *Greek* word for it; and which has its name from the great number of olive-trees that grew upon it: *he ſent two of his diſciples*; their names are not mentioned by any of the Evangeliſts, but it is very probable they were *Peter* and *John*; of the places here mentioned, ſee the note on *Matt.* xxi. 1.

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[a] T. Bab. Succa, fol. 52. 1.

Ver. 30. *Saying, go ye into the village over-againſt* you, *&c.*] What village this was, is not ſaid by any of the Evangeliſts; it ſeems to be either *Bethany*, or *Nob*; and rather the latter, ſince the village of *Bethany* was fifteen furlongs, or near two miles from *Jeruſalem*, *John* xi. 18. and therefore muſt have been paſſed by Chriſt; whereas the tract called *Bethany*, at the mount of *Olives* where Chriſt now was, was but a ſabbath-day's journey, or about a mile, *Luke* xxiv. 50. compared with *Acts* i. 12. ſee the note on *Matt.* xxi 2. *in the which at your entering ye ſhall find a colt tied:* in *Matthew* it is ſaid, an aſs, and a colt with her; which agrees with the prophecy in *Zach.* ix. 9. and which, no doubt, was matter of fact: nor does *Mark* and *Luke* contradict it, tho' they do not expreſs it: *whereon yet never man ſat, looſe him, and bring* him *hither*; for it ſeems that Chriſt ſtaid at the above place, until the diſciples went and fetched it.

Ver. 31. *And if any man aſk you, why do ye looſe* him? *&c.*] As our Lord, being God omniſcient, knew this queſtion would be aſked by the owners, and therefore prepares his diſciples with an anſwer to it: *thus ſhall ye ſay unto him, becauſe the Lord hath need of him.* The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read *our Lord*, yours, and ours; probably the owners of the colt might be ſuch as knew the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and by this way of ſpeaking of him, knew, at once, who was meant, and ſo made no ſcruple of ſending him, as Chriſt told them they would not, and ſo they found it; ſee the notes on *Matt.* xxi. 3. and *Mark* xi. 3.

Ver. 32. *And they that were ſent went their way,* &c.] The two diſciples that were ſent by Chriſt, were obedient to him, and went, as he directed them, and did as he ordered them; *and found, even as he had ſaid unto them.* The *Vulgate Latin* and *Ethiopic* verſions, and ſo ſome copies, add, *the colt ſtanding*; that is, in the place, and manner which he had deſcribed to them; ſee the note on *Mark* xi. 4.

Ver. 33. *And as they were looſing the colt,* &c.] In order to bring it away, as Chriſt bid *them: the owners thereof ſaid unto them, why looſe ye the colt? Mark* takes notice of this, but does not tell us who they were, only that they were perſons that ſtood there; but this Evangeliſt informs us who they were: and it ſeems by this, that there were more owners of the colt than one, which might have made the taking away of the colt the more difficult; ſince, though one might agree to it, another might not; but Chriſt, who is God, and has the hearts of all men in his hands, could, as he did, diſpoſe the minds of theſe men to let the colt go freely, and quietly, with his diſciples; ſee the note on *Mark* xi. 5.

Ver. 34. *And they ſaid, the Lord hath need of him.*] *Our Lord*, as the above verſions in ver. 31. They uſed the words Chriſt directed them to, and it had the effect he ſaid it would; for the owners both let them go, and the colt with them directly; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxi. 6. and *Mark* xi. 6.

Ver. 35. *And they brought him to Jeſus,* &c.] That is, the colt: *and they caſt their garments upon the colt*; that is, the diſciples, who brought him to Jeſus; the *Perſic* verſion here, as in *Matt.* xxi. 7. renders it very wrongly, *Jeſus put his own garment on its back, and ſat on* it; it follows, *and they ſet Jeſus thereon*; in order to ride upon him, as he did to *Jeruſalem*.

Ver. 36. *And as he went,* &c.] Riding on the colt towards *Jeruſalem: they ſpread their clothes in the way*; not the diſciples, for they had put their garments upon the colt; but them ultitude, which either came with him from *Jericho*, and other parts, or that met him from *Jeruſalem*, or both; ſee *Matt.* xxi. 8. and *Mark* xi. 8. and ſo the *Perſic* verſion here; *men put off their clothes and caſt them in the way, that he might paſs over them*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxi. 8.

Ver. 37. *And when he was come nigh,* &c.] To the city of *Jeruſalem*, and which was then in ſight, *even now at the deſcent of the mount of Olives*; being come to the foot of that mount, which lay to the eaſt of *Jeruſalem*, and was about five furlongs from it, or a little more than half a mile [°]: *the whole multitude of the diſciples*; not only the twelve, but the large company that followed Chriſt out of *Galilee*, and were joined by more in *Judea*, as they came along, ſome going before him, and others behind him. The *Arabic* and *Perſic* verſions divide theſe words, and read, *the multitude, and the diſciples*; not only the apoſtles, but the whole body of the people that were with Chriſt: *began to rejoice, and praiſe God, with a loud voice, for all the mighty works that they had ſeen*; calling to mind the many miracles he had wrought in *Galilee*, at *Cana*, *Capernaum*, and other places, and now, as he paſſed through *Judea*, particularly about *Jericho*, where he had reſtored ſight to two or three blind men; and eſpecially the miracle he had lately wrought at *Bethany*, in raiſing *Lazarus* from the dead; from all which they might ſtrongly conclude, that he muſt be the Meſſiah; and being filled with joy and gladneſs, at the remembrance of theſe things, and with thankfulneſs to God, that he had raiſed up the glorious ſaviour and redeemer, they lifted up their voices together, and exerted them to the uttermoſt, and made the air ring with their ſhouts, and acclamations of praiſe to God, on this occaſion.

Ver. 38. *Saying, bleſſed be the king,* &c.] The king Meſſiah, the king of *Iſrael*, the ſon of *David*, the Chriſt of God; ſo the *Ethiopic* verſion adds, *bleſſed be the king of Iſrael*; they ſung their *Hoſannas* to him, as the other Evangeliſts ſay: *that cometh in the name of the Lord*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxi. 9. *peace in heaven*; all heavenly peace and proſperity attend him; or let peace be made with God in heaven, by the prince of peace on earth, for ſinful men: *and glory in the higheſt*; glory be given to God for peace, life, and ſalvation by his ſon; and that in the higheſt heavens, by the angels there, as well as by men on earth, and in the higheſt notes and ſtrains.

Ver. 39. *And ſome of the Phariſees from among the multitude,* &c.] Who had placed themſelves there, to watch and obſerve what was ſaid, and done, that they might have ſomething to reproach Chriſt with, expoſe him for, or bring as a charge againſt him: *ſaid unto him, maſter, rebuke thy diſciples*; not being able to bear ſuch high encomiums of Jeſus, and ſuch open and public declarations of his being the Meſſiah; and would inſinuate, that it was blaſphemy in them to ſay what they did, and pride and vanity in him to allow of it; and that the conſequence might be ſedition, and tumult; and therefore it became him to check ſuch a diſorderly, noiſy, evil, and dangerous practice.

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[°] Joſeph. Antiq. l. 20. c. 6.

Ver. 40. *And he anſwered and ſaid unto them, I tell you,* &c.] As a truth, which may be depended on, and you may be aſſured of; this he ſpake with great earneſtneſs, fervour, and courage: *that if theſe ſhould hold their peace*; be ſilent, and not ſing the praiſes of God, and aſcribe glory to him, and profeſs the Meſſiah, and make this public acknowledgment of him: *the ſtones would immediately cry out*; either againſt them, or in a declaration of the Meſſiah: by which expreſſion our Lord means, that it was impoſſible it ſhould be otherwiſe; it would be intolerable if it was not; and rather than it ſhould not be, God, who is able out of ſtones to raiſe up children to *Abraham*, would make the ſtones ſpeak, or turn ſtones into men, who ſhould riſe up and praiſe the Lord, and confeſs the Meſſiah; hereby commending his diſciples, and tacitly reflecting upon the *Phariſees*, for their ſtupidity; and alſo giving a hint of the converſion of the *Gentiles*, who might be compared to ſtones, eſpecially in the opinion of the *Jews*.

Ver. 41. *And when he was come near, he beheld the city,* &c.] Of *Jeruſalem*; being now nearer, and in a ſituation to take a full view of it, he lift up his eyes, and looking wiſhly on it, and beholding the grandeur and magnificence of it, the number of the houſes, and the ſtately ſtructures in it, and knowing what calamities, in a few years, would come upon it; with which being affected, as man, he looked upon it, *and wept over it*; touched with a tender concern for it, his natural paſſions moved, and tears fell plentifully from his eyes. This muſt be underſtood of Chriſt merely as man, and is a proof of the truth of his human nature, which had all the natural properties, and even the infirmities of it; and as affected with the temporal ruin of *Jeruſalem*, and as concerned for its temporal welfare; and is not to be improved either againſt his proper deity, or the doctrines of diſtinguiſhing grace, relating to the ſpiritual and eternal ſalvation of God's elect; things that are foreign from the ſenſe of this paſſage: ſome ancient chriſtians, and orthodox too, thinking that this was not ſo agreeable to Chriſt, but reflected ſome weakneſs and diſhonour upon him, expunged this clauſe concerning his weeping; but we have another inſtance beſides this; ſee *Joh.* xi. 35. and even the *Jews* themſelves can't think this to be unſuitable to the Meſſiah, when they repreſent the *Shekinah*, and God himſelf weeping over the deſtruction of the temple [p]; and it is particularly [q] ſaid by them of the Meſſiah, that he ſhall weep over the wicked among the *Jews*, according to *Iſ.* liii. 5. and they encourage perſons to mourn over *Jeruſalem*: they ſay [r], whoever does any buſineſs on the ninth of *Ab*, (the day that city was deſtroyed) and does not mourn over *Jeruſalem*, ſhall not ſee its joy; but whoever does mourn over it, ſhall ſee its joy, according to *Iſ.* lxvi. 10 [s].

Ver. 42. *Saying, if thou hadſt known, even thou,* &c.] As well as other cities; or who haſt been ſo long a flouriſhing city, the metropolis of the nation, the ſeat of the ancient kings of *Judah*; yea, the city of the great God, the place of divine worſhip, whither the tribes came up, time after time, to ſerve the Lord; a city ſo highly honoured of God and man: or, who haſt deſpiſed the meſſages of the ſervants of God, mocked and miſuſed the prophets in time paſt, beat one, killed another, and ſtoned another: if ſuch a city, after all this, had but known its true intereſt, *at leaſt in this thy day*; the day of thy viſitation, the laſt day thou art to have, tho' it is ſo late: *the things which belong unto thy peace*; meaning, not peace with God; and the things belonging, or conducing to that, which are not mens works of righteouſneſs, nor tears of repentance, nor even faith itſelf, but the obedience and righteouſneſs, the blood, ſacrifice, and death of Chriſt; nor ſpiritual peace, or internal peace of conſcience, which comes in a Goſpel way, thro' believing, in a courſe of obedience, and all from Chriſt, the peace-maker, and peace-giver; nor eternal peace hereafter, which the grace of God gives a meetneſs for, and the righteouſneſs of Chriſt a right unto; the knowledge of all which is not natural to men, or to be obtained of themſelves, but is the gift of God's grace, and the operation of his Spirit: but ſuppoſing ſuch a peace, and ſuch things relating to it, were intended, nothing more can be inferred from hence, than if the *Jews* had known theſe things, they had been happy; and ſince they had the means of knowing them, they were, of all men, inexcuſable; and that Chriſt, as man, and one of their nation, and as a miniſter of the circumciſion, had a paſſionate concern for their welfare: but not that theſe *Jews*, or any men, can of themſelves, and without the unfruſtrable grace of God working upon their hearts, and enlightening their underſtanding, know theſe things; or that Chriſt acted any inſincere part in wiſhing for theſe things for them, as man, and a miniſter of the word, when he knew, as God, it was not conſiſtent with the will of God that they ſhould have them; ſince Chriſt, as man, ſometimes earneſtly prayed for that, which he, as God, knew could not be, as in the caſe of his own ſufferings and death; nor is this irreconcileable to his dying intentionally, only for thoſe who are actually ſaved: but after all, theſe words are only ſpoken of *Jeruſalem*, and the inhabitants of that city, and not of all mankind, and regard only their temporal peace and welfare, whoſe deſtruction Chriſt knew was near at hand; and of which he afterwards ſpeaks in the following verſes: *but now they are hid from thine eyes*; their eyes were blinded; they were given up to a judicial blindneſs, and hardneſs of heart; a ſpirit of ſlumber and ſtupidity had ſeized them; they could not diſcern the ſigns of the times, and ſo diſbelieved Jeſus as the Meſſiah, and rejected him as ſuch; whom, had they received only in a notional way, tho' they had not believed in him ſpiritually, to the ſaving of their ſouls, they would have been ſecured from outward calamities, and would have enjoyed peace and proſperity, and the things belonging to it our Lord ſpeaks of. Chriſt alludes to the name of *Jeruſalem*, which ſignifies the viſion of peace, or they ſhall ſee peace; but her name and caſe now did not agree. His wiſh is the ſame the Pſalmiſt encourages in *Pſ.* cxxii. 6. which, in the *Septuagint* verſion, is rendered, *pray for the things* that belong *to the peace of Jeruſalem*.

Ver. 43. *For the days ſhall come upon thee,* &c.] Suddenly, and very quickly, as they did within forty years after this: *that thine enemies*; the *Romans*, and ſuch the *Jews* took them to be, and might eaſily underſtand who our Lord meant: *ſhall caſt a trench about thee, and compaſs thee round, and keep thee in on every ſide*; which was not only verified in the *Roman* armies cloſely beſieging them; but particularly in this, as *Joſephus* relates [t], that *Titus* built a wall about the city, of thirty-nine furlongs long, and thirteen forts in it which reached ten furlongs, and all done in three days time; by which means they were pent up, ſtarved, and famiſhed, and reduced to inexpreſſible diſtreſs.

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[p] Zohar in Gen. fol. 114. 4. & in Exod. fol. 76. 4. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 3. 2. Præfat. Echa Rabbati, fol. 39. 4.

[q] Zohar in Exod. fol. 85. 2.

[r] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 30. 2.

[s] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 60. 2. & Caphtor, fol. 118. 2.

[t] De Bello Jud. l. 6. c. 8.

Ver. 44. *And ſhall lay thee even with the ground,* &c.] Beat down all the houſes in it, the ſtately edifices, and even the temple itſelf; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 2. *and thy children within thee*; that is, the inhabitants of the place ſhould be ſlain with the ſword of the enemy, and ſo fall to the ground, and lie upon it: *and they ſhall not leave in thee one ſtone upon another*; ſuch a conſummate, and entire deſolation ſhall be made, as was foretold by *Daniel*, ch. ix. 27. *becauſe thou knoweſt not the time of thy viſitation*; in which the day ſpring from on high had viſited them with his perſonal preſence, preaching among them, and working miracles; and yet they knew him not, but deſpiſed and rejected him; yea, after that they had put him to death, and he was riſen again, he ordered his diſciples to begin their miniſtry, and preach the Goſpel, at *Jeruſalem*; and they continued for ſome time only preaching to them, or at leaſt rarely elſewhere, till they put away the Goſpel from them. The time of the miniſtry of *John* the *Baptiſt*, of Chriſt, and his Apoſtles in *Judea*, was the time of *Jeruſalem*'s viſitation in a way of mercy; which not being taken notice of, and obſerved, brought another kind of viſitation upon them, even in a way of wrath and vengeance. The *Jews* pretend to aſſign other cauſes of *Jeruſalem*'s deſtruction; but the true cauſe was their rejection of *Jeſus*, as the Meſſiah. "Says *Abai*, *Jeruſalem* was not deſtroyed, but becauſe they profaned the ſabbath, as it is ſaid, *Ezek.* xxii. 26. *and have hid their eyes from my ſabbaths*, &c. Says *R. Abbu*, *Jeruſalem* was not deſtroyed, but becauſe they ceaſed reading the *Shema*, (*hear, O Iſrael*, &c.) morning and evening, as it is ſaid, *Iſ.* v. 11, 12, 13. *wo to them that riſe up early*, &c. Says *Rab. Hamenuna*, *Jeruſalem* was not deſtroyed, but becauſe there ceaſed in it the children of the ſchool of *Rabban*, (children were not put to ſchool) as it is ſaid *Jer.* vi. 11. *I will pour it out upon the children*, &c. Says *Ula*, *Jeruſalem* was not deſtroyed, but becauſe there was no ſhame among them, as it is ſaid, *Jer.* vi. 15. *were they aſhamed*, &c. Says *R. Iſaac*, *Jeruſalem* was not deſtroyed, but becauſe ſmall and great were put upon a level, as it is ſaid, *Iſ.* xxiv. 2, 3. *as with the people, ſo with the prieſt*, &c. Says *R. Amram*, the ſon of *R. Simeon bar Aba*, *R. Chanina* ſaid, *Jeruſalem* was not deſtroyed, but becauſe they did not reprove one another, as it is ſaid, *Lam.* i. 6. *her princes are become like harts*, &c. Says *R. Judah*, *Jeruſalem* was not deſtroyed, but becauſe they deſpiſed the diſciples of the wiſe men, as it is ſaid, 2 *Chron.* xxxvi. 16. *but they mocked the meſſengers of God*, &c.[*]" Thus they ſhifted off the true cauſe of their ruin, and aſcribed it to other things.

Ver. 45. *And he went into the temple*, &c.] Being come into the city he alighted from the colt he rode on, and having committed it to the care of a proper perſon to return it to the owner, he went up directly to the temple, of which he was the Lord and proprietor, and where he had ſome work to do the few days he had to live. *And began to caſt out them that ſold therein, and them that bought*; that traded in ſheep, and oxen, and doves; ſee *John* ii. 15. and *Matt.* xxi. 12. The *Ethiopic* verſion adds here, as there, *and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the ſeats of them that ſold doves.*

Ver. 46. *Saying unto them, it is written*, &c.] In *Iſ.* lvi. 7. *my houſe is the houſe of prayer*; built and devoted for that ſervice: *but ye have made it a den of thieves*; which clauſe is not written in the above prophecy, but are the words of Chriſt referring to *Jer.* vii. 11. The *Ethiopic* verſion adds, *and robbers*; and the *Perſic* verſion adds, *and a place of cut-purſes*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxi. 13.

Ver. 47. *And he taught daily in the temple*, &c.] Every day till the paſſover came, and only in the day; for at night he went out of the city to *Bethany*, or to the mount of *Olives*: ſome of his diſcourſes in the temple, the parables he delivered, and his diſputations with the doctors, are recorded in *Matt.* xxi. 23. to the end of the 23^d^ chapter, and in *Mark* xi. 27. to the end of the 12^th^ chapter: *but the chief-prieſts, and the Scribes, and the chief of the people*; or, *the elders of the people*, as the *Syriac* verſion renders it; that is, the whole *Sanhedrim*: *ſought to deſtroy him*; met and conſulted together, how to get him into their hands, what charges to bring againſt him, in order to put him to death.

Ver. 48. *And could not find what they might do*, &c.] The *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, and ſo *Beza*'s moſt ancient copy, add, *to him*; they could not find an opportunity of ſeizing him, nor any advantage againſt him; they knew not what ſteps to take, nor how to bring about their wicked deſign of deſtroying him. *For all the people were very attentive to hear him*; there were great crouds always about him, that hung upon him, as the word rendered *attentive* ſignifies; they heard him with great eagerneſs and diligence, and were ready to catch every word that dropped from his lips; and were exceedingly taken with him, having never heard any man ſpeak like him: wherefore having ſo many followers, and being ſo high in the opinion and affection of the people, the *Sanhedrim* were at a loſs what method to make uſe of to gain their point; and they feared the people, ſhould they ſeize him publickly, leſt they ſhould riſe and reſcue him, and cauſe a tumult and diſturbance.

## CHAP. XX.

Ver. 1. AND *it came paſs, that on one of thoſe days*, &c.] According to the account of the Evangeliſt *Mark*, it muſt be the ſecond day, or two days after his public entrance into *Jeruſalem*; for on the evening of the day he made his entry, he went out to *Bethany* with his diſciples; the next morning, as he returned from thence, he curſed the barren fig-tree; and when he came to the temple caſt out the buyers and ſellers; at evening he went out again, either to *Bethany*, or the mount of *Olives*; and the next morning, as he and his diſciples returned, the fig-tree was obſerved to be dried up; and when they were come to *Jeruſalem*, as he was walking in the temple, he was attacked by the *Sanhedrim*, and had the following diſcourſe with them: *as he taught the people in the temple, and preached the Goſpel*; for he taught them by preaching that, and which he did moſt clearly, faithfully,

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[*] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 119. 2.

and publickly, being abundantly anointed and qualified for it, and ſent to do it. *The chief-prieſts, and the Scribes, came upon him, with the elders.* The whole *Sanhedrim* being purpoſely convened together, came upon him in a body; and it may be ſuddenly, and at an unawares, and came open-mouthed againſt him, and attacked him with great warmth and vehemency.

Ver. 2. *And ſpake unto him, ſaying, tell us by what authority doeſt thou theſe things?* &c.] The *Arabic* and *Ethiopic* verſions read, *this thing*; as if the *Sanhedrim* only referred to his preaching the Goſpel, which is mentioned in the preceding verſe, and was what he was about when they came to him: but the *Perſic* verſion reads, *all theſe things*; not only preaching, but working miracles; and particularly driving the buyers and ſellers out of the temple, which eſpecially affected them, they loſing their rents thereby: *or who is he that gave thee this authority?* God or man? ſee the note on *Matt.* xxi. 23.

Ver. 3. *And he anſwered and ſaid unto them,* &c.] That is, *Jeſus* replied to them, as the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, and *Perſic* verſions expreſs it: *I will alſo aſk you one thing, and anſwer me*; when he alſo promiſed, that if they would give him an anſwer to his queſtion, he would ſatisfy them in the point they interrogated him about: and as this was a prudent decline to avoid the ſnare they laid for him, ſo it was not an impertinent reply to them; ſince it led on to a proper anſwer to their queſtion, as appears by the caſe propoſed; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxi. 24.

Ver. 4. *The baptiſm of John, was it from heaven, or of men?*] This was a new ordinance, and *John* muſt have his authority for adminiſtring it either from God, or from men; and Chriſt is deſirous to know from which he derived it in their opinion; ſuggeſting, that by the ſame authority *John*, his fore-runner, came baptizing, he himſelf came preaching and working miracles; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxi. 25.

Ver. 5. *And they reaſoned with themſelves,* &c.] Or *they thought with themſelves*, as the *Syriac* verſion; or *within themſelves*, as the *Vulgate Latin*, tho' they did not expreſs it; or *one with another*, as the *Arabic* verſion; they took counſel together, and debated the matter among themſelves, and reaſoned after this manner: *ſaying, if we ſhall ſay from heaven*; which was what, in their own conſciences, they believed to be true: *he will ſay, why then believed ye him not?* in what he ſaid concerning the Meſſiah; which if they had, as they ſhould, there would have been no reaſon for ſuch a queſtion they had put; ſee the note, as above.

Ver. 6. *But and if we ſay of men,* &c.] Which they had a good will to againſt the dictates of their own conſciences: *all the people will ſtone us*; meaning the common people, that were then in the temple about Chriſt, hearing him preach; who would be ſo enraged at ſuch an anſwer, that without any regard to their character and office, they would riſe and ſtone them. The *Ethiopic* verſion adds, *whom we fear*; ſee *Matt.* xxi. 26. for it ſeems that they had not ſo behaved as to have the good-will and eſteem of the people, at leaſt they did not pin their faith on their ſleeve: *for they be perſuaded that John was a prophet*; they were fully aſſured of it; and the ſentiments and authority of the chief-prieſts could have no weight and influence upon them to weaken their faith in this point; the evidence was ſo ſtrong, and their faith ſo firm and ſure.

Ver. 7. *And they anſwered, that they could not tell whence it was.*] Whether from heaven, or of men; in this, no doubt, they told an untruth: but they choſe rather to ſacrifice their conſciences than their intereſt, and pretend ignorance rather than profeſs the truth, when they ſaw they ſhould be put to confuſion, or be expoſed to the reſentments of the people.

Ver. 8. *And Jeſus ſaid unto them,* &c.] Since they would not give him a direct anſwer to his queſtion: *neither tell I you by what authority I do theſe things*; nor was there any need of it; they might eaſily perceive by what he had ſaid, from whence he profeſſed to have received his authority, from God, and not from men; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxi. 27.

Ver. 9. *Then began he to ſpeak to the people this parable,* &c.] According to the other Evangeliſts it ſeems to be ſpoken to the chief-prieſts, *Scribes*, and elders; and certain it is, that they looked upon themſelves as ſtruck at in it; it might be ſpoken to both. Chriſt having ſilenced the *Sanhedrim*, turned himſelf to the people, and delivered the parable of the vineyard to them, though his principal view was to the prieſts: *a certain man planted a vineyard*; the people of the *Jews* are deſigned by the *vineyard*, and the *certain man*, or *houſholder*, as *Matthew* calls him, is the Lord of hoſts; and the planting of it is to be underſtood of his bringing and ſettling the people of *Iſrael* in the land of *Canaan*. *Luke* omits certain things which the other Evangeliſts relate, as ſetting an hedge about it, digging a wine-preſs, and building a tower in it; and the *Perſic* verſion here adds, *and planted trees, and ſet a wall about it*; all which expreſs the care that was taken to cultivate and protect it; and ſignify the various bleſſings and privileges the *Jews* enjoyed under the former diſpenſation; ſee the notes on *Matt.* xxi. 33. and *Mark* xii. 1. *and let it forth to huſbandmen*; put the people of the *Jews* under the care not only of civil magiſtrates, but of eccleſiaſtical governours, who were to dreſs this vine, or inſtruct theſe people in matters of religion, that they might be fruitful in good works: *and went into a far country for a long time*; for a long time it was, from the times of *Moſes* and *Joſhua*, when the firſt ſettlement, both of the civil and eccleſiaſtical ſtate of the *Jews*, was made, to the times of Chriſt; it was fourteen or fifteen hundred years; ſee the notes, as above.

Ver. 10. *And at the ſeaſon,* &c.] Or *when it was the time of fruit*, as the *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, agreeable to *Matt.* xxi. 34. ſee the note there: *he ſent a ſervant to the huſbandmen*; or *ſervants*, as in *Matthew*; the prophets of the Lord, his meſſengers, whom he ſent to them, to exhort them to bring forth the fruits of righteouſneſs, as follows: *that they ſhould give him of the fruit of the vineyard*; that is, that they, bringing forth good fruit in their lives and converſations, whereby it might appear that they were trees of righteouſneſs, and the planting of the Lord; he, or they obſerving them, might give an account of them to the Lord, to the glory of his name: *but the huſbandmen beat him, and ſent him away empty*; the *Jews* not only mocked theſe meſſengers of the Lord, and deſpiſed their words, but miſuſed them, 2 *Chron.* xxxvi. 15. they beat them with their fiſts, ſmote them on the cheek, and ſcourged them with ſcourges; ſo that they had no account to give of their fruitfulneſs in good works, but the contrary; ſee the notes on *Matt.* xxi. 35. and *Mark* xii. 3.

Ver. 11. *And again he ſent another ſervant*, &c.] Or ſett of prophets in after-times, and yet before the *Babyloniſh* captivity: *and they beat him alſo*; as they had done the other; they continued in their male-practices, yea increaſed in them: *and entreated him ſhamefully*; putting him to open ſhame, uſing him in a very ignominious and ſhameful manner, which it was a ſhame to relate, and which was ſhameful for them to do: *and ſent him away empty*; as they had done the other.

Ver. 12. *And again he ſent the third*, &c.] Perhaps after the return of the *Jews* from captivity, and between that time and the coming of Chriſt, in which interval many good men were uſed in a very inhuman manner, *Heb.* xi. 37, 38. *and they wounded him alſo*; by caſting ſtones at him; ſee *Mark* xii. 4. *and caſt him out*; of the vineyard.

Ver. 13. *Then ſaid the Lord of the vineyard*, &c.] Who planted it, and let it out to huſbandmen, and expected fruit from it, and ſent his ſervants from time to time for it: *what ſhall I do?* or what can be done more than has been done? *Iſ.* v. 4. who elſe can be ſent that is likely to do any good with ſuch an ungrateful and unfruitful people? *I will ſend my beloved Son*; the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Son of God, who lay in his boſom, was the darling of his ſoul, and the delight of his heart; him he determined to ſend, and him he did ſend to the loſt ſheep of the houſe of *Iſrael*: *it may be they will reverence him, when they ſee him*; it might be thought after the manner of men, that conſidering the greatneſs of his perſon, as the Son of God, the nature of his office, as the redeemer and ſaviour of men, the doctrines which he preached, the miracles which he wrought, and the holineſs and harmleſſneſs of his converſation, and the great good he did both to the bodies and ſouls of men, that he would have been had in great eſteem and veneration with the men, to whom he was ſent, and among whom he converſed: but, alas! when they ſaw him, they ſaw no beauty, comelineſs, and excellency in him, and nothing on account of which he ſhould be deſired by them.

Ver. 14. *But when the huſbandmen ſaw him*, &c.] In human nature, heard him preach, and obſerved the miracles done by him: *they reaſoned among themſelves*; as the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, and elders of the people often did: *ſaying, this is the heir*; the heir of God, being his ſon; and ſo the *Ethiopic* verſion; *this ſon is his heir*, or the heir of the vineyard; being, by appointment, heir of all things, and by his deſcent from *David* heir to the kingdom of *Iſrael*: *come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours.* The *Arabic* and *Perſic* verſions render it, *and his inheritance ſhall be ours*; the nation, city, temple, and all the emoluments and benefits thereof. The word *come* is left out in the *Alexandrian* copy, and in the *Gothic* and *Vulgate Latin* verſions.

Ver. 15. *So they caſt him out of the vineyard*, &c.] Rejected him as the Meſſiah, even denied that he was of the *Jewiſh* nation; ſaid he was a *Samaritan*, and delivered him to the *Gentiles* that were without, and were aliens from the commonwealth of *Iſrael*; and at laſt had him without their city, and put him to death, as follows: *and killed him*; the Prince of life, the Lord of glory, and heir of all things; ſee *Acts* ii. 23, 36. and iii. 15. and v. 30. and x. 39. *what therefore ſhall the Lord of the vineyard do unto them?* the huſbandmen, the chief prieſts, elders, *Scribes*, and *Phariſees*; at whoſe ſollicitations the life of his ſon, and heir, was taken away; by which he muſt be greatly provoked and incenſed.

Ver. 16. *He ſhall come and deſtroy theſe huſbandmen*, &c.] Which had its accompliſhment at the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*: according to the other Evangeliſts, theſe words are the anſwer of the chief prieſts, *Scribes*, and elders, to the above queſtions put to them by Chriſt, after he had delivered the parable; but here they ſeem to be the words of Chriſt, who alſo ſaid the ſame, and confirmed what they had obſerved, and could not but own, that it was juſt and right, and what might be expected, with what follows: *and ſhall give the vineyard to others*; the land of *Judea*, to the *Romans* in particular, and the church-ſtate, with the Goſpel and ordinances of it, to the *Gentiles* in general, ſometimes called *others*; ſee the notes on chap. v. 29. and xviii. 11. *and when they heard it, they ſaid, God forbid*; for though they were their own words, yet being repeated and confirmed by Chriſt, and perceiving that they were the perſons intended, deprecate the fulfilment of them; at leaſt ſo far as they underſtood they related to the killing of the Meſſiah, and to the deſtruction of their nation, city, and temple.

Ver. 17. *And he beheld them*, &c.] Looked very earneſtly and wiſhly at them, ſpeaking as it were by his looks, ſignifying, that verily ſo it would be, as he had ſaid; that they would reject the Meſſiah, and put him to death, and bring utter ruin upon themſelves, and deprive their poſterity of many advantages and privileges: *and ſaid, what is this then that is written*; that is, what elſe is the meaning of ſuch a ſcripture? is not the ſenſe of that perfectly agreeable to what has been ſaid, that the Meſſiah ſhall be rejected by the principal men among the *Jews* in church and ſtate, and yet he ſhall be exalted, who will then take vengeance on them? *the ſtone which the builders rejected, the ſame is become the head of the corner?* The paſſage is in *Pſal.* cxviii. 22. ſee the note on *Matt.* xxi. 42.

Ver. 18. *Whoſoever ſhall fall on that ſtone, ſhall be broken*, &c.] Not who ſhall fall upon Chriſt by faith, and build upon him as the foundation ſtone, for ſuch ſhall be ſaved; but that ſtumble at him, and are offended with him, and fall by unbelief and hardneſs of heart; ſuch do themſelves much hurt and miſchief, and expoſe themſelves to danger and ruin; they bid very fair for deſtruction: *but on whomſoever it ſhall fall*; as it did with its full weight upon the *Jews* at their deſtruction, and as it will upon all chriſtleſs ſinners at the laſt day: *it will grind him to powder*; the ruin of ſuch will be unavoidable, and there will be no recovery; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxi. 44.

Ver. 19. *And the chief prieſts, and the Scribes, that ſame hour*, &c.] As ſoon as he had delivered the above parable, together with that of the two ſons: *ſought to lay hands on him*; they had a good-will to it, being exceedingly graveled with the queſtion he put to them concerning *John*'s baptiſm, which confounded them, and put them to ſilence; and with the parables he delivered, in which they were ſo manifeſtly pointed at: *and they feared the people*; leſt they ſhould riſe and ſtone them, as in ver. 6. or reſcue him out of their hands; *for they perceived that he had ſpoken this parable againſt them*; and that they were the huſbandmen that had uſed the ſervants of God ſo ill, and would put to death the ſon of God, the Meſſiah; and who would at length be deſtroyed themſelves, and the kingdom of God be taken from them, tho' they ſeem to deteſt and deprecate it, ſaying in ver. 16. *God forbid*; that we ſhould kill the heir, or that we ſhould be deſtroyed, and the vineyard given to others: theſe things grievouſly nettled them, and exaſperated them againſt him; but they knew not how to help themſelves at preſent.

Ver. 20. *And they watched him*, &c.] What he ſaid, and what he did, and where he went, that they might take an advantage againſt him, or know where he was to ſend to him, as they ſhould think fit, and take the beſt opportunity of ſo doing. The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions leave out this clauſe: *and ſent forth ſpies which ſhould feign themſelves juſt men*; men of virtue and religion, conſcientious men, that would do nothing but what was juſt and right, and were deſirous of being exactly informed of the truth of things, that they might act right in every punctilio: *that they might take hold of his words*; improve them, and form a charge upon them, of ſedition and treaſon: *that ſo they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the Governour*; the *Roman* governour, and by him be put to death. Theſe men were ſome of them the diſciples of the *Phariſees*, and others were *Herodians*; ſee *Matt.* xxii. 16.

Ver. 21. *And they aſked him ſaying, maſter*, &c.] *Rabbi*, or doctor; hoping, by this flattering title, and the flattering words uſed by them, to work him up to an openneſs and freedom of converſation with them: *we know that thou ſayeſt, and teacheſt rightly*; rightly divideſt the word of God, and delivereſt out ſound doctrine according to it: and this he certainly did, tho' they ſpoke theſe words hypocritically, not believing what they themſelves ſaid; at leaſt, they did not care that others ſhould believe this of him: *neither accepteſt thou the perſon of any*. The *Perſic* verſion very wrongly renders it, *and lookeſt not upon the countenance, and heart of any one whomſoever*; for tho' Chriſt did not look upon the countenances of men, and judge according to the outward appearance, nor regard men on account of outward circumſtances, as riches, honours, learning, *&c.* yet he looked upon the heart, and knew what was in it, and reſpected ſincerity and uprightneſs wherever he found it, and which were wanting in theſe men: *but teacheſt the way of God truly*; the way of worſhipping God, and of enjoying him, both in this world, and in that to come; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxii. 16.

Ver. 22. *Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Cæſar, or no?*] The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions here, as in the other Evangeliſts, render it, *head money*. The phraſe, *for us*, is here added, and on it lies the emphaſis, and ſtreſs of the queſtion; for the doubt pretended, was not whether it was lawful for the *Romans* to pay tribute to *Cæſar*, but whether it was lawful for them who were *Jews*, were *Abraham*'s ſeed, and, as they boaſted, were never in bondage, but were the Lord's free people, to pay tribute to an heathen emperor, or no.

Ver. 23. *But he perceived their craftineſs*, &c.] Knowing what was in them, and being a diſcerner of the thoughts and intents of their hearts, he clearly ſaw that their view was either, that they might have a charge againſt him to the *Roman* governours, ſhould he declare againſt payment of tribute; or that they might expoſe him to the people of the *Jews*, ſhould he aſſert the lawfulneſs of it: *and ſaid unto them, why tempt ye me?* with this enſnaring queſtion.

Ver. 24. *Shew me a penny*, &c.] A *Roman denarius*, value ſeven-pence half-penny of our money. The *Perſic* verſion adds, *they ſhewed it, he aſked of them*; and the *Ethiopic* verſion, *and they brought it, and he ſaid unto them*, as follows; *whoſe image and ſuperſcription hath it?* for the penny had an head upon it, with ſomething written, as the name of the emperor, whoſe image it was, his titles, the date of the coin, or ſome motto on it: *they anſwered and ſaid, Cæſar's*; very likely *Tiberius Cæſar*'s, who was at that time emperor of *Rome*; ſee the notes on *Matt.* xxii. 20, 21.

Ver. 25. *And he ſaid unto them, render therefore unto Cæſar the things which be Cæſar's*, &c.] The *Arabic* verſion renders it, *give to the king what is the king's*; the tribute that was due to him; ſince they were under his government, and were protected by him, and traded with his money; the currency of which among them was an acknowledgment of him as their ſovereign: *and unto God the things which be God's*; which relate to his worſhip, honour, intereſt, and kingdom; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxii. 21.

Ver. 26. *And they could not take hold of his words before the people*, &c.] Which was what they wanted; that if he had dropped any ſeditious and treaſonable expreſſions againſt the government, they might be witneſſes againſt him; or if he had not vindicated the liberties of the people, and the rights of the *Jewiſh* nation, theſe might be exaſperated againſt him, and leave him: *and they marvelled at his anſwer*; which was ſo formed, as to give them no handle againſt him either way: *and held their peace*; they were ſilenced, and had nothing to ſay to him, nor againſt him, but left him, and went their way.

Ver. 27. *Then came to him certain of the Sadducees*, &c.] That is, *to Jeſus*, as the *Perſic* verſion expreſſes it; and it was *the ſame day*, as *Matthew* ſays, on which the diſciples of the *Phariſees*, and the *Herodians*, had been with him, putting the queſtion about tribute to him: *which deny that there is any reſurrection*; that is, of the dead; that there ever was any inſtance of it, or ever will be: this was the diſtinguiſhing tenet of that ſect; ſee *Acts* xxiii. 8. *and they aſked him*; the following queſtion, after they had put a caſe to him.

Ver. 28. *Saying, maſter, Moſes wrote unto us*, &c.] In *Deut.* xxv. 5. where the ſubſtance of what follows is contained, tho' not in expreſs words: *if any man's brother die, having a wife, and he die without children, that his brother ſhould take his wife, and raiſe up ſeed unto his brother*; the meaning of which is, that if a man died without iſſue, and left a wife behind him, his next brother, if unmarried, was to marry his wife, and the firſt child born of her, was to be reckoned the deceaſed's, and to inherit his eſtate; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxii. 24.

Ver. 29. *There were therefore ſeven brethren*, &c.] In the place where theſe *Sadducees* dwelt; or, however, that were known by them; at leaſt they ſuppoſed ſuch a caſe, and it might be fact: *and the firſt took a wife, and died without children*; ſon or daughter, and ſo had none to keep up his name, and to poſſeſs his inheritance.

Ver. 30. *And the ſecond took her to wife*, &c.] As he was obliged by the above law, or pluck off the ſhoe: *and he died childleſs*; as his eldeſt brother before him.

Ver. 31. *And the third took her*, &c.] To wife, by virtue of the ſame law: *and in like manner the ſeven alſo*; the other four, one after another, when all ſeven married her: *and they left no children, and died*; or they died, leaving no children behind them.

Ver. 32. *Laſt of all the woman died alſo.*] Having had no children by either of her ſeven huſbands.

Ver. 33. *Therefore in the reſurrection*, &c.] At the time of the reſurrection of the dead, in that ſtate, ſuppoſing there will be ſuch an one, which they denied; *whoſe wife of them is ſhe?* the firſt, or the laſt, or any of the intermediate ones? *for ſeven had her to wife*; and ſhe had no child by either of them; ſo that their claim ſeems to be alike; this they thought unanſwerable, and ſufficient to ſet aſide the notion of a reſurrection.

Ver. 34. *And Jeſus anſwering, ſaid unto them*, &c.] After he had obſerved that their error aroſe from ignorance of the ſcriptures, and the power of God: *the children of this world marry, and are given in marriage*; that is, ſuch who live in this world, in the preſent mortal and imperfect ſtate, being mortal men, and die, and leave their eſtates and poſſeſſions; theſe marry, and have wives given them in marriage; and it is very right, and fit, that ſo it ſhould be, in order to keep up a ſucceſſion of men, and that they may have heirs to enjoy their ſubſtance when they are gone.

Ver. 35. *But they which ſhall be accounted worthy to obtain that world*, &c.] The world to come, eternal life and happineſs; not by their own works and merits, but through the blood, ſacrifice, and righteouſneſs of the Meſſiah: *and the reſurrection from the dead*; that is, the firſt reſurrection, the reſurrection unto life, which only the dead in Chriſt will enjoy; otherwiſe all will be raiſed; but ſome to the reſurrection of damnation: *theſe neither marry, nor are given in marriage*; there will be no need of any ſuch practice, for the reaſons that follow.

Ver. 36. *Neither can they die any more*, &c.] Therefore there will be no need of marrying to procreate children, to keep up a ſucceſſion of men, any more than there is among the angels: *for they are equal unto the angels*; in ſpirituality, purity and immortality; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxii. 30. *and are the children of God*; as they are now by adopting-grace; but, as yet, it does not appear as it will then, what they are, and will be: *being the children of the reſurrection*; as Chriſt was declared to be the ſon of God by his reſurrection, ſo will they appear to be the children of God by their reſurrection to eternal life; for though others will riſe, yet not to everlaſting life; and thus appearing to be children of God, they will alſo be heirs of God, and enjoy the inheritance which they will always live to poſſeſs in their perſons; and therefore the caſe being different with them from the children of the world, they'll not marry, nor be given in marriage, as they are.

Ver. 37. *Now that the dead are raiſed*, &c.] Or that there will be a reſurrection of the dead, this is a proof of it: *even Moſes ſhewed at the buſh*; when the Lord appeared to him out of it, and he ſaw it burning with fire, and not conſumed; when the Lord called to him out of it by the following name, as he has recorded it in *Exodus* iii. 6. Hence it is ſaid, *when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Iſaac, and the God of Jacob*; for tho' the Lord called himſelf ſo, yet *Moſes* likewiſe calls him by theſe names, when he gives an account of this affair, and when he went from him to the children of *Iſrael*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxii. 32.

Ver. 38. *For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living*, &c.] See the note on *Matt.* xxii. 32. *for all live unto him.* The *Perſic* verſion reads, *all theſe live unto him*; namely, *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*; for tho' they are dead to men, they are not to God; their ſouls live with him, and their bodies will be raiſed by him: he reckons of them, as if they were now alive, for he quickens the dead, and calls things that are not, as though they were; and this is the caſe of all the ſaints that are dead, as well as of thoſe patriarchs. The *Ethiopic* reads, *all live with him*; as the ſouls of all departed ſaints do; the *Arabic* verſion reads, *all live in him*; ſo all do now, *Acts* xvii. 28.

Ver. 39. *Then certain of the Scribes anſwering, ſaid*, &c.] Who believed the doctrine of the reſurrection, which the *Sadducees* denied, and ſo were pleaſed with our Lord's reaſonings on this ſubject: *maſter, thou haſt well ſaid*; thou haſt ſpoken in a beautiful manner, reaſoned finely upon this head, and ſet this matter in a fair and clear light; ſee the note on *Mark* xii. 28.

Ver. 40. *And after that, they durſt not aſk him any queſtion at all.*] Neither the *Phariſees*, *Sadducees*, *Scribes*, nor *Herodians*.

Ver. 41. *And he ſaid unto them*, &c.] The *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *to the Phariſees*; and ſo it appears, that it was to them he ſpoke, from *Matt.* xxii. 41. *how ſay they?* The *Syriac* verſion reads, *how ſay the Scribes?* as in *Mark* xii. 35. and the *Perſic* verſion, *how ſay the wiſe men*, the doctors in *Iſrael*, *that Chriſt is David's ſon?* than which nothing was more common among the *Jews*.

Ver. 42. *And David himſelf ſaith in the book of Pſalms*, &c.] In *Pſal.* cx. 1. *the Lord ſaid to my Lord, ſit thou on my right hand*; which words were delivered by *David*, as inſpired by the ſpirit of God; and contain a ſpeech of God the father to his ſon Jeſus Chriſt, upon his aſcenſion to heaven, after his ſufferings, death, and reſurrection from the dead; when he was bid to ſit down in human nature, at the right hand of God, in token of having done his work on earth to full ſatisfaction; and in the relation of which *David* calls Chriſt his Lord; and is the reaſon of their being mentioned.

Ver. 43. *'Till I make thine enemies thy footſtool.*] Which words are a continuation of the citation out of the above *Pſalm*; and for the application of theſe words, with the preceding, to the Meſſiah, ſee the note on *Matt.* xxii. 44.

Ver. 44. *David therefore calleth him Lord*, &c.] Or, *my Lord*, as the *Syriac* and *Ethiopic* verſions read; or, *his Lord*, as the *Arabic* verſion. This is the inference from the words before cited, upon which the following queſtion is aſked, *how is he then his ſon?* how can theſe things be reconciled? in what ſenſe can he be both his Lord and ſon? ſee the note on *Matt.* xxii. 45.

Ver. 45. *Then in the audience of all the people*, &c.] Whilſt they were about him, and hearing him, and for their ſakes too; *he ſaid unto his diſciples*; yea, he ſpake to the multitude, as well as to the diſciples, as appears from *Matt.* xxiii. 1.

Ver. 46. *Beware of the Scribes*, &c.] And alſo of the *Phariſees*; for they are joined together in *Matthew*: *which deſire to walk in long robes*: the rule for the length of a ſcholar's garment was this[a]; "his fleſh muſt not appear under his garments, as the light linnen garments, and the like, they make in *Egypt*; nor muſt his garments be drawn upon the ground, as the garments of proud men, but muſt reach to his heel, and his glove muſt reach the tops of his fingers." According to this rule, the garments of the doctors were to be ſo long as to cover the whole body, even down to their heels, but were not to be any longer; and by this it appears their garments were very long; but they did not always go by this rule; ſome had their garments ſo long as to have a train after them; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiii. 5. *and love greetings in the markets*; or in courts of judicature; they loved to be ſaluted with the titles of *Rabbi*, maſter, and the like: *and the higheſt ſeats in the ſynagogues*; which were next to the place where the book of the law was read and expounded, and where they might be ſeen by the people: *and the chief rooms at feaſts*; the uppermoſt; ſee the notes on *Matt.* xxiii. 6, 7.

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[a] Maimon. Hilch. Dayot, c. 5. §. 9. Vid. T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 57. 2. & Gloſſ. in ib.

Ver. 47. *Which devour widows houſes,* &c.] As the characters of them, in the preceding verſe, expoſe their pride, this ſhews their avarice; they were very voracious and cruel; they did not ſpare widows, but devoured their ſubſtance: *and for a ſhew make long prayers*; to cover their wickedneſs; pretending great devotion and religion: *the ſame ſhall receive greater damnation*; than openly prophane ſinners; doing ſuch wickedneſs under a cloke of religion, will aggravate their condemnation; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiii. 14.

## CHAP. XXI.

Ver. 1. AND *he looked up,* &c.] As Chriſt ſat over-againſt the treaſury, looking upon the ground, he lift up his eyes; for the treaſury was not in an high place, or above Chriſt, who was right againſt it. The *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions leave out this clauſe. *And ſaw the rich men caſting their gifts into the treaſury*; ſee the note on *Mark* xii. 41.

Ver. 2. *And he ſaw alſo a certain poor widow,* &c.] Whom he took particular notice of above all the reſt: the poor, and the widow, are regarded by him, and are his care; nor are their mean ſervices done in faith, and from a principle of love, deſpiſed by him, but preferred to the greater ſervices of others, where faith and love are wanting: *caſting in thither two mites*; the value of a farthing. The *Perſic* verſion renders it, *two bottoms of yarn*; ſee the note on *Mark* xii. 42.

Ver. 3. *And he ſaid,* &c.] To his diſciples, as the *Ethiopic* verſion adds; theſe he called to him, upon this occaſion, as appears from *Mark* xii. 43. *of a truth I ſay unto you, that this poor woman hath caſt in more than they all*; than all the rich men; not in quantity, but in proportion to her ability; ſee the note on *Mark* xii. 43.

Ver. 4. *For all theſe have of their abundance,* &c.] Which they had remaining; the ſame *Hebrew* word יתר, ſignifying to remain, and to abound: they had large poſſeſſions, and gave in much, and yet had a great deal left; out of which they *caſt in unto the offerings of God*; or *gifts of God*: not as gifts unto him; or among the gifts of God; but into the treaſury where the gifts, and free-will offerings were put; the ſame with the *Corban*, in *Matt.* xxvii. 6. and ſo the *Syriac* verſion here renders it, *the houſe of the offering of God*: and it is expreſſed in the plural number; becauſe there were ſeveral cheſts, in which theſe gifts were put, for various uſes; ſee the note on *Mark* xii. 41. *but ſhe of her penury hath caſt in all the living ſhe had*; ſee the note on *Mark* xii. 44.

Ver. 5. *And as ſome ſpake of the temple,* &c.] Theſe were the diſciples; *Mark* ſays one of them; but it ſeems there were more than one; one might begin the diſcourſe, and others join him: *how it was adorned with goodly ſtones and gifts*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 1. *he ſaid*; what follows. This was as he went out of the temple.

Ver. 6. *As for theſe things which ye behold,* &c.] Some, as the *Syriac* and *Ethiopic* verſions, read theſe words by way of interrogation; *are theſe the things which ye behold?* do ye look upon theſe with wonder and delight? *the days will come*; and they are haſtening on; a little while, a few years more: *in the which there ſhall not be left one ſtone upon another, that ſhall not be thrown down*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 2.

Ver. 7. *And they aſked him,* &c.] That is, his diſciples, when they were come to the mount of *Olives*, and as he ſat upon that, *Matt.* xxiv. 3. *ſaying, maſter, but when ſhall theſe things be?* when the temple ſhall be deſtroyed; and one ſtone ſhall not be left upon another; *and what ſign* will there be *when theſe things ſhall come to paſs?* which ſhows that this refers to the deſtruction of the temple, and ſo the ſigns following; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 3.

Ver. 8. *And he ſaid, take heed that ye be not deceived,* &c.] With falſe Chriſts, and falſe prophets: *for many ſhall come in my name*; making uſe of his name, taking it to them; not that they would pretend they were ſent by him, but that they were he himſelf: *ſaying, I am* Chriſt; ſo the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions ſupply as we do: *and the time draweth near*; not that ſuch will come, but when come, they will ſay, that the time of the deliverance of the *Jewiſh* nation from the *Roman* yoke is at hand: *go ye not therefore after them*; don't be their diſciples, or follow them where they would lead you; for nothing but deſtruction will be the conſequence of it.

Ver. 9. *But when ye ſhall hear of wars and commotions,* &c.] Or ſeditions, and Tumults; *wars* may deſign the wars of the *Romans*, againſt the *Jews*; and the *commotions*, or ſeditions, the inteſtine troubles among themſelves: *be not terrified*; as if the deſtruction of the nation, city, and temple, would be at once: *for theſe things muſt firſt come to paſs, but the end is not by and by*; or *immediately*. The *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions leave out this laſt word, and read, as in *Matt.* xxiv. 6. ſee the note there.

Ver. 10. *Then ſaid he unto them, nation ſhall riſe,* &c.] See the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 7.

Ver. 11. *And great earthquakes ſhall be in divers places, and famines, and peſtilences,* &c.] See the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 7. *and fearful ſights*; or *terrible things*; whether heard, or ſeen, as dreadful thundrings, and lightnings; and a voice heard in the temple, ſaying, let us go hence; and an ideot that went about ſeveral years together, ſaying, wo to the people, wo to the city, *&c.* a flame was ſeen in the temple, and the doors of it opened of themſelves: *and great ſigns ſhall there be from heaven*; as comets and blazing ſtars, a flaming ſword, or a comet like one, hanging over *Jeruſalem*, and armies in the air engaged againſt each other [b]. The *Syriac* verſion adds, *and great winters there ſhall be*; that is, very long and cold; and ſo the *Perſic* verſion, *and winter, and cold, ſhall be protracted*.

Ver. 12. *But before all theſe,* &c.] Before all theſe things come to paſs: *they ſhall lay their hands on you*; as the high-prieſt, the prieſts, and the captain of the temple did upon the apoſtles, *Acts* iv. 1, 3. and v. 17, 18. *and perſecute* you; as upon the death of *Stephen*, *Acts* viii. 1. *delivering you up to the ſynagogues*; to be ſcourged there; or to the courts of judicature, the conſiſtories of the *Jews*, their great *Sanhedrim*; before theſe the apoſtles were brought, *Acts* iv. 6, 7, 15. and v. 17. *and into priſons*; as were all the apoſtles together, and *Peter* at another time ſeparately, *Acts* iv. 3. and v. 18. and xii. 4. *being brought before kings, and rulers, for my names ſake*; for being called by his name, and calling upon it; for profeſſing, and preaching his Goſpel; ſee the note on *Matt.* x. 18.

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[b] Vid. Joſeph. de Bello Jud. l. 6. c. 5.

Ver. 13. *And it ſhall turn to you for a teſtimony.*] By this means they would have an opportunity of leaving their teſtimony for Chriſt before kings and rulers; and what they ſhould meet with from them, would be a means of ſtrengthening and confirming them in the truths of the Goſpel; and be a proof and evidence to them of the certainty of the above things Chriſt had ſaid, ſhould be accompliſhed; as well as be for a Teſtimony againſt the rulers and governours, *Jews*, and *Gentiles*, before whom they ſhould be convened; ſee *Matt.* x. 18,

Ver. 14. *Settle it therefore in your hearts,* &c.] Reſolve on this in your minds, and let it be a rule never to be departed from: *not to meditate before what you ſhall anſwer*; not to ſit down, and ſtudy a form of words, and ſcheme of things, what to reply to the enſnaring queſtions that may be thought would be aſked, by kings and rulers, or any of the judges before whom they ſhould be brought; it being natural for perſons, eſpecially of a low life, to be timorous and fearful, to appear before ſuch great perſonages, and to be thoughtful and ſollicitous what to ſay to any queſtion that may be aſked them; ſee the note on *Matt.* x. 19.

Ver. 15. *For I will give you a mouth,* &c.] A faculty of ſpeaking, a freedom of expreſſion, a door of utterance, a good degree of elocution, to ſpeak properly, pertinently and freely to any point: *and wiſdom*; to anſwer with great propriety, and in the moſt prudent manner, to any difficult and enſnaring queſtion; and to furniſh with ſuch knowledge of the Goſpel, and with ſuch gifts and abilities to preach and defend it, that they ſhould be able to give a clear and diſtinct account of it, and prove every point in it, by the moſt ſtrong and convincing arguments, and vindicate it againſt all objections: *which all your adverſaries ſhall not be able to gainſay or reſiſt.* This was remarkably fulfilled in *Peter*, and *John*, and in *Stephen*, *Acts* iv. 13, 14. and vi. 10. The firſt word, *gainſay*, is left out in the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions.

Ver. 16. *And ye ſhall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren,* &c.] See the note on *Matt.* x. 21. *and kinsfolks and friends.* The *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions add, *your*, to each of theſe relations, as *your parents*, &c. *and* ſome *of you ſhall they cauſe to be put to death*; as *Stephen* was ſtoned to death, and *James*, the brother of *John*, *Herod* killed with the ſword, *Acts* vii. 58. and xii. 2. and indeed all of them were put to death, excepting *John*, before the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*.

Ver. 17. *And ye ſhall be hated of all men,* &c.] See *Matt.* x. 22. and xxiv. 9.

Ver. 18. *But there ſhall not an hair of your head periſh.*] That is, without the will of God, as in *Matt.* x. 29, 30. or not one ſhall periſh, but what ſhall be reſtored again: or, the ſenſe is, that tho' they ſhould be betrayed by their friends, and hated, and perſecuted, and impriſoned by their enemies, yet they ſhould be no loſers in the main; all things ſhould work together for their good; and tho' even they ſhould be put to death, yet that would be to their advantage, ſince inſtead of a temporal, troubleſome life, they ſhould enjoy an eternal and happy one: for this can't be underſtood of entire preſervation from all corporal damages and hurt; ſeeing it is before declared, that they ſhould be put into priſons, and ſome of them put to death; nor of their preſervation at the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, for none of them was living at that time, but the apoſtle *John*, and he was not in thoſe parts.

Ver. 19. *In your patience poſſeſs ye your ſouls.*] By patiently bearing all afflictions, reproaches, indignities and perſecutions, enjoy yourſelves; let nothing diſturb or diſtreſs you; poſſeſs that peace and joy in your ſouls, which the world cannot take away; ſee *Rom.* v. 3, 4, 5. The *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read, *ye ſhall poſſeſs*; and the ſenſe may be this; by patient continuance, or by perſeverance in the ways of God, and the truths of Chriſt unto the end, ye ſhall be ſaved; ſhall find your lives, and enjoy your ſouls, as in *Matt.* x. 22. and xxiv. 13.

Ver. 20. *And when ye ſhall ſee Jeruſalem compaſſed with armies,* &c.] The *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, and *Perſic* verſions, *with an army*; that is, with the *Roman* army, as it was by the army which *Titus Veſpaſian* brought againſt it, and beſieged it with: *then know that the deſolation thereof is nigh*; ſignifying, that there would be no deliverance to be expected, as when the *Aſſyrian* army under *Rabſhekah* appeared againſt it; but that whenever the *Roman* army beſieged it, its deſtruction might be looked upon as inevitable; nor was the ſiege raiſed until it was deſtroyed, which was about four years after.

Ver. 21. *Then let them which are in Judea, flee to the mountains,* &c.] See the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 16. *And let them which are in the midſt of it*; either of *Judea*, as the preceding clauſe ſeems to direct the ſenſe; or in *Jeruſalem*, and which indeed was in the midſt of *Judea*; and this ſenſe is favoured by the *Perſic* verſion, which renders it, *within the city*; let them go out of it, as the chriſtians did to *Pella*, mount *Libanus*, and other places: *and let not them that are in the countries*; either foreign countries, or in country towns and villages: *enter thereinto*; either into *Judea*, or into *Jeruſalem*; contrary to this advice, they came from all countries to the feaſt of the paſſover at *Jeruſalem*, and were there ſhut up by the ſiege and deſtroyed [c].

Ver. 22. *For theſe be the days of vengeance,* &c.] Of God's vengeance on the *Jewiſh* nation, for their rejection and crucifixion of the Meſſiah; *that all things which are written may be fulfilled*; as in *Moſes* and the prophets; ſee *Deut.* xxviii. 20—68. and xxxii. 22—26. *Iſa.* vi. 10, 11, 12. *Dan.* ix. 26, 27.

Ver. 23. *But wo unto them that are with child,* &c.] See the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 19. *For there ſhall be great diſtreſs in the land*; of *Judea*. The *Greek* word *αναγκη*, here uſed, properly ſignifies *neceſſity*, but here intends afflictions and diſtreſs; in which ſenſe it is often uſed by the *Septuagint*, as in *Pſal.* cvii. 6, 13, 19, 28. and cxix. 143. and *Jer.* ix. 15. and it is alſo by the *Targumiſts* adopted into their language, and uſed in the ſame ſenſe [d]: and indeed, the diſtreſs was very great, and ſuch a time of tribulation, as was never known ſince the beginning of the world, nor never will be the like; what with the enemy without, and their ſeditions and diviſions within, the robberies, murders, and famine, which prevailed and abounded, their miſeries are not to be expreſſed: *and wrath upon this people*; of the *Jews*; even the wrath of God, as well as of man, which came upon them to the uttermoſt; and their own hiſtorian obſerves, that God, who had condemned the people, turned every way of ſalvation to their deſtruction [e].

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[c] Joſeph. de Bello Jud. l. 7. c. 17.

[e] Joſeph. de Bello Jud. l. 6. c. 15.

[d] Vid. Targum in Gen. xxii. 14. & xxxviii. 25. & Targum Sheni in Eſth. v. 1.

Ver. 24. *And they ſhall fall by the edge of the ſword*, &c.] Or *mouth of the ſword*, an *Hebraiſm*; ſee the *Septuagint* in *Jud.* i. 8, 25. The number of thoſe that periſhed by the famine and ſword, were eleven hundred thouſand [f]: *and ſhall be led away captive unto all nations*; when the city was taken, the moſt beautiful of the young men were kept for the triumph; and thoſe that were above ſeventeen years of age, were ſent bound into *Egypt*, to labour in the mines; many were diſtributed through the provinces, to be deſtroyed in the theatres, by the ſword or beaſts; and thoſe that were under ſeventeen years of age, were led captive to be ſold; and the number of theſe only, were ninety-ſeven thouſand [g]: *and Jeruſalem ſhall be trodden down of the Gentiles*; the *Romans*, who ploughed up the city and temple, and laid them level with the ground; and which ſpot has been ever ſince inhabited by ſuch as were not *Jews*, as *Turks* and *Papiſts*: and ſo it will be, *until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled*; that is, till the fulneſs of the *Gentiles* is brought in; until the Goſpel is preached all over the world, and all God's elect are gathered in out of all nations; and then the *Jews* will be converted, and return to their own land, and re-build and inhabit *Jeruſalem*; but till that time, it will be as it has been, and ſtill is poſſeſſed by *Gentiles*. The word *Gentiles*, is left out in one of *Beza*'s Exemplars, and ſo it is likewiſe in the *Perſic* verſion.

Ver. 25. *And there ſhall be ſigns in the ſun, and in the moon*, &c.] They ſhall be darkened, and ſuffer very ſtrange and ſurprizing eclipſes: *and in the ſtars*; they ſhall fall from heaven, as in *Matt.* xxiv. 29. and ſo the *Ethiopic* verſion reads here: all which, as it may be underſtood in a literal ſenſe, ſo it may likewiſe in a figurative and myſtical one, and be interpreted of the changes there ſhould be in the *Jewiſh* ſtate; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 29. So the *Jewiſh* writers [h] interpret the ſun, the light, the moon, and ſtars, in *Eccl.* xii. 2. By the *ſun* they underſtand, the kingdom of the houſe of *David*; by *the light*, the law; by *the moon*, the *Sanhedrim*; and by *the ſtars*, the *Rabbins*; and the ſame ſeem to be deſigned by the ſtars here: *and upon the earth diſtreſs of nations*; upon the land of *Iſrael*, in the ſeveral nations and countries belonging to it; as *Galilee* of the nations, *Judea*, and the region beyond *Jordan*, ſhall be in great diſtreſs: *with perplexity*; of mind, not knowing what to do, which way to go, or ſtep to take; the *Syriac* verſion inſtead of it, reads *clapping*, or *preſſing of the hands*; which is done by perſons, when in an agony and great diſtreſs: *the ſea and the waves roaring*; which deſign ſome unuſual and extraordinary ſtorms and tempeſts, and inundations in the ſea of *Galilee*, or *Tiberias*, which would be ſo very terrible, as to cauſe great uneaſineſs, diſtreſs, and perplexity; and ſo ſome verſions render it, *becauſe of the ſea*, &c.

Ver. 26. *Mens hearts failing them for fear*, &c.] Of what theſe ſigns in the heaven, earth, and ſea portend: *and for looking after thoſe things which are coming on the earth*; on the land of *Judea*: *for the powers of heaven ſhall be ſhaken*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 29.

Ver. 27. *And then ſhall they ſee the Son of man*, &c.] See the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 30.

Ver. 28. *And when theſe things begin to come to paſs*, &c.] When the firſt of theſe ſigns appears, or any one of them: *then look up and lift up your heads*; be chearful and pleaſant; don't hang down your heads as bullruſhes, but erect them, and put on a chearful countenance, and look upwards, from whence your help comes; and look out wiſhly and intently, for your ſalvation and deliverance: *for your redemption draweth nigh*; not the redemption of their ſouls from ſin, ſatan, the law, the world, death, and hell; for that was to be obtained, and was obtained, before any of theſe ſigns took place; nor the redemption of their bodies at the laſt day, in the reſurrection, called the day of redemption; for this reſpects ſomething that was to be, in the preſent age and generation; ſee ver. 32. but the deliverance of the apoſtles and other chriſtians, from the perſecutions of the *Jews*; which were very violent, and held till theſe times, and then they were freed from them: or by *redemption* is meant, the Redeemer, the Son of man, who ſhall now come in power and glory, to deſtroy the *Jews*, and deliver his people; and ſo the *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *for he draws nigh who ſhall ſave you*.

Ver. 29. *And he ſpake to them a parable*, &c.] That is, to his diſciples: *behold the fig-tree, and all the trees*; that, or any other tree; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 32.

Ver. 30. *When they now ſhoot forth*, &c.] Their buds, branches, and leaves; the *Vulgate Latin* adds, *of themſelves*: *ye ſee and know of your own ſelves*; without any hint, or direction from others, the caſe is ſo plain and obvious; the *Syriac* and *Arabic* verſions read, *of them*; the trees, by their putting forth their buds and leaves; the *Perſic* and *Ethiopic* verſions, leave out the clauſe *of yourſelves*; and none of the *Oriental* verſions read the word *ſee*: *the ſummer is now nigh at hand*; ſee *Matt.* xxiv. 32.

Ver. 31. *So likewiſe when ye ſee theſe things come to paſs*, &c.] The ſigns before-mentioned, in ver. 8, 9, 10, 11, 20, 25, 26. *Know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand*; a more viſible and glorious diſplay of the kingdom of the Meſſiah, in the deſtruction of his enemies, the *Jews*; ſee *Mark* ix. 1.

Ver. 32, 33. *Verily I ſay unto you, this generation*, &c.] See the notes on *Matt.* xxiv. 34, 35. All the *Oriental* verſions read here as there, *all theſe things*; before related.

Ver. 34. *And take heed to yourſelves*, &c.] To your ſouls and bodies, to your lives and converſations; be upon your watch and guard: *leſt your hearts be overcharged with ſurfeiting and drunkenneſs*; with exceſſive eating and drinking; for theſe, as they oppreſs and burden the ſtomach, and diſorder the body, ſo they ſtupify the ſenſes, and make the mind dull and heavy, and unfit for ſpiritual and religious exerciſes; ſuch as reading, meditation, and prayer: *and cares of this life*; concerning food and cloathing, what you ſhall eat or drink, or wherewith ye ſhall be cloathed; all ſuch anxious and worldly cares, being that to the ſoul, as intemperance is to the body; for there is ſuch a thing as being inebriated with the world, as well as with wine: *and ſo that day come upon you unawares*; the day of *Jeruſalem*'s deſtruction; and this ſuggeſts, that ſuch would be the carnality and ſecurity of ſome perſons, and ſo would be ſurprized with ruin at once; ſee ch. xvii. 26—30.

Ver. 35. *For as a ſnare ſhall it come*, &c.] In which a bird is ſuddenly taken, and cannot get out again; the *Perſic* verſion renders it, *as lightning and the ſplendor of the ſun*; which break out at once, and enlighten the whole earth; ſo the deſtruction of the *Jewiſh* nation, ſhould be ſudden, and unavoidable, and univerſal; for it ſhould come

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[f] Joſeph. de Bello Jud. l. 7. c. 49. & Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccl. l. 3. c. 7.

[g] Ib.

[h] In Prefat. Echa Rabbati, fol. 38. 4. Jarchi in Eccleſ. xii. 2.

come *on all them that dwell upon the face of the whole earth*: or land of *Judea*; and ſo it was, for not only *Jeruſalem*, but all *Judea*, and *Galilee*, ſuffered in this deſolation.

Ver. 36. *Watch ye therefore, and pray always*, &c.] Watch againſt every ſin, ſnare, and temptation; particularly, againſt the above things, ſurfeiting, drunkenneſs, and worldly cares; pray continually, for freſh ſupplies of grace: *that ye may be counted worthy*; not for watchfulneſs and prayer, but through the grace and goodneſs of God: *to eſcape all theſe things that ſhall come to paſs*; the dreadful miſeries and diſtreſs, that ſhall come upon the *Jews*: *and to ſtand before the Son of man*; with intrepidity, confidence, and pleaſure; and meet him at his coming in this way, with joy and comfort; and likewiſe at death, and at judgment; ſee 1 *John* ii. 28.

Ver. 37. *And in the day time he was teaching in the temple*, &c.] That is, *Jeſus*, as the *Perſic* verſion expreſſes it; his conſtant method every day, till the feaſt of paſſover came, was to go up to the temple, and there openly and freely preach the Goſpel to the people, who reſorted thither in great numbers, for that purpoſe: *and at night he went out*; of the temple, and out of the city: *and abode in the mount that is called* the mount *of Olives*; very likely to pray, both for himſelf and for his diſciples, his time with them being ſhort.

Ver. 38. *And all the people came early in the morning*, &c.] Not all the people in *Jeruſalem*, every inhabitant of the city; this word *all*, is often to be taken with a reſtriction, and here it deſigns a large number; the *Perſic* verſion renders it, *vaſt multitudes*: theſe, ſome out of curioſity, and others from a real love to him, and his miniſtry, roſe betimes, and came early, *to him in the temple, to hear him*; which is ſaid, in commendation of Chriſt's hearers, and is worthy of imitation; as the former verſe is a commendation of the preacher, in his conſtancy and diligence in his work, and following it with his prayers.

## CHAP. XXII.

Ver. 1. NOW *the feaſt of unleavened bread drew nigh*, &c.] Which laſted ſeven days; during which the *Jews* eat their bread without leaven, in commemoration of the haſte in which they went out of *Egypt*; being ſuch, that they had not time to leaven their dough, but took it with their kneading-troughs along with them, as it was; and as figurative of the unleavened bread of ſincerity and truth, with which the Goſpel feaſt is to be kept; ſee *Exod*. xii. 34. 1 *Cor*. v. 8. *Which is called the paſſover*; becauſe the Lord paſſed over the houſes of the *Iſraelites*, when he ſlew all the firſt-born in *Egypt*; now the time of this feaſt drew near, when the conſpiracy was formed againſt the life of Chriſt: *Matthew* and *Mark* are more expreſs, and ſuggeſt, that it was two days before the paſſover; ſee *Matt*. xxvi. 2. *Mark* xiv. 1.

Ver. 2. *And the chief prieſts and Scribes*, &c.] *Matthew* adds, *and the elders of the people*; which made up the great *Sanhedrim* and council of the nation; theſe met together, not in their uſual place the temple, but at the palace of *Caiaphas*, the high-prieſt; ſee *Matt*. xxvi. 3. *And ſought how they might kill him*; that is, *Jeſus*, as the *Vulgate Latin* and *Ethiopic* verſions read; they had determined before, upon the advice of *Caiaphas*, to put him to death, and very likely had fixed what kind of death he ſhould die; ſee *John* xi. 49, 50, 53. and now they conſult together, of the manner of bringing it about, and at what time; and the majority were not for doing it on a feaſt-day, when there was a great concourſe of people, but with more privacy: *for they feared the people*; which were now in great multitudes with him, who came along with him from *Galilee*, and other parts; and had *hoſanna'd* him into the city, and ſtill abode with him, and their numbers were increaſing; and the *Sanhedrim* were aware, that at the paſſover there would be ſtill a greater company of people from all parts of the land; and they might conclude, that he would have a large number of his friends come out of *Galilee*, where he had been for the moſt part teaching, and working miracles; and they were afraid, ſhould they lay hold on him publickly, the people would riſe and ſtone them; at leaſt would reſcue him out of their hands, and diſappoint them of their deſigns.

Ver. 3. *Then entered ſatan into Judas*, &c.] At the ſame time that the *Sanhedrim* were ſitting, and conſulting about the death of Chriſt, *ſatan*, or the adverſary, as the word ſignifies, the devil, who is the enemy of the Meſſiah, the woman's ſeed, entered into *Judas*; not corporally, as he did into thoſe that were poſſeſſed by him; but he entered *into* his *heart*, as the *Ethiopic* verſion renders it; he put it into his heart to betray him, as it is ſaid in *John* xiii. 2. he ſtirred up, and worked upon the corruptions of his heart; ſuggeſted evil things to his mind, and baited his temptations agreeable to his malice and covetouſneſs: and this man was *ſurnamed Iſcariot*; to diſtinguiſh him from another apoſtle of the ſame name; concerning this his ſurname, ſee the notes on *Matt*. x. 4. and *John* xiii. 2. *Being of the number of the twelve*; apoſtles, or diſciples of Jeſus, as the *Perſic* verſion reads, and which is an aggravation of his ſin: now this being two days before the paſſover, ſhows, that the ſop which *Judas* took, after which the devil entered into him, *John* xiii. 27. could not be the paſſover ſop, but was the ſop he eat at the ſupper in *Bethany*, in the houſe of *Simon* the leper, ſo long before it.

Ver. 4. *And he went his way*, &c.] From Chriſt, and the reſt of the apoſtles, out of *Bethany*; and when it was night, about two miles from *Jeruſalem*, whither he went directly: *and communed with the chief prieſts and captains*; that is, of the temple, as in ver. 52. and ſo the *Perſic* verſion reads, *the militia of the temple*; and the *Syriac* verſion renders it, *the captains of the militia of the temple*; inſtead of *captains*, the *Ethiopic* verſion reads *Scribes*, and ſo does the *Arabic*, and which adds, *and the ſoldiers*; but theſe captains were not *Roman* officers, or ſoldiers, but eccleſiaſtical perſons, who preſided in the temple, and were heads and governours, over bodies of men employed there, of which ſort were the following[i]: "there were fifteen, ממונין, preſidents, or governours in the ſanctuary, and ſo they were appointed for ever over each of theſe fifteen things, "one governour; and they are theſe: one was "over the times, or ſolemn ſeaſons; the ſecond, "over the ſhutting of the gates; the third, over "thoſe that kept watch; the fourth, over the ſingers; the fifth, over the cymbal, with the reſt of the ſinging inſtruments; the ſixth, over the lots; the ſeventh, over the neſts (of doves;) the eighth, over the ſeals, or tickets; the ninth, over the drink-offerings; the tenth, over the ſick (prieſts;) the eleventh, over the waters; the twelvth, over the buſineſs of the ſhew-bread; the thirteenth, over the buſineſs of the incenſe; the fourteenth, over the buſineſs of the vail; and the fifteenth, over the buſineſs of the prieſts garments; and every one of theſe governours, had under him *abundance of men*, that ſo they might prepare the buſineſs they preſided over." Theſe ſeem rather to be meant, than the watch in the temple; which, though kept in ſeveral places, there was but one ſingle perſon that preſided over it; as appears from the above account, and from what follows; and who was called the man of the mountain of the houſe, or the governour of the temple[k]: "in three places the prieſts kept watch in the ſanctuary, in the houſe of *Abtines*, and in the houſe of *Nitzotz*, and in the houſe of *Moked*, and the *Levites* in twenty and one places——the man of the mountain of the houſe, went round every ward with torches burning before him, and every one that was not ſtanding, he ſaid to him, peace be on thee; and if he found that he was aſleep, he ſtruck him with his ſtaff, and had power to burn his garments." Whence it does not appear to me, that there were heads or captains over every ward, as Dr. *Lightfoot* ſuggeſts, but one over them all; perhaps theſe captains may be the ſame with the governours of the temple, in 1 *Eſdras* i. 8. and vii. 2. But be theſe who they will, *Judas* it ſeems was informed where, and upon what they were met together, and he went to them, and converſed with them: *how he might betray him unto them*; in the moſt ſecret manner, and with the leaſt noiſe and diſturbance.

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[i] Maimon. Hilch. Cole Hamikdaſh, c. 7. §. 1, 2. Miſn. Shekalim, c. 5. §. 1, 2.

Ver. 5. *And they were glad*, &c.] For nothing could be more opportune and agreeable to them, than that one of his diſciples ſhould meet them at this juncture, and offer to put him into their hands in the moſt private manner; *and covenanted to give him money*. The *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *thirty pieces of ſilver*; which was the ſum they agreed to give him, and he accepted of; ſee *Matt.* xxvi. 15.

Ver. 6. *And he promiſed*, &c.] He undertook to deliver him into their hands; he laid himſelf under obligation to do it; he faithfully promiſed he would. The *Arabic* verſion renders it, *he gave thanks*; for the money he received, being well pleaſed he had made ſuch a bargain; and ſo the word here uſed, ſometimes ſignifies; and indeed commonly either to confeſs, or to give thanks, in which latter ſenſe it is uſed, in *Matt.* xi. 25. but here rather it is to be underſtood, in the ſenſe of promiſing: *and ſought opportunity*; the two days following before the paſſover: *to betray him unto them in the abſence of the people*; when they were gone from him, and he was alone; but found no opportunity of doing it this way, which they had agreed upon with him, and he had promiſed, until the night of the paſſover, when he was alone in the garden with his diſciples.

Ver. 7. *Then came the day of unleavened bread*, &c.] The firſt of them, the fourteenth day of the month *Niſan*: *when the paſſover muſt be killed*; that is, the *paſſover lamb*, as the *Perſic* verſion renders it; and which, according to the law in *Exod.* xii. 6. was to be done between the two evenings; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 17.

Ver. 8. *And he ſent Peter and John*, &c.] That is, *Jeſus* ſent them, as the *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions expreſs it; theſe were two favourite diſciples of Chriſt, and were now ſent by him from *Bethany* to *Jeruſalem*: *ſaying, go and prepare us the paſſover, that we may eat*; it together; ſo ſervants uſed to be ſent, to go and prepare the paſſover for their maſters; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 17.

Ver. 9. *And they ſaid unto him, where wilt thou that we prepare?*] Meaning, not in what village, town, or city, for it was a fixed and determined thing, that the paſſover ſhould be eat at *Jeruſalem*, and no where elſe; ſee *Deut.* xvi. 2. but in what houſe in *Jeruſalem*?

Ver. 10. *And he ſaid unto them, behold*, &c.] Giving them a ſign, whereby they ſhould know the very houſe, where he would keep the paſſover: *when ye are entered into the city*; that is, the city of *Jeruſalem*; for Chriſt and his diſciples were now at *Bethany*, from whence he ſent *Peter* and *John* thither, where only the paſſover was to be killed and eaten: *there ſhall a man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water*; the *Perſic* verſion adds, *upon his back*; for which he had been to ſome well, or fountain in the city, in order to mix with wine at the paſſover: *follow him into the houſe where he entereth in*; ſo that it ſeems they were to return, and go after him into the houſe, where he went with his pitcher of water; this was a trial of the faith and obedience of the diſciples, and as the ſequel ſhews, a proof of the omniſcience and deity of Chriſt.

Ver. 11. *And ye ſhall ſay unto the good man of the houſe*, &c.] The maſter of it; for the man bearing the pitcher of water, ſeems to be a ſervant only: *the maſter ſaith unto thee*; by theſe his two diſciples, *Peter* and *John*; it looks as if the word *maſter*, as peculiar to Chriſt, and by way of eminency belonging to him, *Matt.* xxiii. 10. was well known to thoſe who believed, and were followers of him, as the man of this houſe might be; ſee *John* xi. 28. The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read, *our maſter ſaith*, and leave out the other phraſe, *to thee*: *where is the gueſt-chamber*; or dining-room: the word properly ſignifies an inn, or place to bait at; ſo called, from travellers unlooſing their burdens there, either from themſelves, or their beaſts; the *Arabic* verſion renders it, *the place of my reſt*; a place for refreſhment and feaſting: *where I ſhall eat the paſſover with my diſciples?* who were a ſufficient number to eat the paſſover lamb by themſelves; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 18.

Ver. 12. *And he ſhall ſhew you a large upper room furniſhed*, &c.] With all things neceſſary, to eat and drink out of, at the paſſover; *there make ready*. The *Ethiopic* verſion adds, *for us*, as in *Mark* xiv. 15. The *Perſic* verſion renders it, *there prepare a place*; but this was prepared already; the words deſign the preparation of the paſſover, and every thing proper for it.

Ver. 13. *And they went*, &c.] From *Bethany* to *Jeruſalem*: *and found as he had ſaid unto them*; they met the man with the pitcher of water, and by following him, found the houſe Chriſt meant to keep the paſſover at; they told the maſter of it, what Chriſt ordered them, who immediately ſhowed them a very convenient room, as he had deſcribed to them: *and they made ready the paſſover*; provided a lamb, and got it killed and dreſſed, and prepared every thing neceſſary for the keeping of the feaſt, according to divine appointment; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 19.

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[k] Miſn. Middot, c. 1. §. 1, 2.

Ver. 14. *And when the hour was come*, &c.] When it was evening, the laſt of the two evenings, when it was dark, at leaſt after ſix o'clock; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 20, *he ſat down*; or lay along on a couch, as was the cuſtom; ſee the note, as before: *and the twelve apoſtles with him*; for *Judas*, after he had made his bargain with the chief-prieſts, *Scribes*, and elders, came and took his place with the reſt of the apoſtles, both to cover his ſin, and to watch the beſt opportunity of betraying his maſter.

Ver. 15. *And he ſaid unto them*, &c.] The twelve apoſtles, as they were eating the paſſover, it being uſual to talk and converſe much at ſuch a time; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 21. *With deſire have I deſired to eat this paſſover with you before I ſuffer*; not for the ſake of eating; for though he was traduced as a glutton, and did often eat and drink in a free and familiar way, both at the tables of *Phariſees*, and of publicans and ſinners; yet he was not a man given to appetite; witneſs his faſt of forty days and forty nights, and his great negligence of himſelf, which ſometimes obliged his diſciples to pray him to eat; ſee *John* iv. 31, 34. Indeed, according to the *Jewiſh* canons, it was not judged proper, that a man ſhould eat much on the day before the paſſover, that he might be hungry, and eat the paſſover, בתאבון, *with deſire* [l], or with an appetite. Our Lord may allude to this; but this was not the thing he means; nor merely does he ſay this on account of the paſſover, as it was God's ordinance; tho' as he was made under the law, and that was in his heart, he had a great regard to it, and a delight in it, which he had ſhown in his frequent and conſtant attendance on it from his youth: but tho' he had kept many paſſovers, yet of none of them did he ſay, what he does of this, which was his fourth paſſover from his entrance on his public miniſtry, and his laſt: two reaſons are ſuggeſted in the text why he ſo greatly deſired to eat this paſſover; the one is, becauſe he ſhould eat it *with* his diſciples: an emphaſis lies on the phraſe, *with you*, to whom, and not ſo much to the paſſover, and the eating of that was his deſire; as it is to all his people: it was ſo from everlaſting when he deſired them as his ſpouſe and bride; and in time when he became incarnate, ſuffered, died, and gave himſelf for them: his deſire is towards them whilſt in unregeneracy, that they may be converted; and to them when converted, notwithſtanding all their backſlidings and revoltings. His deſire is to their perſons, and the comelineſs and beauty of them, which he himſelf has put upon them; and to their graces, and the exerciſe of them, with which he is raviſhed; and to their company and communion with them, which he chooſes and delights in: and his deſire is towards their being with him to all eternity, and which he delighted in the fore views of from eternity; and is the joy ſet before him, and which carried him through his ſufferings and death; and is the amount and accompliſhment of all his prayers and interceſſion: and the other reaſon of this his ſtrong deſire in the text is, that this was the laſt paſſover, and that his ſufferings and death were juſt at hand, and which he longed to have over; not that he deſired theſe ſufferings, for the ſake of them, which could not be agreeable to, and deſirable by his human nature, but becauſe of the effects of them; ſince hereby juſtice would be ſatisfied, the law would be fulfilled, ſin atoned for, and the ſalvation of his elect obtained; for whom he bore the ſtrongeſt affection, and whom he loved with a love of complacency, and whoſe ſalvation he moſt earneſtly deſired, and even ſufferings for the ſake of it.

Ver. 16. *For I ſay unto you, I will not any more eat thereof*, &c.] Of the paſſover, and which now, with the reſt of the ceremonial law, was to be aboliſhed: *until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God*; ſignifying, not that he ſhould eat of it in the kingdom of God, where it would be fulfilled; ſeeing the paſſover was never more to take place, neither in the Goſpel-diſpenſation, nor in the heavenly glory; both which may be meant by the kingdom of God; but that he ſhould never eat more of it in this ceremonial way, ſince it would have its accompliſhment in each of thoſe ſtates: and it has been already fulfilled under the Goſpel-diſpenſation, which is often meant by the kingdom of God; in himſelf, who is the paſſover ſacrificed for us, 1 *Cor.* v. 7. for the paſſover-lamb was a type of Chriſt, and he is the ſum and ſubſtance of that ſhadow, and the fulfilling end of that type; it had its accompliſhment in him; of which ſee the note on 1 *Cor.* v. 7. and it will alſo be fulfilled in the kingdom of heaven, or eternal glory, when there will be a perfect deliverance of the ſaints from ſin, ſatan, and the world; which the deliverance of the *Iſraelites* out of *Egypt* was typical of, commemorated in the paſſover; and therefore then will be ſung the ſong of *Moſes*, and the lamb; and then will Chriſt, and his true followers, eat and drink together in his father's kingdom, and ſpend an endleſs eternity in never-fading joys and pleaſures.

Ver. 17. *And he took the cup and gave thanks*, &c.] There were four cups of wine drank at the paſſover, which the pooreſt man in *Iſrael* was obliged to drink; and over each of which a bleſſing was pronounced [m]: and this was one of them, and ſeems to be the firſt; for the paſſover was begun by mixing a cup of wine, and bleſſing it, or giving thanks over it [n]; and which was uſually done in the following manner [o]: “ bleſſed art thou, O Lord our “ God, the king of the world, who haſt created “ *the fruit of the vine:* bleſſed art thou, O Lord “ our God, the king of the world, who hath “ choſen us above all people, and hath exalted “ us above every tongue, and hath ſanctified us “ by his commandments; and thou haſt given “ unto us, O Lord our God, in love, the ſtated “ feſtivals for joy, and the feaſts and ſeaſons for “ rejoicing; this day of the feaſt of unleavened “ bread, this time of our freedom, a holy convo- “ cation, in remembrance of the going out of “ *Egypt*; for thou haſt choſen us, and thou haſt “ ſanctified us, above all people; and the feaſts of “ thine holineſs with joy and rejoicing thou haſt “ made us to inherit: bleſſed art thou, O Lord, “ who haſt ſanctified *Iſrael*, and the ſeaſons: bleſſed “ art thou, O Lord our God, who hath kept us “ alive, and preſerved us, and haſt brought us to “ this time.” After this every one drank of his cup, and put it on the table: accordingly it follows, *and ſaid, take this and divide* it *among yourſelves*; that is, every one drink of it.

Ver. 18. *For I ſay unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine*, &c.] That is, wine; ſee the bleſſing at the paſſover-cup in the notes on the preceding verſe: *until the kingdom of God ſhall come*; with power, as in *Mark* ix. 1. in the reſurrection of

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[l] Maimon. & Bartenora in Miſn. Peſachim, c. 10. §. 1.

[m] Maimon. Chametz Umetzah, c. 7. §. 9, 10.

[n] Ib. c. 8. §. 1.

[o] Haggada Shel Peſach, fol. 241. 1, 2. ed. Baſil. p. 3, 4. ed, Rittangel.

Chriſt from the dead; in his exaltation and ſeſſion at God's right hand; in the pouring forth of the Spirit on the Apoſtles; in the converſion of great multitudes both in *Judea*, and in the *Gentile* world; in the deſtruction of the *Jews*; in the latter day-glory; and in the ultimate ſtate of happineſs and bliſs in the world to come. The *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *until I drink it new in the kingdom of God*, as in *Mark* xiv. 25. ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 29.

Ver. 19. *And he took bread and gave thanks*, &c.] Or bleſſed it, as in *Matt.* xxvi. 26. *Mark* xiv. 22. Here begins the account of the Lord's ſupper after the paſſover was eaten: *and brake it, and gave unto them*; the diſciples, as is expreſſed in *Matt.* xxvi. 26. *ſaying, this is my body*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 26. *which is given for you*; or will be given for you, as an offering for ſin in your room and ſtead; and accordingly it was given into the hands of men, and of juſtice, and unto death. The phraſe denotes the ſubſtitution and ſacrifice of Chriſt in the room of his people, and the voluntarineſs of it; and is only mentioned by *Luke* in this account: the Apoſtle *Paul* writes, *which is broken for you*, 1 *Cor.* xi. 24. alluding to the breaking of the bread in the ordinance, and as expreſſing the bruiſes, wounds, ſufferings, and death of Chriſt: the *Ethiopic* verſion here adds, *for the redemption of many. This do in remembrance of me*; that is, eat this bread in remembrance of my love to you, and in commemoration of my body being offered up for you. Obſerve this ordinance in the manner I now inſtitute it, in time to come, in memory of what I am about to do for you; for this direction does not only regard the preſent time and action, but is intended as a rule to be obſerved, by the churches of Chriſt in all ages, to his ſecond coming: and it is to be obſerved, that the Lord's ſupper is not a reiteration, but a commemoration of the ſacrifice of Chriſt. This phraſe is only mentioned by *Luke* here, and by the Apoſtle *Paul*, who adds it alſo at the drinking of the cup, 1 *Cor.* xi. 24, 25. The *Perſic* verſion here reads, *do this perpetually in remembrance of me*.

Ver. 20. *Likewiſe alſo the cup after ſupper*, &c.] Both after the paſſover, and the Lord's ſupper; that is, he took the cup after they had eat the bread, and gave thanks over it, and gave it to his diſciples, bidding them drink of it, as in *Matt.* xxvi. 27. ſee the note there: *ſaying, this cup is the New Teſtament in my blood, which is ſhed for you.* The *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *for many*; as in *Matt.* xxvi. 28. where it is added, *for the remiſſion of ſins*; ſee the note there.

Ver. 21. *But behold the hand of him that betrayeth me*, &c.] By *the hand* is meant, not figuratively the counſel, contrivance, and conſpiracy of *Judas* to betray him, as the word is uſed in 2 *Sam.* xiv. 19. but literally the hand of *Judas*, which was then dipping in the diſh with Chriſt, *Matt.* xxvi. 23. and it follows here, is *with me on the table*; and is an aggravation of his ſin, that one that ſat with him at his table, eat bread with him, and dipped his morſel in the ſame diſh, ſhould be the betrayer of him, according to the prophecy in *Pſ.* xli. 9. as well as deſcribes and points at the perſon that ſhould do this action, even one of his diſciples; for which diſciples he had juſt now ſaid, his body is given, and his blood is ſhed. The phraſe, *with me*, is left out in the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions. From *Luke*'s account it appears moſt clearly, that *Judas* was not only at the paſſover, but at the Lord's ſupper, ſince this was ſaid when both were over.

Ver. 22. *And truly the ſon of man goeth*, &c.] That is, dies, which is going the way of all the earth, *Joſh.* xxiii. 14. *as it was determined*; in the counſels and purpoſes of God, and agreed to by Chriſt in the covenant of grace; ſee *Acts* ii. 23. and iv. 28. the death of Chriſt, the manner of it, and the means by which it was brought about, were all predetermined by God; yet this did not, in the leaſt, excuſe the ſin of thoſe concerned in it, nor exempt them from puniſhment: *but wo unto that man by whom he is betrayed*; who not only came to an untimely end, and died an infamous death by his own hands, but went to his own place, the place of everlaſting torments allotted him: wherefore in *Matt.* xxvi. 24. 'tis added, *it had been good for that man if he had not been born*; ſee the note there.

Ver. 23. *And they began to enquire among themſelves*, &c.] Two days before, at the ſupper in *Bethany*, when the ſame thing was hinted to them, they looked at one another, *John* xiii. 22. as perſons in the utmoſt ſurprize and conſternation, not being able, for a while, either to ſpeak to Chriſt, or one another; but now they enquired among themſelves, and of Chriſt likewiſe, *Matt.* xxvi. 21. *which of them it was that ſhould do this thing*; ſo barbarous, ſhocking, and horrible.

Ver. 24. *And there was alſo a ſtrife among them*, &c.] The *Perſic* verſion reads, *at a certain time there was a contention among the apoſtles*; and ſome think, that this refers to the time when the mother of *Zebedee*'s two ſons aſked the favour of Chriſt, to ſet one of them at his right hand, and the other at his left, in his kingdom; which greatly incenſed the other diſciples, and occaſioned a diſpute about precedence; when our Lord interpoſed, and uſed much the ſame arguments as here; and which, 'tis thought, *Luke* here inſerts out of the proper place. The *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *then his diſciples diſputed among themſelves*; pinning it down to this very time: and what might give occaſion to the preſent diſpute, may be what Chriſt had ſaid concerning the kingdom of God, ver. 16, 18. which they underſtanding of the temporal kingdom of the Meſſiah, and fancying, by his words, that it was near at hand, began to ſtrive among themſelves who ſhould be the greateſt in it; or it might be brought on by their enquiry among themſelves, who ſhould betray him, which might lead them on each one to throw off the imputation from himſelf, and to commend himſelf as a ſteady follower of Jeſus, and to expreſs his hopes of being his chief favourite, and principal miniſter in his kingdom: for the ſtrife was, *which of them ſhould be accounted the greateſt*; by Chriſt; or that ſhould be ſo in his kingdom. Perhaps the contention might be chiefly between *Peter*, *James* and *John*, the two ſons of *Zebedee*, and who were the favourite diſciples of Chriſt; and *Peter* might urge his ſeniority, and what Chriſt had ſaid to him, *Matt.* xvi. 18, 19. and the rather, ſince it is certain ſatan was now buſy about him; wherefore Chriſt calls him by name, and ſingles him out among the reſt, ver. 31.

Ver. 25. *And he ſaid unto them*, &c.] The diſciples; that is, *Jeſus* ſaid to them, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions expreſs: *the kings of the Gentiles exerciſe lordſhip over them*; by which our Lord would diſſuade his diſciples from ſeeking to introduce a ſuperiority over one another, ſince this was the practice of the heathens, of the men of the world, of ignorant *Gentiles*; whereas Chriſt's kingdom was a ſpiritual kingdom, and not of this world, and therefore not to be managed in ſuch a way. *And* *they that exerciſe authority upon them are called benefactors*; either by themſelves, or by their court-flatterers, to cover their ambition, tyranny, and cruelty. Two of the kings of *Egypt* were called by the name *Euergetes*[p]; the word that is here uſed, and tranſlated *benefactors*; and it was commonly given to other kings, princes, and men in power: ſo *Cyrus* was called by the *Armenians*; *Antigonus* by the *Greeks*; and *Phylacus* among the *Perſians*: the ſame name was given to *Mithridates* king of *Pontus*, to *Titus Ælius Hadrianus*, to *Menander*, to *Marcus Aurelius Severus*, and to *Cato Uticenſis*, and others[q].

Ver. 26. *But ye ſhall not be ſo*, &c.] See the note on *Matt*. xx. 26. *but he that is greateſt among you*; in age or gifts, or would be thought to be the greateſt, who is moſt ambitious of grandeur and authority, which perhaps might be *Peter*'s caſe, who was the oldeſt man: *let him be as the younger*; as *John*, the beloved diſciple, who was the youngeſt of them; and be as modeſt, and as humble as he, and reckon himſelf as in his place, and condeſcend to men of low eſtates, and eſteem each other, even the youngeſt, better than himſelf. So the phraſe, היכרבא היכזעירא[r], *both greater and leſſer*, is uſed of the elder and younger. *And he that is chief*; that is, a ſpiritual ruler and governour in the church of God, as all the diſciples were: *as he that doth ſerve*; for the apoſtles and miniſters of the word, tho' they are over others in the Lord, and have the rule over them, yet they are ſervants for Jeſus ſake, and ſo ought to reckon themſelves; ſee the note on *Matt*. xx. 27.

Ver. 27. *For whether is greater*, &c.] Chriſt appeals to themſelves, and puts a caſe that is plain and obvious to any one, who is the greater, and more honourable perſon: *he that ſitteth at meat*; that ſits, or lies down at table, and another waits on him: *or he that ſerveth?* that ſtands behind, obſerves orders, and miniſters to thoſe that ſit down: *is not he that ſitteth at meat?* you, and every one muſt own, that he is the greateſt, and moſt honourable perſon: *but I am among you, as he that ſerveth*; Chriſt took upon him the form of a ſervant, and inſtead of being miniſtred unto, miniſtred to others; and had very lately, but two days before, girt himſelf, and took a baſon and a towel, and waſhed and wiped the feet of his diſciples: now our Lord, by his own example throughout the whole of his conduct among them, as well as by ſuch a ſingle action, would diſſuade from their ambitious views of ſuperiority over each other, and learn of him who was meek and lowly, and by love ſerve one another.

Ver. 28. *Ye are they which have continued with me*, &c.] From the beginning of his miniſtry, to that very time, they abode by him, and never departed from him, when others withdrew and walked no more with him: *in my temptations*; not in the wilderneſs by ſatan; for they were not with him then, not being as yet called to be his diſciples and followers: but his afflictions, by the reproaches, and cavils, and enſnaring queſtions of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, and their attempts upon him to take away his life by ſtoning, *&c.* which were trials and temptations to him. So the *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *in my affliction*: now, ſince they had ſtood their ground, and firmly adhered to him in all his trials, he would have them ſtill continue with him, and in his intereſt, tho' they ſhould not have that temporal glory and grandeur they expected; but, on the contrary, freſh troubles and exerciſes, reproach, perſecution, and death itſelf; and, for their encouragement, he promiſes both pleaſure and honour, though of another ſort, than what they were ſeeking after.

Ver. 29. *And I appoint unto you a kingdom*, &c.] Not a temporal one, but a ſpiritual one; and either intends, that they ſhould have in the government of the church, peculiar to them, as apoſtles, they being ſet in the firſt, and higheſt place, and office, in the church; and have the keys of the kingdom of heaven, or the Goſpel-diſpenſation, and church-ſtate, committed to them, whereby they ſhould open the door of faith to men, both to *Jews* and *Gentiles*; and have the power of binding and looſing, or of pronouncing things to be lawful or unlawful to be retained and uſed, and even of remitting ſins in a miniſterial and declarative way; and not only of rebuking and reproving for ſin with authority, but even of inflicting corporal puniſhment on delinquents, and that in a very ſevere way, as in the caſes of *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, *Elymas* the ſorcerer, the inceſtuous perſon at *Corinth*, and *Hymenæus* and *Philetus*: or the kingdom of grace, which they had in common with all the ſaints, which lies not in outward things, but in righteouſneſs, peace, and joy, and which can never be moved, or taken away; by virtue of which Chriſt reigns in the hearts of his people, and they are kings, and prieſts to God, and have power, as princes, with God and men, and overcome, and reign over their own luſts, and the world, and ſatan: or that kingdom, and dominion, and greatneſs of the kingdom, which ſhall be given to the ſaints of the moſt high, *Dan*. vii. 27. in the latter-day glory and kingdom-ſtate of Chriſt on earth, when the ſaints ſhall reign with him: or the kingdom of glory prepared from the foundation of the world; a gift of our heavenly father's, which the ſaints are called unto, made meet for, and have a right unto, in Chriſt, and are heirs of, and into which he will introduce them at the laſt day: and indeed, all theſe ſenſes may be taken into the account of this text: *as my father hath appointed unto me*; a kingdom, not of nature and providence, which he has in right of nature, being of the ſame eſſence, and having the ſame perfections with his father; and in right of creation, all being made by him; for this is not given, or appointed to him; nor is he accountable for it to any, ſince he receives it not from any: but his mediatorial kingdom, which is given him, and which he will deliver up the account of to his father another day; ſee *Dan*. vii. 14. 1 *Cor*. xv. 24. which took place here on earth in the days of his fleſh; though it was not of this world, nor came with obſervation, or with worldly pomp and ſplendor; and became more viſible upon his reſurrection from the dead, his exaltation at the right hand of God, the effuſion of the ſpirit, the great converſions among men, and the deſtruction of the *Jewiſh* nation. This kingdom takes in the whole Goſpel-diſpenſation, reaching from the times of Chriſt being in the fleſh, to his ſecond coming; and comprehends all the elect of God, who are a kingdom of prieſts, or a royal prieſthood, in whoſe hearts Chriſt reigns by his ſpirit, and grace; it includes the whole viſible Goſpel church-ſtate on earth, which is God's holy hill of *Sion*, over which he has ſet Chriſt, as king, and which he governs by laws of his own enacting, and by governours appointed under him, among whom he'll reign; firſt more ſpiritually in the latter day, when the Goſpel ſhall be ſpread all over the world, and the kingdoms of

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[p] Alex. ab Alexandro Genial. Dier. l. 1. c. 2.

[q] Vid. Cuper. Inſcript. & Marmora. p. 283, 284.

[r] Targum in 2 Chron. xxxi. 15.

this world, ſhall become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Chriſt; and next perſonally with all his ſaints together, for the ſpace of a thouſand years; and laſt of all triumphantly to all eternity, in the ultimate glory and kingdom of his father.

Ver. 30. *That ye may eat, and drink, at my table, in my kingdom*, &c.] In the Goſpel-diſpenſation, or Goſpel church-ſtate, in which Chriſt has a table, called the table of the Lord, 1 *Cor.* x. 21. which is the Lord's ſupper, and is a table well furniſhed with the beſt of proviſions, his fleſh and blood, of which believers may eat and drink with a hearty welcome; Chriſt himſelf being preſent to ſup with them: and in his perſonal reign on earth, where will be the marriage-ſupper of the lamb, to which all the ſaints will be called; and will ſit down with *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, and be regaled with joys and pleaſures not to be expreſſed: and in the ultimate glory, when the lamb ſhall feed them, and ſhall lead them to fountains of water; and they ſhall never hunger nor thirſt more, but ſhall have fulneſs of joy, and be ſatiated with pleaſures that will never fade nor end: *and ſit on thrones*; expreſſive of the great honour and dignity they were raiſed to, both in this, and the other world, from a low and mean eſtate, being before as beggars on the dunghil, now among princes, and on thrones, even on the ſame throne with Chriſt; ſee 1 *Sam.* ii. 8. *Rev.* iii. 21. *judging the twelve tribes of Iſrael*; doctrinally and miniſterially; accuſing the *Jews*, and arraigning them for the crucifixion of Chriſt; paſſing ſentence upon them, and condemning them, and declaring that they ſhould be damned for their diſbelief and rejection of him; ſee the note on *Matt.* xix. 28.

Ver. 31. *And the Lord ſaid, Simon, Simon*, &c.] *Peter* is particularly, and by name, ſpoken to, either becauſe he might be a principal perſon in the debate and contention about ſuperiority, mentioned in the context; or becauſe he was chiefly to ſuffer in the following temptation of ſatan; or becauſe he was generally the mouth of the reſt of the apoſtles: and he is addreſſed, not by the name of *Peter*, the name Chriſt gave him, when he firſt called him, ſignifying his future ſolidity, firmneſs, and ſtedfaſtneſs; becauſe in this inſtance, he would not give any proof of it; but by his former name, *Simon*, and which is repeated, partly to ſhow the earneſtneſs of Chriſt in the delivery of what follows, and partly to expreſs his affectionate concern for him; ſo the *Jews* obſerve [s] concerning God's calling, *Moſes, Moſes*, *Exod.* iii. 4. that כפול לשון חבה, *the doubling of the word*, is expreſſive *of love*, and finding grace and favour; even as it is ſaid *Abraham, Abraham*, *Gen.* xxii. 11. or it may be to excite attention to what Chriſt was about to ſay. Though the *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read the firſt of theſe, *to Simon*, thus; Jeſus ſaid to *Simon, Simon, behold ſatan hath deſired to have you*; not only *Peter*, but all the apoſtles; for the word υμας, *you*, is plural: ſatan the enemy of the woman's ſeed, the accuſer of the brethren, the wicked one, and the tempter, deſired, aſked leave of God, for he can do nothing without permiſſion; that he might have theſe diſciples, under his power, and in his hand; juſt as he got leave to have the goods, and even the body of *Job* in his hand, and fain would have had his life, and ſoul too, could he have obtained it; and he would have the lives and ſouls of others; for he goes about, ſeeking to devour whom he may; and he had now an evil eye upon the apoſtles, and wanted an opportunity to gratify his malice and envy: his end in deſiring to have them in his power was, *that he may ſift* you *as wheat*; not to ſeparate the chaff from the wheat, but to make them look like all chaff, by covering the wheat of grace with the chaff of ſin and corruption; or to deſtroy the wheat, was it poſſible; or to toſs them to and fro as wheat is in a ſieve; that is, to afflict and diſtreſs them; ſee *Amos* ix. 9. by ſcattering them both from Chriſt, and one another; by filling them with doubts about Jeſus being the Meſſiah and redeemer; and by frighting them with the fears of enemies and of death, which end he obtained; ſee *Matt.* xxvi. 56. *Luke* xxiv. 31. *John* xx. 19.

Ver. 32. *But I have prayed for thee*, &c.] Chriſt prayed for all the apoſtles; but particularly for *Peter*, becauſe he was in the greateſt danger: whether the prayer Chriſt refers to was that in *John* xvii. in which are many paſſages relating to the preſervation, ſanctification, final perſeverance and glorification of the apoſtles, as well as of other ſaints, as in ver. 9, 11, 15, 17, 20, 24. and ſo theſe words might be ſpoken a little after that prayer was ended, which was about this ſame time; or whether it was any other, and only mental, and not vocal, is not certain: however, the petition was, *that thy faith fail not*; ſatan in his temptations ſtrikes principally at the faith of God's people; that being a grace which gives much glory to God, and in the exerciſe of which believers have much peace, joy, and comfort; both which he envies and grudges; and it is alſo a ſhield which keeps off, and quenches his fiery darts, and is a piece of armour he is ſadly haraſſed with, and therefore endeavours all he can, to weaken and deſtroy it, or wreſt it out of their hands: but tho' thro' the power of ſin, and the force of temptation, it may fail as to ſome degree of the ſtedfaſtneſs of it, as to the actings and exerciſe of it, and as to the ſenſe believers may have of it; yet never as to its principle, it being an irrevocable gift of God's grace; a work of his almighty power; a ſolid and ſubſtantial grace, even the ſubſtance of things hoped for; an immortal and incorruptible ſeed, and of which Chriſt is the author and finiſher: and to nothing more is its ſecurity owing, than to the prayers of Chriſt, which are always heard, and to his powerful mediation, and prevalent interceſſion; Chriſt is the advocate of his people; he prays that they might have faith, and then he prays, that it may not fail; and it ſhall not, notwithſtanding all the oppoſition of hell, and earth, unto it: *and when thou art converted, ſtrengthen thy brethren*: *Peter* was now a converted man, and had been for ſome years; but whereas he would fall by temptation into a very great ſin of denying his Lord, and which was attended with ſuch circumſtances as made him look like an unconverted, and an unregenerate man; his recovery by the freſh exerciſe of faith in Chriſt, and repentance for his ſins, is called a converſion; and which was not his own act, but owing to the power and efficacy of divine grace; ſee *Jer.* xxxi. 18. Some verſions render it in the imperative, *in time, convert, turn*, or *return, and ſtrengthen thy brethren*; as the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions; as he afterwards did: for whereas all the diſciples forſook Chriſt, and fled, ſome one way, and ſome another, *Peter*, after his recovery, got them together again, and returned them to *Jeruſalem*; when they with him aſſembled together, till the third day Chriſt was riſen: he ſtrengthened their faith in the Meſſiah, and put them upon filling up the place of *Judas*, by chooſing another apoſtle; and on the day of *pentecoſt*

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[s] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 88. 4. Jarchi in Gen. xxii. 11. Bemidbar Rabba, §. 14. fol. 217. 1.

*pentecoſt* preached a moſt excellent ſermon, which, as it was made uſeful for the converſion of three thouſand ſinners, was, doubtleſs, a means of confirming the minds of the diſciples; and he has left two exceeding uſeful epiſtles for the ſtrengthening of his brethren in all ages of time; the deſign of which is to eſtabliſh the ſaints in faith and holineſs, that they may not be drawn aſide, and fall from the ſtedfaſtneſs of their faith, either by the luſts of the fleſh, or by the perſecutions of men, or by the error of the wicked.

Ver. 33. *And he ſaid unto him*, &c.] That is, *Simon*, or *Simeon*, ſaid unto him, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions expreſs it; he made a reply to Jeſus, ſaying, as one fearleſs of danger, and confident in himſelf: *I am ready to go with thee, both into priſon, and to death*; he ſuggeſts, that he was not afraid of ſatan, nor of his temptations, of being ſifted, ſhaken, and toſſed by him: he was not to be frighted out of his faith by him, or to be ſcared with a priſon, and death itſelf; he was ready for both; and they were welcome, come when they would; and rather than part from, or deny his Lord, he was then prepared to go with him, at once, to either of them. The phraſe, *to go*, is not in the *Syriac* verſion.

Ver. 34. *And he ſaid*, &c.] *To him*, as all the *Oriental* verſions add; to *Peter*, as what is ſaid ſhews; that is, *Jeſus* ſaid to him, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* veſions expreſs: *I tell thee, Peter*; who knew him, and his heart, better than he did himſelf, as well as knew what was to come, and what would befal him; and therefore declares it, as he does with the greateſt aſſurance and certainty, and which might be depended on, and accordingly came to paſs: *the cock ſhall not crow this day*; in this night, as in *Mark* xiv. 30. or this night, as in *Matt.* xxvi. 34. for it was now night; a natural day includes both night and day; a like way of ſpeaking, ſee in *Luke* ii. 8, 11. *before that thou ſhalt thrice deny that thou knoweſt me*; as he did, ver. 57, 58, 60. See the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 34.

Ver. 35. *And he ſaid unto them*, &c.] To the diſciples, as the *Perſic* verſion reads; not to *Peter* only, but to them all: *when I ſent you without purſe, and ſcrip, and ſhoes*; without the neceſſaries of life, without proper accommodation, for a journey, without proviſions, or money, to buy any with: ſo ανευ βαλαντιȣ, *without a purſe*, is, by the *Scholiaſt* on *Ariſtophanes* [t], interpreted by ανευ αργυριȣ και δαπανης, *without money and expence*: Chriſt here refers to his miſſion of them in *Matt.* x. 5, 9, 10. *lacked ye any thing?* any of the common bleſſings of life, food to eat, or raiment to wear? *and they ſaid, nothing*; they lacked nothing at all; wherever they came, they had friendly accommodations; they were provided with every thing neceſſary for them; they had both food and raiment, and good lodgings in every place; the houſes and hearts of men were opened by Chriſt to receive them, tho' they were ſent out by him, ſo empty and deſtitute.

Ver. 36. *Then ſaid he unto them*, &c.] That is, *Jeſus* ſaid unto them, as the *Perſic* verſion expreſſes it: *but now he that hath a purſe let him take* it, *and likewiſe* his *ſcrip*; ſignifying hereby, that from this time forward, immediately after his departure from them, after his death, reſurrection, and aſcenſion, when they ſhould be ſent into all the world to preach the Goſpel, it would be otherwiſe with them than before; that they ſhould be reduced to great penury and diſtreſs, ſhould neither have food, nor money to buy any with; and that they ſhould ſuffer hunger, and thirſt, and nakedneſs, and have no certain dwelling-place, as was their caſe; ſee 1 *Cor.* iv. 11. and that they would not be received, and entertained in the manner they had been; and therefore it would be adviſeable, if they had any proviſions, to take them with them in their ſcrips; or if they had any money, to carry it with them in their purſes; for glad would they be to provide themſelves with neceſſaries at any rate: *and he that hath no ſword*; the word *ſword* is not in this clauſe, but in the next; 'tis only in the original, *he that hath not*; which, at firſt ſight, looks as if the ſenſe was, he that hath not a purſe, or a ſcrip, to ſell, and buy a ſword with, let him ſell his garment, and buy one: but, as *de Dieu* obſerves, the phraſe, *he that hath not*, is the ſame with *he that has nothing*; who is a poor man, and has no money to buy a ſword with, let him part with his garment, which rich men, who had money, had no need to do; though the *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Arabic* verſions put the word *ſword*, in both clauſes: *he that hath no ſword, let him ſell his garment and buy a ſword*; that is, if he could get one no other way. Chriſt here uſes the common dialect of the nation, as Dr. *Lightfoot* obſerves. So on the feaſt of dedication of the temple, "if a "man had not any thing to eat, but what he had "by alms, he muſt beg, or מוכר כסותו, *ſell his* "*garment*, and take oil, and lamps, and light "them [u]." Theſe words of Chriſt are not to be underſtoood literally, that he would have his diſciples furniſh themſelves with ſwords at any rate, ſince he would never have ſaid, as he afterwards does, that two were ſufficient; which could not be enough for eleven men; or have forbid *Peter* the uſe of one, as he did in a very little time after this: but his meaning is, that wherever they came, and a door was opened for the preaching of the Goſpel, they would have many adverſaries, and theſe powerful, and would be uſed with great violence, and be followed with rage and perſecution; ſo that they might ſeem to ſtand in need of ſwords to defend them: the phraſe is expreſſive of the danger they would be expoſed to, and of their need of protection; and therefore it was wrong in them to be diſputing and quarrelling about ſuperiority, or looking out for, and expecting temporal pomp and grandeur, when this would be their forlorn, deſtitute, and afflicted condition; and they would quickly ſee the affliction and diſtreſs begin in himſelf. In *ſeven* ancient copies of *Beza*'s, 'tis read in the future tenſe, *he ſhall take, he ſhall ſell, he ſhall buy*.

Ver. 37. *For I ſay unto you, that this that is written*, &c.] In *Iſ.* liii. 12. *muſt yet be accompliſhed*; it having not been as yet; at leaſt not ſo perfectly fulfilled: *and he was reckoned among the tranſgreſſors*. The *Syriac* and *Arabic* verſions read in the firſt perſon, *and I ſhall be reckoned*, &c. and ſo the *Perſic* verſion, *that I may be numbered*, &c. and the *Ethiopic* renders it, *and the Lord Jeſus is numbered with ſinners*; neither right: for the words are a proper citation from *Iſ.* liii. 12. which, as the whole prophecy belongs to the Meſſiah, was fulfilled in Jeſus; who, though he was no tranſgreſſor, yet being in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh, and dwelling among, and converſing with ſinners, was traduced as one, and was joined with *Barabbas*, a murderer, a thief, and a robber, and put up with him for the people to chuſe which of the two they would have releaſed; and was at laſt crucified between two thieves; and more than this, being in the law-place, and ſtead of his people, and having their ſins laid upon him, and imputed to him, he was made and accounted, by imputation,

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[t] In Avibus, p. 548.

[u] Maimon. Hilch. Megilla Uchanucha, c. 4. §. 12.

imputation, not only a ſinner, but ſin itſelf; and as ſuch, was conſidered in the eye of the law, and by the juſtice of God, and was treated accordingly; ſee the note on *Mark* xv. 28. *for the things concerning me have an end.* The *Syriac* verſion renders it, *all of them*; or *the whole of it*, as the *Ethiopic* verſion; all that were concerning him; all the counſels, purpoſes, and decrees of God, relating to his ſufferings and death; to the manner in which his death was brought about, by one of his diſciples betraying him; to the ſeveral indignities he ſhould be uſed with, by *Herod*, *Pontius Pilate*, the *Jews*, and *Roman* ſoldiers; and to his death itſelf; all which were by the determinate counſel, and foreknowledge of God, and now were about to have, and quickly had their fulfilling end; as alſo all his own covenant-engagements and agreements he entered into with his father, to bear the ſins of many, to make his ſoul an offering for ſin, to be numbred with tranſgreſſors, and pour out his ſoul unto death; and likewiſe all the types and ſhadows of the law, all ſacrifices in general, and the daily ſacrifice in particular, with the paſſover, brazen ſerpent, and other things, even the whole law, both moral and ceremonial, had their full and final accompliſhment in him; together with all the prophecies of the Old Teſtament relating to this matter, particularly *Gen.* iii. 15. *Pſal.* xxii. 12—18. *Iſ.* liii. 5—12. *Dan.* ix. 26. *Zach.* xii. 10. and xiii. 6, 7.

Ver. 38. *And they ſaid, Lord, behold here* are two *ſwords*, &c.] That is, the diſciples ſaid ſo, as the *Perſic* verſion expreſſes it; for they underſtood Chriſt's words literally; and two ſwords being among them, and which they might bring with them from *Galilee*, to defend themſelves from thieves, and robbers, which infeſted the roads between that country and *Jeruſalem*; and one of theſe, as appears afterwards, belonged to *Peter*, they mention them with a deſire of knowing whether they were ſufficient, or whether they muſt provide themſelves with more: *and he ſaid unto them, it is enough*; or, *they are ſufficient*, as the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions render it; which muſt be underſtood, either ironically; yes, two ſwords to be ſure, are ſufficient for eleven men, and againſt many and powerful enemies: or his meaning is, they were ſufficient to anſwer his purpoſe, and be an emblem of what he deſigned by the ſword; or this was a ſhort way of ſpeaking, ſuggeſting their ſtupidity and ignorance; it is enough, it is very well, I perceive you don't underſtand my meaning, and I ſhall ſay no more at preſent.

Ver. 39. *And he came out*, &c.] That is, *Chriſt*, as the *Perſic* verſion; or the *Lord Jeſus*, as the *Ethiopic* verſion expreſſes; he came out of the gueſt-chamber, or upper-room, and out of the houſe where he had been keeping the paſſover with his diſciples; and he came out of the city of *Jeruſalem*, to begin his ſorrows and ſufferings without the camp, where he was to end them: *and went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives.* This had been his practice and cuſtom for ſeveral nights paſt, as appears from chap. xxi. 37. Hence *Judas* knew the place he now went to, and could direct the ſoldiers and officers where to go, and apprehend him; and this ſhews the willingneſs of Chriſt to be taken, in order to ſuffer and die; otherwiſe he would have gone to another place, and not this. The *Ethiopic* verſion adds, *to pray*, as he did; and, as very likely he was uſed; for he would ſometimes continue a whole night in prayer on a mountain; ſee *Luke* vi. 12. *and his diſciples alſo followed him*; eleven of them, for *Judas* was now gone to the chief-prieſts to inform them where Chriſt was going, that they might ſeize him: but the other diſciples followed him, which was ſo ordered, that they might be witneſſes of his ſorrows and agonies in the garden, and of his being betrayed by *Judas*, and apprehended by the *Jews*; though upon this they forſook him and fled.

Ver. 40. *And when he was at the place*, &c.] In the garden, at *Gethſemane*, which was at the foot of the mount of *Olives*; *he ſaid unto them*; to the diſciples, as the *Perſic* verſion reads; *pray that ye enter not into temptation*. This, according to the Evangeliſts *Matthew*, and *Mark*, was ſaid to them after he had prayed the firſt time, and returned to the diſciples, and found them ſleeping; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 41.

Ver. 41. *And he was withdrawn from them*, &c.] That is, from the three diſciples, *Peter*, *James*, and *John*, whom he took along with him, leaving the reſt at ſome further diſtance; and from theſe he removed, *about a ſtone's caſt*; fifty, or ſixty feet from the place where they were: *and kneeled down and prayed*; the following prayer.

Ver. 42. *Saying, father, if thou be willing*, &c.] If it be conſiſtent with thy will of ſaving ſinners, and which thou haſt declared to me, and I have undertook to perform: the other Evangeliſts ſay, *if it be poſſible*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 39. *remove this cup from me*; meaning, either his preſent ſorrows and diſtreſs, or his approaching ſufferings and death, which he had in view, or both: *nevertheleſs not my will*; as man, for Chriſt had an human will diſtinct from, though not contrary to his divine will: *but thine be done*; which Chriſt undertook, and came into this world to do; and it was his meat and drink to do it, and was the ſame with his own will, as the ſon of God; ſee the notes on *Matt.* xxvi. 39, 42.

Ver. 43. *And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven*, &c.] Whether this was *Michael* the archangel, as ſome have conjectured, or *Gabriel*, or what particular angel, is not for us to know, nor is it of any importance: 'tis certain, it was a good angel; *an angel of God*, as the *Ethiopic* verſion reads; ſince he came from heaven, and was one of the angels of heaven, ſent by God on this occaſion; and it is clear alſo, that he was in a viſible form, and was ſeen by Chriſt, ſince he is ſaid to appear to him: *ſtrengthening him*; under his preſent diſtreſs, againſt the terrors of ſatan, and the fears of death, by aſſuring him of the divine favour, as man, and of the fulfilment of the promiſes to him to ſtand by him, aſſiſt, ſtrengthen, and carry him thro' what was before him; and by obſerving to him the glory and honour he ſhould be crowned with, after his ſufferings and death, and the compleat ſalvation of his people, which would be obtained hereby, and which was the joy ſet before him; and which animated him, as man, to bear the croſs, and deſpiſe the ſhame with a brave and heroic ſpirit. Now, though God the Father could have ſtrengthened the human nature of Chriſt, without making uſe of an angel; and Chriſt could have ſtrengthened it himſelf, by his divine nature, to which it was united; but the human nature was to be brought into ſo low a condition, and to be left to its ſelf, as to ſtand in need of the aſſiſtance of an angel: and this ſhows not only the miniſtration of angels to Chriſt, as man, but that he was at this preſent time made a little lower than the angels, who was the creator and Lord of them; as he afterwards more apparently was, through the ſufferings of death.

Ver. 44. *And being in an agony*, &c.] Or in a conflict, and combat; that is, with the devil, who now appeared viſibly to him, in an horrible form: after his temptations in the wilderneſs ſatan left him for a ſeaſon, till another opportunity ſhould offer; and now it did; now the prince of this world came to him; ſee *Luke* iv. 13. *John* xiv. 30. and attacked him in a garden, where the firſt onſet on human nature was made: and now began the battle between the two combatants, the ſerpent, and the ſeed of the woman; which iſſued in the deſtruction of ſatan, and the recovery of mankind. The *Arabic* verſion leaves out this clauſe; and the *Syriac* verſion renders it, *being in fear*; and to the ſame purpoſe are the *Perſic* and *Ethiopic* verſions; that is, of death; and muſt be underſtood of a ſinleſs fear of death in his human nature, to which death being a diſſolution of it muſt be diſagreeable; tho' not death, barely conſidered, was the cauſe of this fear, diſtreſs, and agony he was in; but as it was to be inflicted on him for the ſins of his people, which he bore, and as it was the curſe of the law, and the effect of divine wrath and diſpleaſure: *he prayed more earneſtly*; repeating the words he had ſaid before with great eagerneſs and importunity, with intenſeneſs of mind, and fervor of ſpirit, with ſtrong crying, and tears to him that was able to ſave him from death, *Heb.* v. 7. *and his ſweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling to the ground.* This account of Chriſt's bloody ſweat is only given by *Luke*, who being a phyſician, as is thought, more diligently recorded things which belonged to his profeſſion, to take cognizance of; nor ſhould it be any objection to the truth and credibility of this fact, that it is not mentioned by the other Evangeliſts, ſince it is no unuſual thing with them for one to record that which is omitted by another; nor that this is wanting in ſome *Greek* and *Latin* copies, as *Jerom* [w], and *Hilary* [x] obſerve; ſince it was expunged, as is ſuppoſed, either by ſome orthodox perſons, who weakly thought it might ſeem to favour the *Arians*, who denied that Chriſt was of the ſame impaſſible nature with the Father; or rather by the *Armenians*, or by a ſett of men called *Aphthartodocetæ*, who aſſerted the human nature of Chriſt to be incorruptible: but certain it is, that it is in the moſt ancient and approved copies, and in all the *Oriental* verſions, and therefore to be retained; to which may be added, that it is taken notice of, not to mention others, by thoſe two early writers, *Juſtin Martyr* [y], and *Irenæus* [z]: nor ſhould its being ſo ſtrange and unuſual a ſweat, at all diſcredit the hiſtory of it, ſince there have been inſtances of this kind ariſing from various cauſes; and if there had been none, ſince the caſe of our Lord was ſingular, it ought to be credited. This bloody ſweat did not ariſe from a cachexy, or ill ſtate of body, which has ſometimes been the cauſe of it, as *Ariſtotle* obſerves, who ſays [a], that the blood ſometimes becomes ſanious, and ſo ſerous, inſomuch that ſome have been covered with a *bloody ſweat*: and in another place he ſays [b], that thro' an ill habit of body it has happened to ſome, that they have ſweat a bloody excrement. *Bartholinus* produces inſtances in plagues and fevers [c]; but nothing of this kind appears in Chriſt, whoſe body was hale and robuſt, free from diſtempers and diſeaſes, as it was proper it ſhould, in order to do the work, and endure the ſufferings he did; nor did it ariſe from any external heat, or a fatiguing journey. The above writer [d] relates, from *Actuarius*, a ſtory of a young man that had little globes of blood upon his ſkin, by ſweat, thro' the heat of the ſun, and a laborious journey. Chriſt's walk from *Jeruſalem* to the garden was but a ſhort one; and it was in the night when he had this ſweat, and a cold night too; ſee *John* xviii. 18. it rather aroſe from the agony in which he was before related: perſons in an agony, or fit of trembling, ſweat much, as *Ariſtotle* obſerves [e]; but to ſweat blood is unuſual. This might be occaſioned by his vehement ſtriving and wreſtling with God in prayer, ſince the account follows immediately upon that; and might be owing to his ſtrong cries, to the intenſeneſs and fervor of his mind, and the commotion of the animal ſpirits, which was now very great, as ſome have thought; or, as others, to the fear of death, as it was ſet before him in ſo dreadful a view, and attended with ſuch horrible circumſtances. *Thuanus* [f], a very grave and credible hiſtorian, reports of a governour of a certain garriſon, who being, by a ſtratagem, decoyed from thence, and taken captive, and threatened with an ignominious death, was ſo affected with it, that he ſweat *a bloody ſweat* all over his body. And the ſame author [g] relates of a young man of *Florence*, who being, by the order of pope *Sixtus* the fifth, condemned, as he was led along to be executed, thro' the vehemence of his grief diſcharged blood inſtead of ſweat, all over his body: and *Maldonate*, upon this paſſage, reports, that he had heard it from ſome who ſaw, or knew it, that at *Paris* a man, robuſt, and in good health, hearing that a capital ſentence was pronounced upon him, was, at once, all over in a bloody ſweat: which inſtances ſhow, that grief, ſurprize, and fear, have ſometimes had ſuch an effect on men; but it was not mere fear of death, and trouble of mind, concerning that, which thus wrought on our Lord, but the ſenſe he had of the ſins of his people, which were imputed to him, and the curſe of the righteous law of God, which he endured, and eſpecially the wrath of God, which was let into his ſoul: tho' ſome have thought this was owing to the conflict Chriſt had with the old ſerpent the devil; who, as before obſerved, now appeared to him in a frightful form: and very remarkable is the paſſage which Dr. *Lightfoot*, and others, have cited from *Diodorus Siculus*, who reports of a certain country, that there are ſerpents in it, by whoſe bites are procured very painful deaths; and that grievous pains ſeize the perſon bitten, and alſo *a flow of ſweat like blood.* And other writers [h] make mention of a kind of aſp, or ſerpent, called *Hæmorrhois*; which, when it bites a man, cauſes him to ſweat blood: and ſuch a bloody ſweat it ſhould ſeem was occaſioned by the bite of the old ſerpent ſatan, now nibbling at Chriſt's heel, which was to be bruiſed by him: but of all the reaſons and cauſes of this uncommon ſweat, that of *Clotzius* is the moſt ſtrange, that it ſhould ariſe from the angels comforting and ſtrengthening him, and from the chearfulneſs and fortitude of his mind. This writer obſerves, that as fear and ſorrow congeal the blood, alacrity and fortitude move it; and being moved, heat it, and drive it to the outward parts, and open a way for it thro' the pores: and this he thinks may be confirmed from the fruit and effect of Chriſt's prayer, which was very earneſt, and was heard, as is ſaid in *Heb.* v. 7. when he was delivered from fear; which deliverance produced joy, and this joy iſſued in the bloody ſweat. Some think the words do not neceſſarily imply, that this ſweat was blood, or that there was blood in it; only that his ſweat, as it came out of his body, and fell on the ground, was ſo large, and thick, and viſcous, that it looked like drops, or clots of blood: but the caſe rather ſeems to be this, that the pores of Chriſt's body were ſo opened, that along with ſweat came out blood, which flowed from him very largely, and as it fell on the ground, he being fallen on his face to the earth; it was ſo congealed by the cold in the night-ſeaſon, that it became really, as the word ſignifies, clots of blood upon the earth. The *Perſic* verſion, different from all others, reads, *his tears, like blood, fell by drops upon the ground.* This agony, and bloody ſweat of Chriſt, prove the truth of his human nature; the ſweat ſhows that he had a true and real body, as other men; the anxiety of his mind, that he had a reaſonable ſoul capable of grief and ſorrow, as human ſouls are; and they alſo prove his being made ſin and a curſe for us, and his ſuſtaining our ſins, and the wrath of God: nor could it be at all unſuitable to him, and unworthy of him, to ſweat in this manner, whoſe blood was to be ſhed for the ſins of his people, and who came by blood and water, and from whom both were to flow; ſignifying, that both ſanctification and juſtication are from him.

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[w] Adverſ. Pelag. l. 2. fol. 96. F.
[x] De Trinitate, l. 10. p. 155.
[y] Dialog. cum Tryph. p. 331.
[z] Adv. Hæreſ. l. 3. c. 32.
[a] De Hiſt. Animal. l. 3. c. 19.
[b] De Part. Animal. l. 3. c. 5.
[c] De Cruce Hypomnem. 4. p. 185, 186.
[d] Ib. p. 184.
[e] Problem, §. 2. c. 26, 31.
[f] Hiſt. ſui Temporis, par. 1. l. 8. p. 804, 805.
[g] Ib. par. 4. l. 82. p. 69.
[h] Solin. Polyhiſtor, c. 40. Iſidor. Hiſpalenſ. Etymolog. l. 12. c. 4.

Ver. 45. *And when he roſe from prayer,* &c.] The *Syriac* verſion reads, *from his prayer,* having finiſhed it; and the *Perſic* and *Ethiopic* verſions read, *from the place of prayer,* or where he prayed: *and was come to his diſciples*; to the three, which he had left about the diſtance of a ſtone's caſt: *he found them ſleeping for ſorrow*; on his account; for he had ſignified unto them, how exceeding ſorrowful he was; and they might perceive by his looks and geſtures, the anxiety and diſtreſs of his mind he was in, which muſt needs affect them; and beſides, he had given them ſome intimations of his being to be betrayed by one of them, and of his ſufferings and death, and ſpeedy departure from them; and becauſe of theſe things, ſorrow had filled their hearts, and this had induced heavineſs and ſleep upon them; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 40.

Ver. 46. *And ſaid unto them, why ſleep ye?* &c.] The *Arabic* verſion prefaces this with theſe words, *and he awaked them*; and then rebuked them for ſleeping, adding, *riſe and pray, leſt ye enter into temptation*; together with words recorded in *Matt.* xxvi. 45, 46.

Ver. 47. *And while he yet ſpake,* &c.] The above words to his diſciples, *behold a multitude.* The *Perſic* verſion adds, *of Jews, with arrows, ſwords, and ſpears:* but the multitude conſiſted partly of *Roman* ſoldiers, and partly of the officers of the chief-prieſts: *and he that was called Judas*; and ſometimes *Iſcariot,* to diſtinguiſh him from another *Judas,* who alſo was of the number of the apoſtles: *one of the twelve*; diſciples of Chriſt, whom he had choſen, called, and ordained: *went before them*; as their guide, to ſhew them where Jeſus was, and to point him out unto them; ſee *Acts* i. 16. *and drew near unto Jeſus to kiſs him*; that being the ſignal he had given them, by which they ſhould know him. The *Syriac* verſion here adds, *for this ſign he had given to them, whomſoever I ſhall kiſs, the ſame is he:* and ſo likewiſe the *Perſic* and *Ethiopic* verſions, adding alſo this, *lay hold upon him*; but the whole ſeems to be tranſcribed from *Matt.* xxvi. 48.

Ver. 48. *But Jeſus ſaid unto him, Judas,* &c.] Calling him by his name, that he might know he knew him, and to aggravate his ſin; what, *Judas,* my apoſtle, my friend, my familiar friend, in whom I truſted, or with whom I truſted all my worldly affairs, *betrayeſt thou the ſon of man with a kiſs!* who aſſumed human nature for the good of mankind, who is the Meſſiah ſpoken of by the prophets, under the character of the ſon of man, and who is holy, harmleſs, and never did any mortal man any hurt or injury; and what, betray ſuch an one into the hands of his moſt implacable adverſaries, and in ſuch an hypocritical and deceitful way! all which Chriſt ſaid, to ſhow he was no ſtranger to what he was about to do.

Ver. 49. *When they which were about him,* &c.] That is, the eleven diſciples that were about Chriſt, and with him in the garden; *ſaw what would follow:* that their Lord and maſter was about to be betrayed by *Judas,* and would be ſeized, and carried away by the multitude, that were with him: *they ſaid unto him, Lord, ſhall we ſmite with the ſword?* or *ſwords,* as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read; with the two ſwords which they had along with them. This they ſaid, not being thoroughly acquainted with the mind of Chriſt in this matter, whether they ſhould uſe the temporal ſword or no; and might chuſe to ſhow this forwardneſs to ſtand by him, and defend him, remembering how lately they had ſaid, that tho' they died with him, they would not deny him; and might, no doubt, be thoroughly exaſperated and provoked to ſee *Judas* at the head of ſuch a mob, with ſwords and ſtaves, and burned with true zeal for their Lord and maſter; and might be the more ſpirited up to this, by obſerving, that the men fell backwards to the ground, upon Chriſt's ſaying that he was the perſon they ſought; at leaſt their dependance was upon the exertion of his almighty power; for they could never otherwiſe imagine that eleven men, with two ſwords only, would be able to defend him, and reſcue him out of the hands of ſuch a multitude.

Ver. 50. *And one of them ſmote the ſervant of the high-prieſt,* &c.] The perſon that drew his ſword, and performed this daring action, not waiting for an anſwer from Chriſt, was *Peter,* and the high-prieſt's ſervant, that he ſmote, was *Malchus*; both which we learn from *John* xviii. 10. *and cut off his right ear*; he aimed, no doubt, at his head, but miſſing his blow, took off his right ear. 'Tis very likely, that this ſervant was very buſy and forward to lay hold on Chriſt, and ſhewed much virulence, and great malignity; and therefore *Peter* ſingled him out, and levelled his blow at him.

Ver. 51. *And Jeſus anſwered and ſaid,* &c.] Not to the queſtion of the diſciples, but either to *Peter,* who had done this raſh action; and ſo the *Perſic* and *Ethiopic* verſions add, *to him*; or elſe to the multitude, *ſuffer ye thus far*; or to them both, to *Peter* to ſtop his hand, to proceed no farther, but put up his ſword; and ſo the *Arabic* verſion reads, *refrain thyſelf*; and to the multitude to be eaſy, and not revenge the affront that was given them: and in order to pacify them, *he went to the wounded man,* as the *Perſic* verſion inſerts, *and he touched his ear and healed him*; which ſhows, that though the human nature of Chriſt was in a very low condition, yet he ſtill retained the power of doing miracles; and alſo his great humanity, by which example he confirmed his precept of doing good to enemies; and likewiſe hereby, gave full proof of his willingneſs to be apprehended by them; for otherwiſe, he that wrought ſuch a miracle as this, could eaſily have delivered himſelf out of their hands; and one would have thought this would have put a ſtop to them, and have convinced them of the truth of his being a divine perſon, and the Meſſiah.

Ver. 52. *Then Jeſus ſaid unto the chief prieſts,* &c.] After he had wrought this miracle, and had quieted the mob, and reſtrained them from falling upon the apoſtles, and cutting them to pieces, which in all likelihood they would otherwiſe have done; he addreſſed himſelf to *the chief prieſts*, who were members of the *Jewiſh Sanhedrim*, and *the captains of the temple*; ſee the note on ver. 4. *And the elders which were come to him*; which came along with *Judas* and the multitude, in order to ſee things done to their mind, and to animate both *Judas* and the ſoldiers and their officers, by their preſence, leſt they ſhould come without him, as they had before done, *John* vii. 45. *Be ye come out as againſt a thief with ſwords and ſtaves?* ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 55.

Ver. 53. *When I was daily with you in the temple,* &c.] As he had been for ſome days paſt, teaching the people, and diſputing with them, the chief prieſts, *&c. ye ſtretched forth no hands againſt me*; to lay hold upon him, and kill him; the reaſon was, becauſe his time was not come, and they had no licence or permiſſion to hurt him, or any power given them againſt him from above: *but this is your hour*; the time was now come for the betraying of him by *Judas*; for the ſeizing and apprehending him by the *Roman* ſoldiers and officers; and for the delivery of him into the hands of the chief prieſts and elders; and for them to inſult, mock, buffet, ſcourge him, and ſpit upon him: and for the crucifixion of him, and putting him to death: the hour fixed for this was now come: it was now, and not before, and therefore they could not lay hold on him, and do to him what they liſted, but now they might; yet this was but an hour, a ſhort time that they had to triumph over him, in *Caiaphas*'s palace, and *Pilate*'s hall, upon the croſs, and in the grave; for on the third day he aroſe again, notwithſtanding all the precautions they took, and is aſcended to heaven, and is received there, and is out of their reach: and ſince then, it has been his hour to take vengeance on them; on their nation, city, and temple, for their diſbelief, rejection, and ill uſage of him; and it will be likewiſe his hour at the day of judgment, when they ſhall look on him whom they have pierced, and mourn; and hide their faces from him, and call to the mountains to cover them, and when they'll be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction from his preſence: he adds, *and the power of darkneſs*. The *Perſic* verſion reads, *the power of your darkneſs*; that is, either the power granted to them, who were darkneſs itſelf, born and brought up in darkneſs; were walking in darkneſs, and in the ignorance of their minds; and did works of darkneſs, and ſhunned the light, becauſe their deeds were evil; and for which reaſon they now choſe the night, to execute their black deſigns upon Chriſt: or rather, the power of the prince of darkneſs is here meant; that power which he uſurped, and was now permitted him to exerciſe againſt Chriſt: and ſo the *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *the power of the Lord of darkneſs*; who was once an angel of light, but now full of darkneſs, and who darkens the minds of men, and for whom blackneſs of darkneſs is reſerved: the *Jews* were uſed to call the evil angels by this name; for ſo they ſay [i], "the deſtroying "angels are called, חשך ואפלה *darkneſs, and thick* "*darkneſs.*" The ſenſe of the whole paſſage is, that now was the time come, that Chriſt ſhould be delivered up into the hands of wicked men and devils; that the former ſhould have him in their power, and triumph over him for a ſeaſon; and that hell was now let looſe, and all the infernal powers were about him, throwing their poiſoned arrows and fiery darts at him; all which Chriſt endured, to deliver his from the preſent evil world, from the wrath of God, the curſes of the law, and from the power of darkneſs.

Ver. 54. *Then took they him, and led him,* &c.] The band of ſoldiers, the captain, and the officers of the *Jews*, laid hold on Jeſus, and bound him, *John* xviii. 12. and led him out of the garden; notwithſtanding the miracle he had wrought, and the humanity he had ſhown in healing the ſervant's ear; and notwithſtanding his moving addreſs to the chiefs of them; and indeed, this was a confirmation of his laſt words; for by this it appeared, that now was their time, and power was given to them as the emiſſaries of ſatan, to act againſt him: *and brought him into the high-prieſt's houſe*; where the *Sanhedrim* were aſſembled; but this was not in the temple where they uſed to ſit: it is true indeed, that the chamber in the temple, called the chamber *Parhedrin*, or *Palhedrin*, was, בית דירה, *the dwelling houſe* of the high-prieſt, ſeven days before the day of atonement [k]; and this was alſo called the *chamber of the counſellors* [l]; ſo that had the time of year agreed, it might have been thought that this was the place that Jeſus was had to; but here the high-prieſt did not uſually dwell, and it is manifeſtly diſtinguiſhed from his own houſe: for it is ſaid [m], "ſeven days before the day of atone-"ment, they ſeparate, or remove the high-"prieſt, מביתו, *from his houſe*, to the chamber "of *Palhedrin*;" ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 3. *And Peter followed afar off*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 58.

Ver. 55. *And when they had kindled a fire in the midſt of the hall,* &c.] It being cold in the nighttime, though it was at the paſſover, and the beginning of harveſt, the ſervants and officers of the high-prieſt's, made a fire in the middle of the hall, whilſt Jeſus was examining before the *Sanhedrim*, at the other end of it: *and were ſat down together*; about it, as the *Syriac* verſion adds, to warm themſelves: *Peter ſat down among them*; for the ſame purpoſe, and as if he was one of them; and which he might do, not only to warm himſelf, but to prevent his being taken notice of, and ſuſpected; as he might have been, had he been loitering about.

Ver. 56. *But a certain maid beheld him,* &c.] Looked upon him, and took notice of him, and obſerved his countenance and geſture: *as he ſat by the fire*; or *light*; ſee the note on *Mark* xiv. 54. And both by the light of the fire, and other lights, which were doubtleſs in the hall, ſhe diſcovered ſomething in him, which made her look at him again with ſome earneſtneſs: *and earneſtly looked upon him, and ſaid, this man was alſo with him*; that

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[i] Raya Mehimna in Zohar in Lev. fol. 37. 2.

[k] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 10. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Mezuza, c. 6. §. 6.

[l] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 8. 2.

[m] Miſna Yoma, c. 1. §. 1.

fellow, that vile and contemptible wretch, now examining before the high-prieſt; thus in a contemptuous manner, as was the cuſtom and ſtile of that nation, ſhe diſdained to mention the name of *Jeſus*; though the *Perſic* verſion here expreſſes it; and her ſenſe was, that *Peter* was one of that clan, a diſciple of his, and was only come hither as a ſpy.

Ver. 57. *And he denied him, ſaying, woman, I know him not.*] Startled at the maid's poſitive aſſertion, and knowing not how to clear himſelf any other way, roundly, and at once, denied that Jeſus was his maſter; or that he was a diſciple of his; or that he knew any thing of him, or had any acquaintance with him: and thus he that had ſaid he would die with him, rather than deny him, is frighted at a ſervant maid, and denies him upon the firſt attack upon him.

Ver. 58. *And after a little while*, &c.] A quarter, or half an hour after, within an hour at leaſt: *another ſaw him*; not another maid, but another man, as appears from the anſwer; though the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions leave out the word *man*, it may be becauſe *Matthew* and *Mark* repreſent the perſon, on account of whoſe words *Peter* denied Chriſt a ſecond time, to be another maid; but then it is to be obſerved, that that maid did not ſpeak directly to *Peter*, as this perſon did, but to thoſe that were preſent, or that ſtood by: and one of theſe taking the hint from her, looked at him, *and ſaid, thou art alſo of them*; of the diſciples of *Jeſus* of *Nazareth*; thou belongeſt to that company; thou art certainly one of his followers; *and Peter ſaid, man, I am not.* This was after he had been out into the porch, and had muſed upon it, and was come in again, but had not courage enough to withſtand the temptation, and eſpecially now, being attacked by a man; and ſo a ſecond time denies that Chriſt was his maſter, or that he was a diſciple of his.

Ver. 59. *And about the ſpace of one hour after*, &c.] After the firſt aſſault, or rather after the ſecond: *another confidently affirmed*; who was one of them that ſtood by the fire-ſide, and heard what had paſſed; and not only ſo, but was a kinſman to him, whoſe ear *Peter* had cut off, and who had ſeen him in the garden with Chriſt, and therefore with all aſſurance aſſerted it, as a matter of fact, as an unqueſtionable truth, and beyond all doubt: *ſaying of a truth, this* fellow *alſo was with him*; a diſciple and follower of Jeſus, and was with him when he was apprehended; I ſaw him there, and it may be depended on as a truth; and then added this reaſon, *for he is a Galilean*; you may be aſſured of this yourſelves, his ſpeech bewrays him; you may know him by his language, and which confirms my aſſertion.

Ver. 60. *And Peter ſaid, man, I know not what thou ſayeſt*, &c.] Suggeſting, that he was ſo far from being a follower of Jeſus, or a diſciple of his, and from having any perſonal acquaintance with him, that he did not know what he was talking of, or at leaſt could not underſtand what he meant by this harangue, or by talking after this manner about him; and then began to curſe and ſwear, and wiſh the moſt dreadful things to befal him, if he knew any thing of *Jeſus of Nazareth: and immediately while he yet ſpake*; in this ſhocking manner, with his mouth full of oaths, curſes, and imprecations: *the cock crew*; the ſecond time, *Mark* xiv. 72.

Ver. 61. *And the Lord turned*, &c.] Himſelf, his back being to *Peter*, whilſt he was examining before the high-prieſt; but he knew full well what was doing, what had been ſaid to *Peter*, and how often he had denied him: *and looked upon Peter*; with his bodily eyes, with great earneſtneſs, expreſſing in his looks concern and pity for him; for it was a look, not of wrath and reſentment, but of love and mercy, and power went along with it; it was not only a ſignal to *Peter*, to put him in remembrance of what he had ſaid, but it was a melting look to him, and a means of convincing and humbling him, and of bringing him to repentance: *and Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had ſaid unto him, before the cock crow, thou ſhalt deny me thrice*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 75.

Ver. 62. *And Peter went out and wept bitterly.*] See the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 75.

Ver. 63. *And the men that held Jeſus*, &c.] Whilſt he was before the *Sanhedrim*; and were either the *Roman* ſoldiers, or the ſervants of the high-prieſt, who kept hold of him all the while, leſt he ſhould get away; though there was no reaſon for it; his time was come, nor would he eſcape out of their hands, though he could eaſily have reſcued himſelf: *mocked him*; inſulted him, and gave him very opprobrious language, and uſed him in a very ſcurrilous way, and even ſpit upon him; *and ſmote him.* This clauſe is left out in the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions; the word uſed, ſignifies plucking off the ſkin; they pinched him, and tore off his fleſh with their nails; they plucked the hairs of his beard, and the ſkin of his cheeks along with them, and ſo fulfilled *Iſa.* l. 6.

Ver. 64. *And when they had blindfolded him*, &c.] Or put a vail, or linnen cloth over his eyes, as children do at play, to make themſelves ſome ſport with him: *they ſtruck him on the face*; on that part of it which was not covered, either with their hands, or with rods: *and aſked him, ſaying, propheſy, who is it that ſmote thee?* hereby deriding his prophetic office, and uſing ſuch language as children do at blindman's buff; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 68.

Ver. 65. *And many other things blaſphemouſly ſpake they*, &c. As denying and ridiculing his deity, and divine ſonſhip; mocking at, and burleſquing his offices, of prophet, prieſt, and king; aſſerting him to be a mere man, and a very wicked one; a profane ſinner, a glutton, and a wine-bibber; a ſabbath-breaker, a blaſphemer, and a ſeditious perſon; and one that had a devil, or dealt with familiar ſpirits: and thus ſpake they *againſt him*; his perſon, office, and character.

Ver. 66. *And as ſoon as it was day*, &c.] See the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 1. *The elders of the people*; or *the preſbytery of the people*, that were choſen from among the people to ſit in the *Sanhedrim*; the *Iſraelites*, as diſtinct from prieſts and *Levites*, and the doctors; *and the chief prieſts and the Scribes came together*; which made up the great *Sanhedrim*, or council of the nation: *and led him into their council*; or *Sanhedrim*, the place where the *Sanhedrim* ſat, which was in the temple, and in the chamber called, לשכת הגזית, *the paved ſtone chamber* [n]; here they uſually met, and ſo the *Perſic* verſion renders it, *where their congregation was daily there.*

Ver. 67. *Saying, art thou the Chriſt?* &c.] The Meſſiah, promiſed and propheſied of by *Moſes*, and all the prophets, and long expected by us: *tell us*. The *Ethiopic* verſion adds, *openly*; tell us frankly, freely, plainly, as in *John* x. 24. *And he ſaid unto them, if I tell you, you will not believe.* The *Vulgate Latin* and *Syriac* verſions read, *will not believe me*; neither what he ſaid, nor that he was the Meſſiah; they were determined not to believe in him, and receive him as ſuch; their unbelief was wilful, obſtinate, and invincible; they were proof againſt all arguments, evidence, and demonſtration itſelf.

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[n] Miſna Sanhedrin, c. 10. §. 2. & Middot, c. 5. §. 3.

Ver. 68. *And if I alſo aſk* you, &c.] Or enter into a diſcourſe on this ſubject, and require an anſwer to the arguments, proving me to be the Meſſiah, or deſire to know what objections can be made thereunto: *you will not anſwer me*; fairly and directly, or go into a ſerious and ſober converſation on this head: *nor let me go*; or diſmiſs me, though I ſhould appear to be the Meſſiah, or ever ſo free from the charge of blaſphemy and ſedition; you are reſolved, right or wrong, to detain me in bonds, and take away my life; ſo that it ſignifies nothing ſaying any thing to you.

Ver. 69. *Hereafter ſhall the Son of man*, &c.] Meaning himſelf, who was truly man, and then in a low and mean form, and thought by the *Jews* to be a mere man; though this character was known by them to belong to the Meſſiah, eſpecially what follows; as that he ſhould *ſit on the right hand of the power of God*: as he did after his reſurrection, and aſcenſion, and which was manifeſt by the deſtruction of their nation, city, and temple; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 64.

Ver. 70. *Then ſaid they all*, &c.] The whole *Sanhedrim*, with one voice, being greedy to lay hold on, and improve theſe words, that they might have ſomething to lay to his charge: *art thou the Son of God?* for they knew that the Meſſiah, or the Son of man, that was to ſit at the right hand of God, and come in the clouds of heaven, was the Son of God: *and he ſaid unto them, ye ſay that I am*; or rather the words may be rendered, *ye ſay* it, and ye ſay right; it is the very truth: *for I am*; that is, *the Son of God*, as the *Ethiopic* verſion here adds; which ſenſe agrees with *Mark* xiv. 62. and the following words ſeem to require this ſenſe and verſion.

Ver. 71. *And they ſaid*, &c.] That is, *the council*, as the *Perſic* verſion reads; ſome of the members of the *Sanhedrim*, or the whole body of them: *what need we any farther witneſs?* or give any farther trouble in getting witneſſes, and hearing them: *for we ourſelves have heard of his own mouth*; his blaſphemy, and what amounts to a ſufficient charge of that kind; upon which they all pronounced him worthy of death, and determined to deliver him into the hands of *Pilate* the *Roman* governour, in order to paſs ſentence on him, and put him to death.

## CHAP. XXIII.

Ver. 1. AND *the whole multitude of them*, &c.] Of the chief prieſts, *Scribes*, and elders; the whole of the *Sanhedrim*, excepting *Nicodemus*, and *Joſeph* of *Arimathea*, having in their court adjudged Chriſt to death: *aroſe*; from the council-chamber, where they ſat in judgment upon him: *and led him unto Pilate*; the *Roman* governour, and into the *prætorium*, or judgment-hall, where cauſes were tried by him; hither they brought Jeſus, having bound him as a priſoner and a malefactor, that their ſentence might be confirmed by civil authority, and that he might be put to the death of the croſs, which was a *Roman* puniſhment.

Ver. 2. *And they began to accuſe him*, &c.] After they found that *Pilate* would not receive him as a malefactor upon their word, and delivery of him to him as ſuch; but inſiſted on knowing what they had to charge him with, and what accuſation they had to bring againſt him: *ſaying, we have found this fellow perverting the nation*; the nation of the *Jews*. Three of *Beza*'s copies read, *our nation*; and ſo do the *Vulgate Latin*, and all the *Oriental* verſions; and it is to be underſtood, either of his perverting the nation from the true doctrine of *Moſes* and the prophets; by ſpreading among them new notions, and falſe principles of religion; whereby he was a troubler of God's *Iſrael*, as *Ahab* charged *Elijah*, 1 *Kings* xviii. 17. where the *Septuagint* uſe the ſame word as here; and ſo is a charge of hereſy, or innovation in religion againſt Chriſt: and thus *Jeſus* ſtands charged in their writings [o]; on thoſe words in *Pſal.* xci. 10. *Neither ſhall any plague come nigh thy dwelling*, they have this note; “that thou mayeſt not have a ſon, or a diſciple, that corrupts his food publickly (*i. e.* his doctrine, who departs from the true doctrine and worſhip, to hereſy and idolatry, and propagates the ſame) כגון ישו הנוצרי, *as Jeſus* the *Nazarene*.” Which laſt clauſe, in ſome later editions of the *Talmud*, is left out: or it may be underſtood of his perverting the nation in their politicks, and ſo is a charge of ſedition againſt him, as follows; *forbidding to give tribute to Cæſar*; than which, nothing was more falſe; ſee *Matt.* xxii. 21. and xvii. 24—27. nor does what is after alledged, ſupport this charge: *ſaying, that he himſelf is Chriſt, a king*; or Chriſt the king, or the king Chriſt; that is, he whom the *Jews* ſo frequently in their writings call, מלך המשיח, *the king Meſſiah*; for ſo he might be, and was, without any hurt to *Cæſar*'s dignity, or revenue; for though he was a king, yet not an earthly one; and though he had a kingdom, yet not of this world: indeed they would inſinuate by this, that he ſet himſelf up as an earthly king, in oppoſition to *Cæſar*, to draw off the people from him, and their allegiance and duty to him; and ſo the *Jews* ſay of Jeſus of *Nazareth*, that he was put to death, and had no mercy ſhown him, becauſe he was, קרוב למלכות, *near to the kingdom* [p]. The whole of this charge was untrue; he was ſo far from perverting the nation with falſe doctrine and worſhip, that he taught the true doctrine, and right way of worſhip, and refuted the falſe gloſſes of the *Phariſees*, and oppoſed the vain traditions of the elders, by which both were corrupted; and ſo far was he from any ſeditious principles and practices, or doing any injury to *Tiberius Cæſar*, the then reigning emperor, that he taught the people to give *Cæſar*, the things that were *Cæſar*'s, and he himſelf paid the tribute money; and when the people would have took him by force, and have made him a king, he avoided it by getting out of the way, *John* vi. 15.

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[o] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 103. 1. & Beracot, fol. 17. 2.

[p] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 43. 1.

Ver. 3. *And Pilate aſked him, ſaying*, &c.] Obſerving that it was ſaid, he had given himſelf out to be a king; for as for what regarded religion, he took no notice of; he put this queſtion to him, *art thou the king of the Jews?* that their prophecies ſpeak of, and they have expected: *and he anſwered him and ſaid, thou ſayeſt* it; that is, thou ſayeſt well; it is as thou ſayeſt, I am the king of the *Jews*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 25. tho' he did not leave this without an explanation; without informing him what a ſort of a king he was, and what kind of a kingdom he had; ſee *John* xviii. 36, 37. which made *Pilate* perfectly eaſy, and deſirous to releaſe him, as appears by what follows.

Ver. 4. *Then ſaid Pilate to the chief-prieſts, and to the people*, &c.] Both to the *Sanhedrim*, and to the mob that were gathered together about the governour's palace on this occaſion; and who were ſtanding without the judgment-hall, into which they would not enter, leſt they ſhould be defiled, and be unfit to eat the paſſover: wherefore *Pilate* came out to them; and this was the ſecond time of his coming out to them, when he ſaid the following words, *John* xviii. 28, 38. *I find no fault in this man*; no cauſe, or reaſon, why any puniſhment ſhould be inflicted on him, and eſpecially be put to death; no crime that can be faſtened on him, or accuſation proved againſt him, or any thing that amounts to a charge of ſedition: the man is an harmleſs and innocent man, that has done nothing againſt *Cæſar*, or the government, and good of the nation; and therefore is not worthy of death, or of ſtripes, but ſhould be diſcharged. This was *Pilate*'s ſenſe.

Ver. 5. *And they were the more fierce*, &c.] Or *urgent* to have him put to death; ſo the *Hebrew* word חזק, is rendered in *Exod.* xii. 33. which anſwers to that here uſed. *They cried out*, as the *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read; they were more clamours and noiſy; they cried out louder, and exerted themſelves with great fury and violence, and added ſtrength to their clamour, and increaſed their charges: *ſaying, he ſtirreth up the people*; to ſedition and rebellion: *teaching throughout all Jury*; or *Judea*; not in one, or a few places only, but every where: *beginning from Galilee*; where indeed our Lord did begin his miniſtry, and where he chiefly taught; ſee *Matt.* iv. 12, 17, 23. and which they rather choſe to mention, becauſe that the *Galileans* were reckoned a ſeditious people, and had been drawn into rebellion, and had ſuffered for it; ſee *Acts* v. 37. *Luke* xiii. 1. *to this place*; the city of *Jeruſalem*, the metropolis of the nation; ſuggeſting, that he taught ſeditious principles not only in *Galilee*, but all the way from thence throughout *Judea*, and even in their chief city, and had drawn many diſciples after him every where; ſo that it was a notorious caſe, as well as of great conſequence, and much danger, and ought not to trifled with.

Ver. 6. *When Pilate heard of Galilee*, &c.] *The name of Galilee*, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read: when that was mentioned, *he aſked*; the *Ethiopic* verſion ſays, the *Galileans*; ſome of which might be preſent, being come to the feaſt of the paſſover, and were very proper perſons to enquire of: *whether the man were a Galilean*; ſo *Jeſus* was reputed to be; for tho' he was born at *Bethlehem* of *Judah*, he was brought up at *Nazareth* in *Galilee*, where he ſpent the greater part of his private life, and his public miniſtry was chiefly exerciſed in thoſe parts; hence the *Jews* thought, that he came out of *Galilee*, and was a *Galilean*, *John* vii. 41, 52. and ſo he uſed to be called by *Julian* the apoſtate; and it ſeems, that the anſwer returned to *Pilate* was, that he was a *Galilean*; and ſo the *Perſic* verſion adds, and *they ſaid, yes*; for it follows;

Ver. 7. *And as ſoon as he knew that he belonged unto Herod's juriſdiction*, &c.] The country which was under his power, and he had the government of; for *Herod* was *Tetrarch* of *Galilee*, *Luke* iii. 1. This was *Herod Antipas*, the ſon of *Herod* the great, and the ſame that beheaded *John* the *Baptiſt*; wherefore as ſoon as *Pilate* found that Jeſus was one of his province, immediately *he ſent him to Herod*; to be examined, and to have his cauſe tried before him: and this he did partly, that he might be rid of this troubleſome buſineſs; and partly that he might ſhew to *Herod* what a regard he had to his juriſdiction, and power; and that he was unwilling to break in upon it, or uſurp that to himſelf, which did not belong to him: the way from *Pilate*'s hall, to the place where *Herod* was, is computed, by *Adrichomius* to be about three hundred and fifty ſteps: *who himſelf was alſo at Jeruſalem at that time*; or *in thoſe days*; the days of the paſſover; for *Herod* being born a *Jew*, and the ſon of a proſelyte, was come to *Jeruſalem*, at this time, to keep the feaſt of the paſſover.

Ver. 8. *And when Herod ſaw Jeſus, he was exceeding glad*, &c.] For tho' he had been brought up in his country, and had ſo frequently preached, and wrought miracles there, he had never ſeen him before; and to have a ſight of him, was a great indulgence to his curioſity: *for he was deſirous to ſee him of a long ſeaſon*; perhaps ever ſince he had heard of his fame, and had entertained a notion that Chriſt was *John* the *Baptiſt* riſen from the dead, whom he had beheaded; and therefore was deſirous of ſeeing him, that he might know whether he was *John* or no: *becauſe he had heard many things of him*; concerning his doctrine, and miracles, and eſpecially the latter; how that he caſt out devils, and healed all manner of diſeaſes, and even raiſed the dead to life: *and he hoped to have ſeen ſome miracle done by him*; which would have ſtill more gratified his curioſity, and have been the ſubject of further enquiry and converſation.

Ver. 9. *Then he queſtioned with him in many words*, &c.] Or talked very much to him, enquiring who he was, whether *John* the *Baptiſt*, or no; whether it was true that he had wrought ſuch miracles he had heard of, and how he wrought them, and by what power he performed them, and how he came by it; and uſed many arguments to perſuade him to work a miracle at that time: *but he anſwered him nothing*; would not give him one word in return to his many words, nor work any miracle in his preſence; he anſwered him neither by words nor deeds; he would not indulge his curioſity, tho' he might have obtained his liberty by it.

Ver. 10. *And the chief-prieſts and Scribes*, &c.] The *Sanhedrim* that followed him from *Pilate*'s hall, to *Herod*'s palace; fearing, leſt *Herod* ſhould be diſpoſed to let him go, ſhould he gratify him by working a miracle: *ſtood*; before *Herod*; ſo witneſſes, and accuſers, uſed to do; ſee the note on *Mark* xiv. 57. *and vehemently accuſed him*; of the ſame things they had accuſed him before *Pilate*, with great bitterneſs and conſtancy, increaſing, and aggravating the charges againſt him.

Ver. 11. *And Herod, with his men of war*, &c.] Or his ſoldiers, his life-guards that attended his perſon, who came with him from *Galilee*, and were both for his ſecurity and ſervice, and for his pomp and magnificence: *ſet him at nought*; made nothing of him; had him in no account; treated him as a ſilly, and contemptible creature, that could not do any thing that was reported of him; nor able to ſay any thing for himſelf; but took him to be a mere fool and ideot; and ſo they uſed him: *and mocked* him; as a king, and made ſport and paſtime with him: *and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe*. The *Vulgate Latin* renders it, *a white robe*; a token of his innocence, tho' not ſo deſigned by them, but rather by way of deriſion, as a ſymbol of his ſimplicity and folly. The *Syriac* verſion renders it, *ſcarlet*; and the *Arabic* and *Perſic* verſions, *red*. It is very likely that it was an old worn-out robe of one of the officers, or ſoldiers, which they put on him; in contempt of his being a king, as the *Roman* ſoldiers afterwards did, upon the ſame account: *and ſent him again to Pilate*; uncondemned, not knowing what to make of him, or the charge againſt him, and he might be unwilling to have any hand in his death, not having forgotten the caſe of *John* the *Baptiſt*; and therefore remits him to *Pilate*, to do as he thought fit with him.

Ver. 12. *And the ſame day Pilate and Herod were made friends together*, &c.] For it pleaſed *Herod*, that *Pilate* ſhould ſhow ſuch a regard to his authority and power, as to ſend one that belonged to his juriſdiction to take cognizance of his caſe; and eſpecially as it was a perſon that was much talked of, and he had long wanted to ſee; and *Pilate*, on the other hand, was pleaſed with *Herod*, that tho' he was one that was under his juriſdiction, and ſo had a right of trying the cauſe, and either abſolve or condemn, yet choſe not to uſe this his power, but referred the caſe to the *Roman* governour: *for before they were at enmity between themſelves*; it may be on account of the *Galileans*, the ſubjects of *Herod*, whom *Pilate* had ſlain, whilſt they were ſacrificing at *Jeruſalem*, *Luke* xiii. 1. which *Herod* might reſent, as an infringement upon his authority and power; for had they been ever ſo deſerving of puniſhment, it ought to have been left to him, to have inflicted it, and not the governour of *Judea*, who had nothing to do with them: but now matters were made up by this ſtep of *Pilate*'s, in ſending Chriſt to him, ſuppoſed to be a *Galilean*, and ſo of *Herod*'s juriſdiction; which was tacitly acknowledging his former conduct to be wrong, and ſhewed a regard to *Herod*'s authority: and thus they were reconciled together, and agreed in their contemptuous uſage, and ill treatment of Chriſt, and ſo fulfilled *Pſal.* ii. 1, 2.

Ver. 13. *And Pilate, when he had called together the chief-prieſts*, &c.] That is, after *Herod* had ſent back Chriſt unto him, he then ſummoned the chief-prieſts together, to conſider what ſhould be done to him: *and* with them alſo, *the rulers and the people*; both the civil and eccleſiaſtical rulers, and the chief among the people, who had been forward in accuſing Jeſus, and ſeeking his death: the latter of theſe is not read in the *Perſic* verſion; and both are joined together in the *Syriac* and *Ethiopic* verſions, and read thus; by the former, the *princes*, or *chiefs of the people*; and by the latter, *the judges of the people*: in a word, he convened the whole *Sanhedrim*, which conſiſted of the chief-prieſts, *Scribes*, and elders of the people.

Ver. 14. *Said unto them, ye have brought this man unto me*, &c.] Pointing to Jeſus, who ſtood before him; *as one that perverteth the people*; from their religion, and laws, and allegiance to *Cæſar*. The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read, *your people*; of the ſame nation with them, and that were under their care and juriſdiction; at leaſt in an eccleſiaſtical way: *and behold, I having examined him before you*; not only privately, and alone, between themſelves in the judgment-hall, *John* xviii. 33. and xix. 9. but openly in the preſence of them, when he brought forth Jeſus to them, and heard their charges, and urged him to anſwer to them, *Matt.* xxvii. 11—14. *have found no fault in this man*; can't perceive any charge proved againſt him, or any crime he is guilty of, for which puniſhment ſhould be inflicted on him; or at leaſt, that he ſhould be put to death: *touching*, or with regard to *thoſe things, whereof ye accuſe him.* The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read, *all thoſe things*; intimating, that he had carefully looked into, and examined every thing, and had omitted nothing, and that all their accuſations, and charges, put together, did not make it appear that he was guilty of a ſingle crime.

Ver. 15. *No, nor yet Herod*, &c.] Who was a *Jew*, and better verſed in their religious affairs, and underſtood the nature of ſuch charges, and the amount of them, and what was ſufficient proof in ſuch caſes; and who had alſo examined Jeſus, and that in their preſence, and had heard all that they had to accuſe him with, and yet found no fault in him of any ſuch kind, as to adjudge him to death for it: *for I ſent you to him*; along with Jeſus, to make your allegations againſt him good before him; or, *I ſent him to him*, as the *Syriac* verſion reads; that is, Jeſus to him, as the *Perſic* verſion expreſſes, he being of his country, and belonging to his juriſdiction; or, *he ſent him back to us*; as the *Arabic* verſion reads, and three of *Beza*'s copies: that is, *Herod*, after he had examined Jeſus, and found no fault in him, ſent him again to us; not being able to make out any crime againſt him, or to paſs any judgment on the matter, for it follows; *and lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him*; or *by him*: the ſenſe is either, that it appeared to *Herod*, that Chriſt had done nothing that deſerved death; or that nothing was done to him by *Herod*, which ſhewed, that he thought he was worthy of it; ſince he paſſed no ſentence on him, nor ordered him to be ſcourged, nor delivered him into the hands of an executioner, or to be impriſoned 'till things could be cleared up.

Ver. 16. *I will therefore chaſtiſe him*, &c.] Give him ſome correction, as by ſcourging, or beating with rods: this he propoſed, not becauſe he thought him deſerving of it, but in complaiſance to the *Jews*; ſince it would look as if their charges were not altogether weak and groundleſs, and that Jeſus was not entirely innocent: this would carry a ſhew of guilt and puniſhment, and he hoped this might be thought ſufficient, and ſo he ſhould pleaſe them, and ſave Jeſus from dying, which he much deſired: *and releaſe him*; from his bonds, and let him go.

Ver. 17. *For of neceſſity he muſt releaſe one*, &c.] And therefore propoſed to releaſe Jeſus *unto them at the feaſt*; of paſſover, which now was; not that there was any law that obliged to it, but it having been cuſtomary with the *Roman* governour to do ſo, the people expected it; cuſtom had made it neceſſary: and ſo the *Syriac*, *Arabic* and *Perſic* verſions render it; *it was a cuſtom to releaſe*, &c. not at each feaſt, or every feaſt, as the laſt of theſe verſions read, only at the paſſover, as is expreſſed, *John* xviii. 39.

Ver. 18. *And they cried out all at once*, &c.] The chief-prieſts, rulers, and people, not bearing to hear of a releaſe of him, now they had got him in their hands; and enraged at the propoſal, in a moſt clamorous way, cried out, as one man, immediately: *Saying, away with this* man; to the croſs; to *Calvary*, the place of execution; away with him out of the world; he is not fit to live: *and releaſe unto us Barabbas*; whoſe character is given in the next verſe; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 16.

Ver. 19. *Who, for a certain ſedition made in the city*, &c.] Of *Jeruſalem:* he had made an inſurrection in it, in oppoſition to the government, in order to have thrown off the yoke, and to have aſſerted and maintained their liberties, as a free people; or rather to have ſeized and plundered the properties of other people, ſince he is repreſented elſewhere as a robber: *and for murder*; which had either been committed by himſelf, or his accomplices, in the inſurrection; and for theſe things, ſedition, and murder, he *was caſt into priſon*; where he lay till this feaſt, in order to be executed.

Ver. 20. *Pilate therefore willing to releaſe Jeſus*, &c.] Being more and more convinced of his innocence; and ſtill ſeeing more clearly into the wickedneſs, malice, and envy of his accuſers; and having received a meſſage from his wife: *ſpake again to them*; putting it again to them, which he ſhould releaſe; aſking them what he ſhould do with Jeſus; plainly ſignifying his mind, that he thought him innocent, and that it would be right to let him go. The *Ethiopic* verſion repreſents him, ſaying, *will ye that I ſave for you*, or *releaſe to you the Lord Jeſus?*

Ver. 21. *But they cried, ſaying, crucify him, crucify him.*] They were fierce and furious, more noiſy and clamorous, the more they perceived *Pilate* was for ſaving him; and they were more deſirous to have him crucified, and more impatient 'till it was done, as the repetition of the word ſhews.

Ver. 22. *And he ſaid unto them the third time*, &c.] After Chriſt had been ſent back to him from *Herod*; for he had declared before he had ſent him to him, that he found no fault in him, *John* xviii. 38. *Why, what evil hath he done?* what capital crime has he committed? is he guilty of murder? or ſedition? or blaſphemy? or robbery, and theft? or any other enormous crime? *I have found no cauſe of death in him*; why he ſhould be put to death at all; and much leſs to this ſhameful and painful death of the croſs, which was the puniſhment of ſlaves, and of the vileſt of men, which they were deſirous of: *I will therefore chaſtiſe him, and let him go*; this he ſaid, not as if he was determined to do it, whether they liked it, or no; but as ſignifying what he willed, or choſe, and hoped they would be contented with, that he ſhould be ſcourged, or beaten, and diſmiſſed, as he at firſt propoſed.

Ver. 23. *And they were inſtant with loud voices*, &c.] They were urgent, and inſiſted upon his crucifixion, and preſſed hard for it, and exerted their voices, and more loudly called: *requiring him, that he might be crucified*; deſiring it in the moſt importunate manner; ſignifying, that it muſt be, that nothing elſe would content them: *and the voices of them, and the chief-prieſts, prevailed*; upon *Pilate* to grant their requeſt, contrary to the dictates of his own conſcience, the conduct of *Herod*, and the meſſage of his wife; the people being ſet on by the chief-prieſts, and the chief-prieſts joining with them, their numbers were ſo great, and their requeſts were preſſed with ſo much force, and violence, and importunity, that *Pilate* could not withſtand them.

Ver. 24. *And Pilate gave ſentence*, &c.] Reſolved, determined, and gave out: *that it ſhould be as they required*; that they ſhould have their requeſt, what they aſked for; namely, that Jeſus ſhould be crucified, and *Barabbas* releaſed.

Ver. 25. *And he releaſed unto them, him*, &c.] *Barabbas*, who is not named, as being a deteſtable perſon, and unworthy to be named; and is therefore deſcribed by the infamous, tho' juſt character of him, as follows: *that for ſedition and murder was caſt into priſon*, as in ver. 19. *whom they had deſired*; to be granted to them, and releaſed; ſee *Acts* iii. 14. *but he delivered Jeſus to their will*; to do as they would with him, to mock, and ſcourge, and crucify him.

Ver. 26. *And as they led him away*, &c.] From *Pilate*'s hall, and out of the city of *Jeruſalem*, towards *Calvary*; which was done by the *Jews* and *Roman* ſoldiers, after they had ſtripped him of his own clothes, and put on him a ſcarlet coat, and had platted a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and a reed in his hand, and bowed the knee, and mocked him, ſaluting him as king of the *Jews*; after they had finiſhed their ſport and paſtime with him, and had put on him his own clothes again: *they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian*; father of *Alexander* and *Rufus*, *Mark* xv. 21. ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 32. *coming out of the country*; either out of the country-part of *Judea*, to the city of *Jeruſalem*; or out of the field where he had been about rural buſineſs, and was now returning home, and perhaps knew nothing of the matter, what had been doing at *Jeruſalem: and on him they laid the croſs*; on which *Jeſus* was to be crucified, and which he was bearing himſelf; but finding that he was weak, and languid, and unable to carry it himſelf, and fearing, ſhould he die by the way, they ſhould be diſappointed of glutting their malice, and ſeeing him in ſhame and agony on the croſs, and of triumphing over him there; and being in haſte for the execution of their malicious deſigns, they put the croſs, at leaſt one end of it, upon this man's ſhoulders: *that he might bear it after Jeſus*; either the whole of it, following Jeſus; or only one end of it, Jeſus going before with the other end on his ſhoulder; which ſeems to be the order in which it was carried between them.

Ver. 27. *And there followed him a great company of people*, &c.] Not only of the common people, but of the principal inhabitants of the city; for among theſe were the chief-prieſts, *Scribes* and elders: ſome went for one thing, and ſome another; ſome pitying, and others mocking at him, and all to ſee the melancholy ſight, ver. 48. as is uſual at executions: and what might make the croud the greater, was the number of people in the city, which were come from all parts to the paſſover; as alſo the fame and character of the perſon, who was going to ſuffer: *and of women, which alſo bewailed and lamented him*; not that theſe were the ſame with the *preficæ* of the *Romans*, or the ιηλεμιστριαι of the *Grecians*; for though the *Jews* had their מקוננות, or mourning women, who were hired to aſſiſt in mourning, by uſing mournful geſtures, tones, and ſongs, ſee *Jer.* ix. 17. yet public mourning was not allowed for perſons that were executed as malefactors; and therefore it is the more remarkable, that here, and in ver. 48. any public tokens of ſorrow ſhould be expreſſed: for, "thoſe that are executed by the "*Sanhedrim*, אין מתאבלין עליהן, *they don't mourn* "*for them*; but their near relations come and aſk "the peace of, or ſalute the witneſſes, and they "ſalute the judges, to ſhew, that they have not "any thing in their hearts againſt them, ſeeing "they have paſſed a true ſentence; but tho' they "don't uſe mourning, lo, they grieve for them; "for there is no grief but in the heart [r]." The reaſon why they did not mourn was, becauſe their ignominy and death atoned for their crime [s]: but it ſeems, there was a difference between thoſe that were put to death by the order of the *Roman* government, and thoſe that were put to death by the *Sanhedrim:* "all that are put to death by the government, altho' they are executed by the order of "the king, and the law gives power to ſlay them, "lo, *they mourn for them*; and they don't reſtrain "any thing from them, and their ſubſtance goes "to the king, and they are buried in the ſepulchres "of their fathers; but all that are put to death by "the *Sanhedrim, they don't mourn for them*; but they "grieve for them; for there is no grief but in the "heart; and they are not buried with their fathers, "till their fleſh is conſumed; and their ſubſtance "goes to their heirs [t]." And ſince Chriſt was condemned to death by the *Roman* governour, hence it may be public mourning was allowed of, and might be done without notice; but theſe ſtill were not the mourning-women, but perſons that followed on their own accord: ſome expreſſed their concern and ſorrow through a natural tenderneſs of ſpirit, and from a principle of humanity, being grieved that ſo uſeful and innocent a perſon, as Chriſt appeared to be, ſhould be put to ſuch a cruel and ſhameful death; and others from a ſpirit of gratitude, they, or their friends, having received cures from him, being healed by him of ſickneſſes, or diſpoſſeſſed of devils; and others from a ſpiritual, as well as natural affection for him; among whom were his own mother and his mother's ſiſter, and *Mary Magdalen*, and other women that followed him out of *Galilee*.

Ver. 28. *But Jeſus turning unto them*, &c.] Theſe women being behind Chriſt, at the back of him; and he knowing who they were, and what they were doing, turns himſelf to them, and addreſſed them in the following manner: and *ſaid, daughters of Jeruſalem*; or ye *Jeruſalem* women; juſt as the inhabitants of *Jeruſalem* are called daughters of *Zion* in *Iſ.* iii. 16. *weep not for me*; ſignifying, that they need not be under any concern on his account, for he was very willing to die; he deſired nothing more; this was that he came into the world about; nor was he afraid to die; death was no king of terrors to him; he went to the croſs with the greateſt courage and intrepidity: beſides, his ſufferings, tho' he knew they would be very great and painful, yet that they would be ſoon over; nor could he be long held in the power of death, but would be raiſed again, and go to his father, and be exalted at his right hand, and which ſhould be matter of joy: to which might be added, that hereby his father's counſels and covenant, purpoſes and promiſes, would have their accompliſhment, the law would be fulfilled, juſtice ſatisfied, and all the perfections of God glorified, and the ſalvation of his choſen people effected; which, as it was the joy ſet before him, is a ground of rejoicing to believers: not that weeping on account of his ſufferings and death, was ſinful; for he had offered prayers to God with cries and tears himſelf on this head; nor that it was altogether unreaſonable, ſtupid, and prepoſterous; but Chriſt's meaning is, that when things were rightly conſidered, there would be great reaſon to aſſwage their grief, on this account, and rather expreſs it on another; *but weep for yourſelves, and for your children*; not themſelves perſonally, but their nation and poſterity; and either for ſin, their own, and others; the ſins of profeſſors, and of the prophane; particularly the ſin of crucifying him, which would be more injurious to that people than to him, and do them more hurt than him, ſince they had imprecated his blood upon them, and their children; or rather, and chiefly on account of thoſe diſtreſſes and calamities, that would come upon them, in a ſhort time, for their rejection and crucifixion of him; on account of which he himſelf had wept over *Jeruſalem*, and its inhabitants, chap. xix. 41, 42.

Ver. 29. *For behold the days are coming*, &c.] The time is haſtening on; yet a little while, a few years more, and ſuch times of diſtreſs will be: *in the which they ſhall ſay*; or it ſhall be commonly ſaid; it will be in every one's mouth: *bleſſed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps that never gave ſuck*; that is, happy will thoſe perſons be who have no children, to be ſtarved to death, for want of bread; or to be killed with the ſword before their eyes, which muſt greatly enhance their own miſeries. Dr. *Hammond* thinks, that one paſſage particularly is referred to, related by *Joſephus*; that when *Titus* had ſo cloſely encompaſſed the city with a wall, that there was no coming out for proviſions, upon which a ſore famine commenced, ſo that they fed on dung and dirt, and ſhoes, and girdles, one rich and noble woman, whoſe name was *Mary*, the daughter of *Eleazar*, being ſtripped of all ſhe had, by the ſeditious, killed her own child, and dreſſed it, and eat part of it; and the other part being found by the ſoldiers that broke in upon her, the news of this ſhocking fact was ſpread all over the city, and every one looked with horror upon it, and with the ſame compaſſion, as if they had done it themſelves: and then might thoſe words be ſaid, *bleſſed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare*, &c. who, tho' ſtarving themſelves, were under no temptation to do ſuch a deteſtable action.

Ver. 30. *Then ſhall they begin to ſay*, &c.] The *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions read, *then ſhall ye begin to ſay*; the tribulation being ſo great, as never was the like ſince the creation of the world, nor never will be to the end of it; and being ſo ſore preſſed with the ſword and famine; with the enemy without, and diviſions, robberies, and murders within; and their miſeries being inexpreſſible, and intolerable, they will ſeek to go into the holes of the rocks, and caves of the earth, as is propheſied of them, *Iſ.* ii. 19. and as *Joſephus* ſays, many of them did, when the city was taken; and, like thoſe in *Hoſ.* x. 8. will ſay, *to the mountains fall on us, and to the hills cover us*; will chuſe rather that the mountains and hills round about *Jeruſalem*, ſhould fall upon them, and they be buried under the ruins of them, than live in ſuch terrible diſtreſs, or fall into the hands of their enemies! compare with this *Rev.* vi. 15, 16.

Ver. 31. *For if they do theſe things in a green tree*, &c.] Or it may be rendered impersonally, *if theſe things are done in a green tree*; by which is meant the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who is often compared to a tree, as to a green fir-tree, an apple-tree, a vine, and is called the tree of life: and may be ſaid to be a moiſt or green tree; becauſe, as a green tree is full of juice, ſo is he of grace and goodneſs; as that is flouriſhing, ſo was he in the fame of his doctrine and miracles, in the ſpread of his Goſpel, and in the increaſe of his kingdom and intereſt; and

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[r] Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 13. §. 6. Vid, Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 6. §. 4.

[s] Jarchi & Bartenora in Miſn. ib.

[t] Maimon, Hilch. Ebel. c. 1. §. 9.

as that is fruitful and uſeful, ſo was he in preaching the Goſpel, and healing diſeaſes; and as that is not proper to be cut down, nor fit fuel for the fire, ſo he was not deſerving of death, or to be uſed in the manner he was; the metaphor ſeems deſigned to expreſs the righteouſneſs and innocence of Chriſt; ſee *Ezek.* xx. 47. and xxiv. 4. who was pure in his nature, without ſin in his life, harmleſs in his converſation, and did no hurt to any man's perſon or property: his enemies could find nothing, nor prove any thing againſt him; nor even the devil himſelf, but owned him to be the holy one of God; and he was alſo declared innocent by his judge, the *Roman* governour: and yet, how many hard, and grievous things, were done unto him! He was perſecuted in his infancy, and his life was ſought for; he was deſpiſed and reproached by men all his days; he was apprehended as if he had been a thief, and was bound as a malefactor; and arraigned at the bar of men, as if he had been the greateſt criminal on earth; he was mocked, buffeted, and ſpit upon in the palace of the high-prieſt; he was ſcourged by *Pilate*, and miſuſed by his ſoldiers, who arrayed him with a ſcarlet robe, put a crown of thorns on his head, and a reed in his hand, and in a mock-way bowed the knee to him, and ſaluted him as king of the *Jews*; they crucified him between two thieves, and as he hung on the croſs mocked him, and gave him gall and vinegar to drink. To which may be added, that he was forſaken by his God, and father, and his wrath was poured out upon him, as he ſuſtained the perſons, and bore the ſins of his people; the curſe of the law was executed on him, and juſtice drew its ſword, and ſheathed it in him: and now if all theſe things were done to ſuch an uſeful, holy, harmleſs, and innocent perſon, *what ſhall be done in the dry?* by whom wicked men are deſigned; who, as dry trees, are without juice, ſo are they deſtitute of grace and righteouſneſs, and all that is good, and bring forth no fruit, neither to God, nor themſelves, nor others; but, like dead and withered trees, are dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, and full of all manner of ſin, and rottenneſs, and impurity; and are deſerving to be cut down, and are fit fuel for the fire of divine wrath and diſpleaſure, both in this, and in the other world. The wicked *Jews* that rejected Chriſt, and crucified him, are particularly meant; and if ſuch evil things were done by them to ſo juſt a perſon, what may not be expected will fall on them in retaliation for ſuch uſage? and if the *Roman* ſoldiers, under their encouragement acted ſuch a part to Chriſt, who had never done them any injury, what will they not do to theſe men, when provoked by their inſults and rebellions? and if ſuch things were done to Chriſt by his father, according to the requirement of the law, and the ſtrictneſs of divine juſtice, when he was made ſin for his people, tho' he knew none, nor committed any himſelf, what vengeance will fall on them, who muſt anſwer for their ſins in their own perſons? what devouring flames, and everlaſting burnings, will ſuch dry trees be expoſed to, as being fit for them, and deſerving of them? ſo the children of men are, by the *Jews*, in their writings, called, עצים יבשים, *dry trees* [u]; the *Targumiſt* on *Ezek.* xvii. 24. paraphraſes the words thus; "I have humbled the kingdom of the nations, which "was ſtrong as a *green tree*, and I have ſtrengthened the kingdom of the houſe of *Iſrael*, which was "weak as a *dry tree*." It is a common proverb with the *Jews* [x]; "two *dry* ſticks, or brands, and "one green, the dry burn up the *green*:" intimating, that a few righteous perſons among wicked men ſuffer with them; but if righteous men ſuffer, how much more the wicked? ſee 1 *Pet.* iv. 17, 18.

Ver. 32. *And there were alſo two other malefactors*, &c.] Not that Chriſt was one, tho' indeed he was looked upon and treated as one by the *Jews*; but as the words may be read, *there were alſo two others* that were *malefactors*; really ſuch, two thieves, who had been guilty of theft and robbery, and were condemned to die: and theſe were *led with him*; for the greater ignominy and reproach of Chriſt, that it might be thought he was equally a malefactor, and as deſerving of death as they: *to be put to death*; the death of the croſs, which was the death the *Romans* put ſlaves, thieves, and robbers, and the worſt and baſeſt of men to.

Ver. 33. *And when they were come to the place which was called Calvary*, &c.] Or *Cranion*, which ſignifies *a ſkull*; ſo called from the ſkulls of perſons that lay about, who were executed. It is a tradition of the ancients [y], that *Adam* was buried in this place where Chriſt was crucified, and that his ſkull lay here. It was uſual to crucify on high places, and on mountains, ſuch an one as this was [z]: *there they crucified him, and the malefactors*; the two thieves; *one on the right hand, and the other on the left*; and ſo fulfilled the prophecy in *Iſ.* liii. 12.

Ver. 34. *Then ſaid Jeſus, father, forgive them*, &c.] When he was crucified between the two thieves, and as he hung upon the croſs, and while inſulted and abuſed by all ſorts of men, and put to the greateſt pain and torture, he addreſſed himſelf to God his father: the *Arabic* verſion reads, *my father*, who was ſo to him, not as he was man; for as ſuch he had no father; but as he was God, being as a divine perſon, his beloved, and only-begotten ſon: and this he uſes, whilſt, as man, he is praying to him; partly to expreſs his faith of relation to him, his confidence of being heard; and partly to ſet believers an example of praying, as he has directed, ſaying, *our father*, &c. and the petition put up by him is for forgiveneſs; which is with God, and with him only; and that for his enemies, his crucifiers; not for thoſe who ſinned the ſin unto death, the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, who knowing him to be the Meſſiah, maliciouſly crucified him, for whom prayer is not to be made; but for thoſe who were ignorantly concerned in it, as the next clauſe ſhews, even for his own elect, whom the father had given him out of the world, which were among his crucifiers; for thoſe, and not the world, he prays; and the fruit of this his prayer quickly appeared, in the converſion of three thouſand of them under *Peter*'s ſermon on the day of *Pentecoſt*, next following, in ſix weeks time. Tho' ſuch might be his affection, as man, in general, as to wiſh for, and deſire, as ſuch, was it conſiſtent with the divine will, forgiveneſs for all of them; adding *for they know not what they do*, or *are doing*: meaning, in crucifying him, which was the caſe of many of them, and of their rulers; they did not know that Jeſus was the Meſſiah, nor the prophecies concerning him, nor the evil they were committing in putting him to death: not that their ignorance excuſed their ſin; nor was it without ſin; nor does Chriſt uſe it as a plea for pardon, or found his interceſſion upon it, which is always done upon his own propitiatory ſacrifice; but this is mentioned as deſcriptive of the perſons Chriſt prays for, and points out a branch of his prieſtly office he exerciſes, in having compaſſion on the ignorant, and them that are out of the way: *and they parted his raiment, and caſt lots*; that is, upon his veſture, or ſeamleſs coat, and ſo fulfilled the prophecy in *Pſal.* xxii. 18. ſee the notes on *Matt.* xxvii. 35. and *John* xix. 23, 24.

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[u] Zohar in Lev. fol. 14. 2.

[x] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 93. 1.

[y] Cyprian de Reſurrectione Chriſti, p. 479. Hieron. tom. 1. fol. 42. Bar Bahluli apud Caſtell. Lex. Polyglott. col. 3466.

[z] Lipſius de Cruce, l. 3. c. 13.

Ver. 35. *And the people ſtood beholding*, &c.] This diſmal and affecting ſight; inſulting and reviling him, and wagging their heads at him, as did alſo thoſe that paſſed by: *and the rulers alſo with them derided* him; the chief-prieſts, *Scribes*, and elders, the members of the *Sanhedrim*, whoſe characters ſhould have reſtrained them from ſuch an inhuman conduct. The phraſe, *with them*, is wanting in the *Oriental* verſions, and in one of *Beza*'s copies: *ſaying, he ſaved others*; by healing their diſeaſes, or raiſing them from the dead: *let him ſave himſelf*; from death, by unnailing himſelf, and coming down from the croſs; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 42. *if he be Chriſt*; the Meſſiah, he and his followers give out he is; even *the choſen of God*, referring to *Iſ.* xlii. 1. The *Arabic* verſion reads, *the choſen Son of God*, very wrongly; for Chriſt was not choſen to be the Son of God; he was ſo by nature; but he was choſen to be a ſervant, as the text cited ſhows, to be a mediator between God and man, and the ſaviour of his people.

Ver. 36. *And the ſoldiers alſo mocked him*, &c.] The *Roman* ſoldiers, to whom the execution was committed, who crucified him, and parted his garments, and ſtood at his croſs watching; theſe joined in the inſult, which is not to be wondered at. *Coming to him, and offering him vinegar*; which was what was a part of their allowance, and was their drink; ſee the note on *John* xix. 29.

Ver. 37. *And ſaying, if thou be the king of the Jews*, &c.] Or their Meſſiah, who was ſpoken of as a divine perſon; for otherwiſe he might have been their king, and not have been able to have done what is propoſed: *ſave thyſelf*; or deliver thyſelf from the croſs.

Ver. 38. *And a ſuperſcription alſo was written*, &c.] Containing the crime he was charged with, and accuſed of; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 37. and *John* xix. 19, 20.

Ver. 39. *And one of the malefactors, which were hanged*, &c.] On the croſs, one of the thieves crucified with Chriſt; the *Oriental* verſions add, *with him*: according to the Evangeliſts *Matthew* and *Mark*, both of them reviled him, and threw the ſame things in his teeth as the prieſts, people, and ſoldiers did; which how it may be reconciled, ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 44. *railed on him, ſaying, if thou be Chriſt, ſave thyſelf, and us*; taking up the words of the rulers, and adding to them, perhaps, with a deſign to curry favour with them, hoping thereby to get a releaſe; or, however, ſhowing the wickedneſs and malice of his heart, which his ſufferings and puniſhment, he now endured, could make no alteration in; ſee *Rev.* xvi. 9.

Ver. 40. *But the other anſwering, rebuked him*, &c.] That is, the other malefactor made anſwer to him, and reproved him for his baſeneſs and wickedneſs: *ſaying, doſt not thou fear God*; or, *neither doſt thou fear God*, any more than theſe prieſts, people, and ſoldiers, that are acting ſuch a barbarous and inhuman part to a man in miſery: and wilt thou do the ſame, and ſhow that thou art an impious wretch, now thou art juſt going out of the world, and neither fears God, nor regards man, and art without compaſſion to a fellow-ſufferer, adding ſin to ſin, *ſeeing thou art in the ſame condemnation?* undergoing the ſame ſort of puniſhment, tho' not on the ſame account, which might be the reaſon why they ſuffered on the ſame day: for the *Jews* ſay[a], they never judge (or condemn) two in one day, but one to-day, and the other to-morrow: but if they are *in one tranſgreſſion*, "ומיתה אחת, "*and one death*, as an adulterer with an adultereſs, "they condemn them both in one day; but if "the adulterer lies with a prieſt's daughter, ſeeing "he is to be ſtrangled, and ſhe to be burnt, they "don't execute them both in one day."

Ver. 41. *And we indeed juſtly*, &c.] For ſins committed againſt the law; our ſentence is juſt, we are righteouſly puniſhed: which ſhows that he had a true ſenſe of ſin; for where that is, there will be not only an acknowledgment of the offence, but a vindication of the juſtice of God, ſhould he proceed to deal according to the demerit of ſin: *for we receive the due reward of our deeds*; though, according to the law of *Moſes*, theft was not puniſhable with death, but with a reſtoration, either double, or fourfold, or fivefold, according to the nature of it; ſee *Exod.* xxii. 1, 4. It may be theſe men had committed murder along with the robbery: *but this man hath done nothing amiſs*; or abſurd, unreaſonable, wicked, and deteſtable: he did no injury to God, or man; wronged no man's perſon or property; did all things well; obeyed the law of God perfectly, and always did the things which were pleaſing to God. Thus, from the mouth of one of the malefactors Chriſt ſuffered with, was he declared innocent; when the *Jews* deſigned, by crucifying him with them, to have led the people to have believed that he ſuffered for a crime equal, or ſuperior to theirs.

Ver. 42. *And he ſaid unto Jeſus, Lord*, &c.] Acknowledging him to be the Meſſiah, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords; the Lord of all, and eſpecially of his church and people, and his own Lord. So the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read, *my Lord*: however, he ſaid this by the Spirit of God, who enlightened his underſtanding, and wrought faith in him to believe in Chriſt; ſee 1 *Cor* xii. 3. *remember me when thou comeſt into thy kingdom*; or rather *in thy kingdom*, as in *Matt.* xvi. 28. for this man had not only faith in the kingdom of Chriſt, as being of a ſpiritual nature, and not of this world, and not coming with outward pomp and obſervation; in which reſpect his faith exceeded that of the Apoſtles themſelves, who were looking for, and expecting a temporal kingdom; and he not only was without all doubt, or ſcruple, about Chriſt's entering into his kingdom and glory after death, but he had knowledge of, and faith in his ſecond coming, when his glorious kingdom ſhould appear, or his kingdom appear in glory; and when he deſired he might be remembered by him, have favour ſhown him, and he ſhare in the glories and happineſs of it. This was great faith indeed to be exerciſed on Chriſt at ſuch a time as this, when he was under the greateſt reproach and ignominy; while he was inſulted and derided by all ſorts of people; and when he was forſaken by his own Apoſtles, and was ſuffering a ſhameful puniſhment, and now dying.

Ver. 43. *And Jeſus ſaid unto him*, &c.] Jeſus immediately anſwered him, tho' he ſaid not one word to the other that railed at him, or to the multitude that abuſed him; and promiſed him more than he aſked for, and ſooner than he expected. *Verily I ſay unto thee, to-day thou ſhalt be with*

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[a] Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin. c. 14. §. 10.

*me in paradiſe*; בגן עדן, *in the garden of Eden*; not the earthly paradiſe, nor the church militant, but the future place, and ſtate of the happineſs of the ſaints, even heaven, and eternal glory, which the *Jews* frequently call by this name; ſee the note on 2 *Cor.* xii. 4. and is ſo called, becauſe, as the earthly paradiſe, or *Eden*'s garden, was of God's planting, ſo is the heavenly glory of his providing and preparing: as that was a place of delight and pleaſure, ſo here are pleaſures for evermore: as there was a river in it, which added to the delightfulneſs and advantage of it, ſo here runs the river of God's love, the ſtreams whereof make glad the ſaints now, and will be a broad river to ſwim in to all eternity: as there were the tree of life, with a variety of other trees, both for delight and profit, ſo here, beſides Chriſt, the tree of life, which ſtands in the midſt of it, are an innumerable company of angels, and the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect: and as the inhabitants of that garden were pure and innocent creatures, ſo into this paradiſe ſhall nothing enter but what is righteous, pure, and holy: and whereas the principal enjoyment of man in *Eden* was converſation with God, and communion with him, the glory of the heavenly paradiſe will lie in fellowſhip with God, Father, Son, and Spirit, in beholding the face of God, and ſeeing him as he is: and this is the happineſs promiſed by Chriſt to the penitent and believing thief, that he ſhould be here; and not only ſo, but *with* him here, which is far better than being in this world, and than which nothing can be more deſirable; and which, when enjoyed, will be for ever: and this he was to enter upon that very day; which ſhows, that Chriſt's ſoul did not deſcend into hell, locally and literally conſidered, or into the *Limbus Patrum*, the papiſts talk of, to fetch the ſouls of the patriarchs thence, but as ſoon as it was ſeparated from the body was taken up into heaven; and alſo, that the ſouls of departed ſaints are immediately, upon their ſeparation from the body, there; which was the caſe of this wonderful inſtance of the grace of God; and ſhows the ſwiftneſs of the ſoul, or the velocity of angels in conveying it thither immediately: and this agrees with the ſenſe of the *Jews*, who ſay [b], that "the ſouls of the fathers, or patriarchs have reſt, and in a moment, immediately enter into their ſeparate places, or apartments, and not as the reſt of the ſouls; of whom it is ſaid, all the twelve months the ſoul aſcends and deſcends, (goes to and fro) but the ſouls of the fathers, מיד בהפרדן, *immediately, upon their ſeparation*, return to God that gave them." Some would remove the ſtop, and place it after *to-day*, and read the words thus, *I ſay unto thee to-day*; as if Chriſt only ſignified the time when he ſaid this, and not when the thief ſhould be with him in paradiſe; which, beſides it being ſenſeleſs, and impertinent, and only contrived to ſerve an hypotheſis, is not agreeable to Chriſt's uſual way of ſpeaking, and is contrary to all copies and verſions. Moreover, in one of *Beza*'s exemplars it is read, *I ſay unto thee*, οτι σημερον, *that to-day thou ſhalt be with me*, &c. and ſo the *Perſic* and *Ethiopic* verſions ſeem to read, which deſtroys this ſilly criticiſm. And becauſe this was a matter of great importance, and an inſtance of amazing grace, that ſo vile a ſinner, one of the chief of ſinners, ſhould immediately enter into the kingdom of God, and enjoy uninterrupted, and everlaſting communion with him; and that it might not be a matter of doubt with him, or others, Chriſt, who is the *amen*, the faithful witneſs, and truth itſelf, prefaces it after this manner: *verily I ſay unto thee*; it is truth, it may be depended on. This inſtance of grace ſtands on record, not to cheriſh ſloth, indolence, ſecurity and preſumption, but to encourage faith and hope in ſenſible ſinners, in their laſt moments, and prevent deſpair. The *Papiſts* pretend to know this man's name; they ſay his name was *Diſma*; and reckon him as a martyr, and have put him in the catalogue of ſaints, and fixed him on the *twenty-fifth* of *March*.

Ver. 44. *And it was about the ſixth hour*, &c.] Or twelve o'clock at noon; and ſo the *Ethiopic* verſion, *when it was noon*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 45.

Ver. 45. *And the ſun was darkened*, &c. There was an eclipſe of it, which was preternatural, it being now full moon, and laſted three hours, and ſo total, as to darken the whole earth; and now was the propheſy in *Amos* viii. 9. literally fulfilled: *and the vail of the temple was rent in the midſt*. The *Perſic* verſion renders it, *the gate of the temple*; and ſo the *Syriac* verſion, *the face of the gate of the temple*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 51.

Ver. 46. *And when Jeſus had cried with a loud voice*, &c.] A ſecond time; for at the firſt loud cry, he uttered theſe words, *Eli, Eli, lama, ſabachthani*; and at the ſecond what follows; ſee *Matt.* xxvii. 46, 50. and the notes there: *he ſaid, father, into thy hands I commend my ſpirit*; not the holy ſpirit, nor his divine nature, but his human ſoul: for that he had a reaſonable ſoul, as well as a true body, is certain; from his having an human underſtanding, will, and affections, aſcribed to him; and indeed, without this, he would not have been a perfect man, nor like unto us; and could not have been tempted, bore ſorrows and griefs, and endured the wrath of God; nor could he have been a Saviour of ſouls: now juſt as he was expiring, as he made his ſoul an offering for ſin, and which he offered unto God, he committed it to his divine care and protection; and to enjoy his preſence, during its ſeparation from his body, uſing the words of the *Pſalmiſt* in *Pſal.* xxxi. 5. and this ſhews, that his ſpirit, or ſoul, belonged to God, the father of ſpirits, and now returned to him that gave it; that it was immortal, and died not with the body, and was capable of exiſting in a ſeparate ſtate from it, and went immediately to heaven; all which is true of the ſouls of all believers in Chriſt; and what the dying head did, dying members may, and ſhould, even commit their ſouls into the ſame hands: *and having ſaid thus, he gave up the ghoſt*; breathed out his ſoul, diſmiſſed his ſpirit, laid down his life, freely and voluntarily, and which no man, or devil, otherwiſe could have taken away from him.

Ver. 47. *Now when the centurion ſaw what was done*, &c.] The eclipſe of the ſun, the darkneſs upon the land, the earthquake, the rocks rent, and Jeſus expire in ſo uncommon a manner: *he glorified God*; by confeſſing that Chriſt was the ſon of God, and declaring him an innocent perſon: *ſaying, certainly this was a righteous man*; clear of the charges exhibited againſt him, and has ſuffered wrongfully; and this he concluded from thoſe unuſual appearances, and which he conſidered as tokens of divine reſentment.

Ver. 48. *And all the people that came together to that ſight*, &c.] To ſee the execution of Jeſus; and ſome of them might be his inveterate enemies, and came to inſult him, and did inſult him; many of theſe, tho' not every individual of them: *beholding*

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[b] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 58. 4.

*ing the things which were done*; the eclipſe, earthquake, &c. *ſmote their breaſts*; as conſcious of guilt, and as fearing ſome dreadful judgment would fall upon them, and their nation, for this ſin of crucifying Chriſt. The *Perſic* verſion reads, *they went back, and kneeled down*, and *proſtrated themſelves to the ground*; as being in the utmoſt aſtoniſhment, confuſion, fear, and dread: *and returned*; to the city, and to their own houſes, where they might more ſeriouſly, and with the greater compoſure of mind, reflect on theſe things.

Ver. 49. *And all his acquaintance*, &c.] That were related to him in a natural, or in a ſpiritual ſenſe, or both, as his own mother, and beloved diſciple *John*, who were both preſent, *John* xix. 26. or thoſe that were known unto him, and familiar with him, who attended on his miniſtry, and often converſed, and were intimately acquainted with him: *and the women that followed him from Galilee*; among whom were *Mary Magdalene*, and *Mary* the mother of *James*, and *Joſes*, and *Salome* the mother of *Zebedee*'s children: *ſtood afar off*; from the croſs: *beholding theſe things*; with wonder, as well as looking upon their dear ſuffering Lord, with aking hearts, and flowing eyes.

Ver. 50. *And behold*, there was *a man named Joſeph*, &c.] See the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 57. *a counſellor*; *Mark* ſays, he was an *honourable* one; he was either one of the council of the high-prieſt, or a member of the great *Sanhedrim*; ſee the note on *Mark* xv. 43. and he was *a good man, and a juſt*; he was kind and beneficent in his temper, and juſt, and righteous in his life and actions; a like character is given of *Joſeph* the huſband of *Mary*, the mother of our Lord, *Matt.* i. 19.

Ver. 51. *The ſame had not conſented to the counſel and deed of them*, &c.] Tho' he was with the *Jews*, the chief-prieſts, *Scribes*, and elders, in the high-prieſt's palace, being one of that great council; yet he did not agree with them; nor was it his advice and counſel, that they ſhould put Chriſt to death; he was againſt it, at leaſt did not conſent to it: he was *of Arimathea, a city of the Jews*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 57. This clauſe in the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions ſtands in the preceding verſe, and follows after the mention of his name and office, and where it ſeems moſt natural; *who alſo himſelf waited for the kingdom of God*; ſee the note on *Mark* xv. 43.

Ver. 52. *This man went unto Pilate*, &c.] *Mark* ſays, he went *boldly* to him; ſee the note on *Mark* xv. 43. *and begged the body of Jeſus*; knowing he was dead; *that he might bury it*, as the *Ethiopic* verſion adds, and prevent its being interred with the two malefactors, or abuſed by the mob.

Ver. 53. *And he took it down*, &c.] From the croſs, with the help of others, having obtained leave of *Pilate* ſo to do: *and wrapped it in linnen*; as was the cuſtom of the *Jews* in burying their dead; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 59. *and laid it in a ſepulchre that was hewn in ſtone*; cut out of a rock; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 60. *wherein never man before was laid*; ſo that it could not be ſaid it was another body, and not that of Chriſt's, that was raiſed from the dead. This circumſtance ſerves to confirm the truth of his reſurrection.

Ver. 54. *And that day was the preparation*, &c.] Both for the ſabbath, and for the *Chagigah*, or grand feſtival, which they kept on the fifteenth day of the month, in a very pompous manner; ſo that the day following was an high day; *and the ſabbath drew on*, or *ſhone out*; which is ſo ſaid, though it was evening, on account of the lights, which were every where, in every houſe, lighted up at this time, and which they were, by their traditions, obliged to: for ſo run their canons [c]; "three things "a man is obliged to ſay in the midſt of his houſe, "on the evening of the ſabbath, when it is near "dark, have ye tithed? have ye mixed? (*i. e.* the "borders of the ſabbath, the courts and food) "הדליקו הנר, *light the lamp*." This was what could by no means be diſpenſed with; for ſo they ſay [d], "the lighting of the lamp on the ſabbath is "not in a man's power, (or at his liberty,) if he "pleaſes he may light, and if not, he may not "light.—But it is what he is obliged to, and every "man and woman are bound to have in their houſes "a lamp lighted up on the ſabbath; and tho' he "has nothing to eat, he muſt beg, and get oil, "and light a lamp; for this is included in the delight of the ſabbath.—And he that lights, ought "to light within the day, before the ſetting of the "ſun." So that when theſe lamps were every where lighting, before the ſun was ſet, and the ſabbath properly come, it might be ſaid to draw on, or to be ſhining forth. Beſides, it was uſual to call the evening of any day by the name of *light*: thus it is ſaid [e], "אור לארבע עשר, *on the light*, (*i. e.* the "night) of the fourteenth, (of the month *Niſan*) "they ſearch for leaven, *&c.*" So that the Evangeliſt might, very agreeably to the way of ſpeaking with the *Jews*, ſay, that the ſabbath was enlightning, or growing light, tho' the evening was coming on.

Ver. 55. *And the women alſo which came with him from Galilee*, &c.] See the note on ver. 49. *followed after, Joſeſph*; and thoſe that were with him, when they carried the body of Jeſus, in order to interr it: *and beheld the ſepulchre*; took notice of it, what an one it was, whereabout it ſtood in the garden, that they might know, and find it again: *and how his body was laid*; in what poſition, form, and order; and obſerved that it was only wrapped in linnen, and not anointed, or embalmed.

Ver. 56. *And they returned*, &c.] To the city, and to their own houſes, or to ſome one of them: *and prepared ſpices and ointments*; for the anointing, and embalming the body of Chriſt, called by the *Jews* the ſpices of the dead; ſee the note on *Mark* xvi. 1. *and reſted the ſabbath-day, according to the commandment*, in *Exod.* xx. 8—11. not knowing as yet the abolition of it, with the reſt of the ceremonial law; and therefore, tho' they had bought and prepared the ſpices and ointments, they did not carry them to the ſepulchre to anoint the body with them, till the ſabbath was over; for this was forbidden to be done on a ſabbath-day. It is aſked [f], "what is "that thing that is lawful to be done to a living "man, and is forbidden a dead man? it is ſaid, "זה סיכה, *this is anointing*." Tho' elſewhere [g] this "is allowed of; for ſo runs one of their traditions; "they do all things neceſſary for the dead, (*i. e.* on "a ſabbath-day) סכין, *they anoint*, and waſh him, "only they may not move a limb of him." But how he could be anointed, and waſhed, without a limb being moved, is not very eaſy to ſay, as his foot, or hand, or eye-brows, which are the parts one of their commentators inſtances in [h].

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[c] Miſn. Sabbat. c. 2. §. 7.

[d] Maimon. Hilch. Sabbat. c. 5. §. 1, 3.

[e] Miſn. Peſachim, c. 1. §. 1.

[f] T. Hieroſ. Sabbat. fol. 12. 2.

[g] Miſn. Sabbat. c. 23. §. 5.

[h] Bartenora in ib.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XXIV.

Ver. 1. *NOW upon the firſt day of the week*, &c.] On which day it appears by what follows, Chriſt roſe from the dead, and which was the third day from his death, and ſo verified the ſcriptures, and his own predictions: *very early in the morning*; juſt as light began to ſpring, the day to dawn, and break; the firſt appearance of the morning; when it firſt began to dawn; *when it was yet dark*, as in *John* xx. 1. and ſo read the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions here; and the *Ethiopic* verſion, *while it was yet night*: this muſt be underſtood of the time when the women ſet out from the city, or ſuburbs; for by that time they got to the ſepulchre it was ſun-riſing, *Mark* xvi. 2. and ſhews their great love, zeal, and devotion for Chriſt, and great courage and fearleſſneſs to go out of the city at ſuch a time, without any man with them, and to a grave: *they came unto the ſepulchre*, where Chriſt was laid; that is, the women who came with Chriſt from *Galilee*, and who had obſerved where, and how his body was interred: *bringing the ſpices which they had prepared*; on the ſabbath eve, to anoint the body, but were prevented by reaſon of the ſabbath; ſee chap. xxiii. ver. 56. *and certain* others *with them*; that is, other women; beſides *Mary Magdalene*, and *Mary* the mother of *Joſes*, and *Salome*, and other *Galilean* women, there were other *Jeruſalem*-women, or of *Bethany*, it may be, *Mary*, and *Martha*, the ſiſters of *Lazarus*, and of the parts adjacent: this clauſe is left out in the *Vulgate Latin*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, and in one ancient copy of *Beza*'s; but is retained in the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions.

Ver. 2. *And they found the ſtone rolled away from the ſepulchre.*] Which *Joſeph* had laid there, for the ſecurity of the body, and in the ſight of theſe women; and which gave them a concern, as they went along, ſeeing they were all women, who ſhould roll away the ſtone for them, *Mark* xvi. 3. but when they came to the ſepulchre, to their great ſurprize, they found it rolled away, which was done by an angel, *Matt.* xxviii. 2.

Ver. 3. *And they entered in*, &c.] To the ſepulchre, being invited, encouraged, and led on by the angel that ſat upon the ſtone; for the *Jews* ſepulchres were built large enough for perſons to go into; ſee the note on *Mark* xvi. 5. *and found not the body of the Lord Jeſus*; as they expected, having ſeen him put there, and had obſerved in what cave in the ſepulchre, and in what form he was laid.

Ver. 4. *And it came to paſs as they were much perplexed thereabout*, &c.] About the body of Chriſt, and its being gone, what ſhould become of it, whether it was removed, and by what means, and by whom; whether by a friend, or foe, for they had no thought, nor expectation of a reſurrection: *behold, two men ſtood by them in ſhining garments*; who were angels in the form of men; and as theſe were the firſt witneſſes of Chriſt's reſurrection, there were two of them; for by the mouth of two or three witneſſes every thing is eſtabliſhed. *Matthew* and *Mark* take notice but of one; but *John* makes mention of two, as here, ſeen by *Mary Magdalene*, tho' in a different poſture; they were ſitting, the one at the head, the other at the feet, where the body of Jeſus had lain; but when the reſt of the women came, they were riſen up, and ſtood cloſe by them, on a ſudden, at an unawares, being arrayed in white raiment, as white as ſnow, as a token of their purity and innocence, and as bringers of good tidings; and as joining in the triumph of their Lord's reſurrection: their garments were bright and glittering like lightning, to ſet forth the glory and majeſty of theſe celeſtial ſpirits, and that they might be known to be what they were.

Ver. 5. *And as they were afraid*, &c.] That is, the women were afraid of theſe angels; theſe bright appearances and majeſtic forms, as it was uſual for good men and women to be, as appears from the caſes of *Zacharias*, the virgin *Mary*, and others: *and bowed down* their *faces to the earth*; thro' great fear and reverence of theſe heavenly ſpirits, and as not being able to bear the luſtre of their countenances and garments: *they ſaid unto them*; that is, the angels: *why ſeek ye the living among the dead?* intimating, that Chriſt, tho' he had been dead, was now living, and not to be ſought for in a ſepulchre; a way of ſpeaking, much like this, is uſed in a parable of *R. Levi*'s, concerning *Pharaoh*'s not finding the name of God, among the Gods of the nations, upon ſearching for it. *Moſes* and *Aaron* ſaid to *Pharaoh*, "thou fool, is it uſual "for the dead to *ſeek* them among the living? "שמא החיים אצל המתים, *or ever the living* "*among the dead?* our God is living, theſe thou "ſpeakeſt of are dead[i]." Nor is Chriſt to be found among dead ſinners, or lifeleſs profeſſors, but among living ſaints, and among the churches of the living God; nor is life to be found among the dead works of the law, or to be obtained by lifeleſs performances to the dead letter of the law.

Ver. 6. *He is not here, but is riſen*, &c.] So in *Matt.* xxviii. 6. ſee the note there: *remember how he ſpake unto you when he was yet in Galilee*; for theſe women that followed him from *Galilee* were along with the diſciples when he ſaid the following words to them; and which are recorded in *Matt.* xvii. 22, 23.

Ver. 7. *Saying, the ſon of man muſt be delivered into the hands of ſinful men*, &c.] As Chriſt was, who is intended by the ſon of man, he being the ſon of *David*, and the ſon of *Abraham*, and the ſon of *Adam*, tho' he was the ſeed of the woman, and born of a virgin; he was truly man, and ſubject to the infirmities of men; for this is ſometimes uſed as a diminutive expreſſion, tho' a title of the Meſſiah in the Old Teſtament, and regards him in his ſtate of humiliation. He was delivered into the hands of the band of men and officers by *Judas*, who came againſt him with ſwords and ſtaves, as againſt a thief; and by the *Jews* to *Pontius Pilate*, the *Roman* governour, a very wicked man; and by him, to the will of the *Jews*, who, with wicked hands, took him, and ſlew him; and into the hands of the *Roman* ſoldiers, who crucified him, and who may more eſpecially be meant by ſinful men, the *Gentiles*; and eſpecially heathen ſoldiers, being reckoned by the *Jews* notorious ſinners: to be among ſinners, in the company of ſuch ſinful men, muſt needs be very diſagreeable to the holy and harmleſs lamb of God; but to be in their hands, and at their mercy, whoſe tender mercies are cruel, muſt be very afflicting: *and be crucified*; which was a *Roman* death, and a very ſhameful, and painful one: *and the third day riſe again*; 'tis for the ſake of this chiefly that the angels put the women in mind of this whole paragraph, which ſo fully confirms their teſtimony of his reſurrection; and which the women might be aſſured of, upon calling to mind theſe words, which they themſelves had heard from Chriſt's mouth; and it being now the third day ſince the death of Chriſt. The words declare, that all theſe things *muſt* be; that there was a neceſſity of them; partly on account of the decrees of God, by which it was determined they ſhould be; and partly on account of the covenant-engagements of Chriſt, in which he agreed unto them; and alſo, by reaſon of the prophecies of the Old Teſtament, which gave out, that thus it muſt be; yea, our Lord's own predictions made them neceſſary; and the law, and juſtice of God required them; or otherwiſe, the ſalvation of God's people could not have been obtained.

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[i] Shemot Rabba, §. 5. fol 95. 3.

Ver. 8. *And they remembred his words.*] That is, the words of Chriſt, as the *Perſic* verſion expreſſes it; which they had forgot, and it may be had never truly underſtood 'till now; and had now their memories refreſhed with them by the angels, and their underſtandings opened by the ſpirit of God. Saints are ſometimes apt to forget even the gracious promiſes of God, they have underſtood and received comfort from; the word, or words, on which they have been cauſed to hope, until the ſpirit of God, who is their beſt remembrancer, puts them in mind of them.

Ver. 9. *And returned from the ſepulchre*, &c.] Quickly, immediately, as ſoon as ever the angel had done ſpeaking to them; they fled from the ſepulchre in great haſte, as perſons affrighted and amazed, with fear and reverence, on account of the viſion they ſaw, and with joy at what was told them; ſee *Matt.* xxviii. 8. *Mark* xvi. 8. *and told all theſe things*; as that the ſtone was rolled away from the ſepulchre; and that they found not the body of Jeſus in it; that they had ſeen a viſion of angels, who had told them, that Chriſt was riſen, and had put them in mind of ſome words of his ſpoken to the diſciples in their hearing in *Galilee*: *unto the eleven, and to all the reſt*; of the diſciples; not only to the eleven apoſtles, but the ſeventy diſciples, and as many others as were aſſembled together, perhaps the hundred and twenty, *Acts* i. 15. The *Perſic* verſion very wrongly reads, *to all the twelve*; for *Judas* was not now one of them, nor alive; and *Matthias* was not yet choſen.

Ver. 10. *It was Mary Magdalene*, &c.] Out of whom Chriſt had caſt out ſeven devils, who was a ſincere penitent, a true believer in Chriſt, and an affectionate lover of him, and to whom he firſt appeared: *and Joanna*; the wife of *Chuza*, *Herod*'s ſteward, one that had been a follower of Chriſt, and had miniſtred to him of her ſubſtance; ſee *Luke* viii. 2, 3. *and Mary* the mother *of James*; called the leſs; and alſo of *Joſes*, and *Simon*, and *Judas*, the brethren, or kinſmen of Chriſt; this *Mary*, being the wife of *Cleophas*, or *Alpheus*, ſaid[k] to be the brother of *Joſeph*, the huſband of *Mary*, the mother of our Lord: *and other* women that were *with them*; as *Salome*, the mother of *Zebedee*'s children, and others, that came from *Galilee*; *Mark* xv. 40, 41. and xvi. 1. *which told theſe things unto the apoſtles*; before obſerved.

Ver. 11. *And their words ſeemed to them as idle tales*, &c.] As fabulous things, as mere whims, and the fancies of their brains: *as a dream*, according to the *Perſic* verſion; or, *as a jeſt*, as the *Arabic* verſion renders it. They looked upon them as mere deceptions and deluſions, and not real things; the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read, *theſe words*; what they related concerning what they ſaw, and heard, at the ſepulchre: *and they believed them not*; for they had no thought, nor expectation of Chriſt's riſing from the dead; they did not know that he was to riſe again, according to the ſcriptures; nor did they underſtand him when he told them of his riſing again; and had no faith in it, nor hope concerning it, and could give no credit to it, when it was told them; and the *Arabic* verſion reads, *they did not believe it*; the word or report which the women delivered to them.

Ver. 12. *Then aroſe Peter*, &c.] Who, tho' he did not believe the report made, yet liſtened to it, and was alarmed and arouſed by it, and was willing to know the truth of it: *and ran unto the ſepulchre*; not alone, but with *John*, being in haſte to be ſatisfied, how things were: *and ſtooping down*; ſee the notes on *Mark* xvi. 5. and *John* xx. 5. *he beheld the linnen clothes laid by themſelves*; in which the body of Jeſus was wrapped; theſe lay by themſelves, without the body, in one place; and the napkin about his head was wrapped together, and lay in another place by itſelf; ſo that it was a plain caſe, the body was not ſtolen, nor taken away; for neither friends, nor foes, would have taken the pains, or have loſt ſo much time, as to have ſtripped the body, but would rather have carried off the clothes along with it. The *Alexandrian* copy leaves out the word, μονα, *alone*, or *by themſelves*: *and departed*; from the ſepulchre to *Jeruſalem*, to *John*'s houſe there: *wondring in himſelf at that which was come to paſs*; that the body ſhould not be there, and yet the clothes ſhould remain; he could not tell what to make of it. As for a reſurrection, he had no notion of that, and yet could not account for the removal of the body, either by friends or foes, and the clothes left behind.

Ver. 13. *And behold two of them went that ſame day*, &c.] Two of the diſciples, as the *Perſic* verſion reads; not of the eleven apoſtles, for it is certain that one of them was not an apoſtle; but two of the ſeventy diſciples, or of the ſociety of the hundred and twenty that were together; one of theſe was *Cleophas* or *Alpheus*, as appears from ver. 18. the other is, by ſome, thought to be *Luke* the Evangeliſt, as *Theophylact* on the place obſerves, who, out of modeſty, mentions not his name; others have thought that *Nathanael* was the other perſon; and Dr. *Lightfoot* ſeems very confident, from ver. 34. and 1 *Cor.* xv. 5. that the apoſtle *Peter* was the other; but it is not certain who he was: however this very remarkable affair happened, and therefore a *behold* is prefixed to it, on the *ſame day*; the firſt day of the week; the day on which Chriſt roſe from the dead; and the third day from his death it was, ſee ver. i. 21. that theſe two diſciples travelled: *to a village called Emmaus*; whither they might go either to ſee their friends, or upon ſome ſecular affair, or to be retire from the noiſe of the city, and be ſecure from danger by their enemies; or it may be this was the place of *Cleophas*'s abode, who, with the other diſciple, was returning home after the celebration of the paſſover. The place whither they went is particularly mentioned, not becauſe it was a place of note, but for the certainty of the fact. It was now but a village, having been burnt ſince the death of *Herod* the great, by the order of *Varus*, the *Roman* governour[l]; tho' it afterwards became a conſiderable city, if it is the ſame with *Nicopolis*, as *Jerom* aſſerts[m]; though that rather ſeems to be the *Ammaus*, or *Chammath* of *Tiberias*, ſince it was ſituated by the lake of *Geneſareth*. However, it is certain, that *Emmaus* is reckoned, by *Joſephus*[n], one of their chief cities; and *Jarchi*, and *Bartenora*[o] ſay, it is the name of a city; and *Pliny*[p] calls it a toparchy, and ſays it was watered with fountains; which agrees with the account the *Jews* give of it[q]. “*R. Jochanan ben Zaccai* had five diſciples; all the time that he ſtood, or lived, they ſat before him; when he departed, they went to *Jabneh*; and *R. Eleazar ben Arach* went to his wife, לאמאום, *at Emmaus*, a place of pleaſant waters, and a beautiful habitation.” It is mentioned, in company with *Bethoron*, and *Lud*, or *Lydda*: it is ſaid[r], “from *Bethoron*, to אמאום, *Emmaus*, is the mountain; and from *Emmaus* to *Lydda*, the plain; and from *Lydda*, to the ſea, the valley.” *Bethoron* is mentioned as near *Nicopolis*, by *Jerom*; and perhaps is the ſame with *Betholone* in *Pliny*: in *Emmaus* it was a market; at leaſt there was a butchers market in it; hence, we read of, אטלים של אמאום, *the ſhambles of Emmaus*[s]; mention is made of a place ſo called, in 1 *Maccab.* iii. 40, 57. and iv. 3. another *Emmaus* is here meant: *which was from Jeruſalem about threeſcore furlongs*; or ſeven miles and a half; for eight furlongs make a mile. *Joſephus*[t] ſays the ſame, and confirms the account of the diſtance of this place from *Jeruſalem*.

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[k] Euſeb. Eccl. Hiſt. l. 3. c. 11. 32. & 4. 22.

[l] Joſeph. Antiq. l. 17. c. 12.

Ver. 14. *And they talked together*, &c.] As they went along, on their journey: *of all theſe things which had happened*; concerning their dear Lord and Maſter, Jeſus Chriſt; how that he had been betrayed by *Judas*, one of his diſciples; had been led bound, firſt to *Annas*, and then to *Caiaphas*, the high-prieſt, in whoſe palace he had been condemned to death; how that he was delivered by the chief prieſts and elders, to *Pontius Pilate*, the *Roman* governour, of whom they requeſted, that he might be crucified: they very likely diſcourſed alſo, about the ignominious treatment he met with, both in the high-prieſt's palace, and in *Pilate*'s hall; and how at laſt he was crucified between two thieves, and was dead and buried; and particularly, they might be talking together, of what they had heard that morning from the women, that had been at the ſepulchre of Chriſt, and reported that he was riſen.

Ver. 15 *And it came to paſs, that while they communed together*, &c.] About the above ſaid things: *and reaſoned*; with one another, about the truth and credibility of the late report: *Jeſus himſelf drew near*; the *Perſic* verſion adds, *ſuddenly*; he came up at once to them, as if he had been a traveller on the road, and overtook them: *and went with them*; joined himſelf in company to them, and travelled with them.

Ver. 16. *But their eyes were holden*, &c.] The *Ethiopic* verſion adds, *and were covered*; and the *Arabic* verſion renders it, *now he had veiled their eyes*, aſcribing it to Chriſt; and the *Perſic* verſion renders it, *and the eyes of the diſciples were ſhut*: to me it ſeems, that their eyes were held downwards; or they kept looking upon the ground as they walked, which was a poſture ſuitable to their melancholy ſpirits; and there might be a peculiar influence of divine power and providence, ſo diſpoſing them, that they did not look up to Chriſt their new fellow traveller, who walked on with them: and this was ſo ordered, *that they ſhould not know him*; that ſo they might not be ſurprized at once, as they would have been, had they looked at him, and diſcerned who he was; and that they might converſe the more freely with him; and that he might convince them of their ſtupidity and unbelief, by proper arguments.

Ver. 17. *And he ſaid unto them*, &c.] That is, *Jeſus*, as the *Perſic* verſion, or *our Lord*, as the *Ethiopic* verſion, expreſs it: *what manner of communications are theſe, that ye have one to another, as ye walk?* what is the ſubject of your diſcourſe? what is it your converſation one with another, turns upon, in your journey? *and are ſad?* what melancholy ſtory are you telling to one another, which cauſes ſuch ſadneſs of countenance, and dejection of mind? for Chriſt by their countenances and geſtures, as the ſhaking of their heads, and lifting up and wringing of their hands, could eaſily diſcern as man, as well as know as God, that they were full of ſorrow and heavineſs, and which were occaſioned and increaſed by what they were talking of.

Ver. 18. *And one of them whoſe name was Cleophas*, &c.] Or *Alpheus*, for it is the ſame name; he was one of the ſeventy diſciples, and father of the apoſtles *James* and *Jude*, and brother to *Joſeph*, the huſband of *Mary*, the mother of Chriſt, as before obſerved: *anſwering, ſaid unto him, art thou only a ſtranger in Jeruſalem, and haſt not known the things which are come to paſs there in theſe days?* The *Perſic* verſion reads, *in theſe two days*: the ſenſe is, that whereas he appeared to come from *Jeruſalem*, that if he was only a ſtranger and a ſojourner, and not a ſtated inhabitant there, he could not be ignorant of what had been done there a few days paſt; or if he was, that he muſt be the only ſtranger, and the only man, that was ſo; for the facts referred to were ſo notorious, that every one muſt know them, inhabitant or ſtranger.

Ver. 19. *And he ſaid unto them, what things?* &c.] Still appearing as if he was ignorant, and in order to draw out of them a particular relation: *and they ſaid unto him*; both of them, or rather *Cleophas*, for himſelf and his companion: *concerning Jeſus of Nazareth*; that is, what had happened to him, who was commonly known by this name, and was called ſo by way of contempt: but *which was a prophet*; not only a foreteller of things to come, as he foretold his ſufferings, death, and reſurrection, the troubles that ſhould befal his diſciples, the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, and the end of the world; but he was a preacher of the Goſpel, an eminent one, a famous and extraordinary one, that prophet which *Moſes* ſpake of ſhould come; and who was *mighty in deed and word*: he was anointed with the Holy Ghoſt and with power, which he ſhewed by the miracles he wrought; ſuch as healing the ſick, cleanſing lepers, caſting out devils, reſtoring ſight to the blind, cauſing the deaf to hear, the dumb to ſpeak, the lame to walk, and raiſing the dead to life; and in the doctrines he taught, which were with authority, and ſuch as never man ſpake: *before God and all the people*; he was ſent and anointed by God as a prophet, and approved by him; who bore a teſtimony to him by a voice from heaven, declaring him to be his beloved Son; and the works he wrought, were done publickly before men, who glorified God on that account; and the doctrines he taught, were not taught in ſecret, but in the ſynagogues and in the temple, in the audience of all the people, and to their ſurprize and admiration.

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[m] Epitaph. Paul. fol. 59. B. Catalog. Script. Eccl. fol. 98. B. Tom. I. & in Dan. viii. 14. Tom. V.

[n] Antiqu. l. 14. c. 18.

[o] In Miſn. Ceritot, c. 3. §. 7.

[p] Nat. Hiſt. l. 5. c. 14.

[q] Midraſh Kohelet, fol. 74. 4.

[r] T. Hieroſ. Sheviith, c. 9. fol. 38. 4.

[s] Miſn. Ceritot, c. 3. §. 7. T. Bab. Cholin, fol. 91. 2. & Maccot, fol. 14. 1.

[t] De Bello Jud. l. 7. c. 27.

Ver. 20. *And how the chief prieſts and our rulers,* &c.] Civil and eccleſiaſtic: *delivered him*; to *Pontius Pilate*, the *Roman* governour: *to be condemned to death*; the death of the croſs, by the ſaid governour, having firſt ſeized him and examined him before their *Sanhedrim*, and pronounced him guilty of death: *and have crucified him*; for though *Pilate* paſſed the ſentence, and the *Roman* ſoldiers executed it, yet theſe men are ſaid to do it, becauſe it was at their requeſt, and through their inſtigation, that it was done; hence *Peter* charges the *Jewiſh Sanhedrim* with it, *Acts* iv. 10.

Ver. 21. *But we truſted,* &c.] *In him*, as the *Ethiopic* verſion adds: *that it had been he which ſhould have redeemed Iſrael*; they thought, hoped, and believed, that he was the Meſſiah, ſpoken of under the character of the Redeemer of *Iſrael*; and they had been in expectation of redemption by him, though only of a temporal kind, from the *Roman* yoke and bondage; but now they could not tell what to think of it, ſince he was dead; indeed they were not altogether without hope, ſince there was a report of his being raiſed from the dead; but what credit was to be given to that, they could not ſay: but certain it is, that he was the true Meſſiah, and promiſed Redeemer; and who was to redeem, and has redeemed the whole *Iſrael* of God; even all the elect of God, whether among *Jews* or *Gentiles*, from the ſervitude and damning power of ſin, from the ſlavery of ſatan, and the bondage of the law, and from every enemy; and that by his precious blood, his ſufferings and death, the very things which were the occaſion of theſe diſciples doubts about him, as the Redeemer: ſo the *Jews* ſay [u], “that upon the death of *Meſſiah*, the ſon of “*Joſeph*, all *Iſrael* ſhall flee to the deſerts, “and ſuch as are of a doubtful heart, ſhall “turn to the nations of the world and ſay, *is this* “*the redemption we have waited for*, for the Meſſiah “is ſlain?” *And beſides all this, to day is the third day, ſince theſe things were done*; which is either mentioned, as an aggravation of the ignorance of the ſtranger, that theſe things ſhould be done ſo lately, as within three days, and yet he ſhould be ignorant of them, or not remember them, and need to be informed about them; or as a further reaſon of their doubting, that it was now the third day ſince the death of Jeſus, and there was nothing certain of his reſurrection, only the report of the women, which they could not depend upon; or elſe as a reaſon of their truſting, that he was the perſon that ſhould redeem *Iſrael*, ſince this was the third day from his crucifixion, the day on which he ſaid he ſhould riſe from the dead, and of which there was a report ſpread, not to be diſproved, that he was that day actually riſen: this day is greatly obſerved by the *Jews* [w]: they take notice, that the ſcriptures ſpeak of ſeveral remarkable third days; and beſides *Gen.* xxii. 4. *Hoſ.* vi. 2. is cited, a paſſage which refers to the reſurrection of Chriſt on the third day; and they ſpeak “of the third day “of the tribes, *Gen.* xlii. 18. of the third day of “the ſpies, *Joſh.* ii. 16. of the third day of the “giving of the law, *Exod.* xix. 16. of the third “day of *Jonas*, *Jonah* i. 17. (which was a type “of the reſurrection of the Meſſiah, *Matt.* xii. 40.) “of the third day of thoſe that came up out of “the captivity, *Ezra* viii. 15. of the third day of “the reſurrection of the dead, *Hoſea* vi. 2. and of “the third day of *Eſther*, *Eſther* v. 1.”

Ver. 22. *Yea, and certain women alſo of our company,* &c.] Who came with them from *Galilee*, who were of the ſame religion, profeſſed the ſame faith, and belonged to the ſame ſociety and community; who they were, and their names, ſee ver. 10. *Made us aſtoniſhed*; ſurprized us, with an account they brought, ſo that we could not, nor can we now tell, what to think or ſay of it; it is ſuch an one, we know not how to believe, nor to diſprove; it is we fear too good to be true, and ſhould it be as they report, 'tis amazing indeed: *which were early at the ſepulchre*; of the perſon now mentioned, Jeſus of *Nazareth*; even this very morning, by break of day, at leaſt at ſunriſing, whither they went to anoint his body, thinking nothing at all about the reſurrection of him.

Ver. 23. *And when they found not his body,* &c.] In the ſepulchre, as they expected, and ſo could not do what they intended: *they came*; they returned from the ſepulchre with great haſte, and in a very great fright, and came to the diſciples, where they were aſſembled; *ſaying, that they had alſo ſeen a viſion of angels*. The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions add, *there*; at the ſepulchre, for there were two of them at leaſt, if not three; ſee ver. 4. *John* xx. 12. *Matt.* xxviii. 2. They not only reported, that they could not find the body of Jeſus, but alſo that they had ſeen ſome angels: or the ſenſe may be, that they told them, that though they could not find the dead body of their Lord, yet they had ſeen him alive, as they did by the way, as they were returning, *Matt.* xxviii. 9, 10. and alſo that a viſion of angels had appeared to them: *which ſaid that he was alive*; ſee ver. 5, 6. So that it was not a deception of their ſight, they certainly ſaw both Chriſt and the angels; and were aſſured from their teſtimony, as well as by their own eyes and ears, that he was certainly riſen: now, though this was ſo clear a point, and ſo well atteſted, the diſciples knew not how to believe it; they were perplexed about it; they could neither receive it, nor diſcredit it; they hoped it might be ſo, but feared it was not.

Ver. 24. *And certain of them which were with us,* &c.] The apoſtles and brethren, who were together when the women came, and made the above report; particularly *Peter*, who is named, ver. 12. and *John*, who alſo was with him, as appears from *John* xx. 2. theſe *went to the ſepulchre*; of Jeſus, to ſatisfy themſelves and their companions, as much as they could, about theſe things: *and found* it *even ſo as the women had ſaid*; that is, that the body of Jeſus was not there, and that the linnen clothes were laid by themſelves: *but him they ſaw not*; the *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *and him they found not*: the women, as before obſerved, might report, that though they found not the body in the grave, yet they ſaw him alive by the way, but ſo did not the diſciples; which made it look very ſtrange, doubtful, and ſuſpicious, that the women ſhould ſee him, and not his apoſtles; they could not tell how to account for this, and this made them to be in ſuſpenſe about the fact.

Ver. 25. *Then he ſaid unto them,* &c.] That is, *Jeſus ſaid unto them*, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read: *O fools*; not in a natural ſenſe, as if they were deſtitute of the common underſtanding of men; nor in a moral ſenſe, as wicked men, and as they themſelves had been in their unregenerate eſtate; nor in a way of anger and contempt, and with a deſign to provoke; wherefore Chriſt did not act contrary to his own rule, in *Matt.* v. 22. but becauſe they were ſo void of underſtanding in the ſcriptures, and were ſo very ignorant of them, and were ſo blind as to the knowledge of them; particularly thoſe which concerned the ſufferings and reſurrection of the Meſſiah, being influenced by the popular prejudices of education: he therefore expreſſes himſelf with much warmth, concern, and ſurprize, that he ſhould have been ſo long with them, and they ſo long under his doctrine and miniſtry; beſides the advantages of having the ſcriptures, and being converſant with them from their youth; and which they daily read, and had heard expounded, and yet were ſo very ſenſeleſs and ſtupid: *and ſlow of heart to believe, all that the prophets have ſpoken*; that is, upon theſe points, concerning the ſufferings of Chriſt, and his reſurrection from the dead; and indeed, they were very ſlow of heart to believe, not only what the women reported from the angels, but even thoſe of their brethren, who had ſeen him after he was riſen; for which Chriſt upbraids them, *Mark* xvi. 14. Yea, one of them declared after all, that he would not believe, unleſs he ſaw the print of the nails in his hands and feet, and put his hand into it, and thruſt it into his ſide; wherefore Chriſt had good reaſon to treat them in this ſharp manner, and charge them with folly and incredulity: the *Jews* ought not to object to the word *fools*, as unbecoming Chriſt, ſince they frequently repreſent God as making uſe of it; as for inſtance, 'tis ſaid, [x] “the “holy bleſſed God ſaid to them, שוטים, *O ye* “*fools* that are in the world, whatſoever ye do, ye “do for your own neceſſities——And a little after, “*O ye fools* that are in the world, he that labours “on the evening of the ſabbath, ſhall eat on the “ſabbath-day.”

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[u] Abkath Rocel, l. 1. par. 1. ſign. 7. p. 53.

[w] Bereſhit Rabba, §. 56. fol. 49. 3.

Ver. 26. *Ought not Chriſt to have ſuffered theſe things*, &c.] Mentioned in ver. 20. as to be delivered by the chief prieſts, to be condemned to death, and to be crucified: Chriſt ſuffered many things in his perſonal character, being traduced as a ſinful and wicked man, and a friend and encourager of ſinners; as a man of immoral principles and practices; as an idolater, a blaſphemer, an impoſtor, a ſeditious perſon; as one that had had familiarity with the devil, and did his miracles by his aſſiſtance, with a load of other reproaches; and theſe he endured, to anſwer to the loſs of the divine honour and glory, ſuſtained by the ſin of man; and to teach his people patience, under the loſs of their good names, characters, and reputations: and he ſuffered much in his body, in the infirmities of it; which he aſſumed with it, being in all things like to his brethren, excepting ſin; and in the pains which he endured, through buffeting and ſcourging before his crucifixion, and when he hung upon the croſs: and he ſuffered greatly in his ſoul, partly from the temptations of ſatan; and partly from the treatment of his own diſciples, through the frowardneſs of their ſpirits; and eſpecially his being betrayed by one, denied by another, and forſaken by them all, muſt greatly afflict his mind; but chiefly from his bearing the loathſome ſins of men, the ſtrokes of juſtice, and the wrath of God; and particularly, through his being forſaken by him: and of all theſe there was a neceſſity; he *ought* to have ſuffered theſe things, as he did; the counſels and purpoſes of God, the covenant tranſactions and agreement he himſelf entered into with his father, the prophecies of the Old Teſtament, and his own predictions concerning theſe things, together with the ſalvation of his people, in a way conſiſtent with the juſtice of God, and the honour of his law, made them neceſſary: *and to enter into his glory*; which began at his reſurrection from the dead, and is ſeen in his exaltation and ſeſſion at the right hand of God; upon his aſcenſion he was received up to glory, entered into it, took poſſeſſion of it, and is crowned with it; and which will ſtill be more manifeſt, when he ſhall come to judge the world in righteouſneſs; when his ſaints alſo ſhall appear in glory with him, and ſhall be everlaſting ſpectators of his glory; and indeed, his entrance into glory is not merely for himſelf, but in the name and behalf of them. The *Vulgate Latin* verſion reads, *and ſo*, or *thus to enter into his glory*; that is, by the way of ſufferings, which is the way through which his ſaints enter the kingdom, *Acts* xiv. 22. And by a view of the glory that was to follow them, and which he and his people were to enjoy together, was he animated to endure them chearfully and patiently; and this he is entered into, poſſeſſes and enjoys, as the conſequence and reward of his ſufferings.

Ver. 27. *And beginning at Moſes*, &c.] The writings of *Moſes*, the book of *Geneſis* particularly, ch. iii. 15. which is the firſt prophecy of him, and ſpeaks of the bruiſing of his heel, or of the ſufferings of death by him; and proceeding to open and explain the types concerning his bearing the croſs, and the lifting him upon it, in the buſineſs of *Iſaac*, and of the brazen ſerpent; and concerning the ſhedding of his blood, and the oblation of himſelf in the ſacrifices of the law of *Moſes*: *and all the prophets*; as *David*, *Iſaiah*, *Daniel*, and others, very likely the paſſages in *Pſ.* xxii. *Iſ.* liii. *Dan.* ix. *he expounded unto them in all the ſcriptures* in *Moſes*, and the prophets, *concerning himſelf*; eſpecially concerning theſe two points, his ſufferings, and his glory, which the Spirit of Chriſt, in the prophets, teſtified before-hand: beſides the above places referred to, concerning the ſufferings of Chriſt, ſee the following, in reference to his reſurrection and glory, *Pſal.* xvi. 10, 11. and lxviii. 18. and cx. 1, 7.

Ver. 28. *And they drew nigh unto the village*, &c.] Of *Emmaus*, before they were aware; their converſation was ſo very agreeable, that the way did not ſeem tedious, nor the time long: *whither they went*; where they intended to go, when they ſet out; this was the end of their journey; wherefore this village was not ſome intermediate place between *Jeruſalem* and *Emmaus*: *and he made as tho' he would have gone further*; when they were come to *Emmaus*, and to the houſe where the two diſciples intended to make their abode that night: whether it was a publick houſe, or an houſe of one of their friends, or one of their own, it matters not; Chriſt ſtopped not, nor attempted to go in with them, but ſtepped a few ſteps onward, taking his leave of them. The *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *he began to paſs by them*; which carried in it an appearance as if he intended to have travelled further; and in it there was no fraud, diſſimulation, or colluſion: he would have gone ſome little way further doubtleſs, had they not detained him; and he intended to ſtay with them, provided they ſhould aſk him, as he did, tho' not all night, which he never deſigned: the whole of it is nothing elſe but a piece of modeſty,

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[x] T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 2. 2. & 3. 1.

deſty, civility, and prudence; for guile was never found in his mouth.

Ver. 29. *But they conſtrained him*, &c.] The *Arabic* verſion renders it, *they held him by force:* but the meaning is not, that they laid hands on him, and held him in a forcible manner againſt his will; but they were very urgent and importunate with him, that he would ſtay with them; they would take no denial. The ſenſe is better given in the *Perſic* verſion, *the diſciples with importunity ſaid unto him*; they were ſo preſſing with arguments, that he could not withſtand them: *ſaying, abide with us*; his converſation was ſo engaging, and his diſcourſes were ſo heavenly and inſtructive, ſo ſweet and delightful, ſo powerful and moving, that they could not bear to part with him, but were exceeding deſirous of his continuance with them, even tho' he was a ſtranger to them. And as they had in view their own pleaſure and profit, ſo they urge the neceſſity and advantage of his ſtay, with reſpect to himſelf: *for it is towards evening, and the day is far ſpent*; it might be four or five o'clock in the afternoon: *and he went in to tarry with them*; for a while, not all night. So earneſt, importunate, and reſolute was the church, when ſhe had found Chriſt, that he would abide with her, *Cant.* iii. 4, 5.

Ver. 30. *And it came to paſs as he ſat at meat with them*, &c.] When they were ſat down at table with the proviſions before them: *he took bread and bleſſed it, and brake, and gave to them*; as if he was the maſter of the houſe, when he was both a gueſt, and a ſtranger, and as he uſed to do at common meals, when he eat with his diſciples; and thus he did, when he fed five thouſand at one time, and four at another, *Matt.* xiv. 19. and xv. 26. ſee the notes there. Whether only Chriſt, and the two diſciples, ſat down together, or whether others that belonged to the houſe ſat down with them, is not certain: if they were only three, they were a proper company to bleſs the bread together; that is, one in the name of the reſt, they joining with him: if there were but two, they bleſſed, or ſaid grace for themſelves ſeparately; but if three, the rules were theſe, according to the *Jews*[y]: "three that "eat together, they are obliged to call a bleſſing "(or for one)—— and how do they call a bleſſing "among three? one ſays, let us bleſs: if there are "three beſides himſelf, he ſays, bleſs ye.——Three "that eat together have no power to divide;" that is, to make a ſeparate bleſſing, but are obliged to it conjunctly: thus here, being three at leaſt, Chriſt bleſſed bread for them all.

Ver. 31. *And their eyes were opened*, &c.] Not that they were before ſhut, or cloſed up, but what before held them was removed, and what hindered their ſight and knowledge was taken away; and perhaps theſe actions of his taking the bread, and bleſſing, and breaking, and giving it to them, might put them in mind of him, and cauſe them to look wiſhly at him, when, what beclouded their ſight, being gone, and he appearing in his uſual form, they perceived who he was: *and they knew him*; to be their dear Lord and maſter, for whoſe death they had been ſorrowing, and of redemption by him, and of whoſe reſurrection they had been doubting: *and vaniſhed out of their ſight*; not that he vaniſhed as a ſpectre, or as ſmoak vaniſhes into air; but agility being a property of his riſen body, he very ſuddenly, and ſwiftly, and in a moment, withdrew himſelf from them; for if he could withdraw himſelf from company in a very ſpeedy manner before his reſurrection, much more after; ſee *Luke* iv. 30. *John* v. 13. The *Syriac* verſion renders it, *he was taken away from them*; as if ſome of the miniſtring angels were made uſe of to remove him at once; but this ſeems not neceſſary: the *Arabic* verſion renders it, *he was hidden from them*; that ſame power of his that held their eyes all the while they were travelling together, interpoſed ſome object between him and them, ſo that he could not be ſeen by them that very inſtant, even before he was gone out of the houſe.

Ver. 32. *And they ſaid one to another*, &c.] After Chriſt was gone, being ſurprized at what happened, that they ſhould not know him all that while; and that as ſoon as they did, he ſhould diſappear, or withdraw himſelf in this manner: *did not our hearts burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the ſcriptures?* concerning himſelf, his ſufferings, death, and reſurrection, which are in *Moſes*, the prophets, and the Pſalms. The ſcriptures are as a ſealed book to men, learned and unlearned; and none ſo fit to open them as the lion of the tribe of *Judah*: he did open and explain them to theſe his diſciples, as well as converſed with them about other things, as they travelled together; and his words came with ſuch evidence, power, and ſweetneſs, that they were raviſhed with them; their minds were irradiated with beams and rays of divine light; their hearts were warmed and glowed within them; they became fervent in ſpirit, and their affections were raiſed and fired; they found the word to be as burning fire within them; and they now knew ſomewhat what it was to be baptized with fire, which is Chriſt's peculiar office to adminiſter; ſee *Pſ.* xxxix. 3. *Jer.* xx. 9. they ſeem as it were not only to reflect on theſe things with wonder and pleaſure, but alſo to charge themſelves with want of thought, with inattention and ſtupidity; ſince they might have concluded from the uncommon evidence, force, and energy with which his words came to them, who he was, ſeeing no man could ſpeak as he did, and with ſuch effect as his words had.

Ver. 33. *And they roſe up the ſame hour*, &c.] Tho' it was now evening, and the day was ſpent and gone; and notwithſtanding what buſineſs they might have to do at *Emmaus*, about which they came, and even might not have made an end of eating, or ſufficiently refreſhed themſelves; and though they had had a walk of ſixty furlongs that afternoon, yet being big with this appearance of Chriſt to them, and in haſte to impart the joyful news to their fellow-diſciples, they immediately roſe up from table: *and returned to Jeruſalem*; the ſame night, from whence they had come that day: *and found the eleven gathered together*; at a certain houſe known to theſe two, and who met together in the night-ſeaſon, for the ſake of privacy, and for fear of the *Jews*, and who were now up, tho' it was late: theſe are called *eleven*, becauſe *Judas* was now gone from them, and dead; and this being their whole number, it is uſed, though every one might not be preſent, as particularly *Thomas* was not; ſee *John* xx. 19—24. *and them that were with them*; the ſeventy diſciples, and other believers, both men and women; ſee *Acts* i. 15.

Ver. 34. *Saying*, &c.] The following words; and which are not the words of the two diſciples, but of the apoſtles, whom they found gathered together; and who, juſt as theſe two entered the room, ſaid to one another, or rather to theſe two diſciples, to whom at once, and as ſoon as ever they ſaw them, not being able to hold it in, communicated

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[y] Miſn. Beracot, c. 7. §. 1, 3, 4.

municated the good news they had juſt heard; and which, perhaps, *Peter* had been juſt telling them: *the Lord is riſen indeed*; it is certainly matter of fact: for tho' the women were not credited, but their accounts were as idle tales, and, at moſt, only occaſioned ſome thoughts and reflections, which they could not ſettle; yet now they were ſatisfied of the reality of his reſurrection, and ſpeak of it with the greateſt aſſurance and joy: *and hath appeared unto Simon*; he appeared to him firſt, before he did to any of the reſt, tho' he had denied him in ſo ſhameful a manner; which is an inſtance of great grace and goodneſs: and he appeared to him, on purpoſe, no doubt, to comfort him under his diſtreſs; as well as being the oldeſt diſciple, and a man of figure and credit among them, his report would be believed. None of the writers of the New Teſtament take notice of this appearance beſides, only the apoſtle *Paul*, 1 *Cor*. xv. 5. It is certain that it was the ſame day Chriſt roſe from the dead; and was after the women had ſeen him, and after *Peter* had been at the ſepulchre; and before the return of the two diſciples from *Emmaus*, and before he ſhewed himſelf to the reſt of the apoſtles.

Ver. 35. *And they told what things* were done *in the way*, &c.] That is, when the eleven had done ſpeaking, and had finiſhed their report, which they did with great joy and pleaſure; then *theſe two diſciples*, as the *Perſic* verſion expreſſes it, to confirm them the more in the truth of Chriſt's reſurrection, gave them a particular account, how, as they were travelling, Jeſus joined himſelf to them, and entered into a converſation with them, and opened the ſcriptures in a ſweet and powerful manner to them; and yet their eyes were holden all the while, ſo that they did not perceive who he was: *and how he was known of them in breaking of bread*; that ſo it was, that whilſt he was breaking the bread, and giving it to them, and they were eating together, their eyes were opened, and they ſaw plainly who he was: now, tho' this was a common meal, and not the ordinance of the Lord's ſupper, yet ſince Chriſt made himſelf known to his diſciples at an ordinary meal, may not his followers expect that he will make himſelf known to them, and grant them communion with him at his table? and which ſhould be no ſmall argument to engage believers to a conſtant attendance on it.

Ver. 36. *And as they thus ſpake*, &c.] While the two diſciples, that came from *Emmaus*, were giving the above relation; juſt as they had finiſhed it, and had ſcarcely done ſpeaking: *Jeſus himſelf ſtood in the midſt of them*; the apoſtles; who were aſſembled together in a certain houſe, the doors being ſhut for fear of the *Jews*; and it was on the evening of the ſame day Chriſt roſe from the dead, and late at night; ſee *John* xx. 19. and without hearing the doors opened, or the ſound of the feet of Jeſus, and without ſeeing him come in, and approach unto them, he, in a moment, at once, ſtood in the middle of them, as if he had immediately roſe up out of the earth before them; and ſo the *Perſic* verſion renders it, *Jeſus roſe up out of the midſt of them*: by his power he opened the doors, and ſecretly let himſelf in, and ſhut them again at once; and by the agility of his body moved ſo ſwiftly, that he was not diſcerned until he was among them, where he ſtood to be ſeen, and known by them; whereby he made that good in a corporal ſenſe, which he had promiſed in a ſpiritual ſenſe, *Matt*. xviii. 20. and was an emblem of his preſence in his churches, and with his miniſters, to the end of the world. *And ſaith unto them, peace be unto you*; which was an uſual form of ſalutation among the *Jews*; ſee the note on *John* xx. 19. The *Vulgate Latin*, and all the *Oriental* verſions add, *I am he, fear not*; but this clauſe is not in the *Greek* copies.

Ver. 37. *But they were terrified and affrighted*, &c.] At the ſight of him, and at his ſudden appearance among them, without being heard, or ſeen before, and the doors ſhut and bolted; they could not tell how to account for it, that it ſhould be Jeſus himſelf riſen from the dead in his own body, tho' they had been juſt ſpeaking of his reſurrection, and had had a confirmation of it from the diſciples that went to *Emmaus*: *and ſuppoſed that they had ſeen a ſpirit*; that what they ſaw was a phantom, or apparition, or a ſpirit, that had aſſumed, and appeared in, the ſhape of Jeſus, and was not he himſelf.

Ver. 38. *And he ſaid unto them, why are ye troubled*, &c.] Who had more reaſon to rejoice, and be glad, as they were when they knew that it was Jeſus: *and why do thoughts ariſe in your hearts?* whether what they ſaw was Jeſus, or an apparition, which gave them a great deal of trouble and uneaſineſs, and filled them with fright and terror; as it was, and is uſual with perſons when they fancy they ſee a ſpirit, or an apparition; ſee *Matt*. xiv. 26.

Ver. 39. *Behold my hands, and my feet*, &c.] The Evangeliſt *John* adds, *and ſide*; that is, the prints of the nails and ſpear, in his hands, and feet, and ſide; and the wounds they made there, and the ſcars they left behind; by which they might be convinced he was not a ſpirit, and be aſſured of the truth of his reſurrection, and that in the ſame numerical body in which he ſuffered; as well that it might be obſerved by them how great was his love to them, to endure what he did for them. *Handle me and ſee*; or know by feeling, as well as by ſight; ſo that if the one was not ſufficient, the other might confirm; ſight might be deceived, but feeling could not: *Apollonius Tyaneus*, to them that did not know whether he was alive or dead, and who took him for a ſpirit, propoſed himſelf to be touched, and handled, that they might be convinced[z]: *for a ſpirit hath not fleſh and bones*; nothing but appearance, or air at moſt; no ſolid ſubſtance to be felt and handled: *as ye ſee me have*; or may perceive, both by ſight and feeling.

Ver. 40. *And when he had thus ſpoken*, &c.] And put them into a method of ſatisfying themſelves by their ſenſes: *he ſhewed them* his *hands and* his *feet*; that is, he held them forth to be ſeen and handled by them, which no doubt they did; and which were the infallible proofs by which he ſhewed himſelf alive to them after his paſſion; and by which they knew the truth of his incarnation, or that he aſſumed a true and real body, and of the reſurrection of the ſame body; ſee *Acts* i. 3. 1 *John* i. 1.

Ver. 41. *And while they yet believed not for joy*, &c.] Tho' they had been prepared for the belief of Chriſt's reſurrection, by the report of the women, the relation of *Simon Peter*, and the account of the two diſciples that came from *Emmaus*; yet ſuch was the joy they were tranſported with, upon the evidence of it, the news was ſo good, and the favour and benefit ſo great, that they could ſcarcely believe their own ſenſes of ſeeing and feeling: *and wondred*; at the ſight of their riſen Lord, and at the power of God, which was ſeen herein: the thing was marvellous in their eyes, and was a wonderful confirmation of the truth of his Deity, Sonſhip, and Meſſiahſhip. *He ſaid unto them, have ye any meat?* not that he needed any, or was hungry and deſirous of ſome to ſatisfy, or gratify his appetite, but to give them a further proof that he was not a ſpirit; and that he was riſen from the dead in a true and real body, which was capable of eating and drinking.

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[z] Philoſtratus de Vita Apollon. l. 8. c. 5.

Ver. 42. *And they gave him a piece of a broiled fiſh,* &c.] Which was left by them at ſupper, of which they had been eating; for being fiſhermen, moſt of them, this was agreeable food to them: *and of an honey-comb*; not to eat with the fiſh, but after it.

Ver. 43. *And he took* it, *and did eat before them.*] That is, he took both the fiſh, and the honey-comb, and eat of them before them, they looking on all the while; and which was a proof of his being truly riſen from the dead, and not a ſpectre, or apparition, and which they failed not afterwards to make uſe of; ſee *Acts* x. 41. The *Vulgate Latin*, *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions add, *he took the reſt*, or *what remained*, *and gave* it *to them.*

Ver. 44. *And he ſaid unto them, theſe are the words which I ſpake unto you*, &c.] Or this is the ſubſtance of them, the ſenſe and meaning of them; for what follows, we don't find any where expreſſed in ſo many words: *while I was yet with you*; that is, whilſt he was in his ſtate of humiliation, whilſt he dwelt among them, and had his abode with them; otherwiſe he was now with them, but not to continue with them; in a ſhort time he was to aſcend to his God, and their God, to his Father, and their Father: *that all things muſt be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moſes, and in the prophets, and in the pſalms concerning me*; concerning his ſufferings, and death, and reſurrection from the dead, ſpoken of in *Gen.* iii. 15. *Iſ.* liii. *Dan.* ix. 26. *Hoſ.* vi. 2. *Pſ.* xxii. and xvi. 10. and in this he refers to what he had ſaid to his diſciples in *Matt.* xvi. 21. and xvii. 22, 23. and xx. 18, 19. and alludes to the uſual diſtinction among the *Jews* of the books of the Old Teſtament into the law, the prophets, and the *Hagiographa*; among which laſt ſtands the book of Pſalms, and is put for the whole; a diviſion often to be met with in both their *Talmuds*[a], and other writings[b].

Ver. 45. *Then opened he their underſtanding*, &c.] He not only opened their hearts, to attend to what he ſaid, and the proofs he gave of his reſurrection from the dead in a true body; but he removed the veil from the eyes of their minds, and gave them an underſtanding of the ſacred writings, reſpecting this matter: *that they might underſtand the ſcriptures*; concerning his ſufferings, death, and reſurrection, which they were very ignorant of before, and which were as a ſealed book unto them, *John* xx. 9. tho' they had been from their infancy brought up to the reading of the ſcriptures, and had had the advantage of Chriſt's miniſtry for ſome years; which ſhows the neceſſity of the ſpecial illumination of the Spirit, and the influence of his grace to remove the darkneſs of the mind, and give the true ſenſe of the ſacred writings.

Ver. 46. *And he ſaid unto them, thus it is written*, &c.] In the above cited books of the law, the prophets, and the Pſalms; not what after follows, in ſo many words, but the matter and ſubſtance thereof: *and thus it behoved Chriſt to ſuffer, and to riſe from the dead the third day*; it was neceſſary, both becauſe of the decree and appointment of God, and becauſe of the prophecies and predictions of the Old Teſtament; ſee ver. 25, 26.

Ver. 47. *And that repentance and remiſſion of ſins*, &c.] Which are the ſum of the Goſpel miniſtry; ſee *Acts* xx. 21. the doctrine of *repentance* is not of the law, which neither requires, nor admits of it, but of the Goſpel. The *Perſic* verſion calls it, *the Goſpel of repentance*; a doctrine preached by *John* the *Baptiſt*, Chriſt, and his Apoſtles; and the thing itſelf is a bleſſing of the covenant, a gift of God's grace, and in the hands of Chriſt to beſtow; and therefore the doctrine of it is publiſhed in his name, as well as *remiſſion of ſins*; which, tho' it ſprings from the free grace of God, is procured by the blood of Chriſt, and through him it is preached. Theſe two are joined together, not becauſe repentance is the cauſe of pardon; for repentance makes no ſatisfaction for ſin, or atonement for it; nor does the law at all regard it: tears of repentance will not waſh away ſin; notwithſtanding theſe, iniquity remains marked before God; Chriſt's tears themſelves did not take away, nor atone for ſin; his blood muſt be ſhed, and it was ſhed for the remiſſion of it; and that is the only meritorious cauſe of it. The *Syriac* verſion wrongly reads, *repentance for the remiſſion of ſins*: the *Jews*[c] indeed have a notion that repentance atones for ſin; but it is a very bad one, and has no countenance neither from the law of nature, nor the law of *Moſes*: but theſe two are put together, becauſe there is a connexion between them, as there is between repentance, and life, and ſalvation: repentance iſſues in theſe things; and to whomſoever the grace of repentance is given, to them the forgiveneſs of ſins is applied; nor need any truly repenting ſinner deſpair of the pardon of his ſin: and indeed, there is no true evangelical repentance without views, or at leaſt hopes of pardoning grace, and mercy; for that is attended with faith in Chriſt, and is heightened by the diſcoveries of forgiving love: ſuch who have the fulleſt view of the remiſſion of their ſins, have the cleareſt ſenſe of ſin, and have the moſt ſorrow for it, and loath themſelves on account of it, and are aſhamed of it, and do moſt frankly confeſs it, and moſt thoroughly forſake it. And now it was neceſſary, according to Old Teſtament prophecies, that both theſe *ſhould be preached in his name*; in the name of the Meſſiah; by his authority, and as coming thro' him; ſince the remiſſion of ſin is by his blood; and he is exalted as a prince, and a ſaviour, to give both repentance and forgiveneſs of ſins to all the *Iſrael* of God, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*; and therefore it is fitting and proper that theſe ſhould be preached, *among all nations*; of the world, where God's elect are; that ſo they may be brought hereby to repentance, and receive the forgiveneſs of their ſins: *beginning at Jeruſalem*; from whence, according to the Old Teſtament, the word and doctrine of the Lord were to go forth, *Pſ.* cx. 2. *Iſ.* ii. 3. and is particularly mentioned, becauſe the Goſpel was to be firſt preached to the *Jews*, and be the power of God unto ſalvation to them; and becauſe that in *Jeruſalem* lived thoſe who had been concerned in crucifying Chriſt, to whom repentance and forgiveneſs muſt be preached; and which would be a great encouragement to the vileſt of ſinners, to hope for mercy and forgiveneſs, ſince ſuch received both.

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[a] T. Hieroſ. Shekalim, fol. 47. 3. T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 15. 1. & 18. 2. & 21. 1. Roſh Haſhana, fol. 32. 1. Taanith, ol. 8. 1. & 16. 1. & 20. 1. & 30. 1. Megilla, fol. 21. 2. & 24. 1. Bava Bathra, fol. 8. 1. & 13. 2. & Sanhedrin, fol. 106. 1.

[b] Zohar in Lev. fol. 39. 2.

[c] T. Bab. Ceritot, fol. 7. 1.

Ver. 48. *And ye are witneſſes of theſe things.*] As they were witneſſes of the truth of his humanity, having ſeen, and heard, and handled him, both before, and after his reſurrection from the dead, and of all that he did, of all the miracles that he wrought in *Jeruſalem*, *Judea*, and *Galilee*, and of his transfiguration on the mount; ſo likewiſe of his ſorrows in the garden, and of his ſufferings in the palace of the high-prieſt, and in *Pilate*'s hall, and on the croſs; and of his death, which was the death of the croſs; and alſo of his reſurrection from the dead, in the ſame body, to whom he ſhewed himſelf alive by many infallible proofs; by ſhewing them the print of the nails in his hands and feet; by being handled by them; by eating and drinking in their preſence; and by converſing with them for the ſpace of forty days: and their buſineſs was alſo to teſtify the doctrine of repentance, and remiſſion of ſins, in *Jeruſalem*, in all *Judea*, and *Samaria*, and to the uttermoſt parts of the earth, which they accordingly did; ſee *Acts* i. 8. and ii. 32. and v. 30—32. and x. 39, 41. and xx. 21.

Ver. 49. *And behold, I ſend the promiſe of my father upon you*, &c.] By which is meant the promiſe of the Spirit, called the promiſe of the Father, becauſe he was promiſed by the Father to be ſent, and poured on the ſaints in the times of the Meſſiah, *Iſ.* xliv. 3. *Joel* ii. 28. and becauſe Chriſt promiſed to pray the Father for him, and to ſend him from him; and that the Father ſhould ſend him in his name, who would fit and qualify them for, and aſſiſt them in bearing a teſtimony for him; ſince he would teach them all things, lead them into all truth, take of the things of Chriſt, and ſhew them to them, and bring to their remembrance all things they had ſeen and heard: and this promiſe of the Father was to be ſent in a very ſhort time, in ten days time, as accordingly it was; and might be very properly ſaid to be ſent *upon* them, ſince, when he was ſent down, he ſat upon them in the appearance of fire; and this being a marvellous thing, as well as of great moment and importance, it is introduced with a *behold*, as a note both of admiration and attention. *But tarry ye in the city of Jeruſalem*; for the ſpace of ten days; here they were to continue during that time, and not depart thence; yea, they were to ſit there, as the word uſed ſignifies: they were to ſit ſtill, and be ſilent; they were not to begin to preach; they were only to attend to prayer and chriſtian converſation, and to wait for the Spirit, the promiſe of the Father; and who alſo is deſigned in the following clauſe: *until ye be endued with power from on high*; the Spirit of God is a Spirit of might, and of power, as well as of knowledge, of underſtanding, of counſel, of love, and of a ſound mind; whereby they were to be fortified, and inſpired with courage and greatneſs of ſoul, ſo as to look their greateſt adverſaries in the face with boldneſs and intrepidity, and freely, and without fear, ſpeak unto them; and whereby their miniſtrations would be ſucceeded to the converſion of many ſouls; and accordingly ſo it was: for after the Spirit was poured out upon them, they who before were timorous and fearful, came forth publickly, with undaunted courage, and reſolution, and boldneſs, to the amazement of their adverſaries; and their preaching was with the demonſtration of the Spirit, and of power; who may be ſaid to be *from on high*, ſince he deſcended from heaven upon them; and they may be ſaid to be *endued*, or *clothed* with him, ſince there was ſuch an extraordinary and plentiful effuſion of his gifts and graces on them: and now they were to wait in *Jeruſalem* for this, that in the place where the Spirit had been diſhonoured and blaſphemed, and the unpardonable ſin againſt him had been committed by the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, he might be in a moſt viſible and ſignal manner honoured; and alſo, becauſe the doctrine of the Lord was to go out of *Zion*, and the word of the Lord out of *Jeruſalem*. The *Vulgate Latin* verſion leaves out the word *Jeruſalem*, and reads only, *ſit ye in the city until*, &c. but then no other city can be deſigned.

Ver. 50. *And he led them out as far as Bethany*, &c.] Not the town of *Bethany*; could that be thought, it might be ſuppoſed that he led his diſciples thither, to pay a viſit to his dear friends there, *Lazarus*, *Mary*, and *Martha*, before his aſcenſion; but the town of *Bethany* was fifteen furlongs, or near two miles diſtance from *Jeruſalem*, *John* xi. 18. whereas the place from whence Chriſt aſcended was but a ſabbath-day's journey from it, which was two thouſand cubits, or about a mile, *Acts* i. 12. This *Bethany*, therefore, was a tract of land, ſo called from the town, which began at the mount of *Olives*, where *Bethphage* ended; ſee *Mark* xi. 1. and hither from *Jeruſalem* Chriſt led his diſciples, in order to aſcend to heaven in their ſight; and this was the ſpot of ground, where he began to ride in triumph to *Jeruſalem*, and here he aſcended in a triumphant manner to heaven; this was the place he frequently retired to for ſolemn, and ſolitary prayer, and where he had put up many a ſtrong cry to God, and now from hence he aſcended to him; this was the place whither he went after he had eat his laſt paſſover, where he was taken, and from whence he came to ſuffer and die for his people: *and he lift up his hands, and bleſſed them.* The lifting up of his hands was not in order to put them upon his diſciples; tho' the *Ethiopic* verſion adds, *and put* them *on*; nor was it uſed as a prayer-geſture; nor was the bleſſing of them prayer-wiſe, or by praying for a bleſſing on them; but as *Aaron*, his type, lift up his hands towards the people of *Iſrael*, and bleſſed them, when he had offered the offerings for them, *Lev.* ix. 22. So Chriſt, as the great high-prieſt, having offered himſelf a ſacrifice for the ſins of his people, lift up his hands towards his apoſtles, and bleſſed them in an authoritative way, by beſtowing bleſſings upon them: he bleſſed them with a larger meaſure of the ſpirit; for tho' they were to wait ſome few days longer for the extraordinary effuſion of the ſpirit, yet, in the mean while, they received from him more of it than they had formerly had; for he breathed upon them, and ſaid, receive the Holy Ghoſt, *John* xx. 22. He bleſſed them with larger meaſures of grace, and with more ſpiritual light, and underſtanding into the ſcriptures of truth, and with much inward peace of mind, and with the freſh diſcoveries of pardoning love; and which ſeemed neceſſary, ſince by their conduct towards him, one by denying him, and the reſt by forſaking him, the peace of their minds was broken, and they needed a freſh application of forgiving grace. The form of bleſſing the people uſed by *Aaron*, and his ſons, the prieſts, who were types of Chriſt, is recorded in *Num.* vi. 23—27, and tho' our Lord might not uſe the ſame form in bleſſing his diſciples, yet it ſeems he uſed the ſame geſture, lifting up his hands, as they did. The *Targumiſts* ſay [a], the bleſſing of the prieſts was done by ſtretching, or ſpreading out their hands; but other *Jewiſh* writers obſerve, it was by lifting them up: concerning which their rule is [e]; “in the province, the prieſts lift up their hands, as high as their ſhoulders, but in the ſanctuary, above their heads, except the high-prieſt, who did not lift up his hands above the plate of gold on his forehead.” The reaſon of this was, becauſe the name, *Jehovah*, was written upon it, and it was not proper his hands ſhould be lifted up above that. The account *Maimonides* [f] gives of this affair, is; “how is the lifting up of hands? in the borders, at the time the meſſenger of the congregation comes to ſervice, when he has ſaid, who ever will, *&c.* all the prieſts that ſtand in the ſynagogue, remove from their places, and go, and aſcend the deſk (or pulpit,) and ſtand there with their faces to the temple, and their backs to the people, and their fingers cloſed within their hands, until the meſſenger of the congregation has finiſhed the confeſſion, or thankſgiving; and then they turn their faces to the people, and ſtretch out their fingers, and lift up their hands to their ſhoulders and begin to bleſs, and the meſſenger of the congregation pronounces them (the bleſſings) word by word, *&c.*——How is the bleſſing of the prieſts in the ſanctuary? the prieſts go up into the deſk, (or pulpit) after the prieſts have finiſhed the morning daily ſervice, and lift up their hands above, over their heads, except the high-prieſt, who does not lift up his hands above the plate of gold, on his forehead; and one pronounces them (the bleſſings) word for word, as they do in the borders (in the country,) *&c.*” And as our Lord uſed this geſture in bleſſing, it is very likely he complied with another rule, by expreſſing it in the *Hebrew* tongue; for the *Jews* ſay [g], the bleſſing of the prieſts is not ſaid in any place, but in the holy tongue.

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[a] Targum Jon. in Num. vi. 23. & Targum in Cant. vii. 7.

Ver. 51. *And it came to paſs, while he bleſſed them*, &c.] Juſt as he was finiſhing the words, by which he expreſſed the bleſſings he beſtowed on them: *he was parted from them*; as *Elijah* was from *Eliſha:* their ſpiritual and myſtical union by him remained, which is indiſſoluble; nor was his gracious preſence from them withdrawn; nor was this parting in anger and reſentment, as he ſometimes does withdraw from his people, on account of their ſinful conduct, in a little wrath, for a moment, reſenting their unbecoming carriage: but this parting was while he was bleſſing them, and was only in body; his heart was ſtill with them; it was a withdrawment of his corporal preſence from them, and that but for a while; he will come again a ſecond time from heaven, from whence the ſaints expect him, and then they will meet, and never part more: *and carried up into heaven*; by his divine power, as God, by virtue of which he aſcended himſelf, he went up gradually, till he became inviſible to his diſciples; or through the agility of his human body: for the bodies of the ſaints, when raiſed, will be like the angels, ſwift and nimble, and capable of moving from place to place, and of aſcending and deſcending; and much more the glorious body of Chriſt, according to which, theirs will be conformed: tho' neither of theſe deny the uſe of means, that might be made, as of a cloud, and of angels; for a cloud received him out of the ſight of the apoſtles; and there were the twenty thouſand chariots of God, even thouſands of angels, which attended him, when he aſcended on high, and in which he may be properly ſaid to be carried up into heaven, *Acts* i. 9. *Pſal.* lxviii. 17, 18. where he was received with a welcome, by his father, by all the glorified ſaints, and holy angels, and where he is placed in human nature, at the right hand of God; is crowned with glory, and honour, and exalted above all creatures, human or angelic; and where he will remain until the time of the reſtitution of all things, and then he will deſcend to judge the quick and dead. The *Arabic* and *Ethiopic* verſions read both theſe clauſes actively, *he parted himſelf*, or *he departed from them, and went up into heaven*; and ſo reads the *Syriac* verſion the laſt clauſe.

Ver. 52. *And they worſhipped him*, &c.] Not with a civil worſhip, as he was ſometimes worſhiped by men, in the days of his fleſh who, tho' they took him for ſome extraordinary perſon, knew him not to be the ſon of God; but with religious worſhip as God: for by his reſurrection from the dead, Chriſt was declared to be the ſon of God, and both by that, and by his going to his father, his aſcenſion to heaven, the diſciples were more confirmed in his proper deity, and divine ſonſhip; and therefore worſhiped him as God; by calling upon his name, aſcribing bleſſings and honour, and glory, to him; by making him the object of their reverence and fear; and by truſting in him; and by doing every religious act in his name, and which they ever after continued to do: *and returned to Jeruſalem*; as they were ordered, where they were to tarry and wait for the pouring down of the ſpirit: and this they did *with great joy*; for though their Lord was parted from them, and was gone to heaven, this did not cauſe ſorrow, as did his death, but, on the contrary, joy, even great joy; partly becauſe of the glory he was entered into, and poſſeſſed of; and partly on account of what he was gone to do for them; to appear in the preſence of God for them, to make interceſſion for them, to take poſſeſſion of heaven in their name, and to prepare a place for them, as well as to receive gifts for them; and now they return to *Jeruſalem* with great chearfulneſs, in full hope and expectation, yea, aſſurance of faith, that they ſhould ſhortly receive the promiſe of the father.

Ver. 53. *And were continually in the temple*, &c.] At the time of worſhip, at the hours of prayer, or of public ſervice; and perhaps always privately in an upper room in it, where they, with others, met frequently, and continued, with one accord, in prayer and ſupplication; ſee the note on *Acts* i. 14. a practice worthy of imitation, whether in the public or private way: *praiſing, and bleſſing God*; for his ſon Jeſus Chriſt, who had died for their ſins, was riſen again for their juſtification, and was now aſcended into heaven, to be their advocate there; and for all ſpiritual bleſſings, wherewith they were bleſſed in and by Chriſt; for all the gifts beſtowed upon them, and for what they had reaſon to expect; and for the honour done them in having a commiſſion from Chriſt to preach his Goſpel to every creature. *Amen*; ſo let him be praiſed, and bleſſed by all the ſaints, for all that is contained in this Goſpel. In a manuſcript copy of *Beza*'s, 'tis added, “the Goſpel according to ſaint *Luke* was publiſhed fifteen years after the aſcenſion of Chriſt;” ſee the note on the title of this Goſpel.

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[e] Miſn. Sota, c. 7. §. 6. Bemidbar Rabba, §. 11. fol. 203. 3. Vid. Targum Jon. & Rabba, ut ſupra, & T. Bab. Sota, fol. 38, 1.

[f] Hilchot Tephilla, c. 14. §. 3. 9.

[g] Ib. §. 11.

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# AN EXPOSITION, &c.

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## The Goſpel according to St. JOHN.

THE author of this Goſpel is *John*, the ſon of *Zebedee* and *Salome*, the brother of *James* the greater; he outlived the reſt of the diſciples, and wrote this Goſpel after the other Evangeliſts; and in it many things are recorded, which are not in the other Goſpels; as various diſcourſes of Chriſt, and miracles done by him; ſeveral incidents in his life, and circumſtances that attended his ſufferings and death: the occaſion of it, is generally thought to be the errors of *Ebion* and *Cerinthus*, who denied the divinity of Chriſt, aſſerted he was a mere man, and that he did not exiſt before his incarnation; and the deſign of it is to confute them: and it is eaſy to obſerve, that he begins his Goſpel with the divinity of Chriſt; aſſerts him to be God, and proves him to be truly and properly ſo, by the works of creation, which were wrought by him, as well as ſhews that he was really man. *Clemens* [a] calls this Goſpel of *John*, πνευματικον Ευαγγελιον, *a ſpiritual Goſpel*, as indeed it is; conſiſting of the ſpiritual diſcourſes of our Lord, on various occaſions, both at the beginning, and in the courſe of his miniſtry, and eſpecially a little before his ſufferings and death: and the ſame writer obſerves, that *John*, the laſt of the Evangeliſts, conſidering that in the other Goſpels were declared, the things relating to the body of Chriſt, that is, to him, as he was after the fleſh; to his genealogy and birth as man; to what was done to him, or by him, in his infancy; to his baptiſm, temptations, journeys, *&c.* at the requeſt of his familiar friends, and moved by the Spirit of God, compoſed this Goſpel. Moreover, it is obſerved by ſome [b], that the other three Evangeliſts, only record what was done by Chriſt, in one year after *John* the *Baptiſt* was caſt into priſon, as appears from *Matt.* iv. 12. *Mark* i. 14. *Luke* iii. 20. wherefore *John*, at the intreaty of his friends, put theſe things into his Goſpel, which were done or ſaid by Chriſt, before *John* was caſt into priſon. He was called very early by Chriſt, though young; and was with him throughout the whole of his miniſtry, and was an eye and ear witneſs of what he here relates, and his teſtimony is to be received; he was the beloved diſciple, he leaned on the boſom of Jeſus, and had great intimacy with him; and might be privy to ſome things, which others were not acquainted with; and though he was a *Galilean*, and an unlearned man, *Acts* iv. 13. yet being endowed with the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, he was abundantly qualified to write this book: for what ſome ancient writers [c] ſay of him, that he was a prieſt, and wore a plate, that is, of gold upon his forehead, cannot be true, ſince he was not of the tribe of *Levi*; and beſides, only the high-prieſt wore that upon his mitre; unleſs they mean, as ſeems moſt likely, that he was a chriſtian biſhop: perhaps the miſtake may ariſe from *John* the *Baptiſt*, who was of the prieſtly order, and is called by ſome *Jewiſh* writers [d], *John* the high-prieſt. When and where this Goſpel was written, is not certain; ſome ſay in [e] *Aſia*, after he had wrote his *Revelation* in *Patmos*; and others ſay particularly, that it was wrote at *Epheſus*; the title of it in the *Syriac* verſion, ſignifies as much, which runs thus; "the holy Goſ-" "pel, the preaching of *John*, which he ſpoke and" "publiſhed in *Greek* at *Epheſus*." And to the ſame purpoſe is the title of it in the *Perſic* verſion; "the Goſpel of *John*, one of the twelve apoſtles," "which was ſpoken in the city of *Epheſus*, in the" "*Greek-Roman* tongue."

## CHAP. I.

Ver. 1. *IN the beginning was the word*, &c.] That this is ſaid not of the written word, but of the eſſential word of God, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, is clear, from all that is ſaid from hence, to ver. 14. as that this word was in the beginning, was with God, and is God; from the creation of all things being aſcribed to him, and his being ſaid to be the life and light of men; from his coming into the world, and uſage in it; from his beſtowing the privilege of adoption on believers; and from his incarnation; and alſo there is a particular application of all this to Chriſt, ver. 15, 16, 17, 18. And likewiſe from what this Evangeliſt elſewhere ſays of him, when he calls him the word of life, and places him between the Father and the Holy Ghoſt; and ſpeaks of the record of the word of God, and the teſtimony of Jeſus, as the ſame thing; and repreſents him as a warriour and conqueror, 1 *John* i. 1, 2. and v. 7. *Rev.* i. 2, 9. and xix. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16. Moreover, this appears to be ſpoken of Chriſt, from what other inſpired writers have ſaid of him, under the ſame character; as the Evangeliſt *Luke*, ch. i. 2. the Apoſtle *Paul*, *Acts* xx. 32. *Heb.* iv. 12. and the Apoſtle *Peter*, 2 *Pet.* iii. 5. And who is called the word, not as man; for as man he was not in the beginning with God, but became ſo in the fulneſs of time; nor is the man God; beſides, as ſuch, he is a creature, and not the creator, nor is he the life and light of men; moreover, he was the word, before he was man, and therefore not as ſuch: nor can any part of the human nature be ſo called; not the fleſh, for the word was made fleſh; nor his human ſoul, for ſelf-ſubſiſtence, deity, eternity, and the creation of all things, can never be aſcribed to that; but he is the word as the Son of God, as is evident from what is here attributed to him, and from the word being ſaid to be ſo, as in ver. 14, 18. and from thoſe places, where the word is explained by the Son, compare 1 *John* v. 5, 7. *Matt.* xxviii. 19. And is ſo called from his nature, being begotten of the Father; for as the word, whether ſilent or expreſſed, is the birth of the mind, the image of it, equal to it, and diſtinct from it; ſo Chriſt is the only begotten of the Father, the expreſs image of his perſon, in all things equal to him, and a diſtinct perſon from him: and he may be ſo called, from ſome action, or actions, ſaid of him, or aſcribed to him; as that he ſpoke for, and on the behalf of the elect of God, in the eternal council and covenant of grace and peace; and ſpoke all things out of nothing, in creation; for with regard to thoſe words ſo often mentioned in the hiſtory of the creation, *and God ſaid*, may *Jehovah* the Son be called the word; alſo he was ſpoken of as the promiſed Meſſiah, throughout the whole Old Teſtament diſpenſation; and is the interpreter of his Father's mind, as he was in *Eden's* garden, as well as in the days of his fleſh; and now ſpeaks in heaven for the ſaints. The phraſe, מימרא דיי, *the word of the Lord*, ſo frequently uſed by the *Targumiſts*, is well known; and it is to be obſerved, that the ſame things which *John* here ſays of the word, they ſay likewiſe, as will be obſerved on the ſeveral clauſes; from whence it is more likely, that *John* ſhould take this phraſe, ſince the paraphraſes of *Onkelos* and *Jonathan ben Uzziel*, were written before his time, than that he ſhould borrow it from the writings of *Plato*, or his followers, as ſome have thought; with whoſe philoſophy, *Ebion* and *Cerinthus* are ſaid to be acquainted; wherefore *John*, the more eaſily to gain upon them, uſes this phraſe, when that of the Son of God would have been diſagreeable to them: that there is ſome likeneſs between the Evangeliſt *John* and *Plato* in their ſentiments concerning the word, will not be denied. *Amelius* [f], a *platonic* philoſopher, who lived after the times of *John*, manifeſtly refers to theſe words of his, in agreement with his maſter's doctrine: his words are theſe; "and this was truly *Logos*, or the word, by whom always exiſting, the things that are made, were made, as alſo *Heraclitus* thought; and who, likewiſe that *Barbarian* (meaning the Evangeliſt *John*) reckons, was in the order and dignity of the beginning, conſtituted with God, and was God, by whom all things are entirely made; in whom, whatſoever is made, lives, and has life, and being; and who illapſed into bodies, and was clothed with fleſh, and appeared a man; ſo notwithſtanding, that he ſhewed forth the majeſty of his nature; and after his diſſolution, he was again deified, and was God, as he was before he deſcended into a body, fleſh and man." In which words it is eaſy to obſerve, plain traces of what the Evangeliſt ſays in the firſt *four* verſes, and in the *fourteenth* verſe of this chapter; yet it is much more probable, that *Plato* had his notion of the *Logos*, or word, out of the writings of the Old Teſtament, than that *John* ſhould take this phraſe, or what he ſays concerning the word, from him; ſince it is a matter of fact not diſputed, that *Plato* went into *Egypt* to get knowledge; not only *Clemens Alexandrinus* a chriſtian writer ſays, that he was a philoſopher of the *Hebrews* [g], and underſtood prophecy [h], and ſtirred up the fire of the *Hebrew* philoſophy [i]; but it is affirmed by heathen writers, that he went into *Egypt* to learn of the prieſts [k], and to underſtand the rites of the prophets [l]; and *Ariſtobulus* a *Jew* affirms [m], he ſtudied their law; and *Numenius* a *Pythagoric* philoſopher [n], charges him with ſtealing what he wrote, concerning God and the world, out of the books of *Moſes*; and uſed to ſay of him, what is *Plato*, but *Moſes Atticizing?* or *Moſes* ſpeaking *Greek*: and *Euſebius* [o], an ancient chriſtian writer, points at the very places, from whence *Plato* took his hints: wherefore it is more probable, that the Evangeliſt received this phraſe of the word, as a divine perſon, from the *Targums*, where there is ſuch frequent mention made of it; or however, there is a very great agreement between what he and theſe ancient writings of the *Jews* ſay of the word, as will be hereafter ſhewn. Moreover, the phraſe is frequently uſed in like manner, in the writings of *Philo* the *Jew*; from whence it is manifeſt, that the name was well known to the *Jews*, and may be the reaſon of the Evangeliſt's uſing it. This word he ſays, *was in the beginning*; by which is meant, not the Father of Chriſt; for he is never called the beginning, but the Son only; and was he, he muſt be ſuch a beginning as is without one; nor can he be ſaid to be ſo, with reſpect to the Son or Spirit, who are as eternal as himſelf; only with reſpect to the creatures, of whom he is the author and efficient cauſe: Chriſt is indeed in the Father, and the Father in him, but this cannot be meant here; nor is the beginning of the Goſpel of Chriſt, by the preaching of *John* the *Baptiſt*, intended here: *John*'s miniſtry was an evangelical one, and the Goſpel was more clearly preached by him, and after him, by Chriſt and his apoſtles, than before; but it did not then begin; it was preached before by the angel to the ſhepherds, at the birth of Chriſt; and before that, by the prophets under the former diſpenſation, as by *Iſaiah*, and others; it was preached before unto *Abraham*, and to our firſt parents, in the garden of *Eden*: nor did Chriſt begin to be, when *John* began to preach; for *John*'s preaching and baptiſm, were for the manifeſtation of him: yea, Chriſt exiſted as man, before *John* began to preach; and though he was born after him as man, yet as the word and Son of God, he exiſted before *John* was born; he was in being in the times of the prophets, which were before *John*; and in the times of *Moſes*, and before *Abraham*, and in the days of *Noah*: but by the beginning is here meant, the beginning of the world, or the creation of all things;

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[a] Apud Euſeb. Eccl. Hiſt. l. 6. c. 14.

[b] Ib. l. 3. c. 24.

[c] Polycrates in ib. l. 3. c. 31. & l. 5. c. 24. & Hieron. Catalog. Script. Eccleſ. fol. 96. § 55.

[d] Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 25. 2.

[e] Hieron. Prolog. Evang. Joannis.

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[f] Apud Euſeb. Prepar. Evangel. l. 11. c. 19. [g] Stromat. l. 1. p. 274. [h] Ib. p. 303. [i] Ib. Pædagog. l. 2. c. 1. p. 150. [k] Valer. Maxim. l. 8. c. 7. [l] Apuleius de dogmate Platonis, l. 1. in principio. [m] Apud Euſeb. Prepar. Evangel. l. 13. c. 12. [n] Heſych. Mileſ. de Philoſophiſ. p. 50. [o] Prepar. Evangel. l. 11. c. 9.

and which is expreſſive of the eternity of Chriſt, for he was in the beginning, as the maker of all creatures, and therefore muſt be before them all: and it is to be obſerved, that it is ſaid of him, that in the beginning he *was*; not made, as the heavens and the earth, and the things in them were; nor was he merely in the purpoſe and predeſtination of God, but really exiſted as a divine perſon, as he did from all eternity; as appears from his being ſet up in office from everlaſting; from all the elect being choſen in him, and given to him before the foundation of the world; from the covenant of grace, which is from eternity, being made with him; and from the bleſſings and promiſes of grace, being as early put into his hands; and from his nature as God, and his relation to his Father: ſo *Philo* the *Jew*, often calls the *Logos*, or word, the eternal word, the moſt ancient word, and more ancient than any thing that is made [p]. The eternity of the Meſſiah is acknowledged by the ancient *Jews*: *Mic.* v. 2. is a full proof of it; which by them [q] is thus paraphraſed; "out of thee, before "me, ſhall come forth the Meſſiah, that he may "exerciſe dominion over *Iſrael*; whoſe name is "ſaid from eternity, from the days of old." *Jarchi* upon it only mentions *Pſal.* lxxii. 17. which is rendered by the *Targum* on the place, *before the ſun his name was prepared*; it may be tranſlated, before the ſun his name was *Yinnon*; that is, the ſon, namely the Son of God; and *Aben Ezra* intepretsit, יקרא בן, *he ſhall be called the ſon*; and to this agrees what the *Talmudiſts* ſay [r], that the name of the Meſſiah was before the world was created; in proof of which they produce the ſame paſſage. *And the word was with God*; not with men or angels; for he was before either of theſe; but with God, not eſſentially, but perſonally conſidered; with God his Father: not in the *Socinian* ſenſe, that he was only known to him, and to no other before the miniſtry of *John* the *Baptiſt*; for he was known and ſpoken of by the angel *Gabriel* before; and was known to *Mary* and to *Joſeph*; and to *Zacharias* and *Elizabeth*; to the ſhepherds, and to the wiſe men; to *Simeon* and *Anna*, who ſaw him in the temple; and to the prophets and patriarchs in all ages, from the beginning of the world: but this phraſe denotes the exiſtence of the word with the Father, his relation and nearneſs to him, his equality with him, and particularly the diſtinction of his perſon from him, as well as his eternal being with him; for he was always with him, and is, and ever will be; he was with him in the council and covenant of grace, and in the creation of the univerſe, and is with him in the providential government of the world; he was with him as the word and Son of God in heaven, whilſt he as man, was here on earth; and he is now with him, and ever will be: and as *John* here ſpeaks of the word, as a diſtinct perſon from God the Father, ſo do the *Targums*, or *Chaldee* paraphraſes; *Pſal.* cx. 1. *the Lord ſaid to my Lord*, is rendered, *the Lord ſaid to his word*; where he is manifeſtly diſtinguiſhed from *Jehovah*, that ſpeaks to him; and in *Hoſ.* i. 7. the Lord promiſes to *have mercy on the houſe of Judah, and ſave them by the Lord their God.* The *Targum* is, *I will redeem them by the word of the Lord their God*; where the word of the Lord, who is ſpoken of as a Redeemer and Saviour, is diſtinguiſhed from the Lord, who promiſes to ſave by him. This diſtinction of Jehovah and his word, may be obſerved in multitudes of places, in the *Chaldee* paraphraſes, and in the writings of *Philo* the *Jew*; and this phraſe, of *the word* being *with God*, is in the *Targums* expreſſed by, " מימר מן קדם, *the word from before the Lord*, or *which is before the Lord*; being always in his preſence, and the angel of it; ſo *Onkelos* paraphraſes *Gen.* xxxi. 22. *and the word from before the Lord, came to Laban, &c.* and *Exod.* xx. 19. thus, *and let not the word from before the Lord ſpeak with us, leſt we die*; for ſo it is read in the king of *Spain*'s bible; and wiſdom, which is the ſame with the word of God, is ſaid to be *by him*, or with him, in *Prov.* viii. 30. agreeable to which *John* here ſpeaks. *John* makes uſe of the word God, rather than Father, becauſe the word is commonly called the word of God, and becauſe of what follows; *and the word was God*: not made a God, as he is ſaid hereafter to be made fleſh; nor conſtituted or appointed a God, or a God by office; but truly and properly God, in the higheſt ſenſe of the word, as appears from the names by which he is called; as *Jehovah*, God, our, your, their, and my God, God with us, the mighty God, God over all, the great God, the living God, the true God, and eternal life; and from his perfections, and the whole fulneſs of the Godhead that dwells in him, as independance, eternity, immutability, omnipreſence, omniſcience, and omnipotence; and from his works of creation and providence, his miracles, the work of redemption, his forgiving ſins, the reſurrection of himſelf and others from the dead, and the adminiſtration of the laſt judgment; and from the worſhip given him, as prayer to him, faith in him, and the performance of baptiſm in his name: nor is it any objection to the proper deity of Chriſt, that the article is here wanting; ſince when the word is applied to the Father, it is not always uſed, and even in this chapter, ver. 6, 13, 18. and which ſhews, that the word *God*, is not the ſubject, but the predicate of this propoſition, as we render it: ſo the *Jews* often uſe the word of the Lord for *Jehovah*, and call him God. Thus the words in *Gen.* xxviii. 20, 21. are paraphraſed by *Onkelos*; "if *the word of the Lord* will "be my help, and will keep me, *&c.* then *the* "*word of the Lord* ſhall be, לי לאלהא, *my God*:" again, *Levit.* xxvi. 12. is paraphraſed by the *Targum* aſcribed to *Jonathan ben Uzziel*, thus; "I will cauſe "the glory of my *Shekinah* to dwell among you, "and *my word* ſhall *be your God*, the Redeemer;" once more, *Deut.* xxvi. 17. is rendered by the *Jeruſalem Targum* after this manner; "ye have made "*the word of the Lord* king over you this day, "that he may be your God:" and this is frequent with *Philo* the *Jew*, who ſays, the name of God is his word, and calls him, my Lord, the divine word; and affirms, that the moſt ancient word is God [s].

Ver. 2. *The ſame was in the beginning with God.*] This is a repetition of what is before ſaid, and is made to ſhew, the importance of the truths before delivered; namely, the eternity of Chriſt, his diſtinct perſonality, and proper deity; and that the phraſe *in the beginning*, is to be joined to each of the above ſentences; and ſo proves, not only his eternal exiſtence, but his eternal exiſtence with the Father, and alſo his eternal deity; and is alſo made to carry on the thread of the diſcourſe, concerning the word, and not God the Father; and to expreſs, not only his co-exiſtence in nature, but his co-operation in the works of creation next mentioned.

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[p] De Leg. Alleg. l. 2. p. 93. de Plant. Noe, p. 217. de Migrat. Abraham, p. 389. de profugis, p. 466. quis rer. divin. Hæreſ. p. 509.
[q] Targum Jon. in loc.
[r] T. Bab. Peſachim, fol. 54. 1. & Nedarim, fol. 39. 2. Pirke Eliezer, c. 3.
[s] De Allegor. l. 2. p. 99, 101. & de Somniis, p. 599.

Ver. 3. *All things were made by him*, &c.] Which is a proof at once of all that is ſaid before; as that he was in the beginning; and that he was with God the father in the beginning; and that he was God; otherwiſe all things could not have been made by him, had either of theſe been untrue: which is to be underſtood, not of the new creation; for this would be a reſtraining *all* things to a *few* perſons only; nor is it any where ſaid, that all things are new made, but made; and it is falſe, that all were converted, that have been converted, by the miniſtry of Chriſt, as man: all men are not renewed, regenerated, nor reformed; and the greater part of thoſe that were renewed, were renewed before Chriſt exiſted, as man; and therefore could not be renewed by him, as ſuch: tho' indeed, could this ſenſe be eſtabliſhed, it would not anſwer the end for which it is coined; namely, to deſtroy the proof of Chriſt's deity, and of his exiſtence before his incarnation; for in all ages, from the beginning of the world, ſome have been renewed; and the new creation is a work of God, and of almighty power, equally with the old; for who can create ſpiritual light, infuſe a principle of ſpiritual life, take away the heart of ſtone, and give an heart of fleſh, or produce faith, but God? regeneration is denied to be of man, and is always aſcribed to God; nor would Chriſt's being the author of the new creation, be any contradiction to his being the author of the old creation, which is intended here: by *all things*, are meant the heaven, and all its created inhabitants, the airy, ſtarry, and third heavens, and the earth, and all therein, the ſea, and every thing that is in that; and the word, or ſon of God, is the efficient cauſe of all theſe, not a bare inſtrument of the formation of them; for the prepoſition *by* does not always denote an inſtrument, but ſometimes an efficient, as in 1 *Cor*. i. 9. 2 *Cor*. i. 1. *Gal*. i. 1. and ſo here, though not to the excluſion of the father, and of the ſpirit: *and without him was not any thing made that was made*; in which may be obſerved the conjunct operation of the word, or ſon, with the father, and ſpirit, in creation; and the extent of his concern in it to every thing that is made; for without him there was not one ſingle thing in the whole compaſs of the creation made; and the limitation of it to things that are made; and ſo excludes the increated being father, ſon, and ſpirit; and ſin alſo, which is not a principle made by God, and which has no efficient, but a deficient cauſe. So the *Jews* aſcribe the creation of all things to the word. The *Targumiſts* attribute the creation of man, in particular, to the word of God: it is ſaid in *Gen*. i. 27. *God created man in his own image*; the *Jeruſalem Targum* of it is, "and the word of the Lord created man in his likeneſs." And *Gen*. iii. 22. *and the Lord God ſaid, behold the man is become as one of us*, the ſame *Targum* paraphraſes thus; "and the word of the Lord God ſaid, behold the man whom I have created, is the only one in the world." Alſo in the ſame writings, the creation of all things in general is aſcribed to the word; the paſſage in *Deut*. xxxiii. 27. *the eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlaſting arms*, is paraphraſed by *Onkelos*, "the eternal God is an habitation, by whoſe word the world was made." In *Iſ*. xlviii. 13. it is ſaid, *mine hand alſo hath laid the foundation of the earth*. The *Targum* of *Jonathan ben Uzziah* on it is, "yea, by my word I have founded the earth:" which agrees with what is ſaid in *Heb*. xi. 3. 2 *Pet*. iii. 5, 7. and the ſame ſays *Philo* the *Jew*, who not only calls him the archetype, and exemplar of the world, but the power that made it: he often aſcribes the creation of the heavens, and the earth unto him, and likewiſe the creation of man, after whoſe image, he ſays, he was made[t]. The *Ethiopic* verſion adds, at the end of this verſe, *and alſo that which is made is for himſelf*.

Ver. 4. *In him was life*, &c.] The *Perſic* verſion reads in the plural number, *lives*. There was life, in the word with reſpect to himſelf; a divine life the ſame with the life of the father and of the ſpirit; and is in him, not by gift, nor by derivation or communication; but originally, and independently, and from all eternity: indeed he lived before his incarnation as mediator, and redeemer. *Job* knew him in his time, as his living redeemer; but this regards him as the word and living God, and diſtinguiſhes him from the written word, and ſhews that he is not a mere idea in the divine mind, but a truly divine perſon: and there was life in Chriſt the word, with reſpect to others; the fountain of natural life is in in him, he is the efficient cauſe, and preſerver of it; whether vegetative, animal, and rational; and proves him to be truly God, and that he exiſted before his incarnation; ſince creatures, who have received ſuch a life from him did: and ſpiritual life was alſo in him; all his elect are dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, and can't quicken themſelves. Chriſt has procured life for them, and gives it to them, and implants it in them; a life of ſanctification is from him; and a life of juſtification is upon him, and of faith is by him; all the comforts of a ſpiritual life, and all things appertaining to it, are from him, and he maintains, and preſerves it. Eternal life is in him, and with him; not the purpoſe of it only, nor the promiſe of it barely, but the gift of it itſelf; which was granted in conſequence of his aſking it, and which he had by way of ſtipulation; and hence has a right and power to beſtow it: now, this being in him proves him to be the true God, and ſhews us where life is to be had, and the ſafety and ſecurity of it: *and the life was the light of men*; the life which was in, and by the word, was, with reſpect to men, a life of light, or a life attended with light: by which is meant, not a mere viſive, faculty, receptive of the ſun's light, but rational knowledge and underſtanding; for when Chriſt, the word, breathed into man the breath of life, and he became a living ſoul, he filled him with rational light and knowledge. *Adam* had a knowledge of God; of his being, and perfections; of the perſons in the Trinity; of his relation to God, dependance on him, and obligation to him; of his mind and will; and knew what it was to have communion with him. He knew much of himſelf, and of all the creatures; this knowledge was natural and perfect in its kind, but loſeable; and different from that which ſaints now have of God, through Chriſt, the mediator; and ſince this natural light was from Chriſt, the word, as a creator, he muſt be the eternal God. The *Socinians* are not willing to allow this ſenſe, but ſay that Chriſt is the light of men, by preaching the heavenly doctrine, and by the example of his holy life; but hereby he did not enlighten every man that cometh into the world; the greateſt part of men before the preaching, and example of Chriſt, ſat in darkneſs; and

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[t] De Mundi Opificio, p. 4, 5, 31, 32. De Alleg. l. 1. p. 44. De Sacrificiis Abel & Cain, p. 131. De Profugis, p. 464. & de Monarch. p. 823.

the greateſt part of the *Jews* remained in darkneſs, notwithſtanding his preaching, and example; and the patriarchs that were enlightened under the former diſpenſation, were not enlightened this way: it will be owned, that all ſpiritual and ſupernatural light, which any of the ſons of men have had, ſince the fall, was from Chriſt, from whom they had their ſpiritual life; even all ſpiritual light in converſion, and all after-degrees of light; thro' him they enjoyed the light of God's countenance, and had the light of joy and gladneſs here, and of glory hereafter.

Ver. 5. *And the light ſhineth in darkneſs*, &c.] Which, thro' ſin, came upon the minds of men; who are naturally in the dark about the nature and perfections of God; about ſin, and the conſequences of it; about Chriſt, and ſalvation by him; about the ſpirit of God, and his work upon the ſoul; and about the ſcriptures of truth, and the doctrines of the Goſpel. Man was created a knowing creature, but not content with his knowledge, ſins, and is baniſhed from the preſence of God, the fountain of light; which brought a darkneſs on him, and his poſterity, and which is increaſed in them by perſonal iniquity, and in which ſatan, the God of this world, has an hand; and ſometimes they are left to judicial blindneſs, and which iſſues in worſe darkneſs, if grace prevents not: now amidſt this darkneſs there were ſome remains of the light of nature; with reſpect to the being of God, which ſhines in the works of creation and providence; and to the worſhip of God, though very dimly; and to the knowledge of moral good and evil: *and the darkneſs comprehended it not*; or *perceived it not*, as the *Syriac* verſion renders it. By the light of nature, and the remains of it, men could not come to any clear and diſtinct knowledge of the above things; and much leſs to any knowledge of the true way of ſalvation: unleſs, rather by the light ſhould be meant, the light of the Meſſiah, or of the Goſpel ſhining in the figures, types, and ſhadows of the law, and in the prophecies and promiſes of the Old Teſtament; and yet, ſuch was the darkneſs upon the minds of men, that they could not very diſtinctly apprehend it, and much leſs fully comprehend it, ſo that there was need of a freſh and fuller revelation; an account of which follows;

Ver. 6. *There was a man ſent from God*, &c.] *John* the *Baptiſt*: he was not the *Logos*, or word; nor was he an angel, but a man; yet an extraordinary one, in his conception of a barren woman, and in being born when both parents were ſtricken in years; and whilſt he was in the womb, he leaped for joy at the ſalutation of *Mary*; and as ſoon as born was filled with the Holy Ghoſt; and when he was grown up, and appeared in publick, it was in an uncommon manner: his dreſs, and his diet were both out of the common way; and his temper and ſpirit were that of *Elias* the prophet; and as for his work and office, it was very peculiar; he was the forerunner of Chriſt, and the firſt adminiſtrator of the new ordinance of baptiſm, and the greateſt of all the prophets: this perſon had his miſſion from God, both to preach and baptize: *whoſe name was John*; the name given him by the angel before his conception, and by his mother *Elizabeth*, after her neighbours and couſins had given him another; and which was confirmed by his father *Zacharias*, when deaf and dumb: it ſignifies grace, or gracious; and a gracious man he was: he was very acceptable to his parents; a man that had the grace of God in him, and great gifts of grace beſtowed on him; he was a preacher of the doctrines of grace; and his miniſtry was very grateful to many.

Ver. 7. *The ſame came for a witneſs*, &c.] The end of his being ſent, and the deſign of his coming were, *to bear witneſs of the light*: by which is meant, not the light of nature, or reaſon; nor the light of the Goſpel; but Chriſt himſelf, the author of light, natural, ſpiritual, and eternal. This was one of the names of the Meſſiah with the *Jews*; of whom they ſay [u], נהירא שמו, *light is his name*; as it is ſaid in *Dan.* ii. 22. *and the light dwelleth with him*; on which they have [w] elſewhere this Gloſs, this is the king Meſſiah; and ſo they interpret *Pſ.* xliii. 3. of him [x]. *Philo* the *Jew* often ſpeaks of the *Logos*, or word, as light, and calls him the intelligible light, the univerſal light, the moſt perfect light; repreſents him as full of divine light; and ſays, he is called the ſun [y]. Now *John* came to bear a teſtimony to him, as he did; of which an account is given in this chapter, very largely, and elſewhere; as that he teſtified of his exiſtence before his incarnation; of his being with the father, and in his boſom; of his deity, and divine Sonſhip; of his being the Meſſiah; of the fulneſs of grace that was in him; of his incarnation and ſatisfaction; of his deſcent from heaven; and of his relation to his church, as in ver. 15, 16, 18, 23, 27, 29, 30, 34, 36. and ch. iii. 29, 31. the end of which witneſs was, *that all men thro' him might believe*; that is, that the *Jews*, to whom he preached, might, thro' his teſtimony, believe that Jeſus was the light, and true Meſſiah; for theſe words are to be taken in a limited ſenſe, and not to be extended to every individual of mankind; ſince millions were dead before *John* began his teſtimony, and multitudes then in being, and ſince, whom it never reached: nor can it deſign more than the *Jews*, to whom alone he bore witneſs of Chriſt; and the faith which he taught, and required by his teſtimony, was an aſſent unto him as the Meſſiah; tho' the preaching of the Goſpel is a means of true ſpiritual faith in Chriſt; and doubtleſs it was ſo to many, as preached by *John*: it points out the object of faith, and encourages ſouls to believe in Chriſt; and hence, Goſpel-miniſters are inſtruments by whom others believe; and faith comes by hearing, and hearing, by the word of God; and then is a conſiderable end of the Goſpel-miniſtry anſwered.

Ver. 8. *He was not that light*, &c.] He was a light; he was the forerunner of the ſun of righteouſneſs, the *Phoſophorus* of the Goſpel-day; he had great light in him; he knew that the Meſſiah was ready to come, and declared it; and upon his baptiſm he knew him perſonally, and ſignified him to others: he had great light into the perſon and work of Chriſt; and into the way of ſalvation by him, and remiſſion of ſins thro' him; into the doctrines of faith in Chriſt, and of evangelical repentance towards God; and into the abolition of the legal, *Moſaic* and *Jewiſh* diſpenſation; and was an inſtrument of giving light to others; yea, he was a burning and ſhining light, in whoſe light the *Jews* rejoiced, at leaſt for a ſeaſon: but then he was not that light, the word and wiſdom of God; that increated light that dwelt with him from all eternity; nor that which was the light of men, from the creation; nor that light, which was of old promiſed to the ſaints and patriarchs of the Old Teſtament,

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[u] Echa Rabbati, fol. 50. 2.

[w] Bereſhit Rabba, fol. 1. 3.

[x] Jarchi in ib.

[y] De Mundi Opificio, p. 6. De Allegor. l. 2. p. 80. & de Somniis, p. 576, 578.

ment, and ſhone in the ordinances and predictions of that ſtate; nor that fountain and giver of light, of every ſort, to men; not that light in which is no darkneſs, and always ſhines; not that true light, or ſun of righteouſneſs, the Meſſiah, or that lightens every man that comes into the world: *but* was ſent *to bear witneſs of that light*; which is repeated, to diſtinguiſh him from that light; to ſhew what he was ſent for, and that he acted according to his miſſion; and to expreſs the honourableneſs of his work.

Ver. 9. That *was the true light*, &c.] Chriſt is that light, that famous and excellent light, the fountain of all light to all creatures; that gave light to the dark earth at firſt, and ſpoke light out of darkneſs; that light of all men in the earth, and of all the angels in heaven, and of all the ſaints below, and of all the glorified ones above: he is the *true* light, in diſtinction from typical lights; the *Urim* of the former diſpenſation; the candleſtick, with the lamps of it; the pillar of fire which directed the *Iſraelites* by night in the wilderneſs; and from all the typical light there was in the inſtitutions and ſacrifices of the law; and in oppoſition to the law itſelf, which the *Jews* [z] magnify, and cry up as the light, ſaying, there is no light but the law; and in oppoſition to all falſe lights, as prieſts, diviners, and ſoothſayers among the *Gentiles*; *Scribes*, and *Phariſees*, and the learned Rabbins among the *Jews*, ſo much boaſted of as the lights of the world; and to all falſe Chriſts and prophets that have riſen, or ſhall riſe, in the world. *Which lighteth every man that cometh into the world*: the ſenſe is, either that every man that is enlightened in a ſpiritual manner, is enlightened by him, which is true of Chriſt, as the Son of God, exiſting from the beginning; but not in the *Socinian* ſenſe, as if they were enlightened by his human miniſtry and example; for the Old Teſtament-ſaints were not enlightened by his preaching; and many were enlightened by the miniſtry of *John* the *Baptiſt*; and multitudes afterwards, through the miniſtry of the Apoſtles; and very few, comparatively, were enlightened under the miniſtry of Chriſt; and none we read of, in this ſenſe, enlightened by him, when, and as ſoon as they came into the world: or the meaning is, that he is that light which lighteth all ſorts of men; which is true in a ſpiritual ſenſe: ſome connect the phraſe, *that cometh into the world*, not with *every man*, but with the *true light*; and the *Arabic* verſion ſo reads, and joins it to the following verſe: but this reading is not ſo natural, and the order of the words requires the common reading; nor is the difficulty removed hereby; for ſtill it is every man that is enlightened: it is beſt therefore to underſtand theſe words of the light of nature, and reaſon, which Chriſt, as the word, and creator, and light of men, gives to every man that is born into the world; and which ſerves to detect the *Quakers* notion of the light within, which every man has, and is no other than the light of a natural conſcience; and ſhows how much men, even natural men, are obliged to Chriſt, and how great a perſon he is, and how deſerving of praiſe, honour, and glory. The phraſe, *every man that cometh into the world*, is *Jewiſh*, and often to be met with in *Rabbinical* writings, and ſignifies all men that are born into the world; the inſtances are almoſt innumerable; take one or two: on thoſe words in *Job* xxv. 3. *on whom doth not his light ariſe?* it is aſked [a], who is he that cometh, "מכל באי עולם, "*of all that come into the world*; and ſays, the ſun "hath not lightened me by day, nor hath the "moon lightened me by night? thou enlighteneſt "thoſe above, and thoſe below, and *all that come* "*into the world.*" Again, God is introduced thus ſpeaking [b]: "I am the God, לכל באי עולם, *of* "*all that come into the world*; and I have not united my name, but to the people of *Iſrael.*" Once more [c], "*Moſes*, our maſter, from the mouth of "power, (*i. e.* God; ſee *Matt.* xxvi. 64.) commanded to oblige, את כל באי העולם, *all that* "*come into the world*, to receive the command- "ments which were commanded the ſons of *Noah.*"

Ver. 10. *He was in the world*, &c.] This is to be underſtood, not of his incarnation; for the word *was* denotes paſt exiſtence in the world, even all the time paſt from the creation of the world; and the *world* intends the world in general, as oppoſed to *Judea*, and the people of the *Jews* in the next *verſe*; beſides, the incarnation of the word is ſpoken of in ver. 14. as a new and diſtinct thing from this: but of his being in the world, when firſt made, and ſince, by his eſſence, by which he fills the whole world; and by his power, upholding and preſerving it; and by his providence, ordering and managing all the affairs of it, and influencing and governing all things in it: he was in it as the life and light of it, giving natural life and light to creatures in it, and filling it, and them, with various bleſſings of goodneſs; and he was in the promiſe and type before, as well as after the *Jews* were diſtinguiſhed from other nations, as his peculiar people; and he was frequently viſible in the world, in an human form, before his incarnation, as in *Eden*'s garden to our firſt parents, to *Abraham*, *Jacob*, *Manoah*, and his wife, and others. *And the world was made by him*: ſo *Philo* the *Jew* often aſcribes the making of the world to the *Logos*, or word, as before obſerved on ver. 3. and this regards the whole univerſe, and all created beings in it, and therefore can't deſign the new creation: beſides, if all men in the world were a-new created by Chriſt, they would know him; for a conſiderable branch of the new creation lies in knowledge; whereas, in the very next clauſe, it is aſſerted, that the world knew him not; and they would alſo love him, and obey him, which the generality of the world do not; they would appear to be in him, and ſo not be condemned by him, as multitudes will. To underſtand this of the old creation, beſt ſuits the context, and proves the deity of Chriſt, and his pre-exiſtence, as the word, and Son of God, to his incarnation. *And the world knew him not*; that is, the inhabitants of the world knew him not as their creator; nor did they acknowledge the mercies they received from him; nor did they worſhip, ſerve, and obey him, or love and fear him; nor did they, the greater part of them, know him as the Meſſiah, Mediator, Saviour, and Redeemer. There was, at firſt, a general knowledge of Chriſt throughout the world among all the ſons of *Adam*, after the firſt promiſe of him, and which, for a while, continued; but this, in proceſs of time, being neglected and ſlighted, it was forgot, and utterly loſt, as to the greater part of mankind; for the *Gentiles*, for many hundreds of years, as they knew not the true God, ſo they were without Chriſt, without any notion of the

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[z] T. Bava Bathra, fol. 4. 1.

[a] Vajikra Rabba, §. 31. fol. 171. 4.

[b] Midraſh Ruth, c. 1. v. 1. fol. 27. 3.

[c] Maimon. Hilch. Melakim. c. 8. §. 10. Vid. Miſn. Roſhhaſhana, c. 1. §. 2. T. Hieroſ. Sanhedrin, fol. 25. 4. & 26. 3. Sepher Bahir apud Zohar in Gen. ſol. 30. 3. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 21. 2. & 22. 3. & 24. 3. & 27. 2. Caphtor, fol. 56. 1. Jarchi in Exod. 15. 2.

Meſſiah; and this their ignorance, as it was firſt their ſin, became their puniſhment.

Ver. 11. *He came unto his own*, &c.] Not all the world, who are his own by right of creation; for theſe, his own, are oppoſed to the world, and diſtinguiſhed from them; and his coming to them deſigns ſome particular favour, which is not vouchſafed to all: nor yet are the elect of God intended; tho' they are Chriſt's own, in a very ſpecial ſenſe; they are his by his own choice, by his father's gift, by his own purchaſe, and thro' the conqueſt of his grace, and are the objects of his ſpecial love; and for their ſake he came in the fleſh, and to them he comes in a ſpiritual way, and to them will he appear a ſecond time at the laſt day unto ſalvation: but they cannot be meant, becauſe when he comes to them they receive him; whereas theſe did not, as the next clauſe affirms: but by his own are meant the whole body of the *Jewiſh* nation; ſo called, becauſe they were choſen by the Lord above all people; had diſtinguiſhing favours beſtowed upon them, as the adoption, the covenants, the promiſes, the giving of the law, and the ſervice of God; and had the *Shekinah*, and the ſymbol of the divine preſence in a remarkable manner among them; and the promiſe of the Meſſiah was in a particular manner made to them; and indeed, he was to be born of them, ſo that they were his kindred, his people, and his own nation: and this his coming to them is to be underſtood not of his incarnation; tho' when he came in the fleſh, as he came of them, ſo he came to them, particularly being ſent to the loſt ſheep of the houſe of *Iſrael*, and was rejected by them as the Meſſiah; yet his incarnation is afterwards ſpoken of in ver. 14. as a new and diſtinct thing from this; and to underſtand it of ſome coming of his before his incarnation, beſt ſuits with the context, and the deſign of the Evangeliſt. Now Chriſt, the Word, came to the *Jews* before his incarnation, not only in types, perſonal and real, and in promiſes and propheſies, and in the word and ordinances, but in perſon; as to *Moſes* in the buſh, and gave orders to deliver the children of *Iſrael* out of *Egypt*: he came and redeemed them himſelf with a mighty hand, and a ſtretched out arm; in his love and pity he led them through the red ſea as on dry ground; and thro' the wilderneſs in a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night; and he appeared to them at mount *Sinai*, who gave unto them the lively oracles of God: *and his own received him not*; they did not believe in him, nor obey his voice; they rebelled againſt him, and tempted him often, particularly at *Maſſah* and *Meribah*; they provoked him to anger, and vexed, and grieved his holy Spirit, as they afterwards ſlighted and deſpiſed his Goſpel by the prophets. Of this non-reception of the Word by the *Jews*, and their puniſhment for it, the *Targumiſt* on *Hoſ.* ix. 17. thus ſpeaks: "my God will remove them far away, becauſe, לא קבילו למימריה, *they receive not his Word*; and they ſhall wander among the people." And ſo they treated this ſame *Logos*, or Word of God, when he was made fleſh, and dwelt among them. Somewhat remarkable is the following diſcourſe of ſome *Jews* among themſelves[*]: "when the Word of God comes, who is his meſſenger, we ſhall honour him. Says *R. Saul*, did not the prophets come, and we ſlew them, and ſhed their blood? (compare this with *Matt.* xxiii. 30, 31, 37.) how therefore now, נקבל מדברו, *ſhall we receive his word?* or wherefore ſhall we believe? Says *R. Samuel*, the *Levite*, to him, becauſe he will heal them, and deliver them from their deſtructions; and becauſe of theſe ſigns we ſhall believe him, and honour him." But they did not.

Ver. 12. *But as many as received him*, &c.] This is explained, in the latter part of the text, by believing in his name; for faith is a receiving him as the Word, and Son of God, as the Meſſiah, Saviour, and Redeemer; a receiving grace out of his fulneſs, and every bleſſing from him, as a juſtifying righteouſneſs, pardon of ſin, and an inheritance among them that are ſanctified; for tho' the generality rejected him, there were ſome few that received him: *to them gave he power to become the ſons of God*; as ſuch were very early called, in diſtinction from the children of men, or of the world; ſee *Gen.* vi. 2, 4. To be the ſons of God is a very ſpecial favour, a great bleſſing, and high honour: ſaints indeed are not in ſo high a ſenſe the ſons of God as Chriſt is; nor in ſo low a ſenſe as angels and men in common are; nor in ſuch ſenſe as civil magiſtrates; nor merely by profeſſion of religion; much leſs by natural deſcent; but by adopting grace: and in this, Chriſt, the Word, has a concern, as all the three divine perſons have. The Father predeſtinated men to the adoption of children, ſecures this bleſſing for them in the covenant of his grace, and puts them among the children, and aſſigns them a goodly heritage: the Spirit, and who is therefore called the Spirit of adoption, diſcovers and applies this bleſſing to them, and witneſſes to their ſpirits that they are the children of God: and Chriſt, the Word, or Son of God, not only eſpouſed their perſons, and in time aſſumed their nature, and by the redemption of them opened a way for their reception of the adoption of children; but actually beſtows upon them the *power*, as it is here called, of becoming the ſons of God: by which is meant, not a power of free-will to make themſelves the ſons of God, if they will make uſe of it; but it ſignifies the honour and dignity conferred on ſuch perſons: ſo *Nonnus* calls it, *the heavenly honour*; as indeed, what can be a greater? It is more honourable than to be a ſon or daughter of the greateſt potentate on earth: and it is expreſſive of its being a privilege; for ſo it is an undeſerved and diſtinguiſhing one, and is attended with many other privileges; for ſuch are of God's houſhold and family, and are provided for by him; have liberty of acceſs unto him; are Chriſt's free men, and are heirs to an incorruptible inheritance. This is a privilege that excels all others, even juſtification and remiſſion of ſins; and is an everlaſting one: and it alſo intends the open right which believers have unto this privilege, and their claim of it: hence it follows, even *to them that believe in his name*; that is, in himſelf, in Chriſt, the Word: the phraſe is explanative of the former part of the verſe, and is a deſcriptive and manifeſtative character of the ſons of God; for tho' the elect of God, by virtue of electing grace, and the covenant of grace, are the children of God before faith; and were ſo conſidered in the gift of them to Chriſt, and when he came into the world to gather them together, and ſave them; and ſo, antecedent to the Spirit of God, being ſent down into their hearts, to make this known to them; yet no man can know his adoption, nor enjoy the comfort of it, or claim his intereſt in it, until he believes.

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[*] Ben Arama in Gen. xlvii. 4. apud Galatin. de Arcan. Cathol. Ver. l. 3. c. 5.

Ver. 13. *Which were born not of blood*, &c.] Or *bloods*, in the plural number. The birth, here ſpoken of, is regeneration, expreſſed by a being born again, or from above; by a being quickened by the Spirit and grace of God; by Chriſt being formed in men; and by a partaking of the divine nature; and by being made new creatures, as all that believe in the name of Chriſt are; and which is the evidence of their being the ſons of God: and now this is owing not to blood, or bloods; not to the blood of circumciſion; or of the paſſover, which the *Jews* had an high opinion of, and aſcribe life and ſalvation to, and to which notion this may be oppoſed: ſo their commentators [f] on *Ezek.* xvi. 6. where the word *live* is twice uſed, obſerve on the firſt *live*, by the blood of the paſſover, on the ſecond *live*, by the blood of circumciſion; but, alas! theſe contribute nothing to the life of the new creature: nor is regeneration owing to the blood of anceſtors, to natural deſcent, as from *Abraham*, which the *Jews* valued themſelves upon; for ſin, and not grace, is conveyed by natural generation: all men are of one blood, and that is tainted with ſin, and therefore can never have any influence on regeneration; no blood is to be valued, or any one upon it, but the blood of Chriſt, which cleanſes from all ſin. *Nor of the will of the fleſh*; man's free-will, which is carnal and corrupt, is enmity to God, and impotent to every thing that is ſpiritually good: regeneration is aſcribed to another will and power, even to the will and power of God, and denied of this: *nor of the will of man*; of the beſt of men, as *Abraham*, *David*, and others; who, tho' ever ſo willing and deſirous, that their children, relations, friends, and ſervants, ſhould be born again, be partakers of the grace of God, and live in his ſight, yet cannot effect any thing of this kind: all that they can do is to pray for them, give advice, and bring them under the means of grace; but all is ineffectual without a divine energy. So with the *Jews*, איש, *a man*, ſignifies a great man, in oppoſition to *Adam*, or *Enoſh*, which ſignify a mean, weak, frail man; and our tranſlators have obſerved this diſtinction, in *Iſ.* ii. 9. *and the mean man (Adam) boweth down, and the great man (Iſh) humbleth himſelf*: on which *Jarchi* has this note, *Adam boweth down*, i. e. little men; *and a man humbleth himſelf*, i. e. princes, and mighty men, men of power: and ſo *Kimchi* on *Pſ.* iv. 2. *O ye ſons of men*, obſerves, that the Pſalmiſt calls them the ſons of men, with reſpect to the great men of *Iſrael*; for there were with *Abſalom* the ſons of great men. Tho' ſometimes the *Jews* ſay [g], *Adam* is greater than any of the names of men, as *Geber*, *Enoſh*, *Iſh*. But now our Evanegliſt obſerves, let a man be ever ſo great, or good, or eminent, for gifts and grace, he cannot communicate grace to another, or to whom he will; none are born again of any ſuch will: *but of God*; of God, the Father of Chriſt, who begets to a lively hope; and of the Son, who quickens whom he will; and of the grace of the Spirit, to whom regeneration is generally aſcribed.

Ver. 14. *And the word was made fleſh*, &c.] The ſame Word, of whom ſo many things are ſaid in the preceding verſes; and is no other than the ſon of God, or ſecond perſon in the Trinity; for neither the Father, nor the Holy Ghoſt, were made fleſh, as is here ſaid of the Word, but the ſon only: and *fleſh*, here ſignifies, not a part of the body, nor the whole body only, but the whole human nature, conſiſting of a true body, and a reaſonable ſoul; and is ſo called, to denote the frailty of it, being encompaſſed with infirmites, tho' not ſinful; and to ſhew, that it was a real human nature, and not a phantom, or appearance, that he aſſumed: and when he is ſaid to be *made* fleſh, this was not done by the change of one nature into another, the divine into the human, or the Word into a man; but by the aſſumption of the human nature, the Word, taking it into perſonal union with himſelf; whereby the natures are not altered; Chriſt remained what he was, and became what he was not; nor are they confounded, and blended together, and ſo make a third nature; nor are they ſeparated, and divided, ſo as to conſtitute two perſons, a divine perſon, and an human perſon; but are ſo united as to be but one perſon; and this is ſuch an union, as can never be diſſolved, and is the foundation of the virtue and efficacy of all Chriſt's works and actions, as mediator: *and dwelt among us*; or *tabernacled among us*; in alluſion to the tabernacle, which was a type of Chriſt's human nature: the model of the tabernacle was of God, and not of man; it was coarſe without, but full of holy things within; here God dwelt, granted his preſence, and his glory was ſeen; here the ſacrifices were brought, offered, and accepted. So the human nature of Chriſt was of God's pitching, and not man's; and tho' it looked mean without, the fulneſs of the Godhead dwelt in it, as well as a fulneſs of grace and truth; in the face of Chriſt the glory of God is ſeen, and thro' him, even the vail of his fleſh, ſaints have acceſs unto him, and enjoy his preſence; and by him their ſpiritual ſacrifices become acceptable to God: or this is obſerved, in alluſion to the feaſt of tabernacles, when the *Jews* dwelt in booths, in remembrance of their manner of living in the wilderneſs: the feaſt of tabernacles was typical of Chriſt, and of his tabernacling in our nature. *Solomon*'s temple, which was alſo a type of Chriſt, was dedicated at the time of that feaſt; and it ſeems probable, that our Lord was born at that time; for as he ſuffered at the time of the paſſover, which had reſpect unto him, and the pouring forth of the ſpirit was on the very day of pentecoſt, which that prefigured; ſo it is highly probable, that Chriſt was born at the time of the feaſt of tabernacles, which pointed out his dwelling among us; and is therefore very pertinently hinted at, when mention is here made of his incarnation. However, reference is manifeſtly had to the *Shekinah*, and the glory of it, in the tabernacle and temple; and almoſt the very word is here uſed. The *Targumiſts* ſometimes ſpeak of the *Shekinah* of the Word dwelling among the *Iſraelites*: ſo *Onkelos* in *Numb.* xi. 20. where the *Iſraelites* are threatned with fleſh, 'till they loath it; becauſe, ſays the *Paraphraſt*, "ye "have loathed *the word of the Lord*, whoſe *Shekinah* "dwelleth among you." *Jonathan ben Uzziel*, on the ſame place, expreſſes it thus; "becauſe ye have "loathed the Word of the Lord, the glory of whoſe "*Shekinah* dwelleth among you." And it follows here, *and we beheld his glory*; the glory of his divine nature, which is eſſential to him, and underived, is equal to the father's glory, is tranſcendent to all creatures, and is ineffable, and incomprehenſible; ſome breakings forth of which there were in his incarnate ſtate, and which were obſerved by the Evangeliſt, and his companions; who, in various inſtances, ſaw plainly, that Chriſt was poſſeſſed of divine

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[f] Jarchi & Kimchi in loc. Shemot Rabba, §. 19. fol. 103. 2. & 104. 4. & Mattanot Cehuna in Vajikra Rabba, §. 23. fol. 164. 2. Zohar in Lev. fol. 39. 2.

[g] Zohar in Lev. fol. 20. 2.

divine perfections, ſuch as omniſcience, and omnipotence; ſince he knew the thoughts of the heart, and could do the things he did: his Father declared him to be his beloved Son; and the miracles he wrought, and the doctrines he taught, manifeſted forth his glory; and not only there were ſome beams of his glory, at his transfiguration, which were ſeen by the apoſtles, among which the Evangeliſt *John* was one, and to which he may have here a particular reference; but even at his apprehenſion, and death, and eſpecially at his reſurrection from the dead. The *Jews* ſpeak of the glory of the Meſſiah to be ſeen in the world to come. They ſay[h], "if a "man is worthy of the world to come, (*i. e.* the "times of the Meſſiah,) he ſhall *ſee the glory* of "the king Meſſiah." And of *Moſes*, they ſay[i], "there was (or will be) no generation like that in "which he lived, until the generation in which the "king Meſſiah comes, which ſhall *behold the glory* of "the holy, bleſſed God, as he." This our Evangeliſt, and the other diſciples of Chriſt have ſeen: *the glory, as of the only-begotten of the Father*; a glory becoming him, ſuitable to him as ſuch; the very real glory of the Son of God; for the *as*, here, is not a note of ſimilitude, but of certainty, as in *Matt.* xiv. 5. *Pſal.* ii. 8. and the Word is here called, *the only-begotten of the father*; which can't be ſaid of Chriſt, as man; for as ſuch, he was not *begotten* at all: nor on the account of his reſurrection from the dead; for ſo he could not be called the *only-begotten*, ſince there are others that have been, and millions that will be raiſed from the dead, beſides him: nor by reaſon of adoption; for if adopted, then not begotten; theſe two are inconſiſtent; beſides, he could not be called the only-begotten, in this ſenſe, becauſe there are many adopted ſons, even all the elect of God: nor by virtue of his office, as magiſtrates are called the ſons of God; for then he would be ſo only in a figurative and metaphorical ſenſe, and not properly; whereas he is called God's own Son; the Son of the ſame nature with him; and, as here, the only-begotten of the Father, begotten by him in the ſame nature, in a way inconceivable and inexpreſſible by us: *full of grace and truth*; that is, he dwelt among men, and appeared to have a fulneſs of each of theſe: for this clauſe is not to be joined with the glory of the only begotten, as if this was a branch of that; but regards him as incarnate, and in his office, as mediator; who, as ſuch, was full of *grace*; the Spirit, and the gifts of the Spirit; of all the bleſſings of grace, of juſtifying, pardoning, adopting, ſanctifying, and perſevering grace; of all the promiſes of grace; of all light, life, ſtrength, comfort, peace, and joy: and alſo of *truth*, of all Goſpel-truths; and as he had the truth, the ſum, and ſubſtance of all the types and prophecies concerning him in him; and as he fulfilled all his own engagements, and his Father's promiſes; and as poſſeſſed of ſincerity towards men, and faithfulneſs and integrity to God.

Ver. 15. *John bare witneſs of him*, &c.] Which was his office and buſineſs, for which purpoſe he was ſent, ver. 6, 7, 8. *and cried*; this agrees with his work and office, according to the prophecy of him in *Iſ.* xl. 3. and with the time of his miniſtry, the year of Jubilee; and with the nature of his miniſtry, which was clear, open, and publick; and performed with vigour, and in a powerful manner, with much aſſurance and certainty, with boldneſs and intrepidity, and with great zeal and fervency, and in an Evangelical way; for it was ſuch a cry as debaſed the creature, and exalted Chriſt: *this was he, of whom I ſpake*; when he firſt entered upon his miniſtry and baptiſm, before he ſaw Chriſt, or baptized him; ſee *Matt.* iii. 11. *he that cometh after me*; for Chriſt came into the world after *John*; he was born ſix months after him; he came after him to be baptized by him, and attended on his miniſtry; and came later into the public miniſtry than he did: *is preferred before me*; by God, the father, in ſetting him up as mediator; conſtituting him the head of the Church; cauſing a fulneſs of grace to dwell in him; appointing him the Saviour of his people; and ordaining him judge of quick and dead. And by the prophets, who ſpake much of him, and ſparingly, of *John*; and of him as the Meſſiah and Saviour, and of *John* only as his harbinger: and by *John* himſelf, who repreſents him as coming from above, and as above all; and himſelf as of the earth, earthly: and by all Goſpel-miniſters, and every true believer; and good reaſon there is for it: *for he was before me*; which can't be meant of honour and dignity; for this is expreſſed before; and it would be proving one thing by the ſame: nor of his birth, as man; for *John* in that ſenſe was before him, being born before him; beſides, being born before another, is no proof of ſuperior worth; others were born before *John*, whom he yet excelled: but of his eternal exiſtence, as the Word, and Son of God, who was before *John*, or any of the prophets; before *Abraham*, and *Noah*, and *Adam*, or any creature whatever: the *Arabic* and *Perſic* verſions read, *for he was more ancient than me*; being from everlaſting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.

Ver. 16. *And of his fulneſs have all we received*, &c.] Theſe are the words not of *John* the *Baptiſt*; but of the Evangeliſt carrying on his account of Chriſt, after he had inſerted the teſtimony of the *Baptiſt*, in connexion with ver. 14. where he is ſaid to be *full of grace and truth*; and which fulneſs is here intended; for the fulneſs of the Godhead in him is incommunicable; and the fulneſs of his fitneſs, and ability for his office, as mediator, was for himſelf; but his fulneſs of grace and truth is diſpenſatory, and is in him, on purpoſe to be communicated unto others: and *of it*, the Evangeliſt ſays, *have all we received*; not all mankind, tho' they all receive natural light and life from him; nor merely all the prophets of the Old Teſtament, tho' they had their gifts and grace from him, who then was, as now, the head of the church; nor only all the apoſtles of Chriſt, tho' theſe may be principally intended; but all believers, who, tho' they have not all the ſame meaſure of grace, nor the ſame gifts, yet all have received ſomething: nor is there any reaſon for diſcouragement, envy, or reproach. Faith is the hand which receives Chriſt, and grace from him; and the act of receiving, being expreſſed in the paſt tenſe, ſeems to regard, firſt converſion, when faith is firſt wrought, and along with it abundance of grace is received; for a believer has nothing but what is given him, and what he has, is in a way of receiving; ſo that there is no room for boaſting, but great reaſon for thankfulneſs, and much encouragement to apply to Chriſt for more grace, which is the thing received, as follows: *and grace for grace*: according to the different ſenſes of the prepoſition αντι, different interpretations are given of this paſſage; as that ſignifies a ſubſtitution of a perſon, or thing, in the room of another, the ſenſe is thought to be, the Goſpel, inſtead of the law; or the grace of the preſent diſpenſation, inſtead of the grace of the former diſpenſation; grace, different from the former grace, as *Nonnus* expreſſes it. If it deſigns the original, and moving cauſe, the meaning is, grace is for the ſake of grace; for there is no other cauſe of electing, juſtifying, pardoning, adopting, and regenerating grace, and even eternal life, but the grace, or free favour of God; and the one is the reaſon why the other is received: if it ſignifies the end, or final cauſe, then it is explained in this way; the diſciples received the grace of apoſtleſhip, or gifts of grace, in order to preach the Goſpel of the grace of God, and for the implanting and increaſing grace in men; and grace alſo, in this life, is received, in order to the perfection of grace, or glory, in the other: if it denotes the meaſure and proportion of a thing, as one thing is anſwerable to another, then it may be interpreted after this manner; the ſaints receive grace from the fulneſs of Chriſt, according, or anſwerable to the grace that is in him; or according to the meaſure of the gift of Chriſt, and in proportion to the place, ſtation, and office they bear in the church. Some think the phraſe only deſigns the freeneſs of grace, and the free and liberal manner in which it is diſtributed, and received; along with which, I alſo think, the abundance of it, at firſt converſion, with all after ſupplies, is intended; and that grace for grace, is the ſame with grace upon grace, heaps of grace; and that the phraſeology is the ſame with this *Jewiſh* one[k], טיבו על ההוא טיבו, *goodneſs upon that goodneſs*, an additional goodneſs; ſo here, grace upon grace, an abundance of it, an addition to it, and an increaſe of it: ſo חדו על חדו[l], joy upon joy, is an abundance of joy, a large meaſure of it; and *holineſs upon holineſs*[m], abundance of it.

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[h] Gloſſ. in T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 58. 1.

[i] Zohar in Lev. fol. 9. 4.

Ver. 17. *For the law was given by Moſes*, &c.] Both moral and ceremonial. The moral law was given to *Adam*, in innocence, which having been broken, and almoſt loſt out of the minds, and memories of men, was given by *Moſes*, in a new edition of it, in writing; and points out what is man's duty both to God and men; diſcovers ſin, accuſes of it, convicts of it, and condemns for it; nor could it give ſtrength to perform its demands; nor does it give the leaſt hint of forgiveneſs; nor will it admit of repentance: and hence is oppoſed to grace; tho' it was a benefit to men, being in its own nature good and uſeful in its effects. The ceremonial law pointed out the pollution of human nature, the guilt and puniſhment of ſin; was a type and ſhadow of deliverance by Chriſt, but could not give the grace it ſhadowed, and therefore is oppoſed both to grace and truth. Now both theſe were given by *Moſes* to the people of the *Jews*, not as the maker, but the miniſter of them: it was God who appointed each of theſe laws, and ordained them in the hand of the mediator *Moſes*, who received them from him, by the diſpoſition of angels, and delivered them to the people of *Iſrael*; and a very high office this was he was put into, and a very great honour was conferred upon him; but Jeſus Chriſt is a far greater perſon, and in an higher office: *but grace and truth came by Jeſus Chriſt*: by *grace and truth*, is meant the Goſpel, in oppoſition to the law; which is called *grace*, becauſe it is a declaration of the love, and grace, of God to men; it aſcribes ſalvation, in all the parts of it, to the free grace and favour of God; and is the means of implanting and increaſing grace in the hearts of men. And *truth*, not only becauſe it contains truth, and nothing but truth, it coming from the God of truth; and the ſubſtance of it being Chriſt, who is the truth; and being revealed, applied, and led into by the ſpirit of truth; but becauſe it is the truth of the types, and the ſubſtance of the ſhadows of the law: or theſe two may mean diſtinct things; grace may deſign all the bleſſings of grace which are in Chriſt, and come by him; and truth, the promiſes, and the fulfilment of them, which are all yea, and amen, in Chriſt: and when theſe are ſaid to be by him, the meaning is, not that they are by him, as an inſtrument, but as the author of them; for Chriſt is the author of the Goſpel, and the fulfiller of the promiſes, and the giver of *all* grace; which ſhews the ſuperior excellency of Chriſt to *Moſes*, and to all men, and even to angels alſo.

Ver. 18. *No man hath ſeen God at any time*, &c.] That is, God the father, whoſe voice was never heard, nor his ſhape ſeen by angels or men; for though *Jacob*, *Moſes*, the elders of *Iſrael*, *Manoah*, and his wife, are ſaid to ſee God, and *Job* expected to ſee him with his bodily eyes, and the ſaints will ſee him as he is, in which will lie their great happineſs; yet all ſeems to be underſtood of the ſecond perſon, who frequently appeared to the Old Teſtament-ſaints in an human form, and will be ſeen by the ſaints in heaven, in his real human nature; or of God in and by him: for the eſſence of God is inviſible, and not to be ſeen with the eyes of the body; nor indeed with the eyes of the underſtanding, ſo as to comprehend it; nor immediately, but thro', and by certain means: God is ſeen in the works of creation and providence, in the promiſes, and in his ordinances; but above all, in Chriſt the brightneſs of his glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon: this may chiefly intend here, man's not knowing any thing of God in a ſpiritual and ſaving way, but in and by Chriſt; ſince it follows, *the only-begotten Son*; the Word that was with God in the beginning. The *Jeruſalem Targum* on *Gen.* iii. 22. ſays almoſt the ſame of the Word of the Lord, as here, where it introduces him ſaying, "the Word of the Lord God "ſaid, lo, the man whom I created, the only one "in my world, even as I am, יחידי, *the only one*, "(or, as the word is ſometimes rendred, *the only-begotten*) in the higheſt heavens." And to the ſame purpoſe the *Targum* of *Jonathan*, and alſo *Jarchi*, on the ſame place. The *Syriac* verſion here renders it, *the only-begotten*, *God which is in the boſom of the father*; clearly ſhewing, that he is the only-begotten, as he is God: the phraſe, *which is in the boſom of the father*, denotes unity of nature, and eſſence, in the father and ſon; their diſtinct perſonality; ſtrong love, and affection between them; the ſon's acquaintance with his father's ſecrets; his being at that time, as the ſon of God, in the boſom of his father, when here on earth, as the ſon of man; and which qualified him to make the declaration of him: *he hath declared* him. The *Perſic* and *Ethiopic* verſions further add, *to us*; he has clearly and fully declared his nature, perfections, purpoſes, promiſes, counſels, covenant, word, and works; his thoughts and ſchemes of grace; his love and favour to the ſons of men; his mind and will concerning the ſalvation of his people: he has made, and delivered a fuller revelation of theſe things, than ever was yet; and to which no other revelation in the preſent ſtate of things will be added. Somewhat like this the *Jews*[n] ſay of the Meſſiah; "there is none that can declare the name of his "father, and that knows him; but this is hid from "the eyes of the multitude, until he comes, ויגידהו, "*and he ſhall declare him*." He is come, and has declared him: ſo *Philo* ſpeaks of the *Logos*, or Word, as the interpreter of the mind of God, and a teacher of men [o].

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[k] Zohar in Exod. fol. 45. 1.

[l] Ib. in Lev. fol. 28. 1. & in Num. fol. 69. 2. & 71. 2.

[m] Ib. fol. 40. 3. & in Num. fol. 61. 1.

[n] R. Moſes Haddarſan in Pſ. 85. 11. apud. Galatin. de Arcan. Cathol. ver. l. 8. c. 2.

Ver. 19. *And this is the record of John*, &c.] The Evangeliſt proceeds to give a large, and full account of the teſtimony *John* the *Baptiſt* bore to Chriſt, which he had hinted at before, and had ſignified was his work, and office, and the end of his being ſent. *When the Jews ſent prieſts and levites from Jeruſalem, to aſk him, who art thou?* The *Jews* that ſent were the great *Sanhedrim* that ſat at *Jeruſalem*, whoſe buſineſs it was to enquire into, examine, and try prophets, whether true or falſe [p]; and *John* appearing as a prophet, and being ſo eſteemed by the people, they depute meſſengers to him to interrogate him, and know who he was. The perſons ſent were very likely of their own body, ſince prieſts and levites were in that council. For it is ſaid [q], "they don't conſtitute, or appoint in the *Sanhedrim* but prieſts, levites, and *Iſraelites*, who have "their genealogies———and it is commanded, "that there ſhould be in the great *Sanhedrim* prieſts "and levites, as it is ſaid, *Deut.* xvii. 9. *and thou* "*ſhalt come unto the prieſts, the levites*, &c. and if "they are not to be found, though they are all *Iſraelites*, (not of the tribe of *Levi*) it is right." Such a *Sanhedrim* is a lawful one; but prieſts and levites, if ſuch could be found, that had proper qualifications, were to be admitted in the firſt place. A meſſage from ſo auguſt an aſſembly, at ſo great a diſtance, (for *Jordan* was a day's journey diſtant from *Jeruſalem* [r]; according to *Joſephus* [s], it was 210 furlongs, or 26 miles and a quarter) and by the hands of perſons of ſuch character and figure, was doing *John* a great deal of honour, and ſerves to make his teſtimony of Chriſt the more public and remarkable; and it alſo ſhows what a noiſe *John*'s miniſtry and baptiſm made among the *Jews*, that it even reached *Jeruſalem*, and the great council of the nation; and likewiſe the queſtion put to him, which by *John*'s anſwer ſeems to intimate as if it was thought he was the Meſſiah, ſhews the opinion that was entertained of him, and even the *Sanhedrim*, might not be without thoughts this way: and the queſtion they put by their meſſengers might not be, as ſome have thought, to enſnare *John*, nor out of diſreſpect to Jeſus, who, as yet, was not made manifeſt; but might be in good earneſt, having, from many circumſtances, reaſon to think there might be ſomething in the peoples opinion of him; ſince, tho' government was not wholly departed from *Judah*, yet they could not but obſerve it was going away a-pace, an *Idumean* having been upon the throne for ſome years, placed there by the *Roman* ſenate; and now the government was divided among his ſons by the ſame order; *Daniel*'s weeks they could not but ſee were juſt accompliſhing; and beſides, from the uncommon appearances *John* made, the auſterity of his life, the doctrine of remiſſion of ſins he preached, and the new ordinance of baptiſm he adminiſtred, they might be ready to conclude he was the perſon.

Ver. 20. *And he confeſſed, and denied not*, &c.] He freely, and without any reſerve, declared, and in the plaineſt and ſtrongeſt terms profeſſed to the meſſengers before all the people, that he was not the Meſſiah; nor did he retract his confeſſion, or draw in his words again, or drop any thing that looked doubtful or ſuſpicious; *but confeſſed, I am not the Chriſt*; he ſtood to it, and inſiſted on it, that he was not that illuſtrious perſon; nor had they any reaſon to entertain ſuch an opinion of him; nor would he have them do ſo; they might aſſure themſelves he was not Chriſt.

Ver. 21. *And they aſked him, what then? art thou Elias?* &c.] *Elijah*, the prophet; the *Tiſhbite*, as *Nonnus* in his paraphraſe expreſſes it; who was tranſlated, ſoul and body, to heaven: the *Jews* had a notion that that prophet would come in perſon a little before the coming of the Meſſiah; ſee the note on *Matt.* xvii. 10. wherefore theſe meſſengers enquire, that ſince he had ſo fully ſatisfied them that he was not the Meſſiah, that he would as ingenuouſly anſwer to this queſtion, if he was *Elias*, or no: *and he ſaith, I am not*; that is, he was not *Elijah* the prophet that lived in *Ahab*'s time, and was called the *Tiſhbite*; for *John*'s anſwer is to the intention of their queſtion, and their own meaning in it, and is no contradiction to what Chriſt ſays of him, *Matt.* xi. 14. that he was the *Elias* that was to come; for he was the perſon meant by him in *Mal.* iv. 5. tho' not in the ſenſe the *Jews* underſtood it; nor is it any contradiction to what the angel ſaid to *Zacharias*, *Luke* i. 17. for he does not ſay that *John* ſhould come in the body, but in the power and ſpirit of *Elias*; ſee the note on *Matt.* xi. 14. *Art thou that prophet? Jeremiah*, whom ſome of the *Jews* [t] have thought to be the prophet *Moſes* ſpoke of, in *Deut.* xviii. 15. and expected that he would appear about the times of the Meſſiah; ſee *Matt.* xvi. 14. or any one of the ancient prophets riſen from the dead, which they alſo had a notion of, *Luke* ix. 8, 19. or, as it may be rendered, *art thou a prophet?* for prophecy had long ceaſed with them: *and he anſwered, no*; he was not *Jeremiah*, nor any one of the old prophets riſen from the dead, nor a prophet in the ſenſe they meant: he was not like one of the prophets of the Old Teſtament; he was a prophet, and more than a prophet, as Chriſt ſays, *Matt.* xi. 9. yet not ſuch a prophet as they were; his propheſying lay not ſo much in predicting future events, as in pointing out Chriſt, and preaching the doctrine of the remiſſion of ſins by him.

Ver. 22. *Then ſaid they unto him, who art thou?* &c.] Since, as yet, he had only anſwered in negatives, who he was not, that he was not the Chriſt, nor *Elias*, nor that prophet; they deſire he would give them a poſitive account who he was: *that we may give anſwer to them that ſent us*; that their labour might not be in vain; that they might not come ſo far for nothing, without knowing who he was; and that they might be capable of giving an account of him to the *Sanhedrim*: *what ſayeſt thou of thyſelf?* they inſiſted on it, that he would openly, and honeſtly declare who he was, and what was his office and buſineſs; that from his own mouth, and not from the opinion and conjectures of others, they might repreſent him in a true light to thoſe who had deputed them on this errand.

Ver. 23. *And he ſaid, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderneſs*, &c.] Theſe words are cited by the other Evangeliſts, and applied to *John* the *Baptiſt*; but then they are only to be conſidered as their citation, and as an application of them to him by them: but here they are uſed by *John* himſelf, who both expreſſes them, and interprets them of himſelf; and in which he was undoubtedly under the infallible direction of the bleſſed Spirit; and which confirms the ſenſe of the Evangeliſts, who apply the words to him. The *Jews* give a different interpretation of the words; though one of their celebrated commentators [u] owns, that the comforts ſpoken of in the preceding verſes are what will be in the days of the king Meſſiah: one of them [w] intreprets, *the voice*, of the Holy Ghoſt; and ſo far it may be true, as *John* was filled with the Holy Ghoſt, and he ſpake by him in his miniſtry: and another [x], of the reſurrection of the dead, or the voice that will be heard then, which will be the voice of the archangel: tho' another of [y] them better explains it by, הם המבסרים, *they are they that bring glad tidings*, or good news; ſuch are Goſpel preachers; only it ſhould have been in the ſingular number: for the text ſpeaks but of one voice; of one perſon crying; and of *John* the *Baptiſt*, who brought the good news, and glad tidings, that the Meſſiah was coming, yea, that he was already come, and that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. The *Hebrew* writers generally underſtand the paſſage, of the return of the *Jews* from the *Babyloniſh* captivity, and of removing all obſtructions in their way to *Jeruſalem*; to which ſenſe the *Targum* on the place inclines, which paraphraſes it thus; "the voice of him that crieth in the "wilderneſs, prepare the way before the people "of the Lord, make in the plain, paths before the "congregation of our God:" but not the people of the Lord, but the Lord himſelf, and not the congregation of God, but God himſelf is intended; whoſe ways were to be prepared, and made plain, even the king Meſſiah; which was to be done, and was done by his forerunner *John* the *Baptiſt*, who, with great modeſty, expreſſes himſelf in the language of this ſcripture, as being a prophecy of him: he was a *voice*, but not a mere voice; nor was his miniſtry a mere voice of words, as the law was, but it was the ſweet voice of the Goſpel, proclaiming the coming of the Meſſiah; encouraging men to believe in him; calling them to evangelical repentance, and publiſhing remiſſion of ſins in the name of Chriſt, and pointing him out as the lamb of God, which takes away the ſin of the world: this voice was *crying*; it was not a ſtill ſmall voice, it was a very loud one; *John* lifted up his voice like a trumpet; he delivered himſelf with great zeal and fervency; and it was *in the wilderneſs* where this voice was heard, in the wilderneſs of *Judea*, as in *Matt.* iii. 1. where Jeſus came preaching: the *Ethiopic* verſion renders the words, *I am the voice of one that goes about in the wilderneſs*; that is, in the ſeveral towns and villages which were in the wilderneſs, to whom *John* went and preached the Goſpel: the *Perſic* verſion reads, *I am the voice and cry which cometh out of the wilderneſs*; referring to the place where he was before he entered on his public miniſtry, and from whence he came; for he was in the deſerts till the day of his ſhewing unto *Iſrael*, *Luke* i. 80. The words, this voice cried, were, *make ſtraight the way of the Lord*; he called upon perſons to reform their ways, and walk in the way of the Lord, to repent of their ſins, believe in Chriſt, and ſubmit to the ordinance of baptiſm: the *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *the way of God*; and ſuch was the perſon, he came to prepare the way for, even the Son of God, and who is truly and properly God, *as ſaid the prophet Eſaias*, in *Iſ.* xl. 3. ſee the note on *Matt.* iii. 3.

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[o] De nominum mutat, p. 1047.
[p] Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 1. §. 5.
[q] Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 2. §. 1, 2.
[r] Miſna Maaſer Sheni, c. 5. §. 2. Juchaſin, fol. 65. 2. Jarchi in Iſ. xxiv. 16.
[s] De Bello Jud. l. 5. c. 4.
[t] Baal Hatturim in Deut. xviii. 15. Tzeror Hammor. fol. 127. 4. & 143. 4. Siphre in Jarchi in Jer. i. 5.

Ver. 24. *And they which were ſent were of the Phariſees.*] Who were the ſtraiteſt ſect of religion among the *Jews*; were very zealous of the traditions of the elders, and profeſſed an expectation of the Meſſiah; and were famous in the nation for their knowledge and learning, as well as for their devotion and ſanctity; and many of them were in the *Sanhedrim*, as appears from *John* iii. 1. *Acts* xxiii. 6. ſee the note on *Matt.* iii. 7.

Ver. 25. *And they aſked him, and ſaid unto him*, &c.] They put a queſtion, by ſaying to him, *why baptizeſt thou then if thou be not that Chriſt, nor Elias, neither that prophet?* ſince he denied that he was the Meſſiah, or *Elias* that was to come before the Meſſiah, according to the expectation of the *Jews*, or that prophet, or a prophet, they demand by what authority he introduced a new rite and ordinance among them, which they had never been uſed to; for tho' there were divers waſhings or baptiſms among them, enjoined by the law of *Moſes* in certain caſes, and others which obtained by tradition, as the immerſion of themſelves after they had been at market, and of cups, pots, brazen veſſels, and tables, yet nothing of this kind that *John* adminiſtred: and as for the baptiſm of proſelytes, it ſeems to be of a later date than this, and had no manner of likeneſs to it. The ordinance *John* adminiſtred was ſuch, as they apprehended that no one ought to practiſe, unleſs he was the Meſſiah, or his fore-runner, or ſome eminent prophet; they inſiſt upon it therefore, that ſince he denied he was either of theſe, that he would ſhow his credentials, and what commiſſion he had from God to baptize; or they ſuggeſt he was liable to be called to an account by their *Sanhedrim*, and be condemned as a falſe prophet, or an innovator in religious affairs. From hence it appears, that the *Jews* expected that baptiſm would be adminiſtred in the times of the Meſſiah, and his fore-runner; but from whence they had this notion, it is not eaſy to ſay, whether from *Zech.* xiii. 1. as *Grotius*, or from *Ezek.* xxxvi. 25. as *Lightfoot*; nor do they ſpeak contemptibly of it, but rather conſider it as a very ſolemn affair, to be performed only by great perſonages: and this may teach modern ones to think and ſpeak more reſpectfully of this ordinance than they do, who have given themſelves great liberties, and have treated it with much contempt and virulence; calling it by the names of uncleanneſs, abomination, filthy water, and a devoting of perſons to ſatan [z]: likewiſe, it is clear from hence, that they expected that this ordinance would be firſt adminiſtred by ſome perſon of very great note, either ſome very famous prophet, as *Elias*, whom they looked for before the coming of the Meſſiah, or elſe the Meſſiah himſelf, and not by a common teacher, or any ordinary perſon; wherefore this rite, as performed by *John*, could have no likeneſs with any thing that was in common uſe among them: beſides, it was expreſly done in the name of the Meſſiah, *Acts* xix. 5. therefore they conclude he, or his fore-runner, muſt be come; and that *John* muſt be one, or other of them, otherwiſe, why did he adminiſter it? and it is alſo evident from hence, that no ſuch practice had obtained before among them, or they would not have been alarmed at it, as they were, nor would they have troubled themſelves to have ſent after *John*, and enquire of him who he was, that ſhould practiſe in this manner.

Ver. 26. *John anſwered them, ſaying, I baptize with water*, &c.] Or *in water*, ſo the *Vulgate Latin*, and all the *Oriental* verſions render it. The ſenſe of the anſwer is, that he indeed baptized perſons in water, which was all that he could do, or pretended to do; and he owned, that this was a new rite, and that he was the adminiſtrator of a new ordinance; but he ſuggeſts, as may be ſupplied from *Matt.* iii. 11. that there was one at hand, and even now among them, that ſhould baptize, and ſo it is read in one of *Stephens*'s copies here, in the Holy Ghoſt, and in fire; and it was by his authority, by a commiſſion he had received from him, that he baptized in water; and that his ſpeedy manifeſtation and appearance as the Meſſiah, which would be confirmed by his power of baptizing in the Holy Ghoſt, and by his miniſtry and miracles, would be a ſufficient vindication of his conduct, and ſupport him in his adminiſtration of water baptiſm: *but there ſtandeth one among you*; or *hath ſtood*, as the *Vulgate Latin* verſion renders it; referring, not to his being among them at twelve years of age, but a few days ago when he came to *John* to be baptized, and was baptized by him; for from ver. 29. 'tis plain, he was not now, or *to day*, as *Nonnus* expreſſes it, ſtanding in the midſt of them. The *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *there is one about to ſtand among you*, as he did the next day: though the meaning of the phraſe may only be, that he was then in being, and dwelt ſome where among them, and not that he was perſonally preſent at that time: *whom ye know not*; neither from whence he is, nor who he is, or what is his work and office; neither the dignity of his perſon, nor the end of his coming into the world, nor the nature of his buſineſs in it.

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[u] Kimchi in Iſ. xl. 1.

[w] Jarchi in Iſ. xl. 3.

[x] Zohar in Gen. fol. 70. 4.

[y] Aben Ezra in Iſ. ib.

[z] Vet. Nizzachon, p. 56, 62, 64, 70, 74, 77, 148, 191, 193.

Ver. 27. *He it is who coming after me,* &c.] Both into the world, and into the miniſtry of the word; for *John* was before Chriſt, in both theſe reſpects, though greatly behind him in others, and therefore he adds, is *preferred before me*: being not only of a more excellent nature, the Son of God, and of an higher extract, the Lord from heaven; but in an higher office, and having greater gifts, and the Spirit of God without meaſure on him; and alſo being more followed by the people; for *John* decreaſed, but he increaſed: or rather the words may be rendered, *who was before me*; being the eternal Son of God, whoſe goings forth were of old, from everlaſting; who was ſet up from everlaſting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was; the firſt-born, or firſt-bringer forth of every creature; and therefore muſt be before all things, which are created by him; ſee the note on ver. 15. *Whoſe ſhoes latchet I am not worthy to unlooſe*; which was one of the meaneſt ſervices done by a ſervant to his maſter; ſee the note on *Matt.* iii. 11.

Ver. 28. *Theſe things were done in Bethabara*, &c.] That is, this teſtimony was bore by *John*; and this diſcourſe paſſed between him and the *Phariſees*, at the place here mentioned; which was a paſſage over *Jordan*, where much people walked to go on the other ſide, *beyond Jordan*; and *where* alſo *John was baptizing*; which brought a great concourſe of people together: ſo that this witneſs was bore in a very publick manner, and before a large number; and it is to this that Chriſt refers, in ch. v. 33. for this was ſo well known, that there was no hiding or denying it: the place where this converſation paſſed, is in the *Vulgate Latin*, and all the *Eaſtern* verſions, and in the *Alexandrian* copy, and many other copies, and ſo in *Nonnus*, called *Bethany*; but as *De Dieu* obſerves, *Bethany* was not beyond *Jordan*, nor in the wilderneſs of *Judea*, but near to *Jeruſalem*, about two miles diſtant from it; nor was it ſituated by waters convenient for baptizing, unleſs they went to the brook *Cedron*, which indeed was not far from it; but it is clear from the hiſtory, that *John* was not ſo near *Jeruſalem*; nor did that brook which might be forded over, continues the ſame learned author, ſeem fit and proper enough, *mergendis baptizandorum corporibus*, *for plunging the bodies of thoſe that were to be baptized*; wherefore he rightly concludes, that either this reading is an error, or there was another *Bethany* near *Jordan*: *Bethabara* ſignifies *the houſe of paſſage*, and is thought to be the place where the *Iſraelites* paſſed over *Jordan*, to go into the land of *Canaan*, *Joſh.* iii. 16, 17. And which, as it muſt be a very convenient place for the adminiſtration of baptiſm by immerſion, uſed by *John*, ſo it was very ſignificant of the uſe of this ordinance; which is as it were, the paſſage, or entrance, into the Goſpel church-ſtate; for perſons ought firſt to be baptized, and then be admitted into a Goſpel church, according to the example of the primitive chriſtians, *Acts* ii. 41. but whether there was a place of this name, where the *Iſraelites* went over *Jordan*, is not certain; and if there was, it does not ſeem ſo likely to be the place here deſigned, ſince that was right over-againſt *Jericho*; whereas this ſeems to be rather farther off, and over-againſt *Galilee*: there were ſeveral paſſages of *Jordan*, *Judges* xii. 5, 6. There was a bridge over it, between the lake of *Samochon* and *Genneſaret*, now called *Jacob*'s bridge, where *Jacob* is ſuppoſed to have wreſtled with the angel, and to have met with his brother *Eſau*; and there was another over it at *Chammath*, near *Tiberias*, and in other places: and it might be at one of theſe paſſages, by which they went over into *Galilee*, that *John* pitched upon to continue preaching and baptizing at; partly becauſe of the number of people that went over, to whom he had the opportunity of preaching; and partly, for the ſake of baptizing thoſe who became proper ſubjects of that ordinance, through his miniſtry. Some have thought, that this place is the ſame with *Beth-barah*, in *Judges* vii. 24. which was either in the tribe of *Ephraim* or of *Manaſſeh*, and not far from the parts where this place muſt be, but was on this ſide *Jordan*; and ſo *Beza* ſays the words ſhould be rendered; and thoſe who came to *John* at *Jordan*, are not ſaid to paſs over that river: others are of opinion, that *Bethabara*, is the ſame with *Betharabah*, *Joſh.* xv. 6, 61. ſince this is called *Bethabara* by the *Septuagint*, in *Joſh.* xviii. 22. However, be it what place ſoever, and whereſoever, it was no doubt very proper for *John*'s purpoſe; and therefore he choſe it, and for a while continued at it: and here, ſays *Jerom*[a], "to this day many of the brethren, that is, "of the number of believers, deſiring there to be "born again, are baptized in the vital ſtream;" ſuch veneration had they for the place where *John* firſt baptized: *Origen* ſays[b], that in his time it was ſaid, that *Bethabara* was ſhewed by the banks of *Jordan*, where they report *John* baptized.

Ver. 29. *The next day John ſeeth Jeſus coming unto him*, &c.] Not to be baptized, for he had been baptized before by him. This ſeems to have been after Chriſt had been forty days in the wilderneſs, from whence he now returned, and came to attend on *John*'s miniſtry; both to do honour to him, and that he might be made manifeſt by him; and this was the day after *John* had bore ſuch a teſtimony concerning him, to the prieſts and *Levites*; and which Chriſt the omniſcient God, knew full well, and therefore came at this ſeaſon, when the minds of the people were prepared by *John*'s teſtimony, to expect and receive him: one part of the work of *Elias*, which the *Jews* aſſign unto him, and the preciſe time of his doing it, exactly agree with this account of *John* the *Baptiſt*; they ſay [c], that his work is "to bring to them (the *Iſraelites*) the "good news of the coming of the Redeemer; and "this ſhall be, יום אחד, *one day*, before the com-"ing of the Meſſiah; and this is that which is "written, *behold I will ſend you Elijah the prophet*, "*before the coming of the great and dreadful day of* "*the Lord*, *Mal.* iv. 5." For *John*, the day before Chriſt came to him, had ſignified to the prieſts and *Levites*, that the Meſſiah was already come; and now on the day following, ſeeing him, pointed as with his finger to him, *and ſaith*, *behold the Lamb of God*, *which taketh away the ſin of the world*: he calls him a *lamb*, either with reſpect to any lamb in common, for his harmleſneſs and innocence; for his meekneſs and humility; for his patience; and for his uſefulneſs, both for food and cloathing, in a ſpiritual ſenſe; as well as for his being to be a ſacrifice for the ſins of his people: or elſe with reſpect to the lambs that were offered in ſacrifice, under the legal diſpenſation; and that either to the paſſover lamb, or rather to the lambs of the daily ſacrifice, that were offered morning and evening; ſince the account of them beſt agrees with what is ſaid of this lamb of God, who was ſlain in type, in the morning of the world, or from the foundation of the world; and actually in the evening of the world, or in the end of it; and who has a continued virtue to take away the ſins of his people, from the beginning, to the end of the world; and their ſins, both of the day and night, or which are committed every day: for as they are daily committed, there is need of the daily application of the blood and ſacrifice of Chriſt, to remove them; or of continual looking unto him by faith, whoſe blood has a continual virtue, to cleanſe from all ſin: the *Jewiſh* doctors ſay [d], that "the morning daily ſacrifice, "made atonement for the iniquities done in the "night; and the evening ſacrifice made atonement "for the iniquities that were by day:" and in various things they were typical of Chriſt, as that they were lambs of the firſt year, which may denote the weakneſs of the human nature of Chriſt, which had all the ſinleſs infirmities of it; they were alſo without ſpot, ſignifying the purity of Chriſt's human nature, who was holy and harmleſs, a lamb without ſpot and blemiſh; theſe were offered as a ſacrifice, and for the children of *Iſrael* only, as Chriſt has given himſelf an offering and a ſacrifice to God, both in ſoul and body, for the ſins of the myſtical *Iſrael* of God, the *Iſrael* whom God has choſen for himſelf, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*; for Chriſt is the propitiation for the ſins of both: and theſe were offered daily, morning and evening; and though Chriſt was but once offered, otherwiſe he muſt have often ſuffered; yet as he has by one offering put away ſin for ever, ſo there is a perpetual virtue in his ſacrifice to take it away, and there is a conſtant application of it for that purpoſe; to which may be added, that theſe lambs were offered with fine flour, oil and wine, for a ſweet ſavour to the Lord; denoting the acceptableneſs of the ſacrifice of Chriſt to his Father, to whom it is for a ſweet ſmelling ſavour, *Eph.* v. 2. And Chriſt is ſtiled the lamb *of God*, in alluſion to the ſame, whom the *Cabaliſtic Jews* [e] call the ſecret of the myſtery, and, כבשי דהמנא, *the lambs of God*; becauſe God has a ſpecial property in him; he is his own Son; and becauſe he is of his providing and appointing, as a ſacrifice for ſin, and is acceptable to him as ſuch; and to diſtinguiſh him from all other lambs; and to give him the preference, ſince he does that which they could not do, *taketh away the ſin of the world*: by the *ſin of the world*, is not meant the ſin, or ſins of every individual perſon in the world; for ſome die in their ſins, and their ſins go before-hand to judgment, and they go into everlaſting puniſhment for them; which could not be, if Chriſt took them away: rather, the ſin which is common to the whole world, namely, original ſin; but then it muſt be obſerved, that this is not the only ſin Chriſt takes away; for he alſo takes away actual ſins; and the *Arabic* and *Ethiopic* verſions read in the plural, *the ſins of the world*; and alſo that this he takes away, only with reſpect to the elect; wherefore they are the perſons intended by the world, as in *John* vi. 33, 51. whoſe ſin, or ſins, Chriſt takes away: and a peculiar regard ſeems to be had to the elect among the *Gentiles*, who are called the world, in diſtinction from the *Jews*, as in *John* iii. 16. 1 *John* ii. 2. and the rather, ſince the lambs of the daily ſacrifice, to which the alluſion is, were only offered for the ſins of the *Jews*: but *John* here ſignifies, that the Lamb of God he pointed at, and which was the antitype of theſe lambs, not only took away the ſins of God's people among the *Jews*, but the ſins of ſuch of them alſo as were among the *Gentiles*; and this ſeems to me to be the true ſenſe of the paſſage. The phraſe *taking away ſin*, ſignifies a taking it up, as Chriſt did; he took it voluntarily upon himſelf, and became reſponſible to divine juſtice for it; and alſo a bearing and carrying it, for taking it upon himſelf, he bore it in his own body on the tree, and carried it away, as the ſcape-goat did under the law; and ſo likewiſe a taking it quite away: Chriſt has removed it as far as the eaſt is from the weſt, out of ſight, ſo as never to be ſeen any more; he has deſtroyed, aboliſhed, and made an utter end of it: and this is expreſſed in the preſent tenſe, *taketh away*; to denote the continued virtue of Chriſt's ſacrifice to take away ſin, and the conſtant efficacy of his blood to cleanſe from it, and the daily application of it to the conſciences of his people; and which is owing to the dignity of his perſon, as the Son of God; and to his continual and powerful mediation and interceſſion: this muſt be a great relief to minds afflicted with the continual ebullitions of ſin, which is taken away by the Lamb of God, as faſt as it riſes; and who, for that purpoſe, are called to *behold*, and wonder at, the love and grace of Chriſt, in taking up, bearing, and taking away ſin; and to look to him by faith continually, for everlaſting ſalvation; and love him, and give him the honour of it, and glorify him for it.

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[a] De Locis Hebraicis, fol. 89. L.

[b] Comment. in Joannem, Tom. 8. p. 131.

Ver. 30. *This is he of whom it is ſaid*, &c.] Either the day before, as in ver. 27. or ſome time before that, ver. 15. when he firſt began to baptize, even before Chriſt came to be baptized by him, and before he perſonally knew him; ſee *Matt.* iii. 11, 13. *After me cometh a man*; not a mere man, but the man God's fellow: and this is ſaid, not becauſe he was now a grown man, or to ſhew the truth of his human nature; but ſeems to be a common *Hebraiſm*, and is all one as if it had been ſaid, *after me cometh one*, or a certain perſon: for the ſenſe of this phraſe, and what follows, ſee the note on ver. 15.

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[c] R. Abraham ben David in Miſn. Ediot, c. 8. §. 7.

[d] R. Menachem, fol. 115, apud Ainſworth, in Exod. xxix. 39.

[e] Raya Mehimna, in Zohar in Lev. fol. 33. 2.

Ver. 31. *And I knew him not*, &c.] Ομμασιν, *by ſight*, as *Nonnus* paraphraſes it; perſonally he had never ſeen him, nor had had any converſation and familiarity with him; for though they were related to each other, yet lived at ſuch a diſtance, as not to know one another, or have a correſpondence with each other: *John* was in the deſerts, until the day of his ſhewing unto *Iſrael*; and Chriſt dwelt with his parents at *Nazareth*, in a very mean and obſcure manner, till he came from thence to *Jordan* to *John*, to be baptized by him; and which was the firſt interview they had: and this was ſo ordered by providence, as alſo this is ſaid by *John*, leſt it ſhould be thought, that the teſtimony he bore to Jeſus, and the high commendation he gave of him, aroſe from the relation between them; or from a confederacy and compact they had entered into: *but that he ſhould be made manifeſt to Iſrael*; who had been for many years hid in *Galilee*, an obſcure part of the world: and though he had been known to *Joſeph* and *Mary*, and to *Zacharias* and *Elizabeth*, and to *Simeon* and *Anna*; yet he was not made manifeſt to the people of *Iſrael* in common; nor did they know that the Meſſiah was come: but that he might be known, *therefore am I come baptizing with water*; or *in water*, as before: for by adminiſtring this new ordinance, the people were naturally put upon enquiry after the Meſſiah, whether come, and where he was, ſince ſuch a new rite was introduced; and beſides, *John* when he baptized any, he exhorted them to believe on him, which ſhould come after him, that is, on Chriſt Jeſus; and moreover, by Chriſt's coming to his baptiſm, he came to have a perſonal knowledge of him himſelf, and ſo was capable of pointing him out, and making him manifeſt to others, as he did.

Ver. 32. *And John bare record*, &c.] The ſame day that he ſaid the above things, and at the ſame time: *ſaying, I ſaw the Spirit*; that is, of God, as is ſaid in *Matt*. iii. 16. and which *Nonnus* here expreſſes; and the *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *the Holy Ghoſt: deſcending from heaven like a dove*; at the time of his baptiſm; ſee the note on *Matt*. iii. 16. *And it abode upon him*; for ſome time; ſo long as that *John* had a full ſight of it, and ſo was capable of giving a perfect account of it, and bearing a certain and diſtinct teſtimony to it.

Ver. 33. *And I knew him not*, &c.] That is, before he came to be baptized by him; when it was ſecretly ſuggeſted to him, who he was, and the following ſignal was given him, to confirm him in it: *but he that ſent me to baptize with water*; or *in water*; that is God; for *John*'s miſſion was from God, as in ver. 6. and his baptiſm from heaven; he had a divine warrant and commiſſion for what he did: *the ſame ſaid unto me*; either by an articulate voice, or by a divine impulſe on his mind, or by the revelation of the Spirit: *upon whom thou ſhalt ſee the Spirit deſcending and remaining on him, the ſame is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghoſt*; that is, the Meſſiah; ſee the notes on *Matt*. iii. 11, 16.

Ver. 34. *And I ſaw*, &c.] The Spirit deſcending from heaven as a dove, and lighting upon Jeſus, and remaining ſome time on him; this he ſaw with his bodily eyes: *and bore record*; at the ſame time, before all the people that were with him, when he baptized Jeſus: *that this is the Son of God*; the natural, eſſential, and eternal Son of God; who being ſent in the fulneſs of time, had aſſumed an human nature, in which he became ſubject to all ordinances, and had the Spirit without meaſure beſtowed on him; and which was an evidence who he was, and of what he came about.

Ver. 35. *Again, the next day after*, &c.] The third day from the prieſts and *Levites* having been with *John*, to know who he was. The *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions, leave out the word *again: John ſtood, and two of his diſciples*; one of theſe was *Andrew*, *Simon Peter*'s brother, as appears from ver. 40. and very likely the other was the Evangeliſt *John*, the writer of this Goſpel, who always chuſes to conceal himſelf. *John* the *Baptiſt* ſtood, and theſe diſciples by him, in ſome certain place near *Jordan*, where he was preaching and baptizing.

Ver. 36. *And looking upon Jeſus as he walked*, &c.] Either by them; or as he was going from them to his lodgings; it being toward the cloſe of the day, when *John* had finiſhed his work for that day, and the people were departing home: *John* fixed his eyes intently on Chriſt, with great pleaſure and delight, and pointing at him, *he ſaith, behold the Lamb of God*; as in ver. 29. where 'tis added, *which taketh away the ſin of the world*; and which the *Ethiopic* verſion ſubjoins here.

Ver. 37. *And the two diſciples heard him ſpeak*, &c.] The above words, and took notice of them; faith in Chriſt came by hearing them; they reached their hearts, and they found their affections, and the deſires of their ſouls, to be after Chriſt: *and they followed Jeſus*; left their maſter, and went after him, in order to get ſome acquaintance with him, and receive ſome inſtructions from him.

Ver. 38. *Then Jeſus turned, and ſaw them following*, &c.] That is, *him*, as the *Vulgate Latin*, and all the *Oriental* verſions add: he ſaw by their walk, and by their countenances, that they were following him; and which he knew before he turned himſelf: he knew what *John* had ſaid, and what an effect it had upon theſe diſciples, and what was working in their hearts, and how deſirous they were of coming up to him, and converſing with him; and therefore he turned himſelf, that they might have an opportunity of ſpeaking to him; or rather, in order to ſpeak to them firſt, as he did: *and ſaith unto them, what ſeek ye?* This he ſaid, not as ignorant of whom, and what they were ſeeking, and deſirous; but to encourage them to ſpeak to him, which through fear and baſhfulneſs, they might be backward to; and therefore, he who will not break the bruiſed reed, nor quench the ſmoaking flax, but cheriſhes and encourages the firſt motions of grace, begins firſt with them, and treats them in a free and familiar manner; thereby to animate and engage them to uſe freedom with him, and which end was anſwered: *they ſaid unto him, Rabbi*; a title which now began to be in much uſe with the *Jews*, and which they gave to their celebrated doctors; and theſe diſciples of *John*, obſerving how magnificently their maſter ſpoke of Jeſus, in great reverence to him, addreſſed him under this character; ſee the note on *Matt*. xxiii. 7. *which is to ſay, being interpreted, maſter*. Theſe are the words of the Evangeliſt, interpreting the word *Rabbi*, and not of the diſciples, and are left out in the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions, who for *Rabbi*, read *our maſter*, or our *Rabbi*; being ſaid by both the diſciples, or by one in the name of both, putting the following queſtion: *where dwelleſt thou?* ſignifying, that that was not a proper place in the publick way, to enter into a converſation with him, and acquaint him with what they were deſirous of; but ſhould be glad to know where he lodged, that they might wait upon him there, either then, or on the morrow, or at any convenient time.

Ver. 39. *He ſaith unto them, come and ſee,* &c.] He gave them an invitation, to go along with him directly, and ſee with their own eyes, where he dwelt, and there and then converſe with him, and at any other time; to which they had a hearty welcome: *they came and ſaw where he dwelt*; they accepted of the invitation, and went along with him immediately, and ſaw, and took notice of the place where he had lodgings, that they might know it, and find it another time; which Dr. *Lightfoot* conjectures, was at *Capernaum*, which is very probable; ſince that was his own city, where he paid tribute, where he frequently reſorted, and was on the banks of *Jordan*, near the lake of *Geneſaret*; and theſe diſciples were *Galileans*: *and abode with him that day*; the remaining part of the day, which they ſpent in delightful converſation with him; by which they knew that he was the Meſſiah; at leaſt they were better inſtructed in this matter, and more confirmed in it. The *Arabic* verſion renders it, *they remained with him that his own day*; and Dr. *Lightfoot* thinks the next day is meant, and that it was the ſabbath-day, which they kept with him in private devotion and conference: *for it was about the tenth hour*; which, according to the *Roman* way of reckoning, muſt be ten o'clock in the morning; ſo that there was a conſiderable part of the day before them; but according to the *Jewiſh* way of reckoning, who reckon twelve hours to a day, it muſt be four o'clock in the afternoon, when there were but two hours to night: and this being about the time when the lamb of the daily ſacrifice of the evening was offered up, very ſeaſonably did *John* point unto them at this time, Chriſt the Lamb of God, the antitype of that ſacrifice; for the daily evening ſacrifice was ſlain at eight and a half, and was offered at nine and a half [f], or between the ninth and tenth hours of the day. The *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *they remained with him that day unto the tenth hour*.

Ver. 40. *One of the two which heard John ſpeak,* &c.] The above things, concerning Jeſus being the Lamb of God: *and followed him*; that is, *Jeſus*, as the *Syriac* and *Arabic* verſions read; and the *Perſic* verſion, *Chriſt*; and the *Ethiopic* verſion, *the Lord Jeſus*; for not *John*, but Jeſus they followed: *was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother*; ſee *Matt.* iii. 18. the other, as before obſerved, might be the writer of this Goſpel.

Ver. 41. *He firſt findeth his own brother Simon,* &c.] Either before the other diſciple, or before he found any other perſon: after he and the other diſciple departed from Chriſt, being affected with the grace beſtowed upon him, and his heart warm with the converſation he had had with him, and tranſported with joy at finding the Meſſiah, goes in all haſte in ſearch of his relations, friends, and acquaintance, to communicate what he had ſeen and heard, in order to bring them to the knowledge of the ſame; for ſuch is the nature of grace, 'tis very communicative, and thoſe that have it, are very deſirous that all others ſhould be partakers of it: and the firſt perſon he lighted on was *Simon*, who was afterwards called *Peter*, who was his own brother; not a brother-in-law, but his own brother, by father and mother's ſide, and ſo dear unto him by the ties of nature and blood: *and ſaith unto him*; with all eagerneſs imaginable, and in a rapture of joy: *we have found the Meſſias*; I, and a fellow diſciple have had the Meſſiah, ſo often foretold by the prophets, and ſo long expected by our fathers, pointed out to us; and we have followed him, and have had converſation with him, and are well aſſured he is that illuſtrious perſon: *which is, being interpreted, the Chriſt*; which, as in ver. 38. are the words of the Evangeliſt, and not *Andrew*, and are therefore left out in the *Syriac* verſion; the word Meſſiah needing no interpretation in that language; and which was the language in which *Andrew* ſpoke. This name *Meſſiah*, was well known among the *Jews*, for that great perſon who was promiſed, and they expected would come, as a Saviour and Redeemer; though it is not very often mentioned in the books of the Old Teſtament, chiefly in the following places, *Pſal.* ii. 2. xviii. 50. lxxxix. 39, 51. *Dan.* ix. 25, 26. but is very much uſed in the *Chaldee* paraphraſes: *Elias Levita* [g] ſays, he found it in more than fifty verſes; and *Buxtorf* [h] has added others to them, and the word appears in *ſeventy-one* places, which he takes notice of, and are worthy of regard; for they ſhew the ſenſe of the ancient ſynagogue, concerning the paſſages of the Old Teſtament, reſpecting the Meſſiah: this *Hebrew* word, is interpreted by the *Greek* word, *Chriſt*; and both ſignify *anointed*, and well agree with the perſon to whom they belong, to which there is an alluſion in *Cant.* i. 3. *thy name is as ointment poured forth*: he is ſo called, becauſe he was anointed from everlaſting, to be prophet, prieſt, and king; ſee *Pſal.* ii. 6. and lxxxix. 20. *Prov.* viii. 22, 23. and he was anointed as man, with the oil of gladneſs, with the graces of the Spirit, without meaſure, *Pſal.* xlv. 7. *Acts* x. 38. And it is from him the ſaints receive the anointing, or grace in meaſure; and are from him called chriſtians, and are really anointed ones; ſee 1 *John* ii. 27. *Acts* xi. 25. 2 *Cor.* i. 21. hence it is a name precious to the ſaints, and ſavoury to them. Theſe words were delivered by *Andrew*, in a very exulting ſtrain, expreſſing great joy; as indeed what can be greater joy to a ſenſible ſoul, than to find Chriſt? which in a ſpiritual ſenſe, is to have a clear ſight of him by faith, to go unto him, and lay hold on him, as the only Saviour and Redeemer: who is to be found in the ſcriptures of truth, which teſtify of him; in the promiſes of grace, which are full of him; and in the Goſpel, of which he is the ſum and ſubſtance; and in the ordinances of it, where he ſhows himſelf; for he is not to be found by the light of nature, or by carnal reaſon, nor by the law of *Moſes*, but by means of the Goſpel, and the Spirit of God attending that, as a ſpirit of wiſdom and revelation, in the knowledge of him: and happy are thoſe ſouls that find Chriſt under his direction; for they find life, ſpiritual and eternal in him; a juſtifying righteouſneſs; free and full pardon of their ſins; ſpiritual food for their ſouls; and peace, comfort, joy, and reſt, and eternal glory: wherefore this muſt needs be matter of joy unto them, ſince ſuch a finding is a rich one, a pearl of great price, riches durable and unſearchable; and which a man that has found, would not part with for all the world; but parts with all he has for it; and is what can never be loſt again; and particularly to two ſorts of perſons, finding Chriſt, muſt give a peculiar pleaſure, and an inexpreſſible joy; to ſuch as are under a ſenſe of ſin and damnation, and to ſuch who have been under deſertion. The phraſe of *finding* a perſon, twice uſed in this text, and hereafter in ſome following verſes, is frequent in *Talmudic* and *Rabbinic* writings; as "he went, "אשכחיה לרב, *and found him with Rab* [i]."

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[f] Miſn. Peſachim, c. 5. §. 1.

[g] Prefat. ad Methurgeman, & in voce משח.

[h] Lexicon Talmud. p. 1268.

[i] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 108. 1. Zohar in Lev. fol. 15. 3.

Ver. 42. *And he brought him to Jeſus*, &c.] That is, *Andrew* brought his brother *Simon* to *Jeſus*; he perſuaded him to go along with him, and ſhewed him where he was; which diſcovered great zeal for Chriſt, being deſirous of gaining ſouls unto him; and great affection to his brother, being heartily concerned that he might know Chriſt, as well as he; nor did he chuſe that he ſhould take up with the bare account that he gave of him, but would have him go to him himſelf, that he might be perſonally acquainted with him, and inſtructed by him: and this alſo ſhows the readineſs and willingneſs of *Simon*, to ſee and hear Chriſt himſelf, and not ſit down contented with the bare relation his brother gave: no doubt he found his heart ſtirred up within him, and the deſires of his ſoul going after Chriſt; and therefore he at once roſe up and went with *Andrew* to him; and thus one perſon may be the means of bringing another to Chriſt: and it may be obſerved, that *Peter* was not the firſt of the Apoſtles that was called by Chriſt, or firſt knew him; *Andrew* was before him, and the means of bringing him into an acquaintance with him; had it been the reverſe, the *Papiſts* would have improved it in favour of *Peter*, as the prince of the Apoſtles: this clauſe is omitted in the *Perſic* verſion. *And when Jeſus beheld him*; as he was coming, or come to him: he had beheld him before in the glaſs of his Father's purpoſes and decrees; he had viewed him in his blood, and ſaid unto him live; and he now looked upon him with a look of love, of complacency, and delight: *he ſaid, thou art Simon the ſon of Jona*; thy name is *Simon*, and thy father's name is *Jona*: he knew both their names, tho' he might have never ſeen their faces, nor heard of them: this he ſaid to give *Simon* a teſtimony of his omniſcience; and which, no doubt, muſt ſtrike him at once. *Simon*, or *Simeon*, was a common name among the *Jews*, being the name of one of the twelve patriarchs; ſee the note on *Matt.* x. 2. and ſo likewiſe was *Jona*, being the name of a prophet of theirs; ſee the note on *Matt.* xvi. 17. and inaſmuch as the prophet *Jonah* was of *Geth Hephar* in *Zebulon*, which was in *Galilee*; ſee the note on *John* vii. 52. this might be a common name among the *Galileans*; ſo that there ſeems no reaſon why it ſhould be thought to be the ſame with *John*, as the *Ethiopic* verſion reads it, and by way of interrogation, *art thou not Simon the ſon of John? Thou ſhalt be called Cephas, which is, by interpretation, a ſtone*; or *Peter*, as it ſhould rather be rendered; and as it is in the *Vulgate Latin* and *Ethiopic* verſions: and as *Cepha*, or *Cephas*, in the *Syriac* and *Chaldee* languages ſignifies a ſtone, or rock [k], ſo does *Peter* in *Greek*: hence, the *Syriac* verſion here gives no interpretation of the word. Chriſt not only calls *Simon* by his preſent name, at firſt ſight of him, but tells him what his future name ſhould be; and which imports, not only that he ſhould be a lively ſtone in the ſpiritual building, the church, but ſhould have a conſiderable hand in that work, and abide firm and ſtedfaſt to Chriſt, and his intereſt, notwithſtanding his fall; and continue conſtant and immoveable until death, as he did. The *Jews* alſo, in their writings, call him *Simeon Kepha* [l].

Ver. 43. *The day following*, &c.] Not the day after *John* had pointed out Chriſt, as the lamb of God, to two of his diſciples; but the day after *Simon* had been with him, being brought by *Andrew*: *Jeſus would go forth into Galilee*; from whence he came to *Jordan*, to *John*, to be baptized by him; and which being done, and his temptations in the wilderneſs over, it was his will, reſolution, and determination, to return to *Galilee*, the place of his education and converſation, till this time; and therefore choſe to begin his miniſtry, and miracles, there, both to give honour to it, and to fulfil a prophecy in *Iſ.* ix. 1, 2. and beſides this, he had doubtleſs another end in going thither; which was to call ſome other diſciples that dwelt there: *and findeth Philip*; as he was going to *Galilee*, or rather when in it; not by hap or chance; but knowing where he was, as the ſhepherd and biſhop of ſouls, looked him up and found him out, and called him by his grace, and to be a diſciple of his; ſee the note on *Matt.* x. 3. *and ſaith unto him, follow me*; leave thy friends, thy calling, and buſineſs, and become a diſciple of mine: and ſuch power went along with theſe words, that he at once left all, and followed Chriſt; as the other diſciples, *Peter*, and *Andrew*, *James*, and *John*, and *Matthew* did, as is recorded of them, tho' not of this; but the following hiſtory makes it appear he did.

Ver. 44. *Now Philip was of Bethſaida*, &c.] A town on the lake of *Geneſareth*, afterwards made a city by *Philip* the *Tetrarch*, and called *Julias*, after the name of *Cæſar*'s daughter [m]: it was a fiſhing town, and had its name from thence; and the diſciples that were of it, were of this buſineſs: *the city of Andrew and Peter*; or *Simon*, as read the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions: three apoſtles were called out of this place, as mean, and wicked, as it was; ſee *Matt.* xi. 21. which was no ſmall honour to it: it is a ſaying of the *Jews* [n], that "a man's place (his native place) does not honour him, but a man honours his place." This was the caſe here.

Ver. 45. *Philip findeth Nathanael*, &c.] Who was of *Cana* of *Galilee*, *John* xxi. 2. and where, 'tis very likely, *Philip* found him; ſince we quickly read of Jeſus, and his diſciples being there. This man is thought, by ſome, to be the ſame with *Bartholomew*; and ſo he is called *Bartholomew*, in a *Syriac* dictionary [o]; and the rather, ſince he and *Philip* are always mentioned together in the account of the apoſtles, *Matt.* x. 3. *Mark* iii. 18. *Luke* vi. 14. And certain it is, from the above-mentioned place, that *Nathanael* was among the apoſtles after our Lord's reſurrection; and it is highly probable was one of them: his name might be *Nathanael bar Tholmai*, the ſon of *Tholmai*, *Ptolomy*, or *Tholomew*. It is the ſame name with *Nethaneel*, and which is read *Nathanael*, as here, in 1 *Eſdras* ix. 22. and by the *Septuagint* on 1 *Chron.* ii. 14. and xv. 24. and xxiv. 6. and xxvi. 4. 2 *Chron.* xxxv. 9. *Ezra* x. 22. *Neh.* xii. 36. and ſignifies one given of God; and is the ſame with *Theodore* in *Greek*, and *Adeodatus* in *Latin*; a doctor of this name, *R. Nathaniel*, is mentioned in the *Jewiſh* writings [p]: *and ſaith unto him, we have found him of whom Moſes, in the law, and the prophets, did write.* He does not ſay, that he, and *Andrew*, and *Simon*, had found the Meſſiah; tho' he deſigns him by this circumlocution; *Nathanael* being, as is generally thought, a perſon well verſed in the law, and the prophets, and ſo would at once know who *Philip* meant: for *Moſes*, in the law, or *Pentateuch*, in the five books written by him, frequently ſpeaks of the Meſſiah as the ſeed of the woman, that ſhould break the ſerpent's head; as the ſeed of *Abraham*, in whom all nations ſhould be bleſſed; and as the *Shiloh* to whom the gathering of the people ſhould be; and as the great prophet, like to himſelf, God would raiſe up among the children of *Iſrael*, to whom they were to hearken: and as for the prophets, they wrote of his birth of a virgin; of the place of his birth, *Bethlehem*; of his ſufferings, and the glory that ſhould follow; of his reſurrection from the dead, his aſcenſion to heaven, and ſeſſion at the right hand of God; and of many things relating to his perſon, and office, and work. And *Philip* having given this general account of him, proceeds to name him particularly; and affirms him to be *Jeſus of Nazareth, the ſon of Joſeph*; that his name was Jeſus, which ſignifies a ſaviour; and anſwers to the promiſes, and prophecies, and character of him in the Old Teſtament; that he was of *Nazareth*, a place not above three hours walk from *Cana*, as *Adrichomius* ſays, where *Philip* and *Nathanael* were: *Nazareth* was the place where Chriſt had lived almoſt all his days hitherto, and therefore is ſaid to be of it; tho' *Bethlehem* was the place of his birth, which *Philip* might not as yet know; as *Capernaum* afterwards was his city, or the more uſual place of his reſidence: and that he was the ſon of *Joſeph*; this *Philip* ſays, according to the common opinion of people; for he was ſuppoſed to be the ſon of *Joſeph*, he having married his mother *Mary*.

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[k] Vid. Targum in Pſ. xl. 3. & Prov. xvii. 8. T. Bab. Ceritot, fol. 6. 1. & Gloſſ. in ib. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 63. 2.

[l] Toldos Jeſu, p. 20, 21, 22, 23.

[m] Joſeph. Antiq. l. 18. c. 3.

[n] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 21, 2.

[o] Bar Bahlul apud Caſtell. Lex. Polyglott. col. 2437.

[p] Pirke Eliezer, c. 48.

Ver. 46. *And Nathanael ſaid unto him*, &c.] Taking notice of, and laying hold on what *Philip* ſaid, that he was of *Nazareth*, which at once ſtumbled, and prejudiced him againſt Jeſus being the Meſſiah; knowing very well that *Bethlehem* was to be the place of his birth: *can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?* The whole country of *Galilee* was had in contempt with the *Jews*; but *Nazareth* was ſo mean a place, that it ſeems it was even deſpiſed by its neighbours, by the *Galileans* themſelves; for *Nathanael* was a *Galilean*, that ſaid theſe words. It was ſo miſerable a place that he could hardly think that any ſort of good thing, even any worldy good thing, could come from thence; and it was ſo wicked, as appears from their murderous deſigns upon our Lord, that he thought no good man could ariſe from hence; and ſtill leſs, any prophet, any perſon of great note; and ſtill leaſt of all, that that good thing, or perſon, the Meſſiah, ſhould ſpring from it: ſo that his objection, and prejudice, proceeded not only upon the oracle in *Micah* v. 2. which points out *Bethlehem* as the birth-place of the Meſſiah; but upon the wickedneſs, and meanneſs, and obſcurity of *Nazareth*. *Philip ſaith unto him, come and ſee*; who tho' he might not be maſter of this point, and knew not how to ſolve this difficulty, and remove this prejudice from *Nathanael*'s mind, yet perſuades him to go with him to *Jeſus*; who, he doubted not, would give him full ſatisfaction in this, and all other points; and then it would moſt clearly appear to him, as it had done to him, that he was the true Meſſiah. The phraſe, תא חזי, *come, ſee*, is often uſed in the book of *Zohar*[q]: ſo it is, and likewiſe, בא וראה, *come and ſee*, in the *Talmudic* writings[r].

Ver. 47. *Jeſus ſaw Nathanael coming to him*, &c.] For notwithſtanding his prejudices, he was a man of ſo much uprightneſs and honeſty, that he thought *Philip*'s requeſt was very reaſonable; and that it was but right, and fair, that he ſhould ſee, and hear, and judge, for himſelf, whether the perſon *Philip* ſpoke of was the Meſſiah, or no; and therefore he came along with him; and as he was coming, *Jeſus* ſaw him, who knew all that had paſſed between him and *Philip*: *and ſaith of him*; to thoſe that were ſtanding by him, and in the hearing of *Nathanael*, *behold an Iſraelite indeed!* a ſon of *Iſrael*, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read; a true ſon of *Jacob*'s; an honeſt, plain-hearted man like him; one that was an *Iſraelite* at heart; inwardly ſo; not one after the fleſh only, but after the ſpirit; ſee *Rom.* ii. 28, 29. 1 *Cor.* x. 18. and which was a rare thing at that time; and therefore a note of admiration is prefixed to it; for all were not *Iſrael*, that were of *Iſrael*; and indeed but a very few then: and ſo, בן ישראל, *a ſon of Iſrael*, and, ישראל גמור, *a perfect Iſraelite*, are[s] ſaid of ſuch who have regard to the articles of the *Jewiſh* faith, tho' not even of the ſeed of *Iſrael*: 'tis added, *in whom there is no guile*; not that he was without ſin; nor is this ſaid of him; nor was he in ſuch ſenſe without guile, as Chriſt himſelf was; but guile was not a governing ſin in him: the courſe of his life, and converſation, was with great integrity, and uprightneſs, and without any prevailing hypocriſy and deceit, either to God, or men. This Chriſt ſaid to ſhew how much ſuch a character is approved by him; and that he knew the ſecrets of mens hearts, and the inward frames of their minds.

Ver. 48. *Nathanael ſaith unto him, whence knoweſt thou me?* &c.] This he ſaid as one ſurpriſed, that he, who was a ſtranger to him, ſhould hit upon his general character, and deſcribe the internal ſtate and frame of his ſoul: this was more ſurprizing to him, than if he had called him by his name *Nathanael*, as he did *Simon*; or had ſaid what was the place of his abode; *Cana* of *Galilee*; ſince this ordinarily was only to be obſerved, and learned, from a long and familiar acquaintance and converſation: by *Nathanael*'s reply, it looks as if he had no doubt, or fears, about the character Chriſt gave him; but rather, that he believed it, as every good man muſt be conſcious to himſelf of his own integrity; only it was amazing to him, how he ſhould know it: *Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto him*; in order to ſatisfy him, how he could know this inward temper of his mind, and to give him ſome undeniable proofs of his omniſcience, which he himſelf muſt acknowledge, being ſuch as none but an all-ſeeing eye could diſcover: *before that Philip called thee, when thou waſt under the fig-tree, I ſaw thee*; in which words Chriſt gives two inſtances of his omniſcience; the one is, that he knew *Philip* had called him; he was privy to all that paſſed between them, though they were alone, and the converſation was had in the moſt private manner. Chriſt knew what an account *Philip* had given of him, and what objection *Nathanael* had made; and what an invitation *Philip* had given him to go along with him to Chriſt, and judge for himſelf; which is here meant by calling him, and with which he complied: and the other is, that he ſaw him under the fig-tree before that: he was ſitting under it, as men in thoſe countries uſed to do; ſee *Micah* iv. 4. where he might be reading, the ſcriptures, and meditating upon them; and if, as ſome obſerve, he was reading, and thinking upon *Jacob*'s dream, concerning the ladder which reached from earth to heaven, and on which he ſaw the angels of God aſcending and deſcending, the words of Chriſt in ver. 51. muſt ſtrike him with freſh ſurprize, and give him another convincing proof of his omniſcience: or he might be praying here in ſecret, and ſo acted a different part from the generality of religious men of that nation, who choſe to pray in ſynagogues, and corners of the ſtreets, that they might be ſeen; and likewiſe proved him to be what Chriſt had ſaid of him, a true and rare *Iſraelite*, without guile and hypocriſy, which were ſo viſible and prevailing among others. It was uſual with the doctors to read, and ſtudy in the law, under fig-trees, and ſometimes, tho' rarely, to pray there. It is ſaid [t], “ *R. Jacob*, and his companions, were “ *ſitting*, ſtudying in the law, תחות חדא תאינה, “ *under a certain fig-tree.*” And the rule they give about praying, on, or under one, is this [u]: “ he “ that prays on the top of an olive-tree, or on the “ top of a *fig-tree*, or on any other trees, muſt “ come down, and *pray below.*” It is ſaid of *Nathanael*, in the *Syriac* dictionary [x]; that his mother hid him under a fig-tree, when the infants were ſlain, *i. e.* at *Bethlehem*; which, if it could be depended upon, muſt be to *Nathanael* a ſurprizing and undeniable proof of the deity of Chriſt, and of his being the true Meſſiah; ſince, at that time, he was an infant of days himſelf, and was the perſon *Herod* was ſeeking to deſtroy, as the Meſſiah, and king of the *Jews*.

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[q] In Gen. fol. 13. 1. & 14. 3. & 16. 1, 2. & in Exod. fol. 83. 4. & paſſim.

[r] T. Bab Taanith, fol. 8. 1. & 23. 2. & 24. 1. Kidduſhin, fol. 20. 1. & 33. 1. & Sota, fol. 5. 1, 2. & paſſim.

[s] Addareth Eliahu apud Trigland. de Sect. Karæorum, c. 10. p. 175, 176.

Ver. 49. *Nathanael anſwered and ſaith unto him*, &c.] Being fully convinced of his omniſcience by theſe inſtances: *Rabbi*; that is, maſter, as it is interpreted in ver. 38. and is not here, becauſe it is there: *thou art the ſon of God*; not by creation, for this would be to ſay no more of him, than may be ſaid of every man; nor by adoption, for in that ſenſe *Nathanael* himſelf was a ſon of God, and many others; nor on account of his wonderful incarnation, which, 'tis very likely, at this time *Nathanael* knew nothing of; nor by reaſon of his reſurrection from the dead, which, as yet, was not, and ſtill leſs might be known by this perſon; nor becauſe of his office, as mediator, for this is expreſſed in the next clauſe; but by nature, as being of the ſame eſſence, and poſſeſſed of the ſame perfections God is; and of which he was convinced by the inſtances he gave of his omniſcience; for it was from hence, and no other conſideration, that he concludes him to be the ſon of God: wherefore this phraſe muſt be underſtood of him, not as mediator, but as a divine perſon; as the natural, eſſential, and eternal ſon of God; and who is truly and properly God: he adds, *thou art the king of Iſrael*; having, in view, no doubt, the paſſage in *Pſal.* ii. 6, 7. where the characters of Son of God, and King of *Zion*, meet in the ſame perſon: not king of *Iſrael*, in a literal ſenſe; though he was the ſon of *David*, and a deſcendant of his in a right line, and was of the royal line, and had a legal right to the throne of *Iſrael*; and *Nathanael* might have a view to this being tinctured with the common national prejudice, that the Meſſiah would be a temporal prince: but his kingdom is not of this world; nor with obſervation; but is ſpiritual; and he is a king over *Iſrael* in a ſpiritual ſenſe, even of ſaints, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*; whom he conquers by his power, and rules in their hearts by his ſpirit, and grace; and protects, and defends them from all their enemies.

Ver. 50. *Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto him*, &c.] Not as reproving him for his faith, as if he was too credulous, and too eaſily gave into the belief of Chriſt, as the Son of God, and true Meſſiah, upon theſe ſingle expreſſions of his; but as approving of it, and ſurprized at it: *becauſe I ſaid unto thee, I ſaw thee under the fig-tree, believeſt thou?* ſome read the words, not by way of interrogation, but as an aſſertion; *thou believeſt*, or *haſt believed*, as the *Vulgate Latin*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions: *thou ſhalt ſee greater things than theſe*; meaning that he ſhould have larger diſcoveries of his perſon, nature, and perfections, and ſhould ſee things done by him, much more ſurprizing than any thing he had ſeen yet; referring to the miracles of raiſing the dead, caſting out devils, and healing all manner of diſeaſes.

Ver. 51. *And he ſaith unto him, verily, verily, I ſay unto you*, &c.] Not only to *Nathanael*, but to the reſt of the diſciples that were then with him; and to ſhew himſelf to be the *Amen*, and faithful witneſs, as well as more ſtrongly to aſſeverate what he was about to ſay, he doubles the expreſſion: *hereafter you ſhall ſee heaven open*; either in a literal ſenſe, as it had been at his baptiſm; or, in a myſtical ſenſe, that there ſhould be a clearer manifeſtation of heavenly truths made by his miniſtry; and that the way into the holieſt of all ſhould be made more manifeſt; and a more familiar intercourſe be opened between God and his people; and alſo between angels and ſaints: *and the angels of God aſcending and deſcending upon the Son of man*; or *to the Son of man*, as the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions render it; meaning himſelf in human nature; the ſecond *Adam*, and ſeed of the woman; and is expreſſive both of the truth, and infirmity of that nature. Reference may here be had to the ladder *Jacob* dreamed of, in *Gen.* xxviii. 12. which was a repreſentation of Chriſt, in his perſon, as God-man; who, as God, was in heaven, whilſt he, as man, was on earth; and in his office, as mediator between God and man, making peace between them both; and in the miniſtration of angels to him in perſon, and to his body the church. And it is obſervable, that ſome of the *Jewiſh* writers [y] underſtand the aſcent, and deſcent of the angels, in *Gen.* xxviii. 12. to be, not upon the ladder, but upon *Jacob*; which makes the phraſe there ſtill more agreeable to this; and ſo they render עלין, in ver. 13. not *above it*, but *above him.* Or the ſenſe is, that there would be immediately made ſuch clearer diſcoveries of his perſon, and grace by his miniſtry, and ſuch miracles would be wrought by him in confirmation of it, that it would look as if heaven was open, and the angels of God were continually going to and fro, and bringing freſh meſſages, and performing miraculous operations; as if the whole hoſt of them were conſtantly employed in ſuch ſervices: and this the rather ſeems to be the ſenſe, ſince the next account we have, is, of the beginning of Chriſt's miracles to manifeſt forth his glory in *Cana* of *Galilee*, where *Nathanael* lived; and ſince the word, rendered *hereafter*, ſignifies, *from hence forward*; or, as the *Perſic* verſion renders it, *from this hour*; tho' the word is left out in the *Vulgate Latin*, and *Ethiopic* verſions.

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[t] T. Hieroſ. Beracot, fol. 5. 3. Vid. Shirhaſhirim Rabba, fol. 16. 4.

[u] Ib. col. 1. & T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 16. 1.

[x] Bar Bahluli apud Caſtell. Lexic. Polyglott. col. 2437.

[y] Bereſhit Rabba, §. 68. fol. 61. 2. & §. 69. fol. 61. 3, 4.

## CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. *AND the third day there was a marriage, &c.*] Either from the ſecond teſtimony bore by *John* the *Baptiſt* concerning Chriſt, and from the call of *Simon Peter*, which ſeem to be of the ſame date; ſee chap. i. 35, 36, 42, 43. or from Chriſt's coming into *Galilee*; or from the converſation he had with *Nathanael*; from either of which the date is taken, it matters not; the firſt is as agreeable and plain, as any. There is much diſpute, and many rules with the *Jews* about the times, and days of marriage: "a virgin, they ſay [z], marries on the fourth day (of the week,) and a widow on the fifth, becauſe the *Sanhedrim* ſit in the cities twice in the week, on the ſecond, and on the fifth days; ſo that if there is any diſpute about virginity, he, (the huſband) may come betimes to the *Sanhedrim*." This was a law that obtained ſince the times of *Ezra*; for it is ſaid [a], "before the order of *Ezra*, a woman might be married on any day;" but in after-times, feaſt-days, and ſabbath-days, were particularly excepted. One of their canons is [b], "they don't marry women on a feaſt-day, neither virgins, nor widows:" The reaſon of it was, that they might not mix one joy with another; and leſt a man ſhould leave the joy of the feaſt, for the joy of his wife. The account *Maimonides* [c] gives of theſe ſeveral things is this; "it is lawful to eſpouſe on any common day, even on the ninth of *Ab*, whether in the day, or in the night; but they don't marry wives neither on the evening of the ſabbath, nor on the firſt of the week: the decree is, leſt the ſabbath ſhould be prophaned by preparing the feaſt; for the bridegroom is employed about the feaſt: and there is no need to ſay, that it is unlawful to marry a wife on the ſabbath-day; and even on the common day of a feaſt they don't marry wives, as we have explained; becauſe they don't mix one joy with another, as it is ſaid in *Gen.* xxix. 27. *fulfil her week, and we will give thee this alſo:* but on the reſt of the days it is lawful to marry a wife, any day a man pleaſes; for he muſt be employed in the marriage-feaſt three days before the marriage. A place in which the *Sanhedrim* don't ſit, but on the ſecond and fifth days only, a virgin is married on the fourth day; that if there is any objection to her virginity, he, (her huſband) may come betimes to the *Sanhedrim:* and it is a cuſtom of the wiſe men, that he that marries one that has been married, he may marry her on the fifth day, that ſo he may rejoice with her on the fifth day, and on the evening of the ſabbath, (*i. e.* the ſixth) and on the ſabbath-day, and may go forth to his work on the firſt day." But elſewhere 'tis ſaid [d], that "now they are uſed to marry on the ſixth day of the week." Yea [e], that "it is lawful to marry, and to make the feaſt on the ſabbath-day." But whether this marriage was of a virgin, or a widow, cannot be known; nor with certainty can it be ſaid, on what day of the week it was: if that day was a ſabbath-day on which the diſciples abode with Chriſt, as Dr. *Lightfoot* conjectures, then it muſt be on the firſt day that Chriſt went into *Galilee*, and found *Philip*, and converſed with *Nathanael*; and if this third day is reckoned from *John*'s ſecond teſtimony, it muſt be on a *Tueſday*, the third day of the week; but if from Chriſt's going into *Galilee*, then it muſt be on a *Wedneſday*, the fourth day, of the week, the day fixed by the *Jewiſh* canon for the marriage of a virgin. This marriage was *in Cana of Galilee*. The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read, in *Kotne*, *a city of Galilee*; and which, in the *Jewiſh* map, is called, קטנא בגליל, *Katna* in *Galilee*, and is placed in the tribe of *Zebulon*, which was in *Galilee*, and not far from *Nazareth*; and bids fair to be the ſame place with this; tho' it is more generally thought [f], that *Cana*, in the tribe of *Aſher*, mentioned in *Joſhua* xix. 28. which was alſo in *Galilee*, is here meant; and is ſo called to diſtinguiſh it from another *Kanah*, in the tribe of *Ephraim*, *Joſhua* xvi. 8. and xvii. 9. *Joſephus* [g] ſpeaks of a town, or village, of *Galilee*, called *Cana*, which was a day's march from it to *Tiberias*, and ſeems to be the ſame place: and another *Jewiſh* writer [h] ſays, "to me it appears, that *Cepher Chanania*, is *Cepher Cana*; or the village of *Cana*, as is clear in *Miſna Sheviith*, c. 9. §. 1. for there is the beginning of lower *Galilee*," which alſo accords with this. Now in the caſe of marriage, there were ſome difference between *Judea* and *Galilee*, and certain rules were laid down relating thereunto: and 'tis ſaid [i], "there are three countries, for the celebration of marriages; *Judea*, the country beyond *Jordan*, and *Galilee*;" that is, that were obliged to marry among themſelves; ſo that if any one married a wife out of any of theſe countries, ſhe was not obliged to go along with him from one country to another [k]: hence it follows, "they don't bring them out from city to city, (*i. e.* oblige them to go with them from city to city) nor from town to town; but in the ſame country they bring them out from city to city, and from town to town.." And it is elſewhere obſerved [l], that "in *Judea*, at firſt, they joined the bridegroom and bride together an hour before they went into the bride-chamber, that ſo his heart might be lifted up in her; but in *Galilee* they did not do ſo: in *Judea*, at firſt, they appointed for them two companions, one for him, and another for her, that they might miniſter to, or wait on the bridegroom, and bride, when they went into the bride-chamber; but in *Galilee* they did not do ſo: in *Judea*, at firſt, the companions ſlept in the houſe where the bridegroom and bride ſlept; but in *Galilee* they did not do ſo." Next we have an account of the perſons that were preſent at this marriage: *and the mother of Jeſus was there*; who ſeems to have been a principal perſon at this wedding, and was very officious; when wine was wanted, ſhe ſignified it to her ſon, and ordered the ſervants to do whatever he bid them: and ſince ſhe, and Jeſus, and his brethren, were all here, it looks as if it was a relation of hers that was now married: and ſince theſe brethren were the kinſmen of Chriſt, *Simon*, *Judas*, and *Joſes*, the ſons of *Cleophas* or *Alpheus*, whoſe wife was ſiſter to the mother of our Lord; and ſince one of them, to diſtinguiſh him from *Simon Peter*, is called *Simon* the *Canaanite*, or an inhabitant of *Cana*, as ſome have thought; hence it is conjectured by Dr. *Lightfoot*, that *Alpheus* had an houſe in *Cana*, and that his family dwelt there, and that it was for one of his family that this marriage-feaſt was made; ſee ver. 2, 3, 5, 12. and chap. xix. 25. *Matt.* xiii. 55. and x. 4. *Joſeph*, the huſband of *Mary*, perhaps, was now dead, ſince no mention is made of him here, nor any where elſe, as alive, after Chriſt had entered on his public miniſtry.

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[z] Miſn. Cetubot, c. 1. §. 1.

[a] T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 3. 1.

[b] Miſn. Moed Katon, c. 1. §. 7. & T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 8. 2. & 18. 2.

[c] Hilchot Iſhot, c. 10. §. 14, 15.

[d] Piſke Toſeph. Cetubot, art. 6.

[e] Ib. art. 28.

[f] Jerom de Locis Hebraicis, fol. 90. B.

[g] In vita ſua.

[h] Juchaſin, fol. 57. 2.

[i] Miſn. Cetubot, c. 13. §. 10. T. Hieroſ. Cetubot, fol. 36. 2.

[k] Bartenora in ib.

[l] T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 12. 1.

Ver. 2. *And both Jeſus was called*, &c.] Or invited, as being a relation, according to the fleſh: *and his diſciples, to the marriage*; who were bidden, on his account; and they ſeem to be theſe, *Andrew*, and the other diſciple, that followed Jeſus, and *Simon Peter*, and *Philip*, and *Nathanael*, who was of this place; and accordingly they all went to it. Chriſt, and his five diſciples, made ſix of the ten, which were always neceſſary to be preſent at the benediction of bridegrooms: for ſo runs the canon[m]; "they don't bleſs the bleſſing of bridegrooms, but "with ten principal and free men; and the bride- "groom may be one of the number." To attend a wedding, was reckoned, with the *Jews*, an act of beneficence and kindneſs[n]. Our Lord, being at this wedding, was acting like himſelf, and his general character, of being free, affable, and courteous; who accepted of every invitation, and refuſed not to be at any entertainment, made by who it would, or on whatever occaſion: and particularly in this inſtance, it ſhews his humility in not diſdaining his poor relations, but giving them his company at ſuch a time; as alſo it was bearing a teſtimony, to the inſtitution of marriage, as honourable; and teaches us to rejoice with them that rejoice: and as this was, at the firſt of Chriſt's miniſtry and miracles, 'tis likely it might give the occaſion of that calumny caſt on him in *Matt.* xi. 19. The diſciples of Chriſt followed the example of their maſter. According to the *Jewiſh* canons[o], a diſciple of a wiſe man might not partake of any feaſt, but what was according to the commandment, as the feaſt of eſpouſals, and of marriage; and ſuch a feaſt was this, which Chriſt and his diſciples were at; and ſo not to be condemned for it, according to their own maxims.

Ver. 3. *And when they wanted wine*, &c.] Or *wine was wanting*; not thro' the intemperance of the gueſts, rather thro' the poverty of the family, who were not able to provide very largely; and it may be by reaſon of a larger number of gueſts than were expected; however, ſo it was ordered by divine providence, that there might be an opportunity for Chriſt to manifeſt forth his glory: *the mother of Jeſus ſaith unto him, they have no wine*; being concerned for the family, leſt they ſhould be put to ſhame and diſgrace, and the entertainment ſhould not proceed with becoming credit and honour; and knowing the power of Chriſt to help in this time of neceſſity, ſhe modeſtly moves it to him, perhaps by a whiſper, ſitting next him; or, it may be, might call him out, and juſt drop the hint; being well perſuaded of his power, as ſhe might; not from any miracles wrought by him in her family for the ſupport of it, when in diſtreſs; for as Chriſt wrought no miracle, in the time of his public miniſtry, for the ſupport of himſelf, or his diſciples, but for others, 'tis not likely he ſhould do it for his family in private life; but from the wonderful things told her by the angel that brought the news of her conception, and by the ſhepherds, and by *Simeon* and *Anna*, which ſhe had laid up in her heart; and from his being the Meſſiah, who, according to the general belief of the nation, was to work miracles; and particularly from the laſt words of the preceding chapter; ſee the note there: for ſhe might be preſent at the delivery of them; and therefore might hope that as this was the firſt opportunity that offered after, that he would diſplay his power in ſupplying the family with wine in this time of exigence.

Ver. 4. *Jeſus ſaith unto her, woman*, &c.] Calling her *woman*, as it was no ways contrary to her being a virgin, *Gal.* iv. 4. ſo it was no mark of diſreſpect; it being an uſual way of ſpeaking with the *Jews*, when they ſhewed the greateſt reſpect to the perſon ſpoken to; and was uſed by our Lord when he addreſſed his mother with the greateſt tenderneſs, and ſtrongeſt affection, *John* xix. 26. The *Jews* frequently object this paſſage to us Chriſtians: one of their writers forms his objection in this manner[p]; "they (the Chriſtians) ſay, the mother "of Jeſus is never called a woman in their law; "but here her ſon himſelf calls her a woman." Another puts it thus[q]; "it is their (the Chriſtians) "belief, that *Mary*, even after ſhe brought forth "Jeſus, was a virgin; but if ſhe was, as they ſay, "why does not her ſon call her by the name of "virgin? but he calls her a woman, which ſig- "nifies one known by man, as appears from ch. "iv. 2. and viii. 10." To which may be replied, that the mother of Jeſus is never called a woman in the New Teſtament, is not ſaid by us Chriſtians: it is certain ſhe is ſo called, both here, and elſewhere; but then this is no contradiction to her being a virgin; one, and the ſame perſon, may be a virgin, and a woman: the damſel, *Abraham*'s ſervant, was ſent to take for wife for his ſon *Iſaac*, is called a woman, though a virgin that had never known any man, *Gen.* xxiv. 5, 8, 14, 16, 43, 44. Beſides, we don't think ourſelves obliged to maintain the perpetual virginity of *Mary*, the mother of our Lord; it is enough that ſhe was a virgin when ſhe conceived, and when ſhe brought forth her firſt-born: and as the *Jews* endeavour to take an advantage of this againſt the character of *Mary*, the *Papiſts* are very ſolicitous about the manner in which theſe words are ſaid, leſt they ſhould be thought to contain a reproof, which they can't bear ſhe ſhould be judged worthy of; or ſuggeſt any thing to her diſhonour, whom they magnify as equal to her Son: but certain it is, that the following words, *what have I to do with thee?* ſhew reſentment and reproof. Some render the words, *what is it to thee and me?* and give this as the ſenſe; what concern is this of ours? what buſineſs have we with it? let them look to it, who are the principal in the feaſt, and have the management of it. The *Jew*[r] objects to this ſenſe of the words, but gives a very weak reaſon for it: "but I ſay, ſays "he, who ſhould be concerned but the maſter of "the feaſt? and he was the maſter of the feaſt:" whereas it is a clear caſe that he was one of the gueſts, one that was invited, ver. 2. and that there was a governour or ruler of the feaſt, who might be more properly called the maſter of it than Jeſus, ver. 8, 10. However, ſince Chriſt afterwards did concern himſelf in it, it looks as if this was not his meaning. Others render it to the ſenſe we do, *what have I with thee?* as the *Ethiopic* verſion; or *what buſineſs haſt thou with me?* as the *Perſic* verſion; and is the ſame with, מה לי ולך, *what have I to do with thee?* uſed in 1 *Kings* xvii. 18. and 2 *Kings* iii. 13. where the *Septuagint* uſe the ſame phraſe as here; and ſuch a way of ſpeaking is common

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[m] Maimon. Hilch. Iſhot, c. 10. §. 5. Pirke Eliezer, c. 19. Shirhaſhirim Rabba, fol. 9. 3.

[n] Maimon. in Miſn. Peah, c. 1. §. 1.

[o] T. Bab. Peſachim, fol. 49. 1. & Maimon. Hilchot Deyot, c. 5. §. 2.

[p] Vet. Nizzachon, p. 222.

[q] R. Iſaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 42. p. 433.

[r] Vet Nizzachon, p. 223.

mon with *Jewiſh* writers [s]: hereby ſignifying, that though, as man, and a ſon of hers, he had been ſubject to her, in which he had ſet an example of obedience to parents; yet, as God, he had a father in heaven, whoſe buſineſs he came to do; and in that, and in his office, as mediator, ſhe had nothing to do with him; nor was he to be directed by her in that work; or to be told, or the leaſt hint given when a miracle ſhould be wrought by him in confirmation of his miſſion and doctrine. Moreover, he adds, *mine hour is not yet come:* meaning not the hour of his ſufferings and death, in which ſenſe he ſometimes uſes this phraſe; as if the hint was, that it was not proper for him to work miracles as yet, leſt it ſhould provoke his enemies to ſeek his life before his time; but rather the time of his public miniſtry and miracles, which were to go together, and the one to be a proof of the other; tho' it ſeems to have a particular regard to the following miracle, the time of doing that was not yet come; the proper juncture, when all fit circumſtances meeting together, it would be both the more uſeful, and the more illuſtrious: or his meaning is, that his time of doing miracles in publick was not yet; and therefore, tho' he was willing to do this miracle, yet he choſe to do it in the moſt private manner; ſo that only a few, and not the principal perſons at the feaſt ſhould know it: wherefore the reproof was not ſo much on the account of the motion itſelf, as the unſeaſonableneſs of it; and ſo his mother took it.

Ver. 5. *His mother ſaid unto the ſervants,* &c.] She took the reproof in good part, and by the words he ſaid, and the manner in which he ſpake them, or by the looks he gave, and the geſtures he might uſe, ſhe hoped, and even believed, that the thing ſhe moved for would be done; and therefore went immediately to the ſervants, and gave them the following inſtructions: *whatſoever he ſaith unto you, do* it; punctually obſerve and obey his orders in every circumſtance.

Ver. 6. *And there were ſet ſix water-pots of ſtone,* &c.] To diſtinguiſh them from other veſſels made of different matter: for the *Jews* had "veſſels made "of duſt, and the dung of beaſts, כלי אבנים, "*veſſels of ſtone*, veſſels of earth, veſſels made of "ſhells, veſſels of nitre, veſſels made of the bones "and ſkins of fiſhes [t]." And as theſe veſſels were very likely for waſhing of hands, ſuch were uſed for that purpoſe: their rule is [u], "they may put water "for the hands in all ſorts of veſſels; in veſſels of dung, "*in ſtone veſſels*, and in veſſels of earth." At a wedding were ſet veſſels of various ſizes to waſh hands and feet in; there was one veſſel called משיכלא, which the *Gloſs* ſays was a large pitcher, or baſon, out of which the whole company waſhed their hands and their feet; and there was another called משיכלתא, which was a leſſer and beautiful baſon, which was ſet alone for the more honourable perſons, as for the bride, and for any gentlewoman [w]; and ſuch might be theſe ſix ſtone jars, or pots: *after the manner of the purifying of the Jews*; or *for the purifying of the Jews*, as the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions render it; that is, for the waſhing of them, their hands and feet, and their veſſels, pots, and cups, according to the traditions of the elders; ſee *Mark* vii. 2, 3, 4. *containing two or three firkins a-piece.* The *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *ſome held two meaſures, and ſome three:* how large the *metreta*, or *meaſure* was, which we render a *firkin*, is not certain; 'tis moſt likely it anſwered to the *Hebrew bath*, which was a common meaſure of liquids with the *Jews*, and held four gallons and a half, or more; ſee the note on *Luke* xvi. 6. ſo that ſuch of theſe veſſels, that held two of theſe meaſures, contained nine gallons, and ſuch as held three of them, thirteen gallons and a half; and ſix of theſe contained a large quantity of wine, one with another: and which makes the following miracle the greater; and ſhows the liberality of Chriſt the more, in providing for the following days of the feaſt, for a marriage was kept ſeven days [x]; and for the family, ſome time after it was over.

Ver. 7. *Jeſus ſaith unto them,* &c.] To the ſervants that waited at the feaſt, *fill the water-pots with water.* The *Ethiopic* verſion adds, *to their brims*, as they did. Chriſt choſe the water-pots, and not the veſſel, or veſſels, or bottles, now empty, out of which they had drank their wine; that it might not be ſaid that there was any left therein, which gave colour and flavour to the water: and he ordered them to be filled with *water* by the ſervants, that they might take notice, and be witneſſes, that that, and nothing elſe, was put into them; and up to the brims, ſo that they could not be capable of having any other liquor infuſed into them: *and they filled them up to the brim*; ſtrictly obſerving the orders of Chriſt, and the inſtructions of his mother.

Ver. 8. *And he ſaith unto them, draw out now,* &c.] As ſoon as ever the veſſels were filled with water, without any more delay, he ordered the ſervants to draw out of thoſe larger, into leſſer veſſels; he does not ſay what, water or wine: *and bear unto the governour of the feaſt*; who either had the ordering and management of the feaſt, and the command of the whole affair; hence the *Ethiopic* verſion calls him, *the maſter of the waiters*, or ſervants: or he was the chief gueſt, as the word ſeems to import, who ſat, or rather lay, on the chief couch at the table; and ſo a proper perſon to begin with, and put the cup round: or elſe he might be doctor or chaplain; for ſuch an one was neceſſary at a marriage; ſince there were ſix or ſeven benedictions to be pronounced; and particularly a bleſſing was ſaid over the cup of wine: for if there was any wine, a cup of it was brought, and he bleſſed over it firſt, and ordered every thing concerning the cup; and this made up ſeven bleſſings at ſuch a time [y]; and therefore was a very fit perſon to bear the wine to firſt: *and they bore* it; the ſervants having drawn out of the ſtone veſſels, by cocks, into ſmaller ones, carried the liquor, as they were ordered, to the above perſon.

Ver. 9. *When the ruler of the feaſt had taſted the water,* &c.] The *Perſic* verſion reads, *taſted of the wine*, and adds, what is not in the text, *it was of a very grateful ſavour:* but the ſenſe is, he taſted of that which was before water, but now *was made wine*; not in ſuch ſenſe as the Papiſts pretend that the bread and wine, in the Lord's ſupper, are tranſubſtantiated into the body and blood of Chriſt, by the conſecration of the prieſt; after which they appear to have the ſame properties of bread and wine as before; but this water, that was turned into wine, ceaſed to be what it was before, and became what it was not: it had no more the properties, the colour, and taſte of water, but of wine; of which the whole company were judges: *and knew not whence it was*; from whence it came, where it was had, nor any thing of the miracle that was wrought, and therefore was a proper perſon to have it put into his hands firſt; ſince it can't be thought he ſhould ſay what he does in the following verſe, from any compact with Chriſt, or in favour of him. *But the ſervants which drew the water knew*; they knew from whence they had it, out of the water-pots; and they knew that they filled them with water; and that that liquor, which the ruler of the feaſt had in his hands, and commended as moſt excellent wine, was drawn out of them; and that there was no juggle, nor deceit in the caſe: and, upon taſting of it, *the governour of the feaſt called the bridegroom* to him; out of the place where he ſat, and which might not be far from him.

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[s] Vid. Kimchi in Pſ. ii. 12. Bechinat Olam, p. 70.

[t] Miſn. Celim, c. 10. §. 1. & Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

[u] Miſn. Yadaim, c. 1. §. 2.

[w] Gloſſ. in T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 77. 2.

[x] Maimon. Hilchot Iſhot, c. 10. §. 12, 13.

[y] Ib. §. 3, 4.

Ver. 10. *And ſaith unto him*, &c.] The following words; expreſſing the common cuſtom uſed at feaſts: *every man at the beginning doth ſet forth good wine*; that is, it is uſual with men, when they make entertainments, firſt to give the gueſts the beſt, the moſt generous, and ſtrongeſt bodied wine; as being moſt ſuitable for them, and they being then beter able to bear it, and it being moſt for the credit of the maker of the feaſt: *and when men have well drank*; not to exceſs, but freely, ſo as that they are exhilarated, and their ſpirits cheerful, but their brains not intoxicated: ſo the word, as anſwering to the *Hebrew* word, שכר, is uſed by the *Septuagint* in *Gen.* xliii. 34. and *Cant.* v. 1. *then that which is worſe*; not bad wine, but τον ελασσω, *that which is leſſer*; a weaker bodied wine, that is lowered, and of leſs ſtrength, and not ſo intoxicating, and which is fitteſt for the gueſts. So *Martial* [z] adviſes *Sextilianus*, after he had drank the tenth cup, not to drink the beſt wine, but to aſk his hoſt for wine of *Laletania*, which was a weaker and lower ſort of wine. But *thou haſt kept the good wine until now*; which ſhows he knew nothing of the miracle wrought. And as the bridegroom here did, in the apprehenſion of the ruler of the feaſt, at this his marriage, ſo does the Lord, the huſband of the church, in the marriage-feaſt of the Goſpel; and ſo he will do at the marriage-ſupper of the lamb. The Goſpel, which may be compared to wine for its purity, pleaſant taſte, and generous effects in reviving drooping ſpirits, refreſhing weary perſons, and comforting diſtreſſed minds, as alſo for its antiquity, was publiſhed before the coming of Chriſt, in the times of *Adam*, *Noah*, *Abraham*, *Moſes*, *David*, and the prophets, but in a lower and weaker way; at ſundry times, here a little, and there a little, by piece-meals, as it were; and in divers manners, by promiſes, propheſies, types, ſhadows, and ſacrifices; and was attended with much darkneſs and bondage: but under the Goſpel-diſpenſation, which is compared to a marriage-feaſt, it is more fully diſpenſed, more clearly publiſhed, and more freely miniſtred. The whole of it is delivered, and with open face beheld; and ſaints are made free by it; it is ſet in the ſtrongeſt and cleareſt light; the beſt wine is reſerved till now; God has provided ſome better thing for us, *Heb.* xi. 40. And ſo with reſpect to the future ſtate of the ſaints, their beſt things are kept for them till laſt. They have many good things now; as the Goſpel, Goſpel-ordinances, the bleſſings, and promiſes of grace, the love of God ſhed abroad in their hearts, the preſence of God, and communion with Chriſt, at leaſt at times; all which are better than wine: but then there is an alloy to theſe; they are lowered by other things, as the corruptions of the heart, the temptations of ſatan, the hidings of God's face, and a variety of afflictions; but they ſhall have their good and beſt things hereafter, and drink new wine in Chriſt's Father's kingdom, without any thing to lower and weaken it: they'll have full joys, and never-fading pleaſures, and ſhall be without ſin and ſorrow; no more deſerted, nor afflicted, and ſhall be out of the reach of ſatan's temptations, and with Chriſt for evermore. Happy are they that are called to the marriage-ſupper of the lamb!

Ver. 11. *This beginning of miracles*, &c.] This miracle of turning water into wine, was the firſt miracle Chriſt ever wrought, either in public or private; for, as for what miracles he is ſaid to do in his infancy, there is no reaſon to give credit to them: and this he *did in Cana of Galilee*; not that this was only the firſt he did in that place; he afterwards working another there, namely, the cure of a nobleman's ſon, *John* iv. 46, 54. but the firſt he did any where, and it was in this place; and which the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions again call *Kotne* of *Galilee*; ſee the note on ver. 1. *and manifeſted forth his glory*; the glory of his deity and divine Sonſhip, which was hid by his aſſumption of human nature, but broke forth and ſhewed itſelf in his miraculous operations, and particularly in this: *and his diſciples believed on him*; the above five diſciples; ſee ver. 2. whom he had called, and who were with him at this marriage, and were made acquainted with this miracle: and tho' they believed in him before, and had declared, and profeſſed him to be the Meſſiah, *Moſes* and the prophets ſpoke of, and and the Son of God, and king of *Iſrael*; yet they were, by this miracle, more and more confirmed in the faith of theſe things: beſides, others might be made his diſciples at this time, and be hereby brought to believe in him.

Ver. 12. *After this he went down to Capernaum*, &c.] After he had been at *Cana*, and at the wedding there; after he had wrought the miracle of turning water into wine; and after he had manifeſted forth the glory of his deity thereby, and had confirmed the faith of his diſciples, he departed from thence, and went lower into the country of *Galilee*, to *Capernaum*, a city near the ſea of *Tiberias*; and which, from henceforward, he made the more uſual place of his reſidence, and whither he frequently reſorted, and therefore it is called his city, *Matt.* ix. 1. This refers not to the ſame journey recorded in *Matt.* iv. 12, 13. for that was after *John* was caſt into priſon, whereas this was before; ſee *John* iii. 24. the company that went with him, are as follow, *he, and his mother*; who had been with him at *Cana*, and was a principal perſon at the wedding: and ſhe now returning home, he accompanies her, to ſee her to her own habitation; or to ſettle her in *Capernaum*, whilſt he went about diſcharging his public miniſtry. *And his brethren*; or near kinſmen, according to the fleſh, the ſons of *Alpheus*, or *Cleophas*, and *Mary*, ſiſter to the mother of our Lord; whoſe names were *James*, *Joſes*, *Simon*, and *Judas*, three of which afterwards became his Apoſtles: *and his diſciples*; as many as he had yet called, which were *Andrew*, and the diſciple that followed Jeſus with him, and *Simon Peter*, and *Philip*, and *Nathanael*: *and they continued there not many days*; not becauſe of the impenitence, unbelief, and wickedneſs of the place, but for the reaſon following.

Ver. 13. *And the Jews paſſover was at hand*, &c.] That feaſt which was kept on the fourteenth day of *Niſan*, in commemoration of the Lord's paſſing over, and by the houſes of the *Iſraelites*, when he ſlew the firſt-born in *Egypt*: and it is called the *Jews* paſſover, becauſe they only were obliged to keep it; nor was it obligatory upon the *Gentiles*; and beſides, was now aboliſhed when *John* wrote this Goſpel, tho' ſtill retained by the *Jews*. And moreover, *John* was now among the *Gentiles*, and for whoſe ſake he penn'd this Goſpel; and therefore ſo diſtinguiſhes this feaſt, which was typical of the Chriſtian paſſover, or of Chriſt our paſſover that is ſacrificed for us. This was the firſt *paſſover* after Chriſt's baptiſm, which is generally thought to have been about half a year before; tho' ſo much time cannot be made out from the ſcriptural account; for from his baptiſm, to his return out of the wilderneſs to *John*, were forty days; and from thence, to his coming to *Cana*, four or five days more; and perhaps he might be ſeven days in *Cana*; for ſo long a wedding was uſually kept; and his ſtay at *Capernaum* was but a few days; all which don't amount to above eight or nine weeks at moſt: the ſecond paſſover after this, is, by ſome, thought to be the feaſt mentioned in *John* v. 1. and the third in *John* vi. 4. and the fourth and laſt, at which he ſuffered, in *John* xviii. 28. The Evangeliſt *John* is the only writer that gives an account of the paſſovers after Chriſt entered on his publick miniſtry, by which is known the duration of it, which is generally thought to be about three years and a half. *Three years and a half*, the *Jews* ſay [a], the *Shekinah* ſat upon the mount of *Olives*, expecting that the *Iſraelites* would repent, but they did not; and this ſeems to be the term of time for diſciples to learn of their maſters: 'tis ſaid [b], one came from *Athens* to *Jeruſalem*, and he ſerved *three years and a half* to learn the doctrine of wiſdom, and he learned it not. *And Jeſus went up to Jeruſalem*; not alone, but his diſciples with him, as appears from ver. 17. to keep the paſſover as he had been wont to do, and as the law required; and he being under the law, as a ſon of *Abraham*, and the ſurety of his people, it became him to fulfil all righteouſneſs, ceremonial, as well as moral, and which he ſtrictly obſerved. He is ſaid to go up to *Jeruſalem*, becauſe that ſtood on higher ground than the low lands of *Galilee*, and was the place where only the paſſover might be kept; ſee *Deut*. xvi. 2.

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[z] A Caupone tibi fæx Laletana petatur
Si plus quam decies, Sextiliane, bibis. L. 1. Ep. 25.

Ver. 14. *And found in the temple*, &c.] Not in the holy place itſelf, nor in the court of the prieſts, where the ſacrifices were offered, nor in the court of the women, nor in the court of the *Iſraelites*, where the people worſhipped; but in the court of the *Gentiles*, or the outward court, even all that ſpace of ground which was between the wall which divided the whole from common ground, and the buildings of the temple, and which was open to the air; for the whole ſacred incloſure, or all within the wall went by the name of the temple. Into this all ſtrangers might come; and the paſſover now being at hand, here were *thoſe that ſold oxen, and ſheep, and doves*: the oxen, or bullocks, were for the *Chagiga*, or feaſt kept on the ſecond day of the paſſover; ſee the note on *John* xviii. 28. and the ſheep, or lambs, as the *Perſic* verſion reads, for the paſſover-ſupper; and the doves were for the offerings of the poorer ſort of lying-in women: with theſe they were ſupplied from the mount of *Olives*. It is ſaid [c], "there were two cedar-trees on the " mount of *Olives*, and under one of them were " four ſhops of them that ſold things for purification; and out of one of them they brought " forty buſhels of young doves every month; and " out of them the *Iſraelites* had enough for the " neſts, or the offerings of turtle-doves;" ſee the note on *Matt*. xxi. 12. *and the changers of money ſitting*; who changed foreign money into the current coin of the *Jews*, ſtrangers coming, at this feaſt, from ſeveral parts of the world; and ſometimes there was need of changing ſhekels into half ſhekels, which, at certain times, were paid for the ranſom of *Iſraelites*; ſee the note on the place above mentioned.

Ver. 15. *And when he had made a ſcourge of ſmall cords*, &c.] That is, *Jeſus*, as the *Perſic* verſion expreſſes it. This ſcourge might be made either of thongs, cut out of the hides of beaſts ſlain in ſacrifice; or of the cords, with which the owners of the cattle had brought them to this place; or with which they had faſtened them in it. And it ſeems to be made, and uſed, not ſo much for force and terror, as to intimate, that theſe perſons, the violators of the holy place, deſerved the ſcourge of divine wrath and puniſhment; as well as to ſhew the miraculous power of Chriſt in driving ſuch a number of men before him, with ſo ſmall and inſignificant a weapon; for the phraſe is diminutive. The reaſon given by Dr. *Lightfoot*, and others, why Chriſt made uſe of a whip, or ſcourge, rather than a ſtaff, is, becauſe it was contrary to a *Jewiſh* canon [d] to go into the mountain of the houſe, or temple, with a ſtaff in the hand; and yet the man of the mountain of the houſe, or the maſter of it, who uſed to go about every ward with torches burning before him, if he found a Levite aſleep in his ward [e] ſtruck him, במקלו, with his ſtaff, and had power to burn his clothes. *He drove them all out of the temple*; that is, he drove out *the men*, as the *Perſic* verſion reads; the merchants, the ſellers of oxen, ſheep, and doves, and the money-changers: *and the ſheep, and the oxen* likewiſe; the *Perſic* verſion adds, *doves*; but theſe are after mentioned: *and poured out the changers money*; off of the tables, or out of the boxes, or diſhes, or drawers, or purſes, in which it was put: *and overthrew the tables*; at which they ſat, and on which they told their money.

Ver. 16. *And ſaid unto them that ſold doves*, &c.] For as theſe were kept in coups, or cages, they could not be drove as the ſheep and oxen, nor could they be let out, and fly, without the loſs of the owners: and therefore Chriſt ſaid to them, *take theſe things hence*; not only the doves, but the pens, coups, or cages, in which they were, and both together: *make not my Father's houſe an houſe of merchandize*; ſo he calls the temple, which was built an houſe for God, and where he took up his reſidence; where were the ſymbols of his preſence; where his worſhip was kept, and ſacrifices offered to him: and he aſſerts God, whoſe houſe this was, to be his Father, and himſelf to be his Son, as none of the prophets that went before him did; and in ſuch ſenſe as neither men nor angels are; and which carries in it a reaſon why he was ſo much concerned for the honour of God, and ſo much reſented the prophanation of his houſe, becauſe he was his Father. A like action with this done by Chriſt at another time, is recorded in *Matt*. xxi. 12, 13. This was at the beginning of his miniſtry, that at the cloſe of it, in which he expreſſed himſelf with more warmth and ſeverity than here: here he only

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[a] Præfat. Echa Rabbati, fol. 40. 4.

[b] Echa Rabbati, fol. 44. 4.

[c] Ib. fol. 52. 4.

[d] Miſn. Beracot, c. 9. §. 5.

[e] Miſn. Middot, c. 1. §. 2.

only charges them with making his Father's houſe an houſe of merchandize, but there with making it a den of thieves; ſince they had not only ſlighted, and deſpiſed his firſt reproof, but had returned to their evil ways, and might grow more wicked and audacious. This inſtance of Chriſt now coming into the temple as a publick miniſter, and which was the firſt time of his entrance into it, after he had taken this character, was a further accompliſhment of *Mal.* iii. 1. for he now went into it, as the Lord and proprietor of it; and which this action of his in driving out the merchants, with their cattle, ſhows; and was a ſurprizing inſtance of his divine power; and is equal to other miracles of his, that a ſingle perſon, a ſtranger, one of no power and authority in the government, unaſſiſted and unarmed, with only a ſcourge of ſmall cords, ſhould carry ſuch awe and majeſty with him, and inject ſuch terror into, and drive ſuch a number of men before him, who were ſelling things for religious uſes, and were ſupported in it by the prieſts and *Sanhedrim* of the nation.

Ver. 17. *And his diſciples remembered that it was written*, &c.] In *Pſ.* lxix. 9. which *Pſalm* belongs to the Meſſiah, as is manifeſt from the citations out of it in the New Teſtament, and the application of them to Chriſt, as in *John* xv. 25. and xix. 28. *Rom.* xv. 3. compared with *Pſal.* lxix. 4, 9, 21. Chriſt is repreſented in it, as ſuffering for the ſins of his people; for he himſelf was innocent; and was hated without a cauſe; but having the ſins of his people imputed to him, he made ſatisfaction for them, and ſo reſtored what he took not away. His ſufferings are ſpoken of in it as very great; and from it we learn, that they are fitly called, by himſelf, a baptiſm, which he deſired to be baptized with, *Luke* xii. 50. ſince the waters are ſaid to come into his ſoul, and he to be in deep waters, where the floods overflowed him; ſo that he was as one immerſed in them: it is not only propheſied of him in it, that he ſhould be the object of the ſcorn and contempt of the *Jewiſh* nation, and be rejected by them, and treated with the utmoſt indignity, and loaded with reproaches; but it foretold, that they ſhould give him gall to eat, and vinegar to drink, which were literally fulfilled in him: and even the *Jews* themſelves ſeem to be under ſome conviction, that the *Pſalm* has reſpect to him; for *Aben Ezra*, a noted commentator of theirs, on the laſt words of the *Pſalm*, has this note; "the ſenſe "is, they and their children ſhall inherit it in the "days of *David*, or in the days of the Meſſiah." It appears from hence, that the diſciples of Chriſt were acquainted with the ſacred writings, and had diligently read them, and ſearched into them, and had made them their ſtudy; and upon this wonderful action of Chriſt, called to mind, and reflected upon the following paſſage of ſcripture, which they judged very proper and pertinent to him: *the zeal of thine houſe hath eaten me up*. This paſſage, ſo far as it is cited, agrees exactly, word for word, with the original text in *Pſ.* lxix. 9. wherefore it is very ſtrange that *Surenhuſius*[f] ſhould remark a difference, and give himſelf a good deal of trouble to reconcile it: he obſerves, that in the *Hebrew* text, it is read, קנאת יהוה, *the zeal of the Lord*, in the third perſon; whereas it is there, קנאת ביתך, *the zeal of thine houſe*, as here, in the ſecond perſon: indeed, the word כי, *for*, is left out, as he remarks, there being no need of it in the citation; the Evangeliſt only hiſtorically relating the accommodation of it to Chriſt, by the diſciples; whereas, in the original text, the words contain a reaſon of the reproach and ſhame which Chriſt endured, and was put to by the *Jews* on account of his zeal for the houſe, honour, and worſhip of God; and the latter part of the text is not produced at all, being not for the preſent purpoſe, tho' very applicable to Chriſt; and is cited, and applied to him by the apoſtle, in *Rom.* xv. 3. Such was Chriſt's regard to his Father's houſe, and which was typical of the church of God; and ſuch his concern for his honour, ordinances, and worſhip, that when he ſaw the merchandize that was carried on in the temple, his zeal, which was a true and hearty affection for God, and was according to knowledge, was ſtirred up in him, and to ſuch a degree, that it was like a conſuming fire within him, that eat up his ſpirits; ſo that he could not forbear giving it vent, and expreſſing it in the manner he did, by driving thoſe traders out of it. *Phinehas* and *Elias* were in their zeal, as well as other things, types of Chriſt; and in the ſpirit and power of the latter he came; and Chriſt not only expreſſed a zeal for the houſe of God, the place of religious worſhip, but for the church and people of God, whoſe ſalvation he moſt earneſtly deſired, and moſt zealouſly purſued: he ſhewed his ſtrong, and affectionate regard to it, by his ſuretyſhip-engagements for them, by his aſſumption of their nature, by his ardent deſire to accompliſh it, and by his voluntary and chearful ſubmiſſion to death on account of it. And ſuch was his zeal for it, that it eat him up, it enflamed his ſpirit and affections, conſumed his time and ſtrength, and, at laſt, his life: and he alſo ſhewed a zeal for the diſcipline of God's houſe, by his ſevere reflections on human traditions; by aſſerting the ſpirituality of worſhip; by commanding a ſtrict regard to divine inſtitutions; and by ſharply inveighing againſt the ſins of profeſſors of religion: and he diſcovered a warm zeal for the truths of the Goſpel, by a lively and powerful preaching of them; by his conſtancy and aſſiduity in it; by the many fatiguing journies he took for that purpoſe; by the dangers he expoſed himſelf to by it; and by the care he took to free the Goſpel from prejudice and calumnies: and it becomes us, in imitation of our great maſter, to be zealous for his truths and ordinances, and for the diſcipline of his houſe, and not bear with either the erroneous principles, or the bad practices of wicked men.

Ver. 18. *Then anſwered the Jews, and ſaid unto him*, &c.] They did not lay hands on him, or offer any violence to him; they did not, as the inhabitants of *Nazareth* did, thruſt him out, and lead him to a precipice, to caſt him down headlong; nor did they take up ſtones to ſtone him, as they afterwards did, when he aſſerted his deity; and it is ſurprizing, that they did not riſe up and deſtroy him at once, a ſingle man, unarmed, and without aſſiſtance, having ſo highly provoked them; the reſtraint upon them muſt be his almighty power: nor do they deny what he ſuggeſted, that they had made his Father's houſe an houſe of merchandize; nor do they offer to vindicate their prophanation of the temple, or object to the purging of it; only demand a proof of his right to do it: and which demand was made, not by the common people, or by the ſellers of oxen, ſheep, and doves, and the money-changers, who were drove out, and had not ſpirit to rally again; but by the chief-prieſts and elders, the *Sanhedrim* of the nation, who had the care and government of the temple, and under whoſe authority the above perſons acted; and whoſe gain and worldly intereſt were promoted hereby, as a like demand was afterwards made by the ſame perſons; ſee *Matt.* xxi. 23. *what ſign ſheweſt thou unto us, ſeeing thou doſt theſe things?* they argued, that either he did theſe things of himſelf, by his own authority, and then they muſt be deemed raſh and unjuſtifiable; or he did it by the authority of others: they knew it was not by theirs, who were the great council of the nation, from whom he ſhould have had his inſtructions and orders, if he acted by human authority; and if he pretended to a divine authority, as they ſuppoſed he did, then they inſiſted upon a ſign or miracle to be wrought, to prove that God was his Father, as he ſuggeſted; and that he was the proprietor and owner of the temple, and had a right to purge it, as he had done; ſee 1 *Cor.* i. 22.

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[f] Biblos Katallages, p. 347.

Ver. 19. *Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto them*, &c.] In a dark and enigmatical way, tho' very properly and pertinently; ſince it was with reſpect to the temple, and his power over it, and right to purge it, that a ſign was required of him: *deſtroy this temple*; pointing, as it were, with his finger to his body; for of that he ſpake, as appears from ver. 21. the diſſolution of which, by death he means, the ſeparation of his ſoul from his body, though not of either from his divine perſon: and it is to be underſtood, not as a command, or a grant, or as an exhortation, and advice to them, to kill his body; but rather as a prophecy of what they would do; or as putting the caſe, that ſhould they, as he knew they would, deſtroy his body, then, ſays he, as a ſign of having a power to do what I have done, *in three days I will raiſe it again*; by which he would appear to be the Son of God, with power, that had power of laying down his life, and taking it up again; and is the very ſign, namely, his reſurrection from the dead on the third day, he gives the *Jews*, when they ſought one of him at another time, and upon another occaſion.

Ver. 20. *Then ſaid the Jews*, &c.] *Unto him*, as read the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions: *forty and ſix years was this temple in building*; which can't be underſtood of the temple as built by *Solomon*, for that was but ſeven years in building, 1 *Kings* vi. 37, 38. But rather of the temple, as built by *Zorobabel*, commonly called the ſecond temple, and might be more properly ſaid to be *this temple*; the calculations of this made by learned men, are various and endleſs to recite. *Daniel*'s ſeven weeks, or forty-nine days, which are ſo many years, can have nothing to do with this account; ſince they regard not the building of the temple, but the city of *Jeruſalem*; though from the ſecond year of *Cyrus*, in which the temple began to be built, to the thirty-ſecond of *Darius* excluſive, were juſt forty-ſix years; *Cyrus* reigning three years, *Artaxerxes Ahaſuerus* fourteen years, and *Artaxerxes Darius* thirty-two; but their account is more likely, which begins at the firſt of *Artaxerxes Longimanus*, who reigned forty years, and ends in the ſixth year of *Darius*, his ſucceſſor, in which year the temple was finiſhed, *Ezra* vi. 15. But to me it ſeems rather, that *Herod*'s temple, or the temple as re-built, or repaired by *Herod*, is here meant; and which the *Jews* call, בניין הורדוס, *the building of Herod* [g]; and ſay of it, that "he who has "not ſeen *Herod*'s building, never ſaw a beautiful "building." And this according to *Joſephus* [h], was begun in the *eighteenth* year of his reign, in the *thirty-fifth* of which Chriſt was born, who was now *thirty* years of age: ſo that reckoning either the eighteenth year of *Herod*, or the thirtieth of Chriſt, the preſent year excluſively, juſt forty-ſix years had run out, ſince the re-building or reparations were firſt begun; and which were not yet finiſhed; for ſome years after this, the above writer obſerves [i], the temple was finiſhed, even in the times of *Nero* and *Agrippa*: and agreeable to this, the words may be rendered, *forty-ſix years has this temple been building*; and which ſtill adds more force to the following reaſoning of the *Jews*: *and wilt thou rear it up in three days?* the thing is impoſſible and impracticable; 'tis madneſs to the laſt degree, to talk at this rate: thus from the length of time which had run out from *Herod*'s firſt beginning to repair and beautify the temple, till now, and yet not finiſhed, they argue the abſurdity of his pretending to raiſe up ſuch a fabrick, ſhould it be demoliſhed, in three days time; they underſtanding him either ignorantly or wilfully, to ſpeak of the material temple, when his ſenſe was otherwiſe, as appears from the words of the Evangeliſt, in the next verſe. The *Jew* [k] objects to this account, of the temple being forty-ſix years in building; he obſerves, that "according to the "ſenſe of the *Nazarenes*, this was the building of "king *Herod*, that was in the time of Jeſus; and "the whole time of his reign were but ſeven and "thirty years, as is manifeſt from the book of "*Joſeph ben Gorion*, c. 65. Beſides, that which "*Herod* built, was built in eight years, as is evi-"dent from the ſame author, c. 55. wherefore the "number of forty-ſix years, in the words of the "writer, (the Evangeliſt) is a palpable error." To which may be replied, that admitting there is an error in this number, it is not the error of the Evangeliſt, but of the *Jews*, whoſe words the Evangeliſt relates; and ſuppoſing this was a miſtake of theirs, either ignorantly or wilfully made, to aggravate the abſurdity and impoſſibility of Chriſt's re-building the temple; and that even the Evangeliſt knew it to be a miſtake; yet he acts the moſt faithful and upright part, in repeating the words of the *Jews*, as they delivered them; and it lies upon the *Jew* to prove, that theſe words were not ſaid by them, or that it is not credible that they ſhould: that this was the building of *Herod* which is here referred to, and that he reigned but thirty-ſeven years, will be granted; but this is no objection to its being forty-ſix years in building, ſince in this account it is not ſaid that it was forty-ſix years in building by *Herod*; the ſenſe is only, that ſuch a number of years had paſſed, ſince it firſt began to be built by him: as for what *Joſeph ben Gorion* ſays, of its being built by him in the ſpace of eight years, it is not to be depended upon, ſince he is not the true *Joſephus*, that wrote the hiſtory of the *Jews*, and is to be corrected by the genuine hiſtorian; and from what has been before obſerved, from the time which according to the true *Joſephus* this building was begun, to this preſent year of Chriſt, when this diſcourſe was had, were juſt forty-ſix years; and admitting, that the main of the building was finiſhed in eight years time, yet additions were continually made to it, ſo that it was not finiſhed entirely, until many years after.

Ver. 21. *But he ſpake of the temple of his body*.] Which was the antitype of the material temple; and might well be called ſo, ſince the bodies of the ſaints are called temples, 1 *Cor.* iii. 16, 17. and vi. 19. 2 *Cor.* vi. 16. and the human nature of Chriſt is called a tabernacle, *Heb.* viii. 2. and he himſelf in prophecy, is ſaid to be, למקדש, *for a ſanctuary*, or temple, *Iſa.* viii. 14. and that becauſe the fulneſs of the Godhead dwelt in him bodily, the train of the divine perfections, filled the temple of his human nature, *Col.* ii. 9. *Iſa.* vi. 1. And becauſe here, as in the temple, God grants his preſence, and communes with his ſaints, accepts of their prayers and praiſes, and all their ſpiritual ſacrifices through him; and who is the oracle, the true *Urim* and *Thummim*, by whom he delivers his whole mind and will to his people.

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[g] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 4. 1.

[h] Antiq. Jud. l. 15. c. 14.

[i] Ib. l. 20. c. 8.

[k] R. Iſaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 43. p. 434.

Ver. 22. *When therefore he was riſen from the dead*, &c.] Which was three years after this: *his diſciples remembered that he had ſaid this unto them*; either to the *Jews*, or to them the diſciples; though the phraſe *to them*, is not in the *Vulgate Latin*, nor in any of the *Oriental* verſions. The diſciples themſelves, were very dull of underſtanding the doctrine of Chriſt's reſurrection; and ſo they continued, notwithſtanding he gave them afterwards very full hints of it, until that he was actually riſen; and then they called to mind theſe words of his, with others that dropped from him upon the ſame ſubject: *and they believed the ſcripture*; that ſpoke of his reſurrection, *Pſal.* xvi. 10. and on the third day, *Hoſ.* vi. 2. *And the word which Jeſus had ſaid*; concerning his riſing again the third day at this time, and at others, as in *Matt.* xvi. 21. and xvii. 23. and xx. 19. and they believed his word equally with the ſcripture, it agreeing to it, and being founded on it.

Ver. 23. *Now when he was in Jeruſalem at the paſſover*, &c.] Whither he went, in order to keep it, that being at hand, and now come; ſee ver. 13. *In the feaſt day*; either on the day the *Chagigah* was eaten, which was ſometimes emphatically called *the feaſt*, as in *Numb.* xxviii. 16, 17. *and in the fourteenth day of the firſt month*, is *the paſſover of the Lord*; *and in the fifteenth day of this month*, is *the feaſt*; the paſſover lamb was eaten on the fourteenth day of the month *Niſan*, and the *Chagigah* was on the fifteenth; in the former only a lamb was eaten, in the other, cattle out of the herds; hence mention is made, both of flocks and herds, for the keeping the paſſover, *Deut.* xvi. 2. *Jarchi*'s note upon the place is, that the herds were for the *Chagigah*, with which the *Talmud* [l] agrees; and *Jonathan ben Uzziel* paraphraſes the words thus, "and ye ſhall ſlay the "paſſover before the Lord your God, between the "evenings, and the ſheep and oxen on the mor-"row, in that very day, for the joy of the feaſt;" for it was obſerved with great joy and mirth: and the rather this is here meant, ſince the *Chagigah* is not only called *the feaſt*, but this here is diſtinguiſhed from the paſſover, as that is in the paſſage above cited, *Numb.* xxviii. 16, 17. For the paſſover here, ſeems to be the general name for the whole ſeven days of the feſtival; and the feaſt to be the particular feaſt of the firſt day of it, which was the fifteenth; to which may be added, that on this day all the males made their appearance in court [m]; and ſo was a very proper time for Chriſt to work his miracles in, when there were ſo many ſpectators: though it may deſign the whole time of the feaſt, all the ſeven days of unleavened bread; during which time Chriſt was at *Jeruſalem*, and wrought miracles, which had the following effect: *many believed in his name*; that he was ſome great prophet, or the prophet, or the Meſſiah; they gave an hiſtorical aſſent unto him as ſuch, at leaſt for that time: *when they ſaw the miracles which he did*; for as miracles, according to the prophecies of the Old Teſtament, were to be performed by the Meſſiah, ſuch as giving ſight to the blind, cauſing the deaf to hear, the dumb to ſpeak, and the lame to walk, *Iſa.* xxxv. 5, 6. ſo they were expected by the ancient *Jews*, that they would be wrought by him, when he came; wherefore theſe *Jews*, ſeeing ſuch like wonderful things wrought by *Jeſus*, they concluded he muſt be the Meſſiah: though the modern ones, in order to ſhift off the evidence of Jeſus being the Meſſiah, from his miracles, deny that miracles are the characteriſtic of the Meſſiah, or will be performed by him; at leaſt, that there is no neceſſity of them to prove him to be the perſon. What miracles theſe were, which were now wrought by Chriſt, are not recorded by this, or any other Evangeliſt; ſee ch. xx. 30. However, being ſurprized at the marvellous things he did, and upon the evidence of theſe extraordinary works, there were many that concluded he muſt be come from God; among theſe it ſeems, as if *Nicodemus* was one; ſee ch. iii. 2. great part of theſe, at leaſt ſome of them, were only nominal and temporary believers, who were not to be confided in as true diſciples, and hearty followers of Chriſt; and who continued not long in the ſame mind and profeſſion, as appears by what follows.

Ver. 24. *But Jeſus did not commit himſelf unto them*, &c.] The ſenſe according to ſome of the ancients is, that he did not commit the whole of the Goſpel to them; he did not make known to them all his mind and will; this he only did to the twelve apoſtles, his ſpecial diſciples and friends; nor was the time come, that he would make known, or have made known, the things concerning his perſon, office, obedience, ſufferings, death, and reſurrection from the dead: but rather the meaning is, that he did not truſt himſelf with theſe perſons, who believed in him, on the foot of his miracles; he did not take them into the number of his aſſociates; he did not admit them to intimacy with him; nor did he freely converſe with them, or make any long ſtay among them; but ſoon withdrew himſelf from hence, and went into other parts of *Judea*, and into *Galilee*: *becauſe he knew all men*; good and bad: all openly profane ſinners, and all their actions; not only their more publick ones, but thoſe that are done in the dark, and which are the moſt ſecretly deviſed, and levelled againſt the ſaints; and he ſo knew them, as to bring them into judgment: and all good men, true believers; he knows their perſons, as they are his Father's choice, his gift of them to him, his own purchaſe, and as called by his grace; and ſo as to diſtinguiſh them at the laſt day, and give up the full account of every one of them to his Father: he knows the worſt of them, the ſin that dwells in them, their daily infirmities, their ſecret perſonal ſins; their family ſins, both of omiſſion and commiſſion; and their church ſins, or which are committed in the houſe of God; and takes notice of them, ſo as to reſent them, and chaſtize them for them; he knows the beſt of them, their graces, their faith, hope, love, patience, humility, ſelf-denial, *&c.* He knows their good works, and all their weakneſſes and their wants: and he knows all nominal profeſſors, on what foot they take up their profeſſion, and what truſt they place in it; he can diſtinguiſh between grace and mere profeſſion, and diſcern the ſecret luſts which ſuch indulge, and the ſprings and progreſs of their apoſtacy: he knew all theſe men, that upon ſeeing his miracles, profeſſed at this time to believe in him; he knew the hypocriſy and diſſimulation of ſome of them; and he knew the notions they had of a temporal Meſſiah, and the temporal views they had in believing in him; and their deſign to ſet him up as a temporal prince, as ſome afterwards would have done: he knew the flaſhy affections of others, who were like *John's* hearers, that were pleaſed for a while; he knew what ſort of faith it was they believed in him with, that it would not hold long, nor they continue with him; for he knew not only all perſons, but παντα, *all things*, as ſome copies read here; ſee *John* xxi. 17.

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[l] Peſachim, fol. 70. 2.

[m] Maimon. Hilch. Chagigah, c. 1. §. 1.

Ver. 25. *And needed not that any ſhould teſtify of man*, &c.] Of this or the other man, that he was a good or a bad man; he needed no proofs to be made, or teſtimonies bore, or evidence given of mens characters and actions; he was of quick underſtanding, and could diſtinguiſh at once between a wicked man and a good man; and ſo had the characteriſtic which the *Jews* require of the Meſſiah; for they rejected *Bar Cozba* from being the Meſſiah, and ſlew him, becauſe he could not ſmell, referring to *Iſa*. xi. 3. or diſcern a bad man from a good man [n]; but this Jeſus could do, without any external evidence: *for he knew what was in man*; which none but the ſpirit of a man can know; his inward thoughts, the ſecrets of the heart; thus Chriſt knew the thoughts of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, *Matt*. ix. 4. being a diſcerner of the thoughts, and intents of the heart, *Heb*. iv. 12. This *Apollonius Tyaneus*, the ape of Chriſt, aſcribed to himſelf [o]; but is what is peculiar to God; and Chriſt being God, knows all that is in man; that there is no good in him naturally, nothing but what comes from his Father, is imparted by himſelf, or implanted by his Spirit; he knows the wickedneſs there is in man, that his heart is deceitful and deſperately wicked, and full of all manner of iniquities; he knows in what condition all the powers and faculties of the ſouls of men are; what their affections are ſet upon, on earthly or heavenly things; whether there is any light in their underſtandings or no; whether their wills are ſubdued and reſigned to the will of God, or no; whether their minds and conſciences are defiled, or their hearts are ſprinkled from an evil conſcience; in ſhort, whether the internal good work of grace is begun upon their ſouls, or not; and he knows the ſecret ſprings of all actions, good and bad; all which, prove his true and proper deity, and ſhew him to be a ſuitable Saviour of ſinners, and qualify him to be the judge of the whole earth.

## CHAP. III.

Ver. 1. THERE *was a man of the Phariſees*, &c.] The *Syriac* verſion adds, *there*; that is, at *Jeruſalem*; and who were among thoſe that believed in the name of Chriſt, upon ſeeing the miracles he did at the feaſt of the paſſover, in that place. This man was not a common and ordinary man, but a man of note and eminence, of dignity and figure; and who was of the ſect of the *Phariſees*, which was the ſtricteſt ſect for religion and holineſs, among the *Jews*; and which, as corrupt as it was, was alſo the ſoundeſt; as having not only a regard to a Meſſiah, and to all the writings of the Old Teſtament, but alſo believed the doctrines of angels and ſpirits, and the reſurrection of the dead, which the *Sadducees* denied; but yet they were implacable enemies of Chriſt; and therefore it is the more to be wondered at, that ſuch an one ſhould come to him, and deſire a converſation with him: *named Nicodemus*; frequent mention is made of, נקדימון בן גוריון, *Nicodemon ben Gorion*, the brother of *Joſephus ben Gorion* [p], the writer of the wars and antiquities of the *Jews*; and there are ſome things which make it probable, that he was the ſame with this *Nicodemus*; for the *Nicodemon* the *Jews* ſpeak ſo much of, lived in this age; as appears, not only from his being the brother of *Joſephus*, but alſo from his being cotemporary with *R. Jochanan ben Zaccai*, who lived in this time, and until the deſtruction of the temple; ſince theſe two are ſaid [q] to be together at a feaſt, made for the circumciſion of a child. Moreover, he is repreſented as very rich, and is ſaid to be one of the three rich men in *Jeruſalem* [r], and who was able to have maintained, מדינה, a city ten years [s]; and they ſpeak of his daughter, as exceeding rich; they ſay, that ſhe had for her dowry a thouſand thouſand golden denarii, or pence; and that her bed was ſtrowed with (*i. e.* the furniture of it coſt) twelve thouſand golden denarii; and that a *Tyrian* golden denarius, was ſpent upon her every week, for a certain kind of ſoup [t]; and the wiſe men decreed her four hundred golden denarii, for a box of ſpices every day [u]; and it is elſewhere [w] ſaid, five hundred: and this our *Nicodemus* was very rich, as appears from his liberality at the funeral of our Lord, *John* xix. 39. Moreover, the *Nicodemon* of the *Jews*, is ſaid to be a counſellor [x] in *Jeruſalem*; and ſo was this, as ſeems evident from *John* vii. 32, 50, 51. and it may be further obſerved [y], that the right name of *Nicodemon*, was *Boni* [z]; now *Boni* elſewhere [a], is ſaid to be one of the diſciples of *Jeſus*, as *Nicodemus* was ſecretly, and perhaps at, and after his death openly, as his aſſociate *Joſeph* of *Arimathea* was; to which may be added, the extreme poverty that his daughter is by them ſaid to be reduced unto; for they report, that *R. Jochanan ben Zaccai*, ſaw her gathering barley corns from under the horſes hoofs in *Aco* [b]; or as it is elſewhere ſaid, out of the dung of the beaſts of the *Arabians*, when ſhe aſked alms of him, and he enquired of her; what was become of her father's ſubſtance. Now to this low eſtate, the family of our *Nicodemus* might be reduced, through the perſecution of the chriſtians by the *Jews*. The name is *Greek*, as at this time many *Greek* names were in uſe among the *Jews*, and ſignifies the ſame as *Nicolas*; but the *Jews* give an etymology of it, agreeable to the *Hebrew* language; and ſay, that he was ſo called, becauſe the ſun, נקדרה, *ſhone out for his ſake:* the occaſion and reaſon of it they tell us, were this [c]; *Nicodemon*, upon want of water at one of the feaſts, agreed with a certain man for twelve wells of water, to be returned on ſuch a day, or pay twelve talents of ſilver; the day being come, the man demanded the water, or the money; *Nicodemon* went and prayed, and a plentiful rain fell, and filled the wells with water; but meeting the man, he inſiſted on it that the day was paſt, the ſun being ſet, and therefore required the money; *Nicodemon* went and prayed again, and the ſun ſhone out; and they add, that there are three perſons for whom the ſun נקדמה, *was prevented*, detained, or hindered in it's courſe, (a word nearer his name than the former) *Moſes*, and *Joſhua*, and *Nicodemon ben Gorion*; for the two former they produce ſcripture, and for the latter tradition: hence it is elſewhere ſaid [d], that as the ſun ſtood ſtill for *Joſhua*, ſo it ſtood ſtill for *Moſes*, and for *Nicodemon ben Gorion*: but to proceed with the account of our *Nicodemus*, he was *a ruler of the Jews*; not a civil magiſtrate; for the civil government was now in the hands of the *Romans*; but an eccleſiaſtical ruler; he was a member of the *Sanhedrim*, which conſiſted of the doctors, or wiſe men, and prieſts, *Levites*, and elders of the people; and ſo was a dignified perſon, and as afterwards called, a maſter in *Iſrael*.

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[n] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 93. 2.

[o] Philoſtrat. Vit. Apollonii, l. 1. c. 13.

[p] Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 25. 1. Shalſhalet Hakabala, fol. 19. 1.

[q] Pirke Eliezer, c. 2. & Juchaſin, fol. 23. 2.

[r] T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 56. 1.

[s] Midraſh Kohelet, fol. 75. 4.

[t] Abot R. Nathan, c. 6. fol. 3. 2.

[u] T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 66. 2.

[w] Echa Rabbati, fol. 49. 2.

[x] Echa Rabbati, fol. 46. 3. Midraſh Kohelet, fol. 75. 1.

[y] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 20. 1.

[z] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 43. 1.

[a] Echa Rabbati, fol. 49. 3.

[b] T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 66. 2.

Ver. 2. *The ſame came to Jeſus by night*, &c.] Through fear of the *Jews*, of being reproached or turned out of his place by them; or through ſhame, that ſuch a doctor as he was, ſhould be known to go to Jeſus of *Nazareth*, to be inſtructed by him; or leſt he ſhould offend any of his brethren of the *Sanhedrim*: though ſome things may be ſaid in favour of this conduct of *Nicodemus*; for ſince Chriſt would not truſt himſelf with thoſe that believed in him upon ſeeing his miracles, ch. ii. 23, 24. among whom *Nicodemus* ſeems to be; or would not admit them into his company, and enter into a free converſation with him; it was neceſſary, that if he would have any diſcourſe with him, that he ſhould take this method; and if it was the ſame night, in which he had ſeen his miracles in the day, as is probable, he took the firſt opportunity he could, and which ſhows great readineſs and reſpect; add to which, that it was very common with the *Jewiſh* doctors, to meet and converſe together, and ſtudy the law in the night. "*R. Aba* roſe, בפלגות ליליא, "*in the middle of the night*, and the reſt of the "companions, to ſtudy in the law [e]." And it is often [f] ſaid of *R. Simeon ben Jochai*, and *Eleazar* his ſon, that they ſat in the night, and laboured in the law; and it was reckoned very commendable ſo to do, and highly pleaſing to God: it is ſaid [g], "whoever ſtudies in the law in the night, the holy "bleſſed God draws a thread of mercy upon him "in the day:" and likewiſe [h], that "every one "that ſtudies in the law in the night, the *Shekinah* "is over againſt him." But it ſeems, the *Babylonian Jews* did not ſtudy in the law in the night [i]: it might ſeem a needleſs queſtion to aſk, whether *Nicodemus* came alone, or no, were it not that according to the *Jewiſh* canon [k], a ſcholar might not go out in the night alone, becauſe of ſuſpicion: *and ſaid unto him, Rabbi*; a title which now greatly obtained among the *Jewiſh* doctors, and of which they were very fond; ſee the note on *Matt.* xxiii. 7. It comes from a word, which ſignifies great and large; and was uſed by them, to ſuggeſt the large compaſs, and great plenty of knowledge they would be thought to have had; and beſt becomes and ſuits with our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, in whom all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge are: ſalutations among the *Jews*, were forbidden in the night [l]; "ſays *R. Jochanan*, it is forbidden a "man to ſalute his neighbour in the night, leſt it "ſhould be a demon:" but here was no ſuch danger; nor was this ſalutation made in the ſtreet, and in the dark, which the canon ſeems to reſpect: *we know that thou art a teacher come from God*; the *Jews* expected the Meſſiah as a *teacher*, which they might learn from many prophecies, as from *Iſa.* ii. 2, 3. and xlviii. 17. and lxi. 1. Upon the firſt of which, and on that paſſage in it, *he will teach us of his ways*, a noted commentator [m] of theirs has this remark; "המורה, *the teacher*, he is the king "Meſſiah." And the *Targum* on *Joel* ii. 23. paraphraſes the words thus; "O ye children of "*Zion*, rejoice and be glad in the Word of the "Lord your God, for he will return, ית מלפכון, "*your teacher* to you." And *Nicodemus* acknowledges Jeſus as ſuch; and as one that did not come, or was ſent by men, as their doctors were; nor did he come of himſelf, as falſe teachers did; but he came from God, and had his miſſion and commiſſion from him: and this was a known caſe, a clear point, not only to himſelf, but to many of the *Jews*; and even to ſome of his brethren, the members of the *Sanhedrim*; who upon hearing of, and ſeeing the miracles done by Chriſt, might meet and converſe freely together about him, and give their ſentiments of him; and might then agree pretty much in this at that time, that he was at leaſt a prophet, and ſome extraordinary teacher, whom God had ſent among them; and *Nicodemus* coming directly from them, repeats his own ſenſe and theirs, ſupported by the following reaſon: *for no man can do theſe miracles that thou doſt, except God be with him*; referring to the miracles he had done at the paſſover in *Jeruſalem*, very lately; ſee ch. ii. 23. And which, though they are not particularly mentioned, may be concluded to be ſuch, as the diſpoſſeſſing of devils, the curing of all manner of diſeaſes by a word, or touch, from what he at other times, and elſewhere did. Miracles were expected by the *Jews*, to be wrought by the Meſſiah, and many believed in Jeſus on this account; ſee ch. vi. 14. and vii. 31. though the modern *Jews* deny it to be neceſſary, that miracles ſhould be done by the Meſſiah [n]; but *Nicodemus* and other *Jews*, thought otherwiſe, and conſidered the miracles of Chriſt as ſuch, as could never be done by man, nor without the preſence and power of God; and concluded that he was with God, and God with him, and was the true *Immanuel*, who is God with us.

Ver. 3. *Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto him*, &c.] Not to any expreſs queſtion put by *Nicodemus*; unleſs it can be thought, that a queſtion of this kind might be aſked, what is the kingdom of God, ſo much ſpoken of in thy miniſtry? and what is requiſite to the ſeeing and enjoying of it? though not recorded by the Evangeliſt; but rather to the words of *Nicodemus*, concluding from his miracles, that he was the Meſſiah; and that the kingdom of God was now approaching, or the world to come, the *Jews* ſo much ſpeak of; and in which all *Iſrael*, according to their notion, were to have a part [o]; and which notion, our Lord in the following words, ſeems to oppoſe: *verily, verily, I ſay unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot ſee the kingdom of God*; *Nicodemus*, according to the general ſenſe of the nation, thought that when the Meſſiah came, and his kingdom was ſet up, they ſhould all ſhare in it, without any more ado; they being the deſcendants of *Abraham*, and having him for their father: but Chriſt aſſures him, that he muſt be *born again*; in diſtinction from, and oppoſition to his firſt birth by nature; in which he was vile, polluted, carnal, and corrupt, being conceived in ſin, and ſhapen in iniquity,] and was a tranſgreſſor from the womb, and by nature a child of wrath; and in oppoſition to his deſcent from *Abraham*, or being born of him, and of his ſeed; for this would be of no avail to him in this caſe, nor give him any right to the privileges and ordinances of the kingdom of God, or the Goſpel diſpenſation; ſee *Matt.* iii. 9. as alſo to birth by proſelytiſm; for the *Jews* have a frequent ſaying [p], that "one that is made a proſe-"lyte, כקטון שנולד דמי, *is like a child new born*." Which they underſtand, not in a ſpiritual, but in a civil ſenſe; ſuch being free from all natural and civil relations, and from all obligations to parents, maſters [q], *&c.* And by this phraſe our Lord ſignifies, that no man, either as a man, or as a ſon of *Abraham*, or as a proſelyte to the *Jewiſh* religion, can have any true knowledge of, or right unto, the enjoyment of *the kingdom of God*, unleſs he is born again; or regenerated, and quickened by the Spirit of God; renewed in the ſpirit of his mind; has Chriſt formed in his heart; becomes a partaker of the divine nature; and in all reſpects a new creature; and another in heart, in principle, in practice, and converſation; or unleſs he be *born from above*, as the word is rendered in ver. 31. that is, by a ſupernatural power, having the heavenly image inſtamped on him; and being called with an heavenly calling, even with the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus: if this is not the caſe, a man can have no true knowledge of the kingdom of the Meſſiah, which is not a temporal and carnal one; it is not of this world, nor does it come with obſervation; nor can he have any right to the ordinances of it, which are of a ſpiritual nature; and much leſs can he be thought to have any true notions, or to be poſſeſſed of the kingdom of grace, which lies in righteouſneſs, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghoſt; or to have either a meetneſs for, or a right unto the kingdom of glory: though by the following words it ſeems, that the word is rightly rendered *again*, or a *ſecond time*, as it is by *Nonnus*.

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[c] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 20. 1.

[d] T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 25. 1.

[e] Zohar in Exod. fol. 84. 1.

[f] Ib. fol. 88. 2. in Lev. fol. 5. 3, 4. & 10, 1. & paſſim.

[g] T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 12. 2. Avoda Zara, fol. 3. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Talmud Tora, c. 3. §. 13.

[h] T. Bab. Tamid, fol. 32. 2.

[i] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 9. 2.

[k] T. Bab. Cholin, fol. 91. 1. Piſke Toſephot Peſach. art. 12. & Maimon. Hilch. Deyot. c. 5. §. 9.

[l] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 44. 1. & Megilla, fol. 3. 1. & Piſke Toſephot Megilla, art. 4. & in Yebamot, art. 238.

[m] R. David Kimchi in loc.

[n] Maimon. Hilch. Melacim, c. 11. §. 3.

[o] Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 11. §. 1.

Ver. 4. *Nicodemus ſaith unto him*, &c.] Underſtanding him of a natural birth, to be repeated: *how can a man be born when he is old?* as it ſeems by this, he himſelf now was: *can he enter the ſecond time into his mother's womb, and be born?* The *Ethiopic* verſion adds, *again*; and the *Arabic* verſion, *and then be born*; this he urges, as abſurd, impracticable, and impoſſible; and which ſhows him to have been as yet a natural man, who could not receive nor diſcern ſpiritual things.

Ver. 5. *Jeſus anſwered, verily, verily, I ſay unto thee*, &c.] Explaining ſomewhat more clearly, what he had before ſaid: *except a man be born of water and of the Spirit*; theſe are, מלות שנות, *two words*, which expreſs the ſame thing, as *Kimchi* obſerves in many places in his commentaries, and ſignify the grace of the Spirit of God. The *Vulgate Latin* and *Ethiopic* verſions read, *the holy Spirit*, and ſo *Nonnus*; and who doubtleſs is intended: by *water*, is not meant material water, or baptiſmal water; for water baptiſm is never expreſſed by water only, without ſome additional word, which ſhows, that the ordinance of water baptiſm is intended: nor has baptiſm any regenerating influence in it; a perſon may be baptized, as *Simon Magus* was, and yet not born again; and it is ſo far from having any ſuch virtue, that a perſon ought to be born again, before he is admitted to that ordinance: and though ſubmiſſion to it is neceſſary, in order to a perſon's entrance into a Goſpel church-ſtate; yet it is not neceſſary to the kingdom of heaven, or to eternal life and ſalvation: ſuch a miſtaken ſenſe of this text, ſeems to have given the firſt birth and riſe to infant baptiſm in the *African* churches; who taking the words in this bad ſenſe, concluded their children muſt be baptized, or they could not be ſaved; whereas by *water* is meant, in a figurative and metaphorical ſenſe, the grace of God, as it is elſewhere; ſee *Ezek.* xxxvi. 25. *John* iv. 14. Which is the moving cauſe of this new birth, and according to which God begets men again to a lively hope, and that by which it is effected; for it is by the grace of God, and not by the power of man's free-will, that any are regenerated, or made new creatures: and if *Nicodemus* was an officer in the temple, that took care to provide water at the feaſts, as Dr. *Lightfoot* hints, and as it ſhould ſeem *Nicodemon ben Gorion* was, by the ſtory before related of him; ſee the note on ver. 1. Very pertinently does our Lord make mention of water, it being his own element: regeneration is ſometimes aſcribed to God the Father, as in 1 *Pet.* i. 3. *James* i. 18. and ſometimes to the Son, 1 *John* ii. 29. and here to the Spirit, as in *Tit.* iii. 5. who convinces of ſin, ſanctifies, renews, works faith, and every other grace; begins and carries on the work of grace, unto perfection; and unleſs a man has this work of his wrought on his ſoul, as he'll never underſtand divine and ſpiritual things, ſo he can have no right to Goſpel ordinances, or things appertaining to the kingdom of God; nor can he be thought to have paſſed from death to life, and to have entered into an open ſtate of grace, and the kingdom of it; or that living and dying ſo, he ſhall ever enter into the kingdom of heaven; for unleſs a man is regenerated, he is not born heir apparent to it; and without internal holineſs, ſhall not enter into it, enjoy it, or ſee God.

Ver. 6. *That which is born of the fleſh, is fleſh*, &c.] Man by his natural birth, and as he is born according to the fleſh of his natural parents, is a mere natural man; that is, he is carnal and corrupt, and cannot diſcern ſpiritual things; nor can he as ſuch, enter into, and inherit the kingdom of God; ſee 1 *Cor.* ii. 14. and xv. 50. And therefore there is a neceſſity of his being born again, or of the grace of the Spirit, and of his becoming a ſpiritual man; and if he was to be, or could be born again of the fleſh, or ever ſo many times enter into his mother's womb, and be born, was it poſſible, he would ſtill be but a natural and a carnal man, and ſo unfit for the kingdom of God. By *fleſh* here, is not meant the fleſhy part of man the body, as generated of another fleſhy ſubſtance; for this is no other than what may be ſaid of brutes; and beſides, if this was the ſenſe, *ſpirit* in the next clauſe, muſt mean the ſoul, whereas one ſoul is not generated from another: but by fleſh is deſigned, the nature of man; not merely as weak and frail, but as unclean and corrupt, through ſin; and which, being propagated by natural generation from ſinful men,

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[p] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 22. 1. 48. 2. 62. 1. & 97. 2.

[q] Vid. Maimon. Iſſure Bia, c. 14. §. 11. & Eduth, c. 13. §. 2.

cannot be otherwiſe; for *who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one*, *Job* xiv. 4. And tho' the ſoul of man is of a ſpiritual nature, and remains a ſpirit, notwithſtanding the pollution of ſin; yet it being defiled with the fleſh, and altogether under the power and influence of the luſts of the fleſh, it may well be ſaid to be carnal or fleſhly: hence *fleſh*, as it ſtands oppoſed to *ſpirit*, ſignifies the corruption of nature, *Gal.* v. 17. and ſuch who are in a ſtate of unregeneracy, are ſaid to be after the fleſh, and in the fleſh, and even the mind itſelf, is ſaid to be carnal, *Rom.* viii. 5, 6, 7, 8. *And that which is born of the Spirit, is ſpirit:* a man that is regenerated by the Spirit of God, and the efficacy of his grace, is a ſpiritual man; he can diſcern and judge all things of a ſpiritual nature; he's a fit perſon to be admitted to ſpiritual ordinances and privileges; and appears to be in the ſpiritual kingdom of Chriſt; and has a right to the world of bleſſed ſpirits above; and when his body is raiſed a ſpiritual body, will be admitted in ſoul, body, and ſpirit, into the joy of his Lord. *Spirit* in the firſt part of this clauſe, ſignifies the Holy Spirit of God, the author of regeneration and ſanctification; whence that work is called the ſanctification of the Spirit, and the renewing of the Holy Ghoſt, 1 *Pet.* i. 2. *Titus* iii. 5. And *ſpirit* in the latter part, intends the internal work of grace upon the ſoul, from whence a man is denominated a ſpiritual man; and as a child bears the ſame name with its parent; ſo this is called by the ſame, as the author and efficient cauſe of it: and beſides, it is of a ſpiritual nature itſelf, and exerts itſelf in ſpiritual acts and exerciſes, and directs to, and engages in ſpiritual things; and has its ſeat alſo in the ſpirit, or ſoul of man.

Ver. 7. *Marvel not that I ſaid unto thee*, &c.] For *Nicodemus* was quite aſtoniſhed, at this doctrine of the new birth; it was altogether new to him, and unheard of by him; nor could he underſtand, nor conceive in what manner it could be: *ye muſt be born again*; in *four* of *Beza*'s copies, it is read *we*; but as Chriſt was not begotten in a carnal way, or deſcended not from *Adam* in the ordinary way of generation, he was not carnal and corrupt, nor in the leaſt tainted with ſin; and ſo ſtood in no need of regeneration; wherefore ſuch a reading muſt be rejected. There is a neceſſity of the regeneration of thoſe, who are the choſen of God, and the redeemed of the Lamb; and of them only, can the words be underſtood; for as for others, they neither can, nor will, nor muſt be born again: but the people of God *muſt*; partly becauſe it is the will of God; it is his purpoſe and reſolution, that they ſhall be regenerated; he has choſen them, through ſanctification of the Spirit, unto ſalvation by Chriſt: this is the way and method of ſaving ſinners he has fixed upon, namely, not to ſave them by works of righteouſneſs, but by grace, and according to abundant mercy, through the waſhing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghoſt: and partly, becauſe of the caſe and condition of men, which requires it; for whereas the choſen people of God, are predeſtinated to the adoption of children, and are taken into the family of God, and are heirs to an inheritance, it is neceſſary they ſhould have a nature, temper, and diſpoſition of mind, ſuitable to the inheritance they are to enjoy; which they have not in their natural eſtate, and which is conveyed to them in regeneration: beſides, their carnal minds are enmity to God, and it is neceſſary that they ſhould be friendly to him, which can't be without regeneration; nor can they, till they are born again, pleaſe God, or do thoſe things which are pleaſing to him: to which may be added, which Chriſt has before ſuggeſted, and which ſhews the neceſſity of it, that without it, no man can either ſee, or enter into the kingdom of God. To take off the ſurprize of *Nicodemus*, our Lord inſtances in a common natural caſe, and to which this affair of regeneration may be compared, and by it illuſtrated.

Ver. 8. *The wind bloweth where it liſteth*, &c.] For ought any mortal can ſay, or do to the contrary: and ſo the Spirit of God is a free-agent in regeneration; he works how, and where, and when he pleaſes; he acts freely in the firſt operation of his grace on the heart, and in all after influences of it; as well as in the donation of his gifts to men, for different purpoſes; ſee 1 *Cor.* xii. 11. and this grace of the Spirit in regeneration, like the wind, is powerful and irreſiſtable; it carries all before it; there's no withſtanding it; it throws down ſatan's ſtrong holds, demoliſhes the fortifications of ſin; the whole poſſe of hell, and the corruptions of a man's heart, are not a match for it; when the Spirit works, who can let? *and thou heareſt the ſound thereof*, *but canſt not tell whence it cometh*, *nor whither it goeth*; as the wind, though its ſound is heard, and its force felt, it can't be ſeen; nor is it known certainly, from whence it comes, and where are the treaſures of it; from whence it begins, and where it ends; ſo is the grace of the Spirit of God in regeneration to a natural man; it is imperceptible, indiſcernable, and unaccountable by him, 1 *Cor.* ii. 14. *So is every one that is born of the Spirit*; he is regenerated by grace, that is, as free and ſovereign, as powerful and irreſiſtible, and as ſecret and imperceptible, as the wind is: and ſeeing ſo ordinary a thing as the blowing of the wind is of ſuch a nature, and ſo little to be accounted for; regeneration by the Spirit of God, who is comparable to the wind, and whoſe name ſo ſignifies, need not be thought ſo marvellous and aſtoniſhing, though the natural man diſcerns it not, and can't account for it. The beauty and propriety of this ſimile will more appear by obſerving, that the ſame *Hebrew* word, רוח, is uſed both for the wind, and for the Holy Spirit of God; it is uſed for the *wind*, in *Gen.* iii. 8. and viii. 1. 1 *Kings* xix. 11. *Eccl.* i. 6. and in other places, and for the Spirit of God, in *Gen.* i. 2. and vi. 3. *Job* xxxiii. 4. and elſewhere: and ſo likewiſe the *Greek* word πνευμα, is uſed for them both, for the wind in this place, and often for the Holy Ghoſt: and it may be obſerved, that the Holy Spirit, becauſe of his powerful, comfortable, and quickening influences, is compared to the wind, eſpecially to the ſouth wind, in ſome paſſages of the Old Teſtament, which Chriſt might have in view, *Cant.* iv. 16. *Zech.* ix. 14. What our Lord here ſays, concerning the wind, is confirmed by all experience, and philoſophical obſervations; the riſe of winds, from whence they come, and whither they go, cannot be aſcertained; the treaſures of them are only with God, and known to him; ſee *Eccl.* xi. 5.

Ver. 9. *Nicodemus anſwered and ſaid unto him*, &c.] Remaining ſtill as ignorant as ever, though Chriſt had explained the phraſe *born again*, at which he ſtumbled, by a being *born of water and of the ſpirit*, or of the grace of the Spirit of God; and had illuſtrated this by the free, powerful, and inviſible blowing of the wind: *how can theſe things be?* The *Arabic* verſion reads, *how can this be?* referring either to the laſt thing ſaid, that a man's being born of the Spirit, is like the blowing of the wind; or to the explanation of the firſt expreſſion, that a man ſhould be born of water, and of the Spirit; or to the firſt aſſertion itſelf, that a man ſhould be born again; which, notwithſtanding the explanation and illuſtration, ſeemed as impoſſible, and as impracticable as ever; or rather to them all, and ſo the *Perſic* verſion reads, *how can all theſe things be?*

Ver. 10. *Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto him*, &c.] Upbraiding him with his continued and invincible ignorance, which was aggravated by his dignified character: *art thou a maſter in Iſrael?* or *of Iſrael*, as all the *Oriental* verſions render it, as it literally may be rendered. He was one of the חכמי ישראל, *wiſe men*, or *doctors of Iſrael* [r], ſo often mentioned by the *Jews*. One of the *Jewiſh* doctors was anſwered, by a boy, juſt in ſuch language as is here uſed; who, not underſtanding the direction he gave him about the way into the city, ſaid to him, אתה הוא חכם של ישראל, *art thou he, a doctor*, or *maſter of Iſrael?* did not I ſay to thee ſo? *&c.* [s] He was not a common teacher; not a teacher of babes, nor a teacher in their ſynagogues, or in their *Midraſhim*, or divinity ſchools, but in their great *Sanhedrim*; and the article before the word uſed will admit it to be rendered, *that maſter*, doctor, or teacher; that famous, and moſt excellent one, who was talked of all over *Jeruſalem* and *Judea*, as a ſurpaſſing one: and now, tho' he was not only an *Iſraelite*, with whom were the laws, ſtatutes, judgments, and oracles of God, the writings of *Moſes*, and the prophets; but a teacher of *Iſraelites*, and in the higheſt claſs of teachers, and of the greateſt fame among them, yet was ignorant of the firſt and important things in religion: *and knoweſt not theſe things?* which were ſo plainly to be ſuggeſted in the ſacred writings, with which he was, or ought to have been converſant: for the ſame things Chriſt had been ſpeaking of, are there expreſſed by a circumciſion of the heart; by a birth, a nation's being born at once; by ſanctification; by the grace of God ſignified under the metaphor of water; and by quickening perſons, comparable to dry bones, thro' the wind blowing, and breathing into them, *Deut.* xxx. 6. *Iſ.* xlix. 21. and lxvi. 8. *Ezek.* xxxvi. 25. and xxxvii. 9, 10.

Ver. 11. *Verily, verily I ſay unto thee, we ſpeak that we do know*, &c.] Meaning either himſelf, and *John* the *Baptiſt* his fore-runner, who preached the ſame doctrine of regeneration, internal ſanctification, and evangelical repentance, as well as outward reformation, as neceſſary to entrance into the kingdom of heaven, or Goſpel-diſpenſation, he declared was juſt at hand; or his diſciples with himſelf, who were now with him, and whom he had called to preach the ſame truths he himſelf did; or the prophets of the Old Teſtament, who agreed with him in theſe things; or the Father that was with him, and never left him alone, and the Holy Spirit that was upon him, by whom he was anointed to preach theſe things, and who ſpoke them in him; or elſe he may uſe the plural number of himſelf alone, as being one in authority, and ſpeaking with it, as he ſometimes did, *Mark* iv. 30. and the rather this ſeems to be the ſenſe, ſince he immediately, in the next verſe, ſpeaks in the ſingular number, *if I have told you earthly things*, &c. Now Chriſt muſt needs thoroughly, and certainly know what he ſpoke, ſince he was not only the omniſcient God, but, as mediator, had all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge in him, and the Spirit of wiſdom and knowledge reſted on him: *and teſtify that we have ſeen*; and therefore ought to have been received as a credible witneſs, as he was a faithful one; ſince *ſeeing* and *knowing* are qualifications in a witneſs, *Lev.* v. 1. and tho' theſe were eminently in Chriſt, the generality of the *Jews* gave no credit to his teſtimony: *and ye received not our witneſs*; which was an aggravation of their ſin and unbelief; ſee ver. 32.

Ver. 12. *If I have told you earthly things*, &c.] Not that the doctrines he delivered were earthly ones; for he was not of the earth, but from heaven, and above all, and ſo ſpake not of the earth, but of heaven, ver. 31. and this doctrine of regeneration was an heavenly doctrine; and the thing itſelf required ſupernatural power, and grace from above: but either they were the more eaſy doctrines of the Goſpel; or were delivered in a plain and eaſy ſtile, and illuſtrated by ſimilies taken from earthly things, as from human birth, from the water, and from the wind: *and ye believe not*; i. e. thoſe things; ye don't receive them, nor give credit to them; or *me*, as the *Ethiopic* verſion adds, who relate them on the beſt evidence, having fully known, and clearly ſeen them: *how ſhall ye believe*; give credit to me, or receive my teſtimony: *if I tell you of heavenly things?* of the more ſublime doctrines of the Goſpel, ſuch as the deſcent of the Meſſiah from heaven; the union of the two natures, human and divine, in him; his being the only-begotten Son of God; his crucifixion and death, ſignified by the lifting up of the ſerpent on a pole in the wilderneſs; and the wonderful love of God to the *Gentile* world in giving Chriſt to, and for them; and the ſalvation, and eternal happineſs of all that believe in him, whether they be *Jews* or *Gentiles*; and theſe delivered in language ſuitable to them, without figures, or natural ſimilies, which help the underſtanding, and convey ideas of things more eaſily to it.

Ver. 13. *And no man hath aſcended into heaven*, &c.] Tho' *Enoch* and *Elias* had, yet not by their own power, nor in the ſenſe our Lord deſigns; whoſe meaning is, that no man had, or could go up to heaven, to bring from thence the knowledge of divine and heavenly things; in which ſenſe the phraſe is uſed in *Deut.* xxx. 12. *Rom.* x. 6. and which may be illuſtrated by *John* i. 18. wherefore inaſmuch as *Nicodemus* had acknowledged Chriſt to be a teacher come from God, our Lord would have him know, that he was the only teacher of heavenly things, as being the only perſon that had been in heaven, and in the boſom of the Father; and therefore if he, and the reſt of the *Jews*, did not receive inſtructions from him, they muſt for ever remain ignorant; for there never had been, nor was, nor could be, any mere man that could go up to heaven, and learn the myſteries of God, and of the kingdom of heaven, and return and inſtruct men in them: *but he that came down from heaven*; meaning himſelf, who is the Lord from heaven, and came from thence to do the will of God by preaching the Goſpel, working miracles, obeying the law, and ſuffering death in the room of his people, and thereby obtaining eternal redemption for them. Not that he brought down from heaven with him, either the whole of his human nature, or a part of it; either an human ſoul, or an human body; nor did he deſcend locally, by change of place, he being God omnipreſent, infinite and immenſe, but by aſſumption of the human nature into union with his divine perſon: *even the ſon of man which is in heaven*; at the ſame time he was then on earth: not that he was in heaven in his human nature, and as he was the Son of man; but in his divine nature, as he was the Son of God; ſee *John* i. 18. tho' this is predicated of his perſon, as denominated from the human nature, which was proper to him only in his divine nature; for ſuch is omnipreſence, or to be in heaven and earth at the ſame time: just as on the other hand God is ſaid to purchaſe the church with his blood, and the Lord of glory is ſaid to be crucified, *Acts* xx. 28. 1 *Cor.* ii. 8. where thoſe things are ſpoken of Chriſt, as denominated from his divine nature, which were proper only to his human nature; and is what divines call a communication of idioms or properties; and which will ſerve as a key to open all ſuch paſſages of ſcripture: and now as a proof of our Lord's having been in heaven, and of his being a teacher come from God, and ſuch an one as never was, or can be, he opens and explains, a type reſpecting himſelf, in the following verſe.

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[r] Derech Eretz, fol. 18. 1.

[s] Echa Rabbati, fol. 44. 4.

Ver. 14. *And as Moſes lifted up the ſerpent in the wilderneſs*, &c.] The hiſtory referr'd to is in *Numb.* xxi. 8. There is, in many things, an agreement between this ſerpent, and Jeſus Chriſt: as in the *matter* of it, it was a brazen ſerpent; it was made not of gold, nor of ſilver, but of braſs, the meaner metal, and was a very unlikely means, of itſelf, to heal the *Iſraelites*; and might be deſpiſed by many: this may denote the meanneſs of Chriſt in his human nature, in his birth and parentage, and place of education and converſe; and eſpecially in his crucifixion and death; and which, to an eye of carnal ſenſe and reaſon ſeemed a very improbable means of ſaving ſinners; and therefore were to ſome a ſtumbling block, and to others fooliſhneſs: tho' on the other hand, as braſs is a ſhining metal, and might be choſe for the ſerpent in the wilderneſs to be made of, that by the luſtre of it the eyes of the *Iſraelites* might be attracted and directed to it, who were at the greateſt diſtance in the camp; ſo it may be expreſſive of the glory of Chriſt, as the only-begotten of the Father, and who is the brightneſs of his Father's glory; and which is the great attractive, motive and inducement to engage ſouls to look unto him, and believe in him, *Iſ.* xlv. 22. and whereas braſs is both a ſtrong and durable metal, it may ſignify the ſtrength of Chriſt, who is the mighty God, and mighty to ſave; and his duration, as a ſaviour, being the ſame to-day, yeſterday, and for ever: likewiſe, the compariſon between the ſerpent *Moſes* lifted up, and Chriſt, may be obſerved in the *form* of it. The brazen ſerpent had the form of a ſerpent, but not the poiſon and venomous nature of one; ſo Chriſt was ſent, in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh, and was found in faſhion as a man, as a ſinful man, but was without ſin, and was perfectly holy; and yet being in this form, was made both ſin and a curſe, that he might redeem his people both from ſin, and from the curſe of the law, by dying a death which denominated him accurſed, of which the ſerpent was an emblem: beſides, this ſerpent was a fiery one; at leaſt it looked like one of the fiery ſerpents, being of braſs, which ſhone as tho' it burned in a furnace; and may be an emblem both of Chriſt's Father's wrath, which was poured out like fire upon him, and of his love to his people, which was like burning fire, the coals whereof gave a moſt vehement flame. Moreover, this ſerpent *Moſes* made, and was ordered to make, was but *one*, tho' the fiery ſerpents, with which the *Iſraelites* were bitten, were many; ſo there is but one mediator between God and man; but one ſaviour, in whom alone is ſalvation, and in no other, even Jeſus Chriſt. To which may be added the *ſituation* in which this ſerpent was put: it was ſet by *Moſes* on a pole; it was lifted up on high, that every one in the camp of *Iſrael* might ſee it; and may point out the aſcenſion of Chriſt into heaven, and his exaltation at God's right hand there, as ſome think; or his being ſet up in the miniſtry of the word, and held forth and exalted there as the only ſaviour of loſt ſinners; or rather his crucifixion, which is ſometimes expreſſed by a lifting up, *John* viii. 28. and xii. 32. Once more, there is an agreement in the effect that followed upon the lifting up of the ſerpent; and which was the deſign of it, *viz.* the healing of ſuch *Iſraelites* as were bitten by the fiery ſerpents, who looked to this: for as the *Iſraelites* were bitten by fiery ſerpents, with the poiſon of which they were infected, and were in danger of death, and to many of them their bitings were mortal; ſo men are poiſoned with the venom of the old ſerpent the devil, by which they are ſubjected to a corporal death, and are brought under a ſpiritual, or moral death, and are liable to an eternal one: and as theſe bitings were ſuch as *Moſes* could not cure; ſo the wounds of ſin, thro' the old ſerpent, are ſuch as can't be healed by the law, moral or ceremonial, or by obedience to either: and as they were the *Iſraelites* who were convinced of their ſin, and acknowledged it, and had a cure by looking to the brazen ſerpent; ſo ſuch whom the Spirit of God convinces of ſin, and to whom he gives the ſeeing eye of faith, theſe, through ſeeing the Son, and looking to Jeſus, as crucified and ſlain, receive healing by his ſtripes and wounds: and as thoſe, who were ever ſo much bit and poiſoned by the fiery ſerpents, or were at ever ſo great a diſtance from the pole, or had the weakeſt eye, yet if they could but diſcern the ſerpent on the pole, though it only appeared as a ſhining piece of braſs, had a cure; ſo the greateſt of ſinners, and who are afar off from God, and all that is good, and who have faith but as a grain of muſtard-ſeed, or but a glimmering view of Chriſt, of his glory, fulneſs, and ſuitableneſs, ſhall be ſaved by him. To add no more, this was done *in the wilderneſs*; which may ſignify this world, Chriſt's coming into it, his crucifixion in it, and his going without the camp, bearing our reproach, or ſuffering without the gates of *Jeruſalem*. It is certain, that the *Jews* had a notion that the brazen ſerpent was ſymbolical and figurative: *Philo* the *Jew* makes it to be a ſymbol of fortitude and temperance[t]; and the author of the *apocryphal* book of *Wiſdom*[u], calls it *a ſign of ſalvation*. They thought there was ſomething myſterious in it: hence they ſay[w], "in "four places it is ſaid, *make thee*, &c. In three "places it is explained, *viz. Gen.* vi. 14. *Numb.* "x. 2. *Joſh.* v. 2. and one is not explained, *Numb.* "xxi. 8. *make thee a fiery ſerpent*, לא פירש, *is* "*not explained.*" And elſewhere[x] they aſk, "and "could the ſerpent kill, or make alive? But at "the time that *Iſrael* looked up, and ſerved with "their hearts their Father which is in heaven, they "were healed; but if not, they were brought low." So that the look was not merely to the brazen ſerpent, but to God in heaven; yea, to the Word of God, his eſſential Logos, as ſay the *Targumiſts* on *Numb.* xxi. 9. The *Jeruſalem Targum* paraphraſes the words thus: "and *Moſes* made a ſerpent of "braſs, and put it upon a high place, and who-

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[t] De Agricult. p. 202. & Allegor. l. 3. p. 1101, 1102, 1103, 1104.

[u] C. 16. v. 6.

[w] T. Hieroſ. Roſhhaſhanah, fol. 59. 1.

[x] Miſn. Roſhhaſhanah, c. 3. § 8.

“ ever was bitten by the ſerpents, and lift up his “ face, in prayer, to his Father which is in hea- “ ven, and looked upon the ſerpent of braſs, lived.” And *Jonathan ben Uzziel* paraphraſes them thus: “ and *Moſes* made a ſerpent of braſs, and put it “ on a high place; and it was, when a ſerpent had “ bitten any man, and he looked to the ſerpent of “ braſs, *and directed his heart*, לשום מימרא דיי, “ *to the name of the word of the Lord*, he lived.” And this healing they underſtand not only of bodily healing, but of the healing of the ſoul: for they obſerve [y], that “ as ſoon as they ſaid, *we have* “ *ſinned*, immediately their iniquity was expiated; “ and they had the good news brought them *of* “ *the healing of the ſoul*, as it is written, *make thee* “ *a ſeraph*; and he does not ſay a ſerpent; and “ this is it: *and it ſhall come to paſs, that every one* “ *that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, ſhall live*, “ רפואת הנפש, *thro' the healing of the ſoul*:” yea, they compare the Meſſiah to a ſerpent; for ſo the *Targum* on *Iſ*. xiv. 29. paraphraſes that paſſage: “ the Meſſiah ſhall come forth from *Jeſſe*'s chil- “ drens children; and his works ſhall be among “ you as a *flying ſerpent*.” And who elſe can be deſigned by the *other ſerpent of life* [z], and the *holy ſerpent* [a] they ſpeak of, in oppoſition to the evil ſerpent that ſeduced *Eve?* And it is well known, that נחש, *a ſerpent*, and משיח, *Meſſiah*, are numerically, or by gematry, the ſame; a way of interpretation, and explanation, often in uſe with the *Jews*. Now, as this ſerpent was lifted up on a pole on high, that every one that was bitten with the fiery ſerpent might look to it, and be healed; *even ſo muſt the ſon of man be lifted up*; upon the croſs, and die: the crucifixion and death of Chriſt were neceſſary, and muſt be, becauſe of the decrees and purpoſes of God, by which he was foreordained thereunto, and by which determinate counſel he was delivered, taken, crucified, and ſlain; and becauſe of his own engagements as a ſurety, laying himſelf under obligations in the council and covenant of peace, to ſuffer, and die, in the room of his people; and becauſe of the prophecies of the Old Teſtament, and his own predictions, that ſo it ſhould be; as alſo, that the antitype might anſwer the type; and particularly, that he might be a ſuitable object of faith for wounded ſinners, ſenſible of ſin to look unto.

Ver. 15. *That whoſoever believeth in him*, &c.] Whether *Jew* or *Gentile*, a greater, or a leſſer ſinner, and of whatſoever ſtate and condition, age or ſex; and though ever ſo weak a believer, provided his faith is of the right kind: not an hiſtorical or temporary one, a mere aſſent to the truth of things reſpecting his perſon, office, and work; but ſuch a faith, by which a ſoul ſees a glory, fulneſs, and ſuitableneſs in him as a Saviour; goes to him, ventures on him, commits itſelf to him, lays hold on him, and receives him, leans and relies upon him, and truſts in him, and lives upon him; and which is the faith of God's elect; a gift of his grace, and the operation of his Spirit; and which works by love, and is attended with the fruits of righteouſneſs: now the end of Chriſt's crucifixion and death is, that ſuch an one *ſhould not periſh*; tho' he is in a loſt and periſhing condition in *Adam*, and by nature, and ſees himſelf to be ſo, and comes to Chriſt as ſuch; and tho' his frames and comforts are periſhing, and he ſometimes fears he ſhall be utterly loſt; and tho' he is ſubject to ſlips and falls, and great ſpiritual decays; and ſhall periſh as to the outward man by death; yet he ſhall never periſh eternally, or be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction, as the wicked will: *but have eternal life*; not by his works, but as the gift of God: and which he that truly believes has already in the covenant of grace, in Chriſt his head, in faith and hope; and has the earneſt and pledge of it, the Spirit of God; and the beginning of it, which is the knowledge of God in Chriſt; and ſhall hereafter poſſeſs it fully, and in perſon, to all eternity: even a life of perfect holineſs and knowledge; a life of never-ending pleaſure; a life free from all the ſorrows, diſtreſſes, and imperfections of this; and which will always continue.

Ver. 16. *For God ſo loved the world*, &c.] The *Perſic* verſion reads *men*; but not every man in the world is here meant, or all the individuals of human nature; for all are not the objects of God's ſpecial love, which is here deſigned, as appears from the inſtance and evidence of it, the gift of his Son: nor is Chriſt God's gift to every one; for to whomſoever he gives his Son, he gives all things freely with him; which is not the caſe of every man. Nor is human nature here intended, in oppoſition to, and diſtinction from the angelic nature; for tho' God has ſhewed a regard to fallen men, and not to fallen angels; and has provided a Saviour for the one, and not for the other; and Chriſt has aſſumed the nature of men, and not angels; yet not for the ſake of all men, but the ſpiritual ſeed of *Abraham*; and beſides, it will not be eaſily proved, that human nature is ever called the world: nor is the whole body of the choſen ones, as conſiſting of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, here deſigned; for tho' theſe are called the world, *John* vi. 33, 51. and are the objects of God's ſpecial love, and to them Chriſt is given, and they are brought to believe in him, and ſhall never periſh, but ſhall be ſaved with an everlaſting ſalvation; yet rather the *Gentiles* particularly, and God's elect among them, are meant; who are often called *the world*, and *the whole world*, and *the nations of the world*, as diſtinct from the *Jews*; ſee *Rom*. xi. 12, 15. 1 *John* ii. 2. *Luke* xii. 30. compared with *Matt*. vi. 32. The *Jews* had the ſame diſtinction we have now, the church and the world; the former they took to themſelves, and the latter they gave to all the nations around: hence we often meet with this diſtinction, *Iſrael*, and the nations of the world; on thoſe words, “ *let them bring* “ *forth their witneſs*, that they may be juſtified, *Iſ*. “ xliii. 9. (ſay [b] the doctors) theſe are *Iſrael*; *or let* “ *them hear and ſay it is truth*, theſe are *the nations* “ *of the world*.” And again [c], “ the holy, bleſſed “ God ſaid to *Iſrael*, when I judge *Iſrael*, I don't “ judge them as *the nations of the world*:” and ſo in a multitude of places: and it ſhould be obſerved, that our Lord was now diſcourſing with a *Jewiſh Rabbi*, and that he is oppoſing a commonly received notion of theirs, that when the Meſſiah came, the *Gentiles* ſhould have no benefit or advantage by him, only the *Iſraelites*; ſo far ſhould they be from it, that, according to their ſenſe, the moſt dreadful judgments, calamities, and curſes, ſhould befal them; yea, hell and eternal damnation. There is a place, they ſay [d], the name of “ which is *Hadrach*, *Zech*. ix. 1. This is the king “ Meſſiah, who is, חד ורך, *ſharp and tender*; “ ſharp to *the nations*, and tender to *Iſrael*.” And ſo of the *ſun of righteouſneſs*, in *Mal*. iv. 2. they ſay,

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[y] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 123. 2.
[z] Zohar in Gen. fol. 36. 2.
[a] Tikkune Zohar in Jetzira, p. 134.
[b] T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 2. 1.
[c] Ib. fol. 4. 1. Vid. T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 91. 2. & Bereſhit Rabba, fol. 11. 3.
[d] Shirhaſhirim Rabba, fol. 24. 1. Jarchi & Kimchi in Zech. ix. 1.

ſay [e], "there is healing for the *Iſraelites* in it, but "the idolatrous nations ſhall be burnt by it." And that [f] "there is mercy for *Iſrael*, but judgment for "the reſt of the nations." And on thoſe words, in *Iſ.* xxi. 12. *the morning cometh, and alſo the night*, they obſerve [g], "the morning is for the righteous, "and the night for the wicked; the morning is "for *Iſrael*, and the night for *the nations of the* "*world*." And again [h], "in the time to come, "(the times of the Meſſiah) the holy, bleſſed God, "will bring *darkneſs* upon *the nations*, and will enlighten *Iſrael*, as it is ſaid, *Iſ.* lx. 2." Once "more [i], "in the time to come, the holy, bleſſed "God will bring the nations of the world, and will "caſt them into the midſt of hell under the *Iſraelites*, "as it is ſaid, *Iſ.* xliii. 3." To which may be added that denunciation of theirs [k], "wo to *the* "*nations of the world*, who periſh, and they know "not that they periſh: in the time that the ſanctuary was ſtanding, the altar atoned for them; "but now, who ſhall atone for them?" Now, in oppoſition to ſuch a notion, our Lord addreſſes this *Jew*; and it is as if he had ſaid, you *Rabbins* ſay, that when the Meſſiah comes, only the *Iſraelites*, the peculiar favourites of God, ſhall ſhare in the bleſſings that come by, and with him; and that the *Gentiles* ſhall reap no advantage by him, being hated of God, and rejected of him: but I tell you, God has ſo loved the *Gentiles*, as well as the *Jews*, *that, he gave his only-begotten Son*; to, and for them, as well as for the *Jews*; to be a covenant of the people, the *Gentiles*, the ſaviour of them, and a ſacrifice for them: a gift which is a ſufficient evidence of his love to them; it being a large and comprehenſive one, an irreverſible and unſpeakable one; no other than his own Son by nature, of the ſame eſſence, perfections, and glory with him; begotten by him in a way unconceivable an inexpreſſible by mortals; and his only-begotten one; the object of his love and delight, and in whom he is ever well pleaſed; and yet, ſuch is his love to the *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, that he has given him, in human nature, up, into the hands of men, and of juſtice, and to death itſelf: *that whoſoever believeth in him*, whether *Jew* or *Gentile*, *ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life*; ſee the note on the preceding verſe.

Ver. 17. *For God ſent not his Son into the world*, &c.] God did ſend his Son into the world in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh, being made of a woman, and made under the law; and which is an inſtance of his great love, and not of any diſreſpect to his Son, or of any inequality between them: but then this was not *to condemn the world*; even any part of it, or any in it: not the *Gentiles*, as the *Jews* thought he would; for tho' God had ſuffered them to walk in their own ways, and had winked at, or overlooked the times of their ignorance, and had ſent no prophet unto them, nor made any revelation of his will, or any diſcovery of his ſpecial grace unto them; yet he ſent his Son now, not to deſtroy them for their idolatry, and wickedneſs, but to be the Saviour of them: nor the *Jews*; for as impenitent and unbelieving, and as wicked as they were, he did not accuſe them to the father, nor judge and condemn them; he was to come again in power and great glory, when he would take vengeance on them, and cauſe wrath to come upon them to the uttermoſt, for their diſbelief and rejection of him; but this was not his buſineſs now: nor the wicked of the world in general; to judge, and condemn them, will be his work, when he comes a ſecond time, in the day God has appointed to judge the world in righteouſneſs. *But* the end of his miſſion, and firſt coming is, *that the world thro' him might be ſaved*; even the world of the elect in general, whom God determined to ſave, and has choſen, to obtain ſalvation by Jeſus Chriſt, and has appointed Chriſt to be the ſalvation of; and who being ſent, came into the world to ſeek and ſave them; and his choſen people among the *Gentiles* in particular: wherefore he is ſaid to be God's ſalvation to the ends of the earth; and all the ends of the earth are called upon to look unto him, and be ſaved by him, *Iſ.* xlix. 6. and xlv. 22.

Ver. 18. *He that believeth on him is not condemned*, &c.] Whether *Jew* or *Gentile*, becauſe a believer is openly in Chriſt; and there is no condemnation to thoſe that are in him: and though the ſentence of death paſſed upon all in *Adam*, and judgment came upon all men to condemnation in him; yet this ſentence being executed on Chriſt, the ſurety of his people, who has been condemned to death, and has ſuffered it in their ſtead, his death is a ſecurity to them from all condemnation; and they are delivered by him from the curſe and condemnation of the law: and having in converſion openly paſſed from death to life, they ſhall never enter into condemnation; and this is the happy caſe of every one that believes in Chriſt: *but he that believeth not is condemned already*. The *Perſic* verſion renders it, *from the beginning*; he remains under the ſentence of condemnation, paſſed in *Adam* upon him; the law accuſes him, and pronounces him guilty before God; he is under the curſe of it, and it is a miniſtration of condemnation and death to him; nor has he any thing to ſecure him from its charge, curſe, and condemnation: this muſt be underſtood of one that is a final unbeliever, or that lives, and dies, in a ſtate of impenitence, and unbelief: *becauſe he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God*; whom God has ſent to be the ſaviour of loſt ſinners, and to deliver them from wrath to come; and there is no other name but his, whereby men can be ſaved; ſo that ſuch that do not believe in him, muſt be damned.

Ver. 19. *And this is the condemnation*, &c.] Of him that believes not in Chriſt; that is, this is the matter and cauſe of his condemnation, and by which it is aggravated, and appears to be juſt: *that light is come into the world*; by which is meant, not natural, or corporal light; tho' natural darkneſs is, by ſome, preferred to this, being more convenient for their evil works; as by thieves, murderers, and adulterers: nor is the light of nature deſigned, with which every man is enlightened that comes into the world; which, tho' but a dim light, might be of more uſe, and ſervice, than it is; and is often rejected, and rebelled againſt, by wicked men, and which will be the condemnation of the heathen world: but rather the light of divine revelation, both in the law of God, and Goſpel of Chriſt; eſpecially the latter is here intended; and which, though ſo great a favour to fallen men, is deſpiſed, and denied by the ſons of darkneſs: tho' it may be beſt of all to underſtand it of Chriſt himſelf, the light of the world, and who is come a light into it; ſee *John* viii. 12. and xii. 46. who may be called *light*, becauſe he has ſet revelation in its cleareſt and fulleſt light; he has declared the whole mind, and will of God concerning the affair of divine worſhip, and the buſineſs of ſalvation: grace, and truth, are come by him; the doctrines of grace, and the truths of the Goſpel, are moſt clearly brought to light by him; the types, and ſhadows of the law are removed; and the promiſes, and prophecies of the Old Teſtament, are moſt largely expounded by him, and moſt perfectly fulfilled in him: and beſides, he is the author and giver of the light of grace, by which men ſee themſelves to be what they are, loſt and undone ſinners; and ſee him to be the only able, willing, ſuitable, ſufficient, and compleat Saviour: and he it is that now gives the ſaints the glimpſe of glory they have, and will be the light of the new *Jeruſalem*, and the everlaſting light of his people hereafter. He, by his incarnation, may be ſaid to *come into the world* in general, which was made by him, as God; and he was in it, as man; tho' he was not known by it as the God-man, Mediator, and Meſſiah: and particularly he came into the *Jewiſh* world, where he was born, brought up, converſed, lived, and died; and into the *Gentile* world, by the miniſtry of his apoſtles, whom he ſent into all the world, to preach the Goſpel to every creature, and ſpread the glorious light of it in every place: *and men loved darkneſs rather than light*; the *Jews*, the greater part of them, preferred the darkneſs of the ceremonial law, and the *Moſaic* diſpenſation, and even the traditions of their elders, before the clear Goſpel-revelation made by Chriſt Jeſus; and the *Gentiles* alſo, for the moſt part, choſe rather to continue in their heatheniſh ignorance, and idolatry, and to walk in their own ways, and in the vanity of their minds, than to embrace Chriſt, and his Goſpel, and ſubmit to his ordinances, and appointments; and the generality of men, to this day, love their natural darkneſs, and chuſe to walk in it, and to have fellowſhip with the works of darkneſs, and delight in the company of the children of darkneſs, rather than follow Chriſt, the light of the world; receive his Goſpel, and walk in his ways, in fellowſhip with his ſaints: the reaſon of all this is, *becauſe their deeds were evil*; which they choſe not to relinquiſh; and Chriſt, his Goſpel and Ordinances are contrary to them; for the doctrine of the grace of God, which has appeared, and ſhone out in great luſtre, and ſplendor, in the world, teaches men to deny ungodlineſs, and worldly luſts; and therefore it is hated, and rejected, by men.

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[e] Zohar in Gen. fol. 112. 2.
[f] Ib. in Exod. fol. 15. 1, 2.
[g] T. Hieroſ. Taaniot, fol. 64. 1.
[h] Shemot Rabba, §. 14. fol. 99. 4.
[i] Ib. §. 11. fol. 98. 3.
[k] T. Bab. Succa, fol. 55. 2.

Ver. 20. *For every one that doth evil, hateth the light*, &c.] Every man, the ſeries of whoſe life and converſation is evil, hates Chriſt and his Goſpel, becauſe they make manifeſt his evil deeds, convict him of them, and rebuke him for them: *neither cometh to the light*; to hear Chriſt preach, or preached; to attend on the Goſpel miniſtration and means of grace: *leſt his deeds ſhould be reproved*; or diſcovered, and made manifeſt, and he be brought to ſhame, and laid under blame, and adviſed to part with them, which he cares not to do; ſee *Eph*. v. 11, 12, 13.

Ver. 21. *But he that doth truth*, &c.] That which is true, right and good: *he whoſe work is juſt*, as the *Ethiopic* verſion renders it; or, *he who does that which is right*, ſo the *Perſic*; that which is according to the will of God, and from a principle of love to him, and with a view to his glory: *cometh to the light*; to Chriſt, and to his word, and ordinances: *that his deeds may be made manifeſt*; being brought to the light, to the teſt, and ſtandard, whether they are right, or wrong; and that it may appear, *that they are wrought in God*; or *by God*; by his aſſiſtance, and gracious influence, without which men can do nothing; for 'tis God that works in them both to will and to do: or, *according to God*, as others render it; according to the will of God, both for matter and manner: or *for God*, as the *Ethiopic* verſion renders it; for the glory of God, which ought to be the aim, and end of every action. The *Perſic* verſion reads the whole thus, *that the work which is between God and him may be known*; that ſuch deeds may be diſcovered, which are only known to God and himſelf.

Ver. 22. *After theſe things*, &c.] After Chriſt's coming to *Jeruſalem*, at the feaſt of the paſſover, with his diſciples, and driving the buyers and ſellers from the temple, and doing the miracles he did there, upon which many believed on him; and after the long diſcourſe he had with *Nicodemus*, concerning regeneration, and other things: *came Jeſus and his diſciples, into the land of Judea*; or *into Judea the country*, having been in *Jeruſalem*, the city-part or chief city in *Judea*; ſo that the country is diſtinguiſhed from, and oppoſed to the city. And thus, a country man, and a *Jeruſalemite*, or citizen of *Jeruſalem*, are diſtinguiſhed [l], "if, הקרתני, *a* "*country man*, (one that lives in the country any "where in the land of *Iſrael*, out of *Jeruſalem* [m]) "receives a field, מירושלמי, *from a man of Jeruſalem*, the ſecond tithes belong to the *Jeruſalemite*; "but the wiſe men ſay, the country man may bring "them up, and eat them at *Jeruſalem*." Or, it may be, becauſe that *Jeruſalem* was part of it in the tribe of *Benjamin*, and the other in the tribe of *Judah*; therefore when Chriſt, and his diſciples, left *Jeruſalem*, they might more properly be ſaid to come into the land of *Judea*. Indeed, it is commonly ſaid by the *Jews* [n], that *Jeruſalem* was not divided among the tribes, and that it did not belong to any tribe; and if ſo, then with greater propriety ſtill, might Chriſt be ſaid to come into the land of *Judea*, when he departed from *Jeruſalem*; unleſs it ſhould be thought, that he went into *Galilee*, and after that came into the land of *Judea*; ſo *Nonnus*: *and there he tarried with them*; with his diſciples, as *Nonnus*; and with the inhabitants of thoſe parts: he made a longer ſtay here than at *Jeruſalem*, having more work to do here, and being more delighted with the plainneſs, and ſimplicity of the country people; or *he converſed* with them, as the *Syriac* verſion renders it; he exerciſed, and employed himſelf among them, as the *Greek* word uſed ſignifies: he went about from village to village, doing good, healing diſeaſes, and preaching the Goſpel, which was made uſeful to many: *and baptized*; not he himſelf, but his diſciples, by his orders, and in his name; ſee chap. iv. 2. whereby he gave freſh countenance and ſanction to the ordinance of water-baptiſm, adminiſtring it to others, as well as ſubmitting to it himſelf.

Ver. 23. *And John alſo was baptizing in Ænon*, &c.] The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions call it *Ain*, or *In-yon*, the fountain of the dove; and the *Arabic* verſion reads it, the fountain of *Nun*: and whether it was a town, or river, it ſeems to have its name from a fountain near it, or that itſelf was one, where was an abundance of water, as the text ſhows. There's a city of this name in the *Septuagint* verſion of *Joſh*. xv. 61. and mention is made of *Hazer Enon* in *Numb*. xxxiv. 9. *Ezek*. xlvii. 17. but neither of them ſeem to be the ſame with this: but be it where, and what it will, it was *near to Salim*; and where that was, is as difficult to know as the other. Some take it to be *Shalem*, a city of *Shechem*, mentioned in *Gen*. xxxiii. 18. but that is not the ſame name with this; and beſides was in *Samaria*; and indeed is by ſome there thought not to be the proper name of any place. Others are of opinion, that it is the ſame with *Shalim* in 1 *Sam.* ix. 4. tho' it ſeems rather to be the place which *Arias Montanus* calls [o], *Salim juxta torrentem*, *Salim* by the brook; and which he places in the tribe of *Iſſachar:* and might be ſo called, either becauſe it was near this *Ænon*, and may be the brook, or river intended, by which it was; or becauſe it was not far from the place where the two rivers, *Jaboc* and *Jordan* met; and ſo the *Jewiſh* maps place near *Jordan*, in the tribe of *Manaſſeh*, bordering on the tribe of *Iſſachar*, a *Shalem*, and by it *Ain-yon*. And the *Septuagint* in *Joſh.* xix. 22. mention *Salim by the ſea*, as in the tribe of *Iſſachar*. There is a paſſage in the *Talmud* [p], which, whether it has any regard to this *Ænon*, and *Salim*, I leave to be conſidered: "the wine of *Ogedoth*, why is it forbidden? becauſe of the village *Pegeſh*; and that of *Borgetha*, becauſe of the *Saracene* palace; and of *Ain-Cuſhith*, becauſe of the village *Salem*." *Nonnus* here calls *Ænon*, a place of deep waters; and *Salim* he reads *Salem*; and ſo ſome copies. *Ænon* where *John* baptized, according to *Jerom* [q], was eight miles from *Scythopolis*, to the ſouth, and was near *Salim* and *Jordan*; and he makes *Salim* to be at the ſame diſtance from *Scythopolis*. However, *John* was baptizing in theſe parts, at the ſame time that Chriſt was teaching and baptizing: he did not leave off on that account. This was the work he was ſent to do, and which he continued in as long as he had his liberty; and he choſe this place, *becauſe there was much water there*; or *many waters*; not little purling ſtreams, and rivulets; but, as *Nonnus* renders it, abundance of water; or a multitude of it, as in the *Arabic* verſion; ſee *Rev.* i. 15. and xvii. 1, 15. *Cant.* viii. 7. and the *Septuagint* in *Pſal.* lxxvii. 19. and cvii. 23. and what was ſufficient to immerſe the whole body in, as *Calvin*, *Aretius*, *Piſcator*, and *Grotius*, on the place, obſerve; and which was agreeable not only to the practice of the *Jews*, who uſed dipping in their baptiſms, and purifications, as *Muſculus* and *Lightfoot* aſſert; but to *John*'s method and practice elſewhere: *and they came, and were baptiſed*. The *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *they came to him*, that is, to *John*, *and he baptized them*; as the *Perſic* verſion adds, *there*, in *Ænon*, near *Salim*, in the much water there: it may be underſtood of the people coming both to *John* and Chriſt, and of their being baptized by them; tho' it ſeems rather to be ſaid of *John*; and ſo *Nonnus* paraphraſes it.

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[l] Miſn, Demai, c. 6. §. 4.

[m] Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

[n] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 12. 1. & Megilla, fol. 26. 1.

Ver. 24. *For John was not yet caſt into priſon.*] As he afterwards was by *Herod*, for the ſake of *Herodias*, becauſe he reproved *Herod* for taking her to be his wife, when ſhe was wife to his brother *Philip*; ſee *Matt.* xiv. 3, 4. and this circumſtance ſhows, that theſe things were done before that journey of Chriſt into *Galilee*, mentioned in *Matt.* iv. 12, 13.

Ver. 25. *Then there aroſe a queſtion*, &c.] A diſpute, or controverſy, occaſioned by the baptiſm of *John* and Chriſt: *between ſome of John's diſciples, and the Jews*. The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read, *between one of John's diſciples, and a certain Jew*; and *Nonnus* renders it, *with an Hebrew man*; and ſo the *Alexandrian* manuſcript; many others read, *with a Jew:* the contention between them was *about purifying*; either about the ceremonial purifications, and ablutions commanded in the law of *Moſes*; or concerning the various waſhings of perſons, and veſſels, according to the traditions of the elders, which the *Jews* in common were very tenacious of; and which they thought were brought into neglect, and contempt, by the baptiſm of *John:* and this ſeems to have been occaſioned by the baptiſm of Chriſt; which the *Jew* might improve againſt the diſciple of *John*, and urge, that ſince another, beſides his maſter, had ſet up baptizing, who could tell which was righteſt and ſafeſt to follow; and therefore it would have been much better, if no ſuch rite at all had been uſed by any, but that the purifications required by the law of *Moſes*, and by their elders, had been ſtrictly and ſolely attended to.

Ver. 26. *And they came unto John*, &c.] The *Perſic* verſion reads, *he came unto John*; that diſciple that had the controverſy with the *Jew* about purifying, who not knowing well how to anſwer him, and which might be the caſe of more, applied to *John: and ſaid unto him, Rabbi*; or *maſter*; or, *our maſter*, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read, which was a title of great reſpect, and reverence, and much in uſe in thoſe times; ſee the notes on *Matt.* xxiii. 7, 8. The *Arabic* verſion joins this word to the following clauſe, and applies it to Chriſt, rendring it thus, *the maſter that was with thee beyond Jordan*; which is making them to ſpeak more honourably of Chriſt than they intended; for tho' they ſpeak very reſpectfully to *John*, yet with much diſdain and neglect of Chriſt; not ſo much as mentioning his name, or uſing any term of honour and reſpect; only ſaying, *he that was with thee*; namely, at *Bethabara*; who came from *Galilee* to *Jordan*, unto *John*, to be baptized by him, and who was baptized by him; and for ſome little time continued with him, and attended on his miniſtry; and as they thought, was a diſciple of *John*'s: *to whom thou beareſt witneſs*; that he was before him, and to be preferred unto him; and that he was the lamb of God, and even the ſon of God; ſuggeſting, that by this teſtimony of his, Chriſt had gained all the credit and reputation he had; and that therefore he had done a wrong thing in enlarging ſo much in the praiſe, and commendation of him: *behold the ſame baptizeth*; takes upon him to adminiſter the ordinance of baptiſm; at leaſt gives orders to adminiſter it; which *John*'s diſciples thought was the proper, and peculiar buſineſs of their maſter; and therefore ſpeak of this as an intruſion into his office, and an entering into his province; and an aſſuming that which only belonged to him: and what gave ſtill more uneaſineſs, and increaſed the complaint, was, *and all men come to him*; that is, *many*, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions render it, even more than came to *John*; ſee chap. iv. 1. Large multitudes from all parts flocked to hear Chriſt preach, and great numbers were made diſciples by him, and then baptized. That he ſhould baptize, gave them great offence; and that he was ſo followed, raiſed their envy; and his being ſo near to *John*, might add to their uneaſineſs. 'Tis a rule with the *Jews*, that "it is not lawful for a diſciple to teach the conſtitutions, or ſentences of the law, before his maſter; but muſt be twelve miles diſtant from him, as the camp of *Iſrael*." And they ſay, that "a diſciple that teaches before, or in the preſence of his maſter, is guilty of death [r]."

Ver. 27. *John anſwered and ſaid*, &c.] The *Syriac* and *Arabic* verſions add, *to them*; the anſwer being made to the diſciples of *John*, who came to him with their complaint: *a man can receive nothing*; the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions add, *of his own will:* ſome underſtand this of Chriſt, as man, who did not take upon him the character of the Meſſiah, nor the office of a mediator, nor the honour of it of himſelf; and who received the gifts and graces of the Spirit of God, without meaſure, and had his ſucceſs in his work from above: and indeed, it is true of both Chriſt, and *John*; for as Chriſt, ſo *John* received his office, and honour, as the harbinger and fore-runner of Chriſt, and all his gifts qualifying for it, and his ſucceſs in it, not of himſelf, but of God: and ſince therefore the ſuperior office, and honour, and uſefulneſs of the one above the other, were according to the ſovereign will of God, there was no room for complaint, murmuring, and envy; but there ought to be contentment and pleaſure in the wiſe diſpoſition of things by God. Yea, this is true of every man, who has nothing of his own; and whatever he has in nature, providence and grace, is a gift to him; and all he enjoys is in a way of receiving: nor can he receive it, *except it be given him from heaven*; from God who dwells there; ſee the note on *Matt*. xxi. 25. who is the author and donor of every gift, temporal, ſpiritual, and eternal; particularly he cannot perceive, and diſcern ſpiritual things, nor receive Goſpel-truths; as it appeared to *John*, his diſciples could not, unleſs ſpiritual light is given from above; and ſuch a favour is beſtowed, as to know the myſteries of the kingdom of heaven: and therefore, for every office, whether of a ſuperior, or inferior kind, and for every degree of honour, and for whatſoever bleſſing and gift, whether for ſoul or body, for time, or for eternity, men ought to be thankful, and not glory in them, as tho' they had not received them; nor is there any reaſon to murmur againſt God, or envy one another, as theſe diſciples did.

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[o] Antiq. Jud. l. 2. c. 3.

[p] T. Hieroſ. Avoda Zara, fol. 44. 4.

[q] De locis Hebraicis, fol. 89. C. & fol. 94. F.

[r] T. Hieroſ. Sheviith, fol. 37. 3.

Ver. 28. *Ye your ſelves bear me witneſs*, &c.] In what they now ſaid, and referred to, in deſcribing Chriſt, as he to whom *John* bore witneſs; and he appeals to them for what he ſaid in their preſence, and before all the people in that teſtimony: *that I ſaid I am not the Chriſt*; ſee chap. i. 19, 20. wherefore, if he, who is the Chriſt, is now come, and teaches, and baptizes, and has the greateſt number of followers, it is not to be wondered at; and much leſs to be envied; but rather to be rejoiced at. For *John*, by repeating what he had before ſaid, that he was not the Chriſt, ſuggeſts, that Jeſus was; and therefore was ſuperior to him in office, honour, and uſefulneſs, who was only his harbinger and fore-runner, as follows: *but I am ſent before him*; to prepare his way, to make ſtraight his paths, to proclaim his coming, and kingdom, being at hand; and that the expectations of men may be raiſed, and they may be ready to receive him when come: and hereby the end of *John*'s office, and miniſtry, had its accompliſhment. The *Ethiopic* verſion adds, *to preach him*.

Ver. 29. *He that hath the bride*, &c.] By whom particular perſons ſeem here to be meant, who were called, converted, and brought to Chriſt, and were made his diſciples, and baptized, and ſo were openly eſpouſed unto him; though ſometimes it deſigns a particular church of Chriſt, and even the whole general aſſembly, and church of the firſt-born, whoſe names are written in heaven; all the elect of God, whether among *Jews*, or *Gentiles*; ſee 2 *Cor*. xi. 2. *Rev*. xxi. 2, 9. Theſe Chriſt has in a conjugal relation; and he came, and comes to have them after this manner: he ſaw them in his father's purpoſes, and decrees, in all the glory he meant to bring them to; and loved them, and deſired them of his father, as his ſpouſe, who gave them to him, as ſuch; and he betrothed them to himſelf for ever; and in time he ſends his miniſtring ſervants with his Goſpel, to engage and betroth them to him; and by the power of his grace, he makes them willing to give up themſelves to him; which is the open eſpouſal of them; and at the laſt day, when the number of the elect are compleated, the marriage of the lamb will be publickly ſolemnized, and a marriage-ſupper will be made; and all that are called, and ready, will enter into the marriage-chamber, and ſhare in the joys, and pleaſures of that day: thus by virtue of the Father's gift, Chriſt has them now as his own property, as his portion, his jewels, his bride, and wife; and by, and thro' his great love to them, he has them not only in his arms, from whence they can never be plucked; but in his heart, where they are ſet as a ſeal; and by virtue of this love, they are united to him, become one with him, are members of his body, fleſh, and bones; and are one ſpirit with him, and nothing can be able to ſeparate them; and he will have them all with him to all eternity, to be where he is, and behold his glory: and now, he that has the bride in this ſenſe, *is the bridegroom*; and ſuch is Chriſt; ſee *Matt*. ix. 15. and xxv. 1. and he acts, and behaves, as ſuch; he loves the ſaints, as a bridegroom loves his bride, with a love prior to theirs; with a love of complacency and delight, which is ſingle, chaſte, and inviolable; free, and ſovereign, wonderful, unchangeable, and from everlaſting to everlaſting: he ſympathizes with them in all their adverſities, and afflictions; he nouriſhes, and cheriſhes them, and provides every thing for them, for food, and clothing, for refreſhment, and protection; and intereſts them in all he has: and an amazing inſtance of grace this is, that ſuch who are no better than others, children of wrath by nature; exceeding great ſinners, guilty, and filthy; bankrupts, and beggars on the dunghill; and yet are taken into ſo near a relation to him; who is in the form of God, and equal to him, the brightneſs of his glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon, the Son of God, in whom all the fulneſs of the Godhead dwells; the king of kings, and lord of lords. And this being the caſe, *John* ſuggeſts, that by theſe perſons following Chriſt, and giving up themſelves to him, it appeared that he was the bridegroom; and to whom ſhould they betake themſelves but to him? Nor did it become him, or any other, to ſeek to draw them from him; nor ſhould any envy his enjoyment of them, ſince they were his in ſo peculiar a ſenſe, and in ſo near a relation: *but the friend of the bridegroom*; meaning himſelf: and ſuch is every true miniſter of the Goſpel; he is a lover of Chriſt, a friend to his intereſt, and ſeeks by all means to promote it, and to bring ſouls unto him. The alluſion is to a cuſtom among the *Jews*, who, at their marriages, uſed to have perſons both on the ſide of the bride, and of the bridegroom, as companions that attended each, and were called their friends; ſee *Judg*. xiv. 20. Such an one is called by the Rabbins, שושבין; and this word is interpreted by, אוהב, *a lover*, or *friend*, the ſame as here; and by, ריעהו, *his*, (the bridegroom's) *friend* in the time of his marriage[s]. There were two of theſe, one for the bride, and another for the bridegroom; for ſo it is ſaid[t], "formerly they appointed two, שושבינין, *friends*, one for him, (the bridegroom) and one for her, (the bride) that they might miniſter to the bridegroom, and do all things at their entrance into the marriage-chamber.——And formerly, theſe friends ſlept where the bridegroom and bride ſlept." And ſo as *John* is here repreſented as

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[s] Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 3. §. 5. & Bartenora in ib.

[t] T. Bab. Cetubot. fol. 12. 1.

the friend of Chriſt, the bridegroom of the church; the *Jews* ſpeak of *Moſes* as the friend of God, the bridegroom of the people of *Iſrael*. So one of their writers [u], having delivered a parable concerning a certain king going into a far country, and leaving his eſpouſed wife with his maid-ſervants, who raiſing an evil report on her, his friend tore in pieces the matrimonial contract, thus applies it: "the king, this is the holy, bleſſed God; the "maidens, theſe are the mixed multitude; and "חשושבין, *the friend*, this is *Moſes*; and the ſpouſe "of the holy, bleſſed God is *Iſrael*." The *Jews* ſay [w], that *Michael* and *Gabriel* were the, שושבינין, *bridal friends* to the firſt *Adam*. *Which ſtandeth*; the phraſe may be ſeen in the above parable of the *Jewiſh* writer [x] referr'd to, עמד שושבינה, *his friend ſtandeth*: this was the poſture of ſervants, and is fitly applied to *John*, who was the harbinger of Chriſt, and judged himſelf unworthy to bear his ſhoes; and well agrees with the miniſters of the Goſpel, who ſtand before Chriſt, wait upon him, and miniſter in his name, and are the ſervants of the churches for his ſake: *and heareth him*; hearkens to his words; obſerves, and obeys them; hears his voice, ſo as to underſtand it, and diſtinguiſh it from another's; and hears it with delight and pleaſure, as every true friend of Chriſt does his Goſpel, which is his voice, and is a joyful ſound; and *ſo rejoiceth greatly becauſe of the bridegroom's voice*: ſuch an one rejoices at the ſight of his perſon, and in communion with him; he rejoices at the ſound of his voice; and is delighted to hear him in the miniſtry of the word, calling to one, and to another, to come unto him, and cauſing them to believe in him, and give up themſelves to him. *This my joy therefore is fulfilled*; in Chriſt, he being come in perſon, and his voice heard in the land of *Judea*, and multitudes of ſouls flocking to him, who believing in him, were baptized; than which, nothing could be a greater pleaſure to *John*, or to any Goſpel-miniſter. This was the accompliſhment and perfection of his joy, which carried it to its utmoſt height: this was what he wiſhed for; and now he had the deſire of his heart. It was uſual for the friend of the bridegroom to carry proviſions with him, and eat and drink with the bridegroom, and rejoice with him; and this rejoicing was mutual. Hence thoſe words, "give me, שושביני, *my friend*, "that I may rejoice with him:" the *Gloſs* upon it is, "and eat at his marriage, even as he alſo re-"joiced, and eat at my marriage [y]." To this rejoicing the alluſion is here.

Ver. 30. *He muſt increaſe*, &c.] Not in ſtature of body, or in wiſdom and underſtanding of mind, as man, he being come to maturity in theſe things already; but in fame, credit, and reputation among men; as he afterwards did in the land of *Judea*, by reaſon of his miracles and doctrines; and after that among the *Gentiles*, through the publication of his Goſpel; and will more and more in the latter day, when he, and he alone, ſhall be exalted: and he muſt increaſe in the miniſtry of his word, which was publiſhed by him, and his diſciples, throughout all the cities of *Iſrael*; and which, after his reſurrection and aſcenſion, grew and increaſed mightily, notwithſtanding the oppoſition made unto it both by their civil and eccleſiaſtical rulers; and which, by the means of his Apoſtles, was ſpread throughout the *Gentile* world, and will hereafter cover the earth, as the waters do the ſea: and alſo in his kingdom and intereſt, which at firſt were very ſmall, like a grain of muſtard-ſeed, or like a little ſtone cut out of the mountain without hands; but in proceſs of time grew exceedingly, and will, e'er long, fill the face of the whole earth; for the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Chriſt; and his dominion ſhall be from ſea to ſea, and from the river to the ends of the earth; and of the increaſe of it there ſhall be no end. And ſo likewiſe in the number of his followers, which at firſt were but few in *Judea*, but afterwards greatly increaſed, and eſpecially among the *Gentiles*; and will be very numerous in the latter-day glory, when the nation of the *Jews* will be born at once, and the fulneſs and forces of the *Gentiles* are brought in: *but I muſt decreaſe*; as he did in his eſteem among the people; ſee *John* v. 35. and in his work and office, which were now come to an end, Chriſt, whoſe fore-runner he was, being come; and quickly after this he was put into priſon, and there put to death.

Ver. 31. *He that cometh from above*, &c.] Meaning Chriſt; not that he brought his human nature with him from heaven, or that that is of a celeſtial nature; but he came from heaven in his divine perſon, not by change of place, he being God immenſe and infinite, but by aſſumption of human nature; which he took upon him, in order to do in it his Father's will, and the work of our ſalvation. *Is above all*; above *John*, before whom he was preferr'd, for he was before him; above the prophets of the Old Teſtament, and even above *Moſes*, the chief of them; yea, above all the angels in heaven, being God over all, bleſſed for ever: wherefore all glory is to be given him; no honour is to be envied him, or detracted from him. *He that is of the earth*; as *John* was, and all mankind are, being deſcended from *Adam*, who was made of the duſt of the earth; and who dwell in houſes of clay, and in earthly tabernacles, which are at laſt reſolved into their original duſt: *is earthly*; of an earthly nature, frame, temper, and diſpoſition; ſee ver. 6. Men naturally mind earthly things; and it is owing to the Spirit and grace of God, if they mind and ſavour ſpiritual things, or have their affections ſet on things above, or their converſation in heaven; and even ſuch, at times, find that their ſouls cleave unto the duſt, and are hankering after the things of the earth: *and ſpeaketh of the earth*; of earthly things, as in ver. 12. and indeed of heavenly things, in an earthly manner, in a low way, and by ſimilies and compariſons taken from the things of the earth; not being able to ſpeak of celeſtial things, as in their own nature, and in that ſublime way the ſubject requires: but *he that cometh from heaven is above all*; men and angels, in the dignity of his perſon; and all prophets and teachers in the excellency of his doctrine, and manner of delivering it: and therefore it is not to be wondered at, that he ſhould be followed as he is; but rather it ſhould ſeem marvellous, that he has no more followers than he has; ſee 2 *Eſdras* iv. 21.

Ver. 32. *And what he hath ſeen and heard*, &c.] Of the Father, of his mind and will, of his purpoſes and promiſes, of his love, grace, and mercy, in the council and covenant of peace, lying in his boſom, and being privy to all his ſecrets. The phraſes expreſs the clear and perfect knowledge Chriſt has of all truths and doctrines; he having all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge in him. *That he teſtifieth*; fully, freely, and faithfully; with-holds nothing, but declares the whole counſel of God; and is deſervedly called the faithful witneſs, *Rev.* i. 5. *And no man receiveth his teſtimony*; tho' it was the teſtimony of God, which is greater than that of man; yet few, and which were next to none at all, gave any heed or credit to it; few or none among the *Jews*, or among the diſciples of *John*, or even among thoſe that followed Chriſt. *John*, and his diſciples, widely differed; they thought that all men came to Chriſt, and believed in him; and *John* thought few or none, in compariſon of the numbers he could have wiſhed, did: and indeed, no one perſon can receive the teſtimony of Chriſt, and believe in him, unleſs it be given him from above, by the grace of God; for the natural man receives not divine and ſpiritual things; ſee ver. 11.

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[u] Jarchi in Exod. xxxiv. 1. Vid. Shemot Rabba, §. 46. fol. 142. 2.

[w] Bereſhit Rabba, §. 8. fol. 8. 2.

[x] Jarchi in ib.

[y] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 144. 2. & 145. 1.

Ver. 33. *He that hath received his teſtimony*, &c.] For there was here and there one that did, who believed in him as the Meſſiah, and embraced his Goſpel, and ſubmitted to his ordinances, and truly and ſincerely followed him: and for the encouragement of ſuch, 'tis ſaid, *hath ſet to his ſeal that God is true*; faithful in fulfilling the promiſes he has made concerning the Meſſiah, and his coming: he firmly believes that God is true to every word of his, and will make good every promiſe; and this he ſeals, ratifies, and confirms by his embracing the teſtimony of Chriſt: whereas, on the contrary, he that believeth not makes God a liar, than which, nothing can be more reproachful to him, 1 *John* v. 10. The *Jews* have a ſaying [z], that "the ſeal of the bleſſed God is truth." The *Arabic* verſion renders it, *he is already ſealed, becauſe God is true*; and the *Ethiopic* verſion, *God hath ſealed him, becauſe he is true*; namely, with his holy Spirit; ſee 2 *Cor.* i. 22. *Eph.* i. 13. and iv. 30.

Ver. 34. *For he whom God hath ſent*, &c.] Still meaning Chriſt, who was ſent in human nature, in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh, in the fulneſs of time; to be the Saviour of the world, of that which was loſt, of the chief of ſinners; and to preach the glad-tidings of the Goſpel, which is more eſpecially here deſigned; and for which he was abundantly qualified by the Spirit of God, with which he was anointed: *ſpeaketh the words of God*; the words which God gave unto him; the doctrines of grace; the word of truth; the word of faith; the word of righteouſneſs; the word of reconciliation; the words of ſalvation and eternal life; the whole mind and will of God; and whatever he ſpoke were as true as the oracles of God, and were ſuch. *For God giveth not the Spirit by meaſure*; unto him, as he did to the prophets of the Old Teſtament, and to the Apoſtles of the New; and to the ordinary miniſters of the word, who have gifts differing one from another; to one is given one gift of the Spirit; and to another, another gift, as the Spirit pleaſeth; and to every one is given grace, or gifts of grace, according to the meaſure of the gift of Chriſt, *Eph.* iv. 7. To which agree what the *Jews* ſay [a] of the holy Spirit, and his gifts. "Says *R. Joden bar R. Simeon*, even the waters which deſcend from above are not given, but, במדה, *in meaſure.*—Says *R. Acha*, even the holy Spirit, which dwells upon the prophets, does not dwell, but, במשקל, *in weight.*" But the Lord Jeſus has every gift of the Spirit, and the fulneſs of grace in him: he's anointed with the oil of gladneſs, with the Holy Ghoſt above his fellows; and has an immeaſurable unction of the holy one; which, like the precious oil poured on *Aaron*, deſcends from him to the members of his body.

Ver. 35. *The Father loveth the Son*, &c.] There is ſuch a relation as that of Father and Son ſubſiſting between the firſt and ſecond perſons in the Trinity; which is not by conſtitution and appointment; or arbitrary, ariſing from, and depending on the will of the firſt, but is natural and neceſſary; the ſecond perſon being begotten by the firſt, and is of the ſame nature, and equally a divine perſon: and which relation is the foundation of the diſtinction of their perſons; and which exiſted from all eternity, and co-exiſted with their being and eſſence; and is what no other ſtand in, angels or men, in ſuch ſenſe as the ſecond perſon does; and is not to be conceived of, expreſſed and explained by us: and from this relation ariſes love; hence, the Son of the Father is his dear Son, the Son of his love; as he muſt needs be, ſince he is of the ſame nature, has the ſame perfections he has, and is the brightneſs of his glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon: and hence he continues to love him in every form and appearance of his; in every office he ſuſtains; in every ſtate and condition into which he comes: he delighted in him as his elect, as choſen and appointed by him to be the Saviour of his people; he took pleaſure in him as the ſurety of them, and when he ſaw him engaging as ſuch, and declaring it was in his heart to do his will, and work out their ſalvation; he loved him when he appeared in human nature, in the form of a ſervant; and in his ſtate of humiliation, more than once he declared, by a voice from heaven, that he was his beloved Son, and particularly at his baptiſm: and indeed, as in that, ſo in every thing elſe, he always did the things that pleaſed him; he loved him when he laid down his life for the ſheep; when he was bruiſed, and his ſoul made an offering for ſin; he loved him when on the croſs, and even when he hid his face from him; when he lay in the grave he left him not, nor would he ſuffer him to ſee corruption; he raiſed him from the dead, and gave him glory; exalted him, and received him into heaven with a welcome, and placed him at his right hand; and now looks with pleaſure upon him, upon his perſon, his ſacrifice, blood, and righteouſneſs: and this love is a love of complacency and delight, and is from everlaſting to everlaſting; the evidence of which follows, *and hath given all things into his hand*; or *by his hand*; as the doctrines of the Goſpel, the gifts of the Spirit, grace, and glory: or rather, *into his hand*; with which he, being the Son of God, a divine perſon, is fit to be entruſted, which otherwiſe he would not be: παντα, *all*, includes *all perſons*; all the angels, the good angels which are choſen in him, and he is the head of; and by whom they are confirmed in the ſtate they are; and who are at his command and beck, and miniſter to him and his. The evil angels, tho' they have broke away from God, and rebelled againſt him, yet are, in ſome ſenſe, in the hands of Chriſt, and under his power; as appears by his diſpoſſeſſing them from the bodies of men on earth, his ſpoiling them on the croſs, and triumphing over them in his aſcenſion to heaven, and by his binding ſatan a thouſand years. All men are given to him; the elect, in a ſpecial ſenſe, as his bride and ſpouſe, as his children, and as his ſheep; hence, he died for them, and effectually calls them, and brings them to himſelf; and they ſhall never periſh, or be plucked out of his hands, but ſhall have eternal life. And wicked men are, in a ſenſe, given to him; their wrath he reſtrains, and makes it to praiſe him; he rules them with a rod of iron, and breaks them in pieces as a potter's veſſel. And *all things* alſo are given into his hands; all temporal things, the things of nature and providence; the light of nature, and all the gifts and attainments of it; all the good things of the world, and which are wiſdom's left-hand bleſſings; and Chriſt diſpoſes of them to his people in mercy, and as covenant ones: all ſpiritual things are in his hands; all the gifts of the Spirit, and the fulneſs of all grace, ſanctifying, juſtifying, pardoning, adopting, and perſevering grace; all the promiſes and bleſſings of the covenant; the government of the church, and the judgment of the world; all power, both in heaven and in earth; the ſalvation of the elect, and their eternal inheritance, happineſs, and glory. For all which, no creature, angels or men, are fit, only the Son of God.

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[z] T. Hieroſ. Sanhedrin, fol. 18. 1. & T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 64. 1. & Yoma, fol, 69. 2.

[a] Vajikra Rabba, §. 15. fol. 157. 3.

Ver. 36. *He that believeth on the Son*, &c.] Who is a proper object of faith and truſt; which, if he was not truly and properly God, he would not be: and this is to be underſtood not of any ſort of faith, a temporary, or an hiſtorical one; but of that which is the faith of God's elect, the gift of God, and the operation of his Spirit; by which a man ſees the Son, goes unto him, ventures and relies upon him, and commits himſelf to him, and expects life and ſalvation from him; and who ſhall not be aſhamed and confounded; for ſuch an one *hath everlaſting life:* he has it in Chriſt his head, in whom he believes; he has a right unto it thro' the juſtifying righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and a meetneſs for it by his grace; he has it in faith and hope; he has the beginning of it in the knowledge of Chriſt, and communion with him; he has ſome foretaſtes of it in his preſent experience; and he has the earneſt and pledge of it in his heart, even the bleſſed Spirit, who works him up for this ſelf-ſame thing: *and he that believeth not the Son*; that does not believe Chriſt to be the Son of God, or Jeſus to be the Meſſiah; or rejects him as the Saviour; who lives and dies in a ſtate of impenitence and unbelief: *ſhall not ſee life*; eternal life; he ſhall not enter into it, and enjoy it; he ſhall die the ſecond death. Very remarkable are the following words of the *Jews* [b] concerning the Meſſiah, whom they call the latter redeemer: "whoſoever believes in him *ſhall live*; but he that believes not in him ſhall go to the nations of the world, and they ſhall kill him." *But the wrath of God abideth on him*; as the ſentence of wrath, of condemnation, and death, and the curſe of the law were pronounced upon him in *Adam*, as on all mankind, it continues, and will continue, and will never be reverſed, but will be executed on him, he not being redeemed from it, as his final unbelief ſhows; and as he was by nature a child of wrath, as others, he remains ſuch; and as the wrath of God is revealed from heaven againſt all unrighteouſneſs and ungodlineſs of men, it comes upon the children of diſobedience and remains there; it hangs over their heads, and lights upon them, and they will be filled with a dreadful ſenſe of it to all eternity. The *Syriac* and *Arabic* verſions render it, *ſhall abide upon him*; ſo ſome copies.

## CHAP. IV.

Ver. 1. WHEN *therefore the Lord knew*, &c.] Or *Jeſus*, as ſome copies, and the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions read; who is Lord of all, Lord of Lords, the one and only Lord of ſaints: and who knew all things as God; every man, and what is in man; who would believe in him, and who not, and who would betray him; he knew his adverſaries, what they thought, ſaid, or did; what was told them, and how it operated in them; and what were the ſecret motions of their hearts, and their moſt private counſels and deſigns: for this is not merely to be underſtood of his knowledge as man, which he might have by private intelligence from others; though what is here ſaid, might be true alſo in this ſenſe: *how the Phariſees*; the inveterate and implacable enemies of Chriſt, and particularly thoſe that dwelt at *Jeruſalem*, and were of the great *Sanhedrim*, or council of the nation: *had heard*; either by their ſpies, which they conſtantly kept about Chriſt; or by *John*'s diſciples, who, through envy, might apply to the *Sanhedrim*, to put a ſtop to, or check upon, the baptiſm and miniſtry of Chriſt; or by common fame: *that Jeſus made and baptized more diſciples than John*; ſee ch. iii. 26. The method Chriſt took was, he firſt made men diſciples, and then baptized them; and the ſame he directed his apoſtles to, ſaying, *go and teach*, or *diſciple all nations, baptizing them*, &c. And this ſhould be a rule of conduct to us, to baptize only ſuch, who appear to have been made the diſciples of Chriſt: now a diſciple of Chriſt, is one that has learned of Chriſt, and has learned Chriſt; the way of life, righteouſneſs, and ſalvation by him; who is a believer in him; who has ſeen a beauty, glory, fulneſs, and ſuitableneſs in him, as a Saviour; and is come to him, and has ventured on him, and truſted in him; and who has been taught to deny himſelf, ſinful ſelf, and righteous ſelf; to part with his ſins, and to renounce his own righteouſneſs, and all dependance on it, for juſtification before God; and who has been made willing to leave and forſake all worldly things and advantages, and to bear all reproach, indignities, and perſecutions, for Chriſt's ſake: and ſuch who are Chriſt's diſciples in this ſenſe, are the only proper perſons to be baptized; theſe are they, that ought to put on this badge, and wear Chriſt's livery: nor can baptiſm be of any uſe to any others; for ſuch only are baptized into him, and into his death, and partake of the ſaving benefits of it; for whatſoever is not of faith, is ſin; and without it alſo, it is impoſſible to pleaſe God.

Ver. 2. *Though Jeſus himſelf baptized not*, &c.] And therefore as *Nonnus* obſerves, it was a falſe report that was made to the *Phariſees*; at leaſt in part, ſo far as concerns the act of baptizing: though it may be this is obſerved, not ſo much to ſhew the falſhood of that report, as to correct what is ſaid of Chriſt's baptizing; leſt it ſhould be underſtood, as if he baptized in his own perſon; whereas he did not, that not ſo well comporting with his greatneſs and majeſty: wherefore *the king did not baptize in water*, as *Nonnus* expreſſes it, but left that for his diſciples and ſervants to do; he had other and greater work to perform, as to preach the Goſpel, and work miracles, heal diſeaſes, caſt out devils, *&c.* And beſides, had another ſort of baptiſm, of a more excellent nature to adminiſter, namely, the baptiſm of the Spirit; and ſince water baptiſm is adminiſtered in his name, as well as in the name of the Father and of the Spirit, it does not ſeem that it would have been adminiſtered with that propriety by himſelf, in his own name; add to which, as is alſo obſerved by others, it might have occaſioned contentions and diſputes among the baptized, had ſome been baptized by Chriſt, and others by his diſciples; the one valuing themſelves on that account, above the others. The *Perſic* verſion indeed ſuggeſts, as if both Chriſt and his diſciples baptized, rendering the words thus; *Jeſus was not alone who baptized, but the diſciples alſo baptized:* whereas the truth of the matter is, that Chriſt did not baptize in water at all: *but his diſciples*; they baptized in his name, and by his orders, ſuch who were firſt made diſciples by him.

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[b] Midraſh Ruth, fol. 33. 2.

Ver. 3. *He left Judea,* &c.] Where he had been for ſome time: at the feaſt of the paſſover he went up to *Jeruſalem*, and after a ſhort ſtay there, he came into the country part of *Judea*, where he tarried longer; and in both about the ſpace of eight months; for it was now but four months to harveſt, which began at the paſſover; ſee ch. ii. 13. and iii. 22. and iv. 35. And now upon the *Phariſees* being made acquainted with his ſucceſs in theſe parts, he leaves them; not through fear of them, but becauſe he would not irritate and provoke them, and ſtir up their malice and envy againſt him, which might put them upon meaſures to ſeek to take away his life; whereas his time was not yet come, and he had other work to do elſewhere: *and departed again into Galilee*; where he had ſpent the greateſt part of his time, in private life; from whence he came to *Jordan* unto *John*, to be baptized by him; and after that went thither again, where he wrought his firſt miracle: and now having been in *Judea* ſome time, he removes to *Galilee* again; and of this journey of his thither, after the impriſonment of *John*, an account is given, in *Matt.* iv. 12, 13. The *Perſic* verſion leaves out the word *again*, and ſo do the *Alexandrian* copy, and many copies; but is by others retained, and very juſtly.

Ver. 4. *And he muſt needs go through Samaria.*] Not the city, but the country of *Samaria*; for the way to *Galilee* from *Judea*, lay through the midſt of *Samaria*; nor was there any other way, without going a great way about; ſee *Luke* ix. 51, 52. and xvii. 11. and which is alſo confirmed by *Joſephus* [c]: and this accounts for his going through *Samaria*, conſiſtent with his forbidding his apoſtles going in the way of the *Gentiles*, or into any of the cities of the *Samaritans*; ſince here was a neceſſity for it, or otherwiſe he himſelf would not have gone, where he forbid his diſciples; though the prohibition may be underſtood, not of bare going into a *Samaritan* city; for it was lawful for them, notwithſtanding that, to go into one of them, as appears from ver. 8. and *Luke* ix. 52. but of going to preach there, *Matt.* x. 5, 6, 7. And beſides this neceſſity, there was another thing that lay upon him, and obliged him to take this tour, and that is, the calling and converſion of a certain woman, and other *Samaritans*, whom the Father had given to him, and he was to redeem by his blood; and the time of whoſe effectual vocation was now come; and therefore he muſt needs go this way, and at this particular time. The *Arabic* and *Perſic* verſions repreſent it, as a purpoſe and determination in his mind to go this way.

Ver. 5. *Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar,* &c.] Now called *Neapolis* [d]; the ſame with *Sichem*, or *Shechem*, as appears from its ſituation, *near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his ſon Joſeph*; ſee *Gen.* xxxiii. 18, 19. and xlviii. 22. and *Joſh.* xxiv. 32. and is either the ſame, only its termination is changed from *em* into *ar*, as *Achan* into *Achar*, 1 *Chron.* ii. 7. Or it is a new name that was given it, and by which it went in the times of Chriſt; and might be ſo called, either from, סוכר, *Socher*, which ſignifies a grave; becauſe here, *Joſeph* and the reſt of the patriarchs were buried, *Joſh.* xxiv. 32. *Acts* vii. 16. Or rather, it was a name of reproach, and ſo called, from, שכר, *drunken*; ſince the *Ephraimites*, the poſterity of *Joſeph*, which dwelt in theſe parts, were infamous for the ſin of drunkenneſs; ſee *Iſa.* xxviii. 1. Hence *Sychar Sichem*, is *drunken Sichem*; mention is made in the *Talmud* [e], of a place called, סיכרא, *Sichra*. The *parcel of ground*, or of *a field*, as in *Gen.* xxxiii. 19. and *Joſh.* xxiv. 32. is in the *Perſic* verſion, called *a vineyard*; and ſo *Nonnus* renders it, *a field planted with vines*; and which may ſerve to confirm the above conjecture, concerning *Sychar* being a nick name.

Ver. 6. *Now Jacob's well was there,* &c.] So called, either becauſe it was dug by him; or becauſe he and his family made uſe of it, when in thoſe parts, as in ver. 12. though no mention is made of it elſewhere, unleſs any reference is had to it in the bleſſing of *Joſeph*, to whom this place belonged, *Gen.* xlix. 22. as Dr. *Lightfoot* thinks, or in *Deut.* xxxiii. 28. as *Grotius* ſuggeſts: in the *Talmud* [f] there is mention made, of, עין סוכר, *the fountain of Sochar*; and may not improperly be rendered, *the well of Sychar:* but whether the ſame with this, is not certain; that appears to be a great way from *Jeruſalem*, as this alſo was, even 40 miles: *Jeſus therefore being wearied with his journey*; having travelled on foot, from *Judea* thither; and he having a body like to ours, ſubject to wearineſs, and which proves the truth and reality of it, was greatly fatigued; having very probably travelled all that morning, if not a day, or days before: *ſat thus on the well*; or by it; by the ſide of it, upon the brink of it, as *Nonnus* paraphraſes it, upon the bare ground. The *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions, leave out, *thus*; and the *Ethiopic* verſion reads it, *there*; but it is rightly retained, and is emphatical; and ſignifies, that he ſat like a weary perſon, glad to ſet himſelf down any where; and not caring how or where, he ſat to reſt his weary limbs: *and it was about the ſixth hour*; about twelve o'clock at noon. The *Ethiopic* verſion adds by way of explanation, *and it was then noon*; and all the *Oriental* verſions omit ὡσει, *about*; rendering it, it was the ſixth hour: and now Chriſt had been travelling all the morning, and it was a time of day to take ſome refreſhment, which as yet he had not, the diſciples being gone to buy food; and a time of day alſo, when the ſun, if out, and has any ſtrength, beats with its greateſt vehemence; and all which conſidered, it is no wonder that he ſhould be weary, faint, and thirſty.

Ver. 7. *There cometh a woman of Samaria,* &c.] Or *out of Samaria*; not out of the city of *Samaria*, but out of the country of *Samaria*; out of *Sychar*,

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[c] Antiqu. Jud. l. 20. c. 5. & in vita ſua, p. 1019.

[d] Hieron. Epitaph. Paulæ, Tom. I. fol. 59. & R. Benjamin Itin. p. 38.

[e] T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 42. 1. & 83. 1. & Cholin, fol. 94. 2.

[f] T. Hieroſ. Shekalim, fol. 48. 4. T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 82. 2. & Menachot, fol. 64. 2 & Gloſſ. in Sanhedrin, fol 11. 2.

a city of *Samaria*: her coming was not by chance, but by the providence of God, and agreeable to his purpoſe, who orders all things according to the counſel of his will; and it is an amazing inſtance of grace, that a woman, a *Samaritan* woman, a lewd and infamous one, ſhould be a choſen veſſel of ſalvation, ſhould be the object of divine favour, and be effectually called by the grace of God; when ſo many wiſe, learned, and religious men in *Judea*, were paſſed by; and not only ſo, but ſhe was the happy means of conveying the knowledge of the Saviour, to many of her neighbours: ſhe came indeed, *to draw water*; for her preſent temporal uſe and ſervice; ſhe little thought of meeting at *Jacob*'s well, with Chriſt the fountain of gardens, and well of living water; ſhe came for natural water, having no notion of water in a ſpiritual ſenſe; or of carrying back with her the water of life, even a well of it, ſpringing up to everlaſting life: *Jeſus ſaith unto her, give me to drink*; that is, water to drink, out of the pot or pitcher, ſhe brought with her, for he was athirſt; which is another proof of the truth of his human nature, and of his taking it, with the ſinleſs infirmities of it: though indeed this requeſt was made, to introduce a diſcourſe with the woman, he having a more violent thirſt, and a ſtronger deſire, after the welfare of her immortal ſoul.

Ver. 8. *For his diſciples were gone away*, &c.] This is related, not ſo much to give a reaſon why Chriſt aſked the woman for water, becauſe his diſciples were not preſent, to miniſter to him; but rather to ſhow, that Chriſt took the opportunity, in their abſence, to converſe with her; partly to avoid the ſcandal and offence they might take, at his converſation with her, being a *Samaritan*; as it appears to have been aſtoniſhing to them, when they found him talking with her, ver. 27. And partly, that he might not put the woman to ſhame and bluſhing before them all; he chuſes to tell her of the ſins of her former life, in a private way. The diſciples were gone *unto the city*; to the city *Sychar*, which was hard by; and their buſineſs there, was *to buy meat*: for though it is ſaid, in the following verſe, that the *Jews* have no dealings with the *Samaritans*; yet this is not to be underſtood in the ſtricteſt ſenſe; for they had dealings with them in ſome reſpects, as will be ſeen hereafter; particularly their food, eatables, and drinkables, were lawful to be bought of them, and uſed: it is ſaid by *R. Juda bar Pazi*, in the name of *R. Ame* [g], "a roaſted egg of the "*Cuthites*, (or *Samaritans*) lo, this is lawful: ſays "*R. Jacob bar Acha*, in the name of *R. Lazar*, "the boiled victuals of the *Cuthites*, (*Samaritans*) "lo, theſe are free; this he ſays concerning boiled "food, becauſe it is not their cuſtom to put wine "and vinegar into it," for theſe were forbidden: hence it is often ſaid [h], that "the unleavened bread "of the *Cuthites*, (or *Samaritans*) is lawful, and "that a man is allowed the uſe of it at the paſſover." And there was a time when their wine was lawful; for one of their canons runs thus [i]; "he that buys "wine of the *Cuthites*, (*Samaritans*) ſays, the two "logs that I ſhall ſeparate, lo, they are the firſt-"fruits, *&c.*" It is indeed ſaid in one place, by *R. Eliezer* [k], "that he that eats the bread of the *Cuthites*, (or *Samaritans*) is as if he eat ſwines fleſh; "to whom (who reported this) ſays (*R. Akiba*) be "ſilent, I will not tell you what *R. Eliezer* thinks "concerning it." Upon which the commentators obſerve [l], that this is not to be underſtood ſtrictly; becauſe he that eats bread of the *Samaritans*, does not deſerve ſtripes according to the law, but according to the conſtitutions of the wiſe men; but theſe, Chriſt and his diſciples had no regard to.

Ver. 9. *Then ſaith the woman of Samaria unto him*, &c.] In a ſcoffing, jeering way: *how is it, that thou being a Jew*; which ſhe might know, by his language and his dreſs: *aſkeſt drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria?* not that the waters of *Samaria* were unlawful for a *Jew* to drink of; for as "the land of the *Cuthites*, (or *Samaritans*) was "pure, or clean, ſo, מקויתיה, *their collections of* "*water*, and their habitations, and their ways "were clean [m]," and might be uſed; but becauſe the *Jews* uſed no familiarity with the *Samaritans*, nor would they receive any courteſy or kindneſs from them, as follows: *for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans*; ſome take theſe to be the words of the Evangeliſt, commenting upon, and explaining the words of the woman; but they ſeem rather to be her own words, giving a reaſon why ſhe returned ſuch an anſwer; and which muſt be underſtood, not in the ſtricteſt ſenſe, as if they had no dealings at all with them: indeed in ſome things they had no dealings with them, and at ſome certain times; hence that diſcourſe of the *Samaritans* with a *Jewiſh Rabbi* [n]. "The *Cuthites*, (or *Samaritans*) enquired of *R. Abbu*, your fathers, "היו מסתפקין, *uſed to deal with us* (or miniſter to "us, or ſupply us with neceſſaries) wherefore do "not ye deal with us? (or take a ſupply from us;) "he replied unto them, your fathers did not corrupt their works, you have corrupted your "works." They might not uſe their wine and vinegar, nor admit them to their tables; they ſay of a man [o], "becauſe the *Cuthites*, (or *Samaritans*) "eat at his table, it was the reaſon why his children went into captivity——and further add, "that whoever invites a *Cuthite*, (or *Samaritan*) "into his houſe, and miniſters to him, is the "cauſe of captivity to his children." And they forbid a man to enter into partnerſhip with a *Cuthite*, (or *Samaritan* [p];) and particularly, "three "days before the feaſts of idolaters (for ſuch they "reckoned the *Samaritans*, as well as others) it is "forbidden to have any commerce with them, to "borrow of them, or lend to them [q], *&c.*" But then at other times, and in other reſpects, they had dealings with them; they might go into their cities and buy food of them, as the diſciples did, ver. 8. they might ſend their wheat to a *Samaritan* miller, to be ground [r]; and as it appears from the above citations, their houſes and habitations were clean, and might be lodged in, with which compare *Luke* ix. 52. the poor of the *Samaritans*, were maintained with the poor of *Iſrael* [s]: wherefore the ſenſe is, as Dr. *Lightfoot* obſerves, that the *Jews* refuſed to receive the leaſt favour or kindneſs, at the hand of a *Samaritan*; and therefore the woman might juſtly wonder, that Chriſt ſhould aſk ſo ſmall a favour of her, as a little water. The reaſon of this diſtance and averſion, was religion; and ſo the *Ethiopic* verſion, rather paraphraſing than tranſlating, renders the words, *the Jews do not agree in religion, nor do they communicate with the Samaritans*,

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[g] T. Hieroſ. Avoda Zara, fol. 44. 4.

[h] T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 10. 1. & Cholin, fol. 4. 1. & Kidduſhin, fol. 76. 1.

[i] Miſn. Demai, c. 7. §. 4. Vid. Bartenora in ib.

[k] Miſna Sheviith, c. 8. §. 10. Pirke Eliezer, c. 38.

[l] Maimon. & Bartenora in Miſn. ib.

[m] T. Hieroſ. Avoda Zara, fol. 44. 4.

[n] Ib.

[o] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 104. 1.

[p] T. Bab. Becorot, fol. 7. 2. Piſke Toſeph. ib. art. 4. & in Megilla, art. 102.

[q] Miſna Avoda Zara, c. 1. §. 1.

[r] Miſna Demai, c. 3. §. 4.

[s] Piſke Toſephot Yoma, art. 63.

*nor mix together:* and this was of long ſtanding, and had been occaſioned and increaſed by various incidents; for when the ten tribes revolted in *Jeroboam*'s time, the calves were ſet up in *Dan* and *Bethel*, in order to draw off the people from worſhip at *Jeruſalem*, which gave great umbrage to the tribes of *Judah* and *Benjamin*; and when the ten tribes were carried away captive by the king of *Aſſyria*, he planted the cities of *Samaria* with colonies in their room, conſiſting of heatheniſh and idolatrous perſons, brought from *Babylon*, and other places; to whom he ſent a prieſt, to inſtruct them in the manner of the God of the land; but with theſe inſtructions, they ſtill retained their idols, and their idolatrous practices; ſee 2 *Kings* xvii. 24—41. which muſt render them odious to the *Jews:* and theſe were the principal adverſaries of the *Jews*, after their return from captivity; and diſcouraged them, and weakened their hands, in the building of the ſecond temple: but what lateſt, and moſt of all had fixed this averſion and enmity, was this; *Manaſſeh*, brother to *Jaddua* the high-prieſt, having married *Sanballat*'s daughter, governour of *Samaria*, was for it removed from the prieſthood; who applying to his father-in-law, he propoſed building for him a temple on mount *Gerizzim*, and making him an high-prieſt; for which he obtained leave of *Alexander* the great, and accordingly built one, and made his ſon-in-law high-prieſt; which drew a great many profligate *Jews* over to him, who mixing with the *Samaritans*, ſet up a worſhip, religion, and prieſthood, in diſtinction from the *Jews*; and this was ever after, a matter of contention and quarrel between theſe people, and the reaſon why they would have no dealings with them.

Ver. 10. *Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto her*, &c.] In a very ſerious manner, in a different way from hers: *if thou knewest the gift of God*; meaning, not the Holy Spirit with his gifts and graces, as ſome think, but himſelf; for the following clauſe is explanatory of it: *and who it is that ſaith to thee, give me to drink*; and Chriſt is alſo ſpoken of in the Old Teſtament, as the gift of God, *Iſa.* ix. 6. and he had lately ſpoken of himſelf as ſuch, ch. iii. 16. and he is, by way of eminency, *the gift of God*; which is comprehenſive of all others, is exceeding large, and very ſuitable to the wants and caſes of men; and is irrevocable, unchangeable, and unſpeakable: for he is God's gift, as he is his own and only begotten Son; and he is given for a covenant to the people, with all the promiſes and bleſſings of it; and as an head, both of eminence and influence; and to be a Saviour of them, and a ſacrifice for their ſins; and as the bread of life, for them to feed and live upon; of which gift, men are naturally ignorant, as this woman was: they know not the dignity of his perſon; nor the nature and uſefulneſs of his offices; nor the way of peace, righteouſneſs, and ſalvation by him; nor do they ſee any amiableneſs, or lovelineſs in him; and whatever notional knowledge ſome natural men may have of him, they know him not ſpiritually and experimentally, or as the gift of God to them: *thou wouldſt have aſked of him*; a favour and benefit; for ſuch who truly know Chriſt, the worth and value of him, and their need of him, will apply to him for grace, as they have encouragement to do; ſince all grace is treaſured up in him, and he gives it freely, and upbraideth not; and ſouls are invited to aſk it of him, and take it freely; nor is it to be had any where elſe: but knowledge of Chriſt, is abſolutely neceſſary, to aſking any thing of him; for till he is known, he'll not be applied to; but when he is made known to any, in his fulneſs and ſuitableneſs, they will have recourſe to him, and aſk grace and mercy of him; and which is freely had: the *Vulgate Latin* very wrongly adds, *perhaps*; reading it, *perhaps thou wouldſt have aſked*; whereas our Lord's meaning is, that ſhe would certainly have aſked: *and he would have given thee living water*; pardoning and juſtifying grace, every branch of ſanctifying grace, and all the ſupplies of it; ſo called, becauſe his grace quickens ſinners dead in ſin, and dead in law, and in their own apprehenſions; and cauſes them to live in themſelves, and before God; and becauſe it refreſhes and comforts, revives and chears, and is like rivers of water in a dry land; and becauſe it maintains and ſupports ſpiritual life in their ſouls; and it ever abides, and continues, and ſprings up unto everlaſting life: for the alluſion is to ſpring water, that bubbles up in a fountain, and is ever running; for ſuch water, the *Jews* call *living water*; ſee *Gen.* xxvi. 19. where in the *Hebrew* text 'tis *living water*; which we, and alſo the *Chaldee* paraphraſe, render *ſpringing water*. So living waters with them, are ſaid to be always flowing, and never ceaſe [t].

Ver. 11. *The woman ſaith unto him, Sir*, &c.] Which was an uſual way in thoſe countries, of addreſſing men, and eſpecially ſtrangers; and expreſſes no uncommon reſpect to Chriſt, of whoſe dignity and greatneſs, ſhe was entirely ignorant; and at whom ſhe was now ſcoffing; for ſo the following words are to be underſtood: *thou haſt nothing to draw with*; no pail, or bucket, or rope, to let it down with, as *Nonnus* adds; for it ſeems, there was no bucket, or veſſel, faſtened at the well for common uſe, but every one brought one with them, when they came to draw: though it is pretty much there was not one; ſince, according to common uſage, and even of the *Jews* [u], "a public well had, קול, *a bucket*, or pitcher; but a "private well had no bucket:" *and the well is deep*; that which is now called *Jacob*'s well, is by ſome ſaid to be forty cubits deep, and by others thirty-five yards: *from whence then haſt thou that living water?* this ſhe ſaid, in a ſneering, ſcoffing manner: ſhe reaſoned with him, either that he muſt have it out of this well; but that could not be, ſince he had no veſſel to draw with, and the well was ſo deep, that he could not come at the water without one; or he muſt have it from ſome neighbouring ſpring; upon which ſhe ſcoffs at him in the following manner.

Ver. 12. *Art thou greater than our father Jacob*, &c.] A perſon of greater worth and character than he, who was content to drink of this water; or wiſer and more knowing than he, who could find out no better fountain of water in all theſe parts? ſhe calls *Jacob* the father of them, according to the common notion and boaſting of theſe people, when it ſerved their turn; otherwiſe they were not the deſcendants of *Jacob*; for after the ten tribes were carried away captive by the king of *Aſſyria*, he placed in their room, in the cities of *Samaria*, men from *Babylon*, *Cuthah*, *Ava*, *Hamath*, and *Sepharvaim*, heatheniſh and idolatrous people; ſee 2 *Kings* xvii. 24. And from theſe, the then *Samaritans* ſprung; only upon *Sanballat*'s building a temple on mount *Gerizzim*, for *Manaſſeh* his ſon-in-law, when put away from the prieſthood by the *Jews*, for his marriage of his daughter, ſeveral wicked perſons of the like ſort, came out of *Judea*, and joined themſelves to the *Samaritans:* and ſuch a mixed medley of people were they at this time, though they boaſted of *Jacob* as their father, as this woman did; and ſo to this day, they draw their genealogy from *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*; and particularly call *Joſeph* their father, and ſay, from whence are we, but from the tribe of *Joſeph* the juſt, from *Ephraim*[w]? as they formerly did[x]; "R. *Meir* ſaw a *Samaritan*, he ſaid to him, from whence comeſt thou? (that is, from what family) he anſwered, from the (tribe) of *Joſeph*." *Which gave us the well*; *Jacob* gave it indeed to *Joſeph* and his poſterity, along with the parcel of ground in which it was; ſee ver. 5. but not to this mixed company: *and drank thereof himſelf, and his children, and his cattle*: which ſhows both the goodneſs and plenty of the water: though our Lord had ſpoken of living water, this woman underſtood him of no other water, but ſpring water; called living water, from its motion, becauſe it is continually ſpringing up, bubbling, and ever running: ſo carnal perſons, when they hear of ſpiritual things under earthly metaphors, think of nothing but carnal things; as *Nicodemus*, when Chriſt talked of being born again; and the *Jews* at *Capernaum*, when he diſcourſed concerning eating his fleſh, and drinking his blood; for ſpiritual things are neither known nor received, by the natural man.

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[t] Bartenora in Miſn. Negaim, c. 14. §. 1.

[u] T. Hieroſ. Erubin, fol. 20. 2.

Ver. 13. *Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto her*, &c.] In a mild and gentle manner, patiently bearing all her ſcoffs and flouts, and continuing to inſtruct and inform her, concerning this living water, ſhewing the preferableneſs of it to all others: *whoſoever drinketh of this water*; meaning in that well called *Jacob*'s well, or any other common water: *ſhall thirſt again*; as this woman had often done, and would again, as ſhe herſelf knew, ver. 15. and as Jeſus did, who very likely afterwards drank of it, *John* xix. 28. For though water allays heat, quenches thirſt, and refreſhes and revives the ſpirits for a while, yet in proceſs of time, natural heat increaſes, and thirſt returns, and there's a neceſſity of drinking water again.

Ver. 14. *But whoſoever drinketh of the water that I ſhall give him*, &c.] Meaning, the Spirit and his grace; ſee ch. vii. 38, 39. and which he more than once ſpeaks of, as his gift here, and in the context: of which, whoever truly partakes, *ſhall never thirſt*; either after ſinful luſts and pleaſures, and his former vicious way of living, which he now diſreliſhes: not but there are deſires and luſtings after carnal things in regenerate perſons, as there were luſtings in the *Iſraelites*, after the onions, garlick, and fleſh-pots in *Egypt*, when they were come out from thence; yet theſe are not ſo ſtrong, prevalent, and predominant; they are checked and reſtrained by the grace of God; ſo that they do not hanker after ſin as they did, nor drink up iniquity like water, or commit ſin with greedineſs, as before: or elſe it means thirſting after the grace of God; thirſty perſons are invited to take and drink of the water of life freely, and are pronounced bleſſed; and 'tis promiſed, that they ſhall be filled, or ſatisfied; yet not ſo in this life, that they ſhall never thirſt after, or deſire more; for as they need more grace, and it is promiſed them, they thirſt after it, and deſire it; and the more they taſte and partake of it, the more they deſire it: but the ſenſe is, either as ſome read the words, *they ſhall not thirſt for ever*; though they may for a time, and be in a diſtreſſed condition for want of a ſupply of it, yet they ſhall not always; God will open rivers and fountains for them, and give drink to his people, his choſen; and in the other ſtate, they ſhall hunger and thirſt no more; for the Lamb ſhall lead them to fountains of living waters: or rather, they ſhall never thirſt, ſo as to be like the thirſty and parched earth, dried up, and have no moiſture in them; for however this may ſeem ſometimes to be their caſe, God will, and does, pour out water and floods upon them; yea, that grace which is infuſed into their ſouls, is an abundant and an abiding principle, which will preſerve them from languiſhing, ſo as to periſh: *but the water that I ſhall give him, ſhall be in him a well of water*; which denotes the plenty of it; for the grace of God given at converſion, is exceeding abundant, it ſuper-abounds all the aboundings of ſin; it comes in large flows into the hearts of regenerate perſons, and flows out of them, as rivers of living water: and which alſo abides, for it continues *ſpringing up into everlaſting life*; it is a ſeed which remains, an immortal and never dying principle; it is inſeparably connected with eternal life; it is the beginning of it, and it iſſues in it; whoever has grace, ſhall have glory; and whoever are called, ſanctified, juſtified, and pardoned, ſhall be glorified: ſuch is the nature, influence, and uſe of this living water, in Chriſt's gift: the words of the law are, in the *Targum* on *Cant.* iv. 15. compared to a well of living water.

Ver. 15. *The woman ſaith unto him, Sir*, &c.] See the note on ver. 11. *give me this water, that I thirſt not*. The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions add, *again: neither come hither*; the *Ethiopic* verſion adds here, *again*; *to draw*. This ſhe ſaid alſo, in the ſame ſneering and ſcoffing way, as her talking of not thirſting and coming thither to draw water, ſhews; and it is as if ſhe had ſaid, pray give me ſome of this fine water you talk of, that I may never thirſt again; and ſo have no occaſion to be at all this fatigue and trouble, to come daily to this well for water: though ſome think, that ſhe now ſpoke ſeriouſly, having ſome little knowledge of what our Lord meant by living water, but with a mixture of much ignorance, and that ſhe heartily deſired it; but the reaſon ſhe gives, ſhews the contrary.

Ver. 16. *Jeſus ſaith unto her*, &c.] Obſerving that ſhe continued an ignorant ſcoffer at him, and his words, determined to take another method with her; and convince her, that he was not a common and ordinary perſon ſhe was converſing with, as ſhe took him to be; and alſo what a ſinner ſhe was, and what a vicious courſe of life ſhe had lived; ſo that ſhe might ſee that ſhe ſtood in need of him, as the gift of God, and Saviour of men; and of the grace he had been ſpeaking of, under the notion of living water: ſaying to her, *go, call thy huſband, and come hither*; go directly from hence to the city of *Sychar*, and call thy huſband, and come back hither along with him again: this Chriſt ſaid, not to have him come to teach and inſtruct him, and as if he would more readily and eaſily underſtand him, and that he might be with her, a partaker of the ſame grace; but to bring on ſome further converſation, by which ſhe would underſtand that he knew her ſtate and condition, and what a courſe of life ſhe now lived, and ſo bring her under a conviction of her ſin and danger, and need of him and his grace.

Ver. 17. *The woman anſwered and ſaid, I have no huſband*, &c.] Which was a truth ſhe would not

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[w] Epiſt. Samar. ad Scaliger. in Antiqu. Eccl. Oriental. p. 123, 124, 126.

[x] Bereſhit Rabba, §. 94. fol. 82. 1.

have ſpoke at another time and place, or to any of her neighbours; but Chriſt being a ſtranger, and no odium incurring upon her by it; and this ſerving a purpoſe to excuſe her going to call him, ſhe declares the truth of the matter: *Jeſus ſaid unto her, thou haſt well ſaid, I have no huſband*; this is the truth, it is really fact, and is the true ſtate of the caſe, between thee and him, who goes for thy huſband.

Ver. 18. *For thou haſt had five huſbands*, &c.] Which ſhe either had had lawfully, and had buried one after another; and which was no crime, and might be: the *Sadducees* propoſe a caſe to Chriſt, in which a woman is ſaid to have had ſeven huſbands ſucceſſively, in a lawful manner, *Matt.* xxii. 25—28. Or rather, ſhe had had ſo many, and had been divorced from every one of them, for adultery; for for no other cauſe it ſhould ſeem, did the *Samaritans* divorce; ſeeing that they only received the law of *Moſes*, and rejected, at leaſt, many of the traditions of the elders; and ſince they are particularly ſaid [y], “not to be expert in the law of marriages and divorces:” and the rather this may ſeem to be the caſe, as Dr. *Lightfoot* obſerves; ſince theſe huſbands are mentioned, as well as he with whom ſhe lived in an adulterous manner; and which ſuggeſts, that ſhe had not lived honeſtly with them: *and he whom thou now haſt, is not thy huſband*; that is, not thy lawful huſband, as the *Perſic* verſion reads, and *Nonnus* paraphraſes; being not married to him at all, though they co-habited as man and wife, when there was no ſuch relation between them: *in that ſaidſt thou truly*; or that which is truth: thus Chriſt the omniſcient God, who knew her full well, and the whole of her paſt infamous converſation, and her preſent lewd and wicked way of living, expoſes all unto her.

Ver. 19. *The woman ſaith unto him, Sir*, &c.] With another countenance, and a different air and geſture, with another accent and tone of ſpeech, dropping her ſcoffs and jeers: *I perceive that thou art a prophet*; ſuch an one as *Samuel* was, who could tell *Saul* what was in his heart, and that his father's aſſes were found, and where they were, 1 *Sam.* ix. 19, 20. and as *Eliſha*, whoſe heart went with his ſervant *Gehazi*, when *Naaman* turned to him to meet him, and give him preſents; and who could tell, e'er the king's meſſenger came to him, that the ſon of a murderer had ſent to take away his head, 2 *Kings* v. 26. and vi. 32. And ſuch a prophet, that had ſuch a ſpirit of diſcerning, this woman took Chriſt to be; and who indeed is greater than a prophet, and is the omniſcient God; who knows all mens hearts, thoughts, words, and actions, and needs not that any ſhould teſtify of them to him; for he knows what is in them, and done by them; and can tell them all that ever they did, as he did this woman, ver. 29. Now in order either to ſhift off the diſcourſe from this ſubject, which touched her to the quick; or elſe being truly ſenſible of her ſin, and willing to reform, and for the future to worſhip God in the place and manner he had directed, ſhe addreſſed Chriſt in the following words.

Ver. 20. *Our fathers worſhipped in this mountain*, &c.] Mount *Gerizzim*, which was juſt by, and within ſight; ſo that the woman could point to it; it was ſo near to *Shechem*, or *Sychar*, that *Jotham*'s voice was heard from the top of it thither, *Judges* ix. 6, 7. By the *fathers*, this woman claims as theirs, are meant, not the immediate anceſtors of the *Samaritans*, or thoſe only of ſome few generations paſt; but the patriarchs *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, whoſe deſcendants they would be thought to be; and they improved every inſtance of their worſhipping in theſe parts, in favour of this mountain, being a ſacred place. And *Abraham* did indeed build an altar to the Lord, in the plain of *Moreh*, *Gen.* xii. 6, 7. and which the *Jews* themſelves [z] own, is the ſame with *Sichem*; but their tradition which *Theophylact* reports, that *Iſaac* was offered upon the mount of *Gerizzim*, is entirely falſe: *Jacob* 'tis true, came to *Shalem*, a city of *Shechem*; and upon this very ſpot of ground, the parcel of a field, he bought of the children of *Hammor*, and gave to his ſon *Joſeph*, he built an altar, and called it *El-elohe Iſrael*, *Gen.* xxxiii. 18, 19, 20. And alſo upon this very mountain, the tribe of *Joſeph*, with others ſtood, when they were come over *Jordan*, and bleſſed the people; all which circumſtances, the *Samaritans* failed not to make uſe of in vindication of themſelves, and their worſhip in this mountain; and which this woman might be acquainted with, and might refer unto: but as for any temple, or place of worſhip on this mount, there was none till of late years, even after the ſecond temple was built. The occaſion of it, as *Joſephus* [a] relates, was this; *Manaſſeh*, brother to *Jaddua* the high-prieſt, having married *Nicaſſo*, daughter of *Sanballat*, governour of *Samaria*, was on that account driven from the prieſthood; he fled to his father-in-law, and related the caſe to him, expreſſing great love to his daughter, and yet a regard to his office; upon which *Sanballat* propoſed to build him a temple on mount *Gerizzim*, for which he did not doubt of obtaining leave of *Darius* the *Perſian* monarch, and make him an high-prieſt. *Darius* being overcome by *Alexander* the great, *Sanballat* made his court to him, and petitioned him for the building of this temple, who granted him his requeſt; and accordingly he built one, and *Manaſſeh* became the high-prieſt; and many of the profligate *Jews*, that had married ſtrange wives, or violated the ſabbath, or had eat forbidden meat, came over and joined him. This temple we are told [b], was built about forty years after the ſecond temple at *Jeruſalem*; and ſtood two hundred years, and then was deſtroyed by *Jochanan*, the ſon of *Simeon*, the ſon of *Mattathiah*, who was called *Hyrcanus*, and ſo ſays *Joſephus* [c]; it might now be rebuilt: however, this did not put a ſtop to worſhip in this place, about which there were great contentions, between the *Jews* and the *Samaritans*; of which we have ſome inſtances, in the writings of the former: it is ſaid [d], that “R. *Jonathan* went to pray in *Jeruſalem*, and paſſed by that mountain (the *Gloſs* ſays, mount *Gerizzim*) and a certain *Samaritan* ſaw him, and ſaid to him, whither art thou going? he replied, that he was going to pray at *Jeruſalem*; he ſaid to him, is it not better for thee to pray in this bleſſed mountain, and not in that dunghill houſe? he replied, why is it bleſſed? he anſwered, becauſe it was not overflowed by the waters of the flood; the thing was hid from the eyes of *R. Jonathan*, and he could not return an anſwer.” This ſtory is told elſewhere [e], with a little variation, and more plainly as to the place, thus; “it happened to *R. Jonathan*, that he went to *Neapolis*, of the *Cuthites*, or *Samaritans*, (*i. e.* to *Sichem*, for *Sichem* is now called *Naplous*) and he was riding upon an aſs, and an herdſman with him; a certain *Samaritan* joined

“ himſelf

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[y] T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 76. 1.

[z] Miſna Sota, c. 7. §. 5. T. Bab. Sota, fol. 33. 2.

[a] Antiqu. l. 12. c. 1. Vid. Juchaſin, fol. 14. 2.

[b] Juchaſin, fol. 14. 2. & 15. 1.

[c] Antiqu. l. 13. c. 17.

[d] Bereſhit Rabba, §. 32. fol. 27. 4. & Shirhaſhirim Rabba, fol. 16. 3.

[e] Debarim Rabba, §. 3. fol. 238. 2.

“ himſelf to them: when they came to mount *Gerizzim*, the *Samaritan* ſaid to *R. Jonathan*, how came it to paſs that we are come to this holy mountain? *R. Jonathan* replied, whence comes it to be holy? the *Samaritan* anſwered him, becauſe it was not hurt by the waters of the flood.” Much the ſame ſtory is told of *R. Iſhmael bar R. Joſe* [f]. It is to be obſerved in this account, that the *Samaritans* call this mountain the holy mountain, they imagined there was ſomething ſacred in it; and the bleſſed mountain, or the mountain of bleſſing; no doubt, becauſe the bleſſings were pronounced upon it; tho' a very poor reaſon is given by them in the above paſſages. And they not only urged the above inſtances of the worſhip of the patriarchs at, or about this place, which this woman refers to; but even falſified a paſſage in the *Pentateuch*, as is generally thought, in favour of this mount; for in *Deut*. xxvii. 4. inſtead of mount *Ebal*, in the *Samaritan Pentateuch* mount *Gerizzim* is inſerted. So ſtood the caſe on one ſide of the queſtion; on the other hand, the *Jews* pleaded for the temple at *Jeruſalem*. And *ye ſay, that in Jeruſalem is the place where men ought to worſhip*; that is, in the temple there; who urged, and very rightly, that God had choſen that place to put his name, and fix his worſhip there; and had ordered them to come thither, and bring their offerings and ſacrifices, and to keep their paſſover and other feaſts; ſee *Deut*. xii. 5, 6. and xvi. 2. 2 *Chron*. ix. 12. This was built by *Solomon*, according to the command and direction of God, ſome hundreds of years before mount *Gerizzim* was made uſe of for religious worſhip; and they had not only theſe things to plead, but alſo the worſhip which was here given to God in this place before the temple was built upon it, which they failed not to do. So the *Targumiſt* on 2 *Chron*. iii. 1. enlarges on this head; “ and *Solomon* began to build the ſanctuary of the Lord in *Jeruſalem*, on mount *Moriah*, in the place where *Abraham* worſhipped and prayed in the name of the Lord: הוא אתר ארע פולחנא, *this place is the land of worſhip*; for there all generations worſhipped before the Lord; and there *Abraham* offered up his ſon *Iſaac*, for a burnt offering, and the Word of the Lord delivered him, and a ram was appointed in his ſtead; there *Jacob* prayed when he fled from *Eſau* his brother; there the angel of the Lord appeared to *David*, when he diſpoſed the ſacrifice in the place he bought of *Ornan*, in the floor of *Ornan* the *Jebuſite*.” And ſince, now there were ſo many things to be ſaid on each ſide of the queſtion, this woman deſires, that ſeeing Chriſt was a prophet, he would be pleaſed to give her his ſenſe of the matter, and inform her which was the right place of worſhip.

Ver. 21. *Jeſus ſaith unto her, woman, believe me*, &c.] In what I am now going to ſay, ſince you own me to be a prophet: *the hour cometh*; the time is at hand; it is very near; it is juſt coming: *when ye ſhall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jeruſalem, worſhip the Father*; that is, God, whom the *Jews*, and ſo the *Samaritans*, knew under the character of the Father of all men, as the creator and preſerver of them; for not God as the Father of Chriſt, or of the ſaints by adopting grace, is here intended, which this ignorant woman at leaſt had no knowledge of: and the reaſon of our Lord's ſpeaking after this manner, ſignifying, that ſhe need not trouble herſelf about the place of worſhip, was, partly, becauſe in a little time *Jeruſalem*, and the temple in it, would be deſtroyed, and not one ſtone left upon another; and that *Samaria*, and this mountain of *Gerizzim*, with whatſoever edifice might be upon it, would be laid deſolate, ſo that neither of them would continue long to be places of religious worſhip; and partly, becauſe all diſtinction of places in religion would entirely ceaſe; and one place would be as lawful, and as proper to worſhip in, as another; and men ſhould lift up holy hands, and pray, and offer up ſpiritual ſacrifices in every place, even from the riſing of the ſun, to the going down of the ſame, *Mal*. i. 11.

Ver. 22. *Ye worſhip ye know not what*, &c.] However, as to her queſtion, he more directly replies by condemning the *Samaritans*, and their ignorance in worſhip, and by approving the *Jews*; and ſo manifeſtly gives the preference to the *Jews*, not only with reſpect to the place, and object of worſhip, but with reſpect to knowledge and ſalvation. As for the *Samaritans*, he ſuggeſts, that they were ignorant, not only of the true object of worſhip, but knew not what they themſelves worſhipped; or, at leaſt, were not agreed in it. The original inhabitants of thoſe parts, from whence theſe *Samaritans* ſprung, were idolatrous heathens, placed by the king of *Aſſyria* in the room of the ten tribes he carried away captive; and theſe feared not the Lord, for they *knew not the manner of the God of the land:* wherefore lions were ſent among them, which ſlew many of them; upon which the king of *Aſſyria* ordered a prieſt to be ſent to inſtruct them: but notwithſtanding this, they had every one gods of their own, ſome one, and ſome another; and ſo ſerved divers graven images, they and their children, and their childrens children, to the time of the writer of the book of *Kings*; ſee 2 *Kings* xvii. 24—41. And tho' after *Manaſſeh*, and other *Jews* were come among them, and they had received the law of *Moſes*, they might have ſome knowledge of the true God, yet they glorified him not as God; and tho' they might in words profeſs him, yet in works they denied him; and even after this they are very highly charged by the *Jews* with idolatrous practices on this mount. Sometimes they ſay [g] the *Cutbites*, or *Samaritans*, worſhipped fire; and at other times, and which chiefly prevails with them, they aſſert [h], that their wiſe men, upon ſearching, found that they worſhipped the image of a dove on mount *Gerizzim*; and ſometimes they ſay [i], they worſhipped the idols, the ſtrange Gods, or *Teraphim*, which *Jacob* hid under the oak in *Sichem*; which laſt, if true, may ſerve to illuſtrate theſe words of Chriſt, that they worſhipped they knew not what, ſince they worſhipped idols hid in the mount. “ *R. Iſhmael bar Joſe*, they ſay [k], went to *Neapolis*, (*Sichem*, called *Naplous*) the *Cutbites*, or *Samaritans* came to him, (to perſuade him to worſhip with them in their mountain); he ſaid unto them, I will ſhew you that ye don't *worſhip at this mountain*, but *the images which are hid under it*; for it is written, *Gen*. xxxv. 4. and *Jacob hid them under the oak which* was *by Shechem*.” And elſewhere [l] it is reported of the ſame *Rabbi*, that he went to *Jeruſalem* to pray, as before related on ver. 20. and after what paſſed between him, and the *Samaritan* he met with at mount *Gerizzim*, before

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[f] Bereſhit Rabba, §. 81. fol. 71. 1.

[g] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 5. 2.

[h] Maimon. in Miſn. Beracot, c. 8. §. 8. & Bartenora in ib. c. 7. §. 1. & in Nidda, c. 4. §. 1.

[i] Shalſhelet Hakkabala, fol. 15. 2.

[k] T. Hieroſ. Avoda Zara, fol. 44. 4.

[l] Bereſhit Rabba, §. 81. fol. 71. 1.

fore mentioned, he added; “ and ſaid to him, I “ will tell you what ye are like, (ye are like) to a “ dog that luſts after carrion; ſo becauſe ye know “ the idols are hid under it, (the mountain) as it “ is written, *Gen.* xxxv. 4. *and Jacob hid them*, “ therefore ye luſt after it: they ſaid—this man “ knows that idols are hid here, and perhaps he'll “ take them away; and they conſulted together to “ kill him: he aroſe, and made his eſcape in the “ night.” But this was not the caſe of the *Jews*: *we know what we worſhip*; Chriſt puts himſelf among them, for he was a *Jew*, as the woman took him to be; and, as man, was a worſhipper of God; he feared, loved, and obeyed God; he truſted in him, and prayed unto him; though, as God, he was the object of worſhip himſelf: and the true worſhippers among the *Jews*, of which ſort Chriſt was, knew God, whom they worſhipped, ſpiritually and ſavingly; and the generality of that people had right notions of the God of *Iſrael*, having the oracles, and ſervice of God, and being inſtructed out of *Moſes*, and the prophets: *for ſalvation is of the Jews*; the promiſes of ſalvation, and of a Saviour, were made to them, when the *Gentiles* were ſtrangers to them; the means of ſalvation, and of the knowledge of it, as the word, ſtatutes, and ordinances, were enjoyed by them, when others were ignorant of them; and the Meſſiah, who is ſometimes ſtiled *ſalvation*, ſee *Gen.* xlix. 18. *Pſ.* xiv. 7. *Luke* ii. 30. was not only propheſied of in their books, and promiſed unto them, but came of them, as well as to them; and the number of the ſaved ones had been for many hundreds of years, and ſtill was among them; the line of election ran among them, and few among the *Gentiles* were called and ſaved, as yet.

Ver. 23. *But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worſhippers*, &c.] The worſhippers of the true God, and who worſhip in a right manner, whether *Jews* or *Samaritans*, or of whatſoever nation: *ſhall worſhip the Father*; the one true God, the Father of Spirits, and of all fleſh living: *in ſpirit*; in oppoſition to all carnal conceptions of him, as if he was a corporeal being, or circumſcribed in ſome certain place, dwelling in temples made with hands, or was to be worſhipped with mens hands; and in diſtinction from the carnal worſhip of the *Jews*, which lay greatly in the obſervation of carnal ordinances: and this ſhews they ſhould not worſhip with their bodies only, for bodily exerciſe profiteth little; but with their ſouls or ſpirits, with their whole hearts engaged therein; and by, and under the influence and aſſiſtance of the Spirit of God, without whom men cannot perform worſhip, neither prayer, praiſe, preaching, or hearing, aright: *and in truth*; in oppoſition to hypocriſy, with true hearts, in the ſingleneſs, ſincerity, and integrity of their ſouls; and in diſtinction from *Jewiſh* ceremonies, which were only ſhadows, and had not the truth and ſubſtance of things in them; and according to the word of truth, the Goſpel of ſalvation; and in Chriſt, who is the truth, the true tabernacle, in, and thro' whom acceſs is had to God, prayer is made to him, and every part of religious worſhip with acceptance: ſo *Enoch* is ſaid, פלח בקושטא, *to worſhip in truth*, before the Lord, in the *Targums* of *Jonathan* and *Jeruſalem*, in *Gen.* v. 24. And it may be that the worſhip of all the three perſons in the Godhead, as more diſtinctly performed under the Goſpel-diſpenſation, is here intended: for the words may be thus read, *ſhall worſhip the Father, with the Spirit, and with the truth*; ſo the prepoſition εν is rendered in *Eph.* vi. 2. and elſewhere; and then the ſenſe is, they ſhall *worſhip the Father*; the firſt perſon in the Trinity, who is the Father of Chriſt, his only-begotten Son, and together and equally with him *the Spirit*; the holy Spirit, as the *Ethiopic* verſion reads; and *Nonnus* calls it the divine Spirit: and the rather he may be thought to be intended, ſince it follows in the next verſe, *the Spirit is God*; for ſo the words lie in the *Greek* text; and are ſo rendered in the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, and *Ethiopic* verſions; and therefore is the proper object of religious worſhip, whoſe temples the ſaints are, with whom they have communion, to whom they pray, and in whoſe name they are baptized: and alſo together *with the truth*; with Chriſt the way, the truth, and the life; who is the true God, and eternal life; and who is equally to be worſhipped as the Father and Spirit, as he is by the angels in heaven, and by the ſaints on earth; who pray unto him, truſt in him, and are alſo baptized in his name, as in the name of the other two perſons: and the rather this may be thought to be the ſenſe, ſince Chriſt is ſpeaking, not of the manner, but of the object of worſhip, in the preceding verſe: *for the Father ſeeketh ſuch to worſhip him*; it being agreeable to him to be worſhipped in the manner, as above related; and his deſire is, that the Son and Spirit ſhould be honoured equally as himſelf; and ſuch worſhippers he has found, having made them ſuch, both among the *Jews* and *Gentiles*; and ſuch only are acceptable to him; ſee *Phil.* iii. 3.

Ver. 24. *God is a Spirit*, &c.] Or *the Spirit is God*; a divine perſon, poſſeſſed of all divine perfections, as appears from his names, works, and worſhip aſcribed unto him; ſee the note on the preceding verſe; tho' the *Arabic* and *Perſic* verſions, and others, read as we do, *God is a Spirit*; that is, God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt: for taking the words in this light, not one of the perſons is to be underſtood excluſive of the other; for this deſcription, or definition, agrees with each of them, and they are all the object of worſhip, and to be worſhipped in a true and ſpiritual manner. God is a Spirit, and not a body, or a corporeal ſubſtance: the nature and eſſence of God is like a Spirit, ſimple and uncompounded, not made up of parts; nor is it diviſible; nor does it admit of any change and alteration. God, as a Spirit, is immaterial, immortal, inviſible, and an intelligent, willing, and active being; but differs from other ſpirits, in that he is an increated one, an immenſe and infinite Spirit, and an eternal one, which has neither beginning nor end: he is therefore a ſpirit by way of eminency, as well as effectively, he being the author and former of all ſpirits: whatever excellence is in them, muſt be aſcribed to God in the higheſt manner; and whatever is imperfect in them, muſt be removed from him: *and they that worſhip him*; worſhip is due to him on account of his nature and perfections, both internal and external; with both the bodies and ſouls of men; and both private and publick; in the cloſet, in the family, and in the church of God; as prayer, praiſe, attendance on the word and ordinances: *muſt worſhip* him *in ſpirit and in truth*; in the true and ſpiritual manner before deſcribed, which is ſuitable to his nature, and agreeable to his will.

Ver. 25. *The woman ſaith unto him*, &c.] Not knowing well what to ſay to theſe things Chriſt had been diſcourſing about, as the place, object, and manner of worſhip; and being indetermined in her judgment of them, by what he had ſaid, was willing to refer them to the Meſſiah's coming; of which ſhe, and the *Samaritans*, had ſome knowledge. *I know that Meſſias cometh which is called Chriſt*: the laſt clauſe, *which is called Chriſt*, are not the words of the woman explaining the *Hebrew* word *Meſſiah*; for as, on the one hand, ſhe did not underſtand *Greek*, ſo, on the other, ſhe could not think that the perſon ſhe was converſing with, who ſhe knew was a *Jew*, needed that word to be explained to him; but they are the words of the *Evangeliſt*, interpreting the *Hebrew* word *Meſſiah*, by the *Greek* word *Chriſt*, in which language he wrote: hence this clauſe is left out in the *Syriac* verſion, as unneceſſary to a *Syriac* reader, not needing the word to be explained to him. The *Arabic* and *Ethiopic* verſions, and ſome copies, read in the plural number, *we know that Meſſias cometh*; the knowledge of the coming of the Meſſiah was not peculiar to this woman, but was common to all the *Samaritans*; for as they received the five books of *Moſes*, they might learn from thence, that a divine and excellent perſon was to come, who is called the ſeed of the woman, that ſhould bruiſe the ſerpent's head; *Shiloh*, to whom the gathering of the people ſhould be; and a prophet like unto *Moſes*: and tho' the word *Meſſiah* is not found in thoſe books, yet, as it was uſual with the *Jews* to call the ſame perſon by this name, they might eaſily take it from them, and make uſe of it; and they not only knew that there was a *Meſſiah* to come, and expected him, but that he was coming, juſt ready to come; and this they might conclude, not only from the general expectation of the *Jewiſh* nation about this time, but from *Gen*. xlix. 10. And it is certain, that the *Samaritans* to this day do expect a Meſſiah, though they know not his name, unleſs it be השחב; the meaning of which they don't underſtand [m]: to me it ſeems to be an abbreviation of השחבא, or הוא אשר הבא, *he that is to come*; by which circumlocution the *Jews* underſtand the Meſſiah; ſee *Matt*. xi. 3. and to which this *Samaritan* woman ſeems to have ſome reſpect: *when he is come he will tell us all things*; the whole mind and will of God; all things relating to the worſhip of God, and to the ſalvation of men. This the *Samaritans* might conclude from his general character as a prophet, like unto *Moſes*, to whom men were to hearken, *Deut*. xviii. 15. and from a common prevailing notion among the *Jews*, that the times of the Meſſiah would be times of great knowledge, founded on ſeveral propheſies, as *Iſ*. ii. 3. and xi. 2, 9. *Jer*. xxxi. 34. and which they ſometimes expreſs in the following manner [n]: "in the days of the Meſſiah, even the little children in the world ſhall find out the hidden things of wiſdom, and know in it the ends and computations (of times), and at that time he ſhall be made manifeſt unto all." And again [o], "ſays *R. Judah*, the holy, bleſſed God will reveal the deep myſteries of the law in the times of the king Meſſiah; for *the earth ſhall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord*, &c. and it is written, *they ſhall not teach every man his brother*, &c." And elſewhere [p], "the whole world ſhall be filled with the words of the Meſſiah, and with the words of the law, and with the words of the commandments; and theſe things ſhall extend to the iſles afar off; to many people, the uncircumciſed in heart, and the uncircumciſed in fleſh; and they ſhall deal in the ſecrets of the law.——And there ſhall be no buſineſs in the world, but to know the Lord only; wherefore the *Iſraelites* ſhall be exceeding wiſe, and know ſecret things, and comprehend the knowledge of their creator, as much as is poſſible for a man to do, as it is ſaid, *the earth ſhall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord*, &c." Accordingly, the Meſſiah is come, who lay in the boſom of the Father, and has made known all things to his diſciples, he hath heard of him; he has declared him to them, his love, grace, and mercy. God has ſpoken all he has to ſay that appertains to his own worſhip, and the ſalvation of the children of men by his Son Jeſus Chriſt.

Ver. 26. *Jeſus ſaith unto her*, &c.] Upon her making mention of the Meſſiah, of his coming, and of his work, he took the opportunity of making himſelf known unto her: *I that ſpeak unto thee am* he; the Meſſiah; ſee *Iſ*. lii. 6. This is a wonderful inſtance of the grace of Chriſt to this woman, that he ſhould make himſelf known in ſo clear and plain a manner, to ſo mean a perſon, and ſo infamous a creature as ſhe had been: we never find that he ever made ſo clear a diſcovery of himſelf, in ſuch expreſs terms, to any, as to her, unleſs it were to his immediate diſciples; and theſe he would ſometimes charge not to tell who he was.

Ver. 27. *And upon this came his diſciples*, &c.] Juſt as he was ſaying the above words, and making himſelf known in this full manner, his diſciples, who had been into the city to buy food, came up to them: *and marvelled that he talked with the woman*; or with a woman; for, according to the *Jewiſh* canons, it was not judged decent, right, and and proper, nor indeed lawful, to enter into a converſation, or hold any long diſcourſe with a woman. Their rule is this, "don't multiply diſcourſe with a woman, with his wife they ſay, much leſs with his neighbour's wife: hence the wiſe men ſay, at whatſoever time a man multiplies diſcourſe with a woman, he is the cauſe of evil to himſelf, and ceaſes from the words of the law, and at laſt ſhall go down into hell [q]." And eſpecially this was thought to be very unſeemly in any publick place, as in an inn, or in the ſtreet; hence that direction [r], "let not a man talk with a woman in the ſtreets, even with his wife; and there is no need to ſay with another man's wife." And particularly it was thought very unbecoming a religious man, a doctor, or ſcholar, or a diſciple of a wiſe man, ſo to do. This is one of the ſix things which are a reproach to a ſcholar, "to talk with a woman in the ſtreet [s]." And it is even ſaid [t], "let him not talk with a woman in the ſtreet, tho' ſhe is his wife, or his ſiſter, or his daughter." And beſides, the diſciples might marvel, not only that he talked with a woman, but that he ſhould talk with that woman, who was a *Samaritan*; ſince the *Jews* had no familiar converſation with *Samaritans*, men or women: and the woman was as much aſtoniſhed that Chriſt ſhould have any thing to ſay to her, and eſpecially to aſk a favour of her; for though they might, and did converſe in a way of trade and buſineſs, yet did not multiply diſcourſe, or enter into a free converſation with one another: and it may be, that the diſciples might over-hear what he ſaid to the woman, juſt as they came up; ſo that their aſtoniſhment was not merely at his talking with a woman, and with a *Samaritan* woman, but at what he ſaid unto her, that he ſhould ſo plainly tell her that he was the Meſſiah, when he ſo ſtrictly charged them to tell no man. *Yet no man ſaid*; no, not *Peter*, as *Nonnus* obſerves, who was bold and forward to put and aſk queſtions: *what ſeekeſt thou?* or enquireſt of her about? is it food, or drink, or what? *or why talkeſt thou with her?* when it is not cuſtomary, ſeemly, and lawful. It may be conſidered, whether or know theſe two queſtions may not relate ſeparately, the one to the woman, the other to Chriſt; as, the firſt, *what ſeekeſt thou?* to the woman; and the ſenſe be, that no man ſaid to her, what do you want with our maſter? what are you enquiring about of him? what would you have of him? or what do you ſeek for from him? and the latter, *why talkeſt thou with her?* peculiarly to Chriſt. The *Arabic*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions, and *Beza*'s ancient copy indeed read, *no man ſaid to him*; which confines both the queſtions to Chriſt. Now this ſhows the reverence the diſciples had for Chriſt, and the great opinion they entertained of him, that whatever he did was well, and wiſely done, though it might ſeem ſtrange to them, and they could not account for it: however, they did not think that he, who was their Lord and Maſter, was accountable to them for what he did; and they doubted not but he had good reaſons for his conduct.

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[m] Epiſt. Samar. ad Scaliger. in Antiq. Eccl. Oriental. p. 125.

[n] Zohar in Gen. fol. 74. 1.

[o] Ib. in Lev. x. 1.

[p] Maimon. Hilch. Melachim, c. 11. §. 4. & 12. 5.

[q] Pirke Abot, c. 1. §. 5. Abot R. Nathan, c. 7. fol. 3. 3. & Derech Eretz, fol. 17. 3.

[r] Bemidbar Rabba, §. 10. fol. 200. 2.

[s] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 43. 2.

[t] Maimon. Hilch. Dayot, c. 5. §. 7.

Ver. 28. *The woman then left her water-pot*, &c.] Her pail, or bucket, ſhe brought with her to the well to draw water in: this ſhe left, either for Chriſt and his diſciples to make uſe of; or rather thro' forgetfulneſs, her mind being greatly impreſſed, and her thoughts much taken up with what Chriſt had ſaid to her, and ſhe being in haſte to acquaint others with it: ſo the diſciples left their nets, their buſineſs, their friends, and all for Chriſt; and ſo the ſaints are brought to quit their earthly and worldly things for the ſake of Chriſt, and his Goſpel. The *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *ſhe left her diſputation*; ſhe left off diſcourſing with Chriſt upon the diſciples coming to him. *And went her way into the city*; the city of *Sychar*, to inform her friends, relations, and neighbours what ſhe had met with: ſo *Andrew* and *Philip*, when they had found Chriſt themſelves, acquaint others with it, and bring them to him; ſo *Levi*, the publican, being called himſelf by Chriſt, makes a feaſt for Chriſt, and invites many publicans and ſinners to ſit down with him, that they might know him as well as himſelf; ſo the Apoſtle *Paul*, when converted, expreſſes a great concern for his brethren and kinſmen according to the fleſh; and ſuch is the nature of true grace, that thoſe that have it would have others partakers of it likewiſe: *and ſaith to the men.* The *Ethiopic* verſion adds, *of her houſe*; no doubt the men of the place in general are meant; not only thoſe of her family, but the inhabitants of the city. The *Syriac* verſion leaves out the words, *to the men.* The *Jews* will not allow the *Cuthites*, or *Samaritans*, to be called *men*; this they peculiarly aſcribe to prieſts, *Levites*, and *Iſraelites* [n].

Ver. 29. *Come, ſee a man*, &c.] An uncommon, an extraordinary man, a prophet, and, who himſelf ſays, he is the Meſſiah, who is now at *Jacob*'s well; come, go along with me, and ſee him, and converſe with him, and judge for yourſelves, who, and what he is: ſhe does not ſay, *go and ſee*; for ſhe propoſed to go along with them herſelf, that ſhe might have more converſation with him, and knowledge of him, and grace from him: ſo ſuch that have taſted that the Lord is gracious, deſire more grace from him, and communion with him. *Which told me all things that ever I did*; the more remarkable things that had been done by her in the whole ſeries of her life and converſation; referring more eſpecially to the account he had given her of her having had five huſbands, and what the man was ſhe now lived with; when, no doubt, all the tranſactions of her life were laid before her, and ſhe had, at once, a view of all her iniquities; when her ſins ſtared her in the face, and her conſcience was filled with guilt and remorſe, and her ſoul with ſhame and confuſion; and ſo it is when Chriſt, by his Spirit, convinces of ſin, of righteouſneſs, and of judgment: *is not this the Chriſt?* that was to come, has been promiſed and propheſied of, and we have expected, who is of quick underſtanding, and even God omniſcient; ſurely this muſt be he, as he himſelf ſays he is.

Ver. 30. *Then they went out of the city*, &c.] *The men*, as the *Syriac* verſion expreſſes it; the inhabitants of *Sychar* left their buſineſs, and came out of the city: *and came unto him*; to Chriſt, to ſee him, and converſe with him, that they might know who he was: for tho' the woman had been a woman of ill fame, yet ſuch was the account that ſhe gave of Chriſt, and ſuch power went along with her words; that what with the ſtrangeneſs of the relation, and the curioſity with which they were led, and chiefly thro' the efficacy of divine grace, at leaſt in many of them, they were moved to regard what ſhe ſaid, and to follow her directions and ſolicitations.

Ver. 31. *In the mean while*, &c.] Whilſt the woman was gone into the city, and had acquainted the inhabitants, that ſuch a wonderful perſon was at *Jacob*'s well, and invited them to come and ſee him: *his diſciples prayed him, ſaying, maſter, eat*; for they perceived a diſinclination in him to food; and they knew that he was weary with his journey, and that it was the time of day, and high time, that he had had ſome food; and therefore out of great reſpect to him, and in concern for his health and welfare, they intreated him that he would take ſome food: ſo far was Chriſt from indulging his ſenſual appetite; and ſo little reaſon had the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* to traduce him as a wine-bibber and glutton.

Ver. 32. *But he ſaid unto them*, &c.] That is, *Jeſus*, as the *Perſic*, or *the Lord Jeſus*, as the *Ethiopic* verſions expreſs it: *I have meat to eat that ye know not of*; meaning the converſion of the *Samaritan* woman, and of other *Samaritans*, who were flocking in great numbers to him, which he knew, tho' his diſciples did not; and the harveſt of ſouls he had a proſpect of, ſee ver. 35. was as meat unto him, delightful and refreſhing; and his mind and thoughts were ſo taken up with theſe things, that he had no inclination to any corporal food.

Ver. 33. *Therefore ſaid the diſciples one to another*, &c.] Privately, among themſelves, tho' in his hearing; at leaſt he knew what they ſaid by his anſwer: *hath any man*; or any one, any angel from heaven, or any of the inhabitants of the city, or any man or woman, or this woman, they had found him talking with: *brought him* ought *to eat?* for they thought of nothing elſe but bodily food; juſt as when he cautioned them againſt the leaven of the *Sadducees* and *Phariſees*, they imagined he ſaid it, becauſe they had taken no bread; whereas he meant the doctrine of theſe perſons: ſo dull of underſtanding ſpiritual things were the diſciples themſelves, that it is not ſo much to be wondered at that the *Samaritan* woman, whilſt in her carnal ſtate, when Chriſt ſpoke of living water, ſhould underſtand him of material water, or ſpring water.

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[n] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 61. 1. & Toſephot in ib.

Ver. 34. *Jeſus ſaith unto them,* &c.] His diſciples: *my meat is to do the will of him that ſent me.* The *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *of my Father that ſent me*; and who is undoubtedly intended. Now as food is pleaſant, and delightful, and refreſhing to the body of man, ſo doing the will of God was as delightful and refreſhing to the ſoul of Chriſt: he took as much pleaſure in it, as an hungry man does in eating and drinking. One part of the will of God was to aſſume human nature; this he had done, and with delight and pleaſure: another part of it was to fulfil the law; and this was in his heart, and was his delight, and he was now doing it: and another branch of it was to ſuffer and die, in the room and ſtead of his people; and as diſagreeable as this was in itſelf to the human nature, yet he chearfully agreed to it; and was ſometimes, as it were, impatient till it was accompliſhed; and he voluntarily became obedient to it: no man could, with greater eagerneſs, fall to eating, when hungry, than Chriſt went about his Father's will and work, even that which was moſt ungrateful to him, as man. *And to finiſh his work*; one part of which was to preach the Goſpel, and for which he was anointed and ſent; and which he did with great aſſiduity and conſtancy: and another part of it was the converſion of ſinners by it, whom he was ſent to call, and with whom he delighted to be; and was the work he was now about, and took the pleaſure in, the text expreſſes: and beſide theſe, miracles were works his Father gave him to finiſh; ſuch as healing diſeaſes, and diſpoſſeſſing of devils, and which he went about doing continually, with great delight: but the chief work of all is, that of the redemption and ſalvation of his choſen ones: this was a work his Father called him to, and ſent him into this world to perform, which he gave unto him, and Chriſt accepted of, and agreed to do; and tho' it was a very toilſome and laborious one, there being a righteous law to be fulfilled, juſtice to be ſatisfied, the ſins of all his people to bear, as well as the wrath of God, and the curſe of the law, and numerous enemies to grapple with, and an accurſed death to undergo; yet with pleaſure he performed this: for the joy of doing his Father's will, accompliſhing his counſels and covenant, and his own engagements, and procuring the ſalvation of his people, he endured the croſs patiently, and deſpiſed the ſhame of it. The whole of the will and work of God was done by him, juſt as the Lord commanded it; exactly, according to the pattern given him, with all faithfulneſs and integrity; with the moſt conſummate wiſdom and prudence; with all application, diligence, and conſtancy, and ſo as to finiſh it, and that without the help of any other; and in ſuch a manner that nothing can be added to it to make it more perfect, or that it can be undone again by men or devils: and that the doing and finiſhing of this were his meat, or as delightful and refreſhing to him as meat is to the body, appears from his ready and chearful engaging in it in eternity; from his early and induſtrious entrance on it in time; from his conſtancy in it, when he had begun, inſomuch that nothing could deter him from it; nor did he ſink and fail under it, nor left it till he had finiſhed it.

Ver. 35. *Say not ye, there are yet four months,* &c.] Our Lord had been in *Jeruſalem* and *Judea* about eight months from the laſt paſſover, and there remained four more to the next paſſover: *and then cometh harveſt?* barley-harveſt, which began at that time. Now as the paſſover was in the middle of the month *Niſan*, which was about the latter end of our *March*; reckoning four months back from thence ſhows, that it was about the latter end of our *November*, or beginning of *December*, that Chriſt was in *Samaria*, and at *Jacob*'s well. Some think, that this does not refer to the then preſent time, as if there were ſo many months from thence to the next harveſt; but to a common way of ſpeaking, that there were four months from ſeed's time to harveſt; during which time there was a comfortable hope, and longing expectation of it: but this will, by no means, agree either with the wheat, or barley harveſt. The wheat was ſown before this time, and the barley a good while after. "Half "*Tiſri*, *Marcheſhvan*, and half *Ciſleu*, were, זרע, "ſeed's time [w]." The earlieſt they ſowed their wheat was in *Tiſri*, which anſwers to our *September* and *October*; *i. e.* to half one, and half the other. The month of *Marcheſhvan*, which anſwers to *October* and *November*, was the principal month for ſowing it [x]: hence that paraphraſe on *Eccl.* xi. 2. "give a good part of thy ſeed to thy field in *Tiſri*, "and do not refrain from ſowing even in *Ciſleu*." As for the barley, that was ſown in the months of *Shebet* and *Adar*, and uſually in the latter [y]; the former of which anſwers to *January* and *February*, and the latter to *February* and *March*. And we read [z] of their ſowing ſeventy days before the paſſover, which was within ſix weeks of the beginning of barley harveſt. *Behold, I ſay unto you, lift up your eyes, and look on the fields*; pointing to the lands which lay near the city of *Sychar*: *for they are white already to harveſt*; alluding to the corn-fields, which, when ripe, and near harveſt, look white: hence we read [a] of, שדה הלבן, *the white field*, which the *Jews* ſay is a field ſown with wheat or barley, and ſo called to diſtinguiſh it from a field planted with trees; tho' it may be rather, that it is ſo called from its white look when ripe. So the three *Targums* paraphraſe *Gen.* xlix. 12. "his "hills, (his valleys, or fields, as *Onkelos*) יחוורן, "*are white* with corn, and flocks of ſheep." Chriſt here ſpeaks not literally; for the fields could not be white at ſuch a diſtance from harveſt; but ſpiritually, of a harveſt of ſouls; and has regard to the large number of *Samaritans* that were juſt now coming out of the city, and were within ſight, and covered the adjacent fields: and theſe he calls upon his diſciples to lift up their eyes and behold; and ſuggeſts to them, that it was not a time for eating and drinking, but for working, ſince here was ſuch a number of ſouls to be gathered in: and thus as from corporal food he proceeded to treat of ſpiritual food; ſo from a literal harveſt he goes on to ſpeak of a ſpiritual one, and encourages his diſciples to labour in it, by the following arguments.

Ver. 36. *And he that reapeth receiveth wages,* &c.] Angels are ſometimes called reapers, and ſo are miniſters of the Goſpel here. The work and miniſtry of the Apoſtles are here expreſſed by *reaping*: for as in reaping, when the corn is ripe, the ſickle is put in, and the corn is cut down, and laid to the ground, and then bound in ſheaves, and gathered into the barn; ſo when things are ripe in providence, and God's ſet time is come to convert any of his people, he makes uſe of his miniſters for the cutting them down, laying low the loftineſs and haughtineſs of man, ſtripping him of all his goodlineſs, and taking him off of a dependance on his own righteouſneſs and works, and for the gathering them into his churches, which is done with a great deal of joy and pleaſure: and ſuch as are ſo employed, and in this way made uſeful, ſhall *receive wages*; ſhall not only be taken care of in providence, and have a ſufficient and comfortable maintenance, the labourer being worthy of his hire; but ſhall have pleaſure, delight, and ſatisfaction in their work, that being bleſſed for the good of ſouls, and the glory of Chriſt, and they having the preſence of God in it; and alſo ſhall hereafter receive the crown of righteouſneſs, when they have finiſhed their courſe, and ſhall ſhine like the ſtars for ever and ever. *And gathereth fruit unto life eternal:* by *fruit* are meant ſinners converted and turned from the error of their ways; which are the fruit of a Goſpel-miniſtry, of the efficacy and power of divine grace accompanying it; ſee *John* xv. 16. and theſe are *gathered*, by the preaching of the Goſpel, out from among the reſt of mankind, unto Chriſt, the *Shiloh*, or peace-maker, and into his churches, and remain, abide, and perſevere to the end; that grace, which is implanted in their ſouls, being a well of living water, ſpringing up to everlaſting life; ſo that they are at laſt gathered into Chriſt's garner, into heaven, where they ſhall live with him for ever: *that both he that ſoweth, and he that reapeth, may rejoice together.* The ſowers are the prophets of the Old Teſtament, who ſowed that ſeed in their prophecies, which ſprung up in Goſpel-times, and laid the foundation therein of the great ſucceſs of the Apoſtles of Chriſt in preaching the word; for they ſo clearly deſcribed the Meſſiah, and pointed out Chriſt, his offices, and his work, in ſo diſtinct a manner, that when he was come he was readily known, and chearfully embraced; they greatly facilitated the work of the Apoſtles, who had nothing to do but to preach Chriſt, as come in the fleſh: and hence they reaped and gathered a vaſt harveſt of ſouls every where. *John* the *Baptiſt* alſo was one that ſowed; he prepared the way of the Lord, and made ſtraight his paths: and our Lord himſelf was a ſower, that went forth to ſow, and who ſowed good ſeed in the field; all which ſucceeded well, and were ripening apace for a general harveſt, which began on the day of *Pentecoſt*, after our Lord's aſcenſion to heaven. This was in *Judea*; and in the *Gentile* world there was a ſowing in providence, which contributed to make the work of the diſciples more eaſy there, and to bring on, in time, a large harveſt. The books of the Old Teſtament were tranſlated into the *Greek* language; and the *Jews* were ſcattered in the ſeveral parts of the world; and the *Greek* tongue, in which the New Teſtament was to be written, was every where generally ſpoken; and theſe providences were ripening apace to bring on a great work there. And now, as before obſerved, the Apoſtles were the reapers; they were remarkably ſucceſsful in the gathering in of ſouls, even more than the prophets, than *John* the *Baptiſt*, or Chriſt himſelf; never was ſuch a harveſt of ſouls, either in *Judea*, or in the *Gentile* world, before or ſince; of which the converſion of theſe *Samaritans* was a pledge or earneſt. Now when the whole harveſt is gathered in, at the end of the world, all theſe will rejoice together; the *patriarchs* and prophets, the fore-runner of Chriſt, and Chriſt himſelf, and all his Apoſtles and miniſters; the different parts they have had in this work all concurring and agreeing together, and iſſuing in the glory of God, and the good of ſouls.

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[w] T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 106. 2.

[x] Gloſſ. in T. Bab. Roſh Haſhana, fol. 16. 1.

[y] Gloſſ. in Bava Metzia & in Roſh Haſhana ib.

[z] Miſn. Menachot, c. 8. §. 2.

[a] Miſn. Sheviith, c. 2. §. 1. & Moed Katon, c. 1. §. 4.

Ver. 37. *And herein is that ſaying true,* &c.] This verifies that proverbial expreſſion ſo much in uſe, and which may be applied to different perſons and caſes: *one ſoweth, and another reapeth*; the prophets ſowed, and the apoſtles reaped.

Ver. 38. *I ſent you to reap,* &c.] To preach the Goſpel, and gather in ſouls by your miniſtry; referring to the miſſion of them in *Matt.* x. 6, 7. *that whereon ye beſtowed no labour*; being ſent to the *Jews*, who had the writings of the prophets, and were verſed in them; and had learned from them that the Meſſiah was to come, and were now in general expectation of him; ſo that they had nothing more to do, than to declare to thoſe perſons who were cultivated by the prophets, and were like to ground till'd and manured, that the Meſſiah was come, and the kingdom of heaven was at hand. *Other men laboured*; the prophets, and *John* the *Baptiſt: and ye are entered into their labours*; to finiſh the work they had begun, and which was almoſt done to their hands.

Ver. 39. *And many of the Samaritans of that city,* &c.] Of *Sychar*, which was a city of *Samaria: believed on him*; that he was the true Meſſiah he had told the woman he was; and ſhe put it to them whether he was or not: before they ſaw him, had any converſation with him themſelves, they believed in him; ſee *John* xx. 29. *for the ſaying of the woman which teſtified, he told me all that ever I did:* the account ſhe gave was ſo plain, and honeſt, and diſintereſted, that they could not but give credit to it; and ſince the perſon was an utter ſtranger to her, and yet had laid before her the whole ſeries of her paſt life and converſation, they concluded he could be no other than the Meſſiah, who ſhould tell all things; and being of quick underſtanding or ſmell, was able to diſcloſe the ſecrets of men.

Ver. 40. *So when the Samaritans were come unto him,* &c.] The *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *all the Samaritans*; they came to him at *Jacob*'s well, upon the woman's ſolicitations, and the account ſhe gave of this extraordinary perſon: and after they had converſed with him, and heard him themſelves, they were taken with his divine diſcourſes, and being thoroughly perſuaded that he was the Meſſiah, *they beſought him that he would tarry with them*; they were not like the *Gergeſenes*, who beſought him to depart out of their coaſts as ſoon as he was in them: but theſe men were delighted with his company; and notwithſtanding his being a *Jew*, deſired a converſation with him, and intreated that he would go along with them to their city, and ſtay with them: *and he abode there two days*; he went with them to *Sychar*. He would not deny their requeſt, leſt they ſhould be diſcouraged; and yet would not make any long ſtay with them, that he might give no umbrage to the *Jews*; though it is very likely from this ſhort ſtay in *Samaria* they afterwards reproached him as a *Samaritan*, ch. viii. 48. Our Lord's direction to his diſciples not to enter into any of the cities of the *Samaritans*, was not a rule to himſelf, or binding upon him, and was only a rule to them *pro tempore*.

Ver. 41. *And many more believed,* &c.] The *Vulgate Latin*, and all the *Oriental* verſions add, *on him:* when he was come into the city, and had preached to the inhabitants in general, a larger multitude than before believed in him as the Meſſiah, and profeſſed him, and became followers of him. *Becauſe of his own word*; which came to them, not in word only, but in power, and was the power of God unto ſalvation to them; and was received by them, not as the word of man, but as the word of God; and it wrought effectually in them, and was an hammer to break their rocky hearts in pieces, and to bring them into ſubjection to himſelf, his Goſpel and ordinances: whether his word or doctrine was accompanied with miracles, is not certain; this ſhows, that their faith in him was founded on his own word, which fell with great weight upon them. It ſeems to have an emphaſis laid upon it, his *own* word, in diſtinction from the woman's ſaying.

Ver. 42. *And ſaid unto the woman,* &c.] Who, it appears, kept hearing Chriſt, attending on him, and converſing with him; for having taſted of his grace, ſhe could not leave him: *now we believe, not becauſe of thy ſaying*; not on account of that only: it ſhould ſeem that theſe were the ſame perſons that believed upon her word before they went out of the city; and who, when come to Chriſt, invited him into it; and now, having heard his excellent diſcourſes, were confirmed in the faith of him: *for we have heard him ourſelves*; not only externally, with their bodily ears, but internally, having ears given them to hear, ſo as to underſtand what he ſaid; to mix it with faith, and receive it in love; to feel the power of it in their hearts, and taſte the ſweetneſs of it, and be nouriſhed by it; and ſo as to diſtinguiſh his voice from another's, as Chriſt's true ſheep are capable of. *And know that this is indeed the Chriſt*; the true Meſſiah, and not a falſe one; the Meſſiah ſpoken of by *Moſes*, whoſe books the *Samaritans* received, as the ſeed of the woman, the *Shiloh*, and prophet, like to *Moſes*; the Chriſt of God, who is anointed to be prophet, prieſt, and king. The *Vulgate Latin* and *Ethiopic* verſions leave out the word *Chriſt*, and only read what follows, *the ſaviour of the world*: they knew him to be the ſaviour, he who was ſpoken of as ſuch; for his work to bruiſe the ſerpent's head implies it, and his name *Shiloh* imports as much: and beſides, he is called by *Jacob* God's ſalvation, *Gen.* xlix. 18. God appointed him as a ſaviour; he ſent him, and he came as ſuch, and is become the author of ſalvation; and his name is called Jeſus, on this account: and a great ſaviour he is; both able, and willing; and he is ſuitable to the caſe of ſinners; and is a complete, and an only one: and theſe *Samaritans* knew him to be *the ſaviour of the world*; not of every individual perſon in it, for all are not ſaved by him; nor of the *Jewiſh* world, for many of them died in their ſins; but of the *Gentiles*, in diſtinction from the *Jews*; ſee *John* iii. 16. 1 *John* ii. 2. even of all God's elect, whether among *Jews* or *Gentiles*; of all that believe in him, of whatſoever nation, and in whatſoever ſtate and condition: ſo that their knowledge of him, and faith in him, were beyond that of the *Jews*, who looked upon the Meſſiah only as a ſaviour of their nation; and that the *Gentiles* would have no manner of benefit and advantage by him: tho' the *Jews* [b] do call the angel in *Exod.* xxiii. 20. פרוקא דעלמא, *the ſaviour*, or *redeemer of* the world. And this the *Samaritans* might know from the writings of *Moſes*, as from *Gen.* xxii. 18. and xlix. 10. their preſent knowledge of Chriſt was not a mere notional, ſpeculative, and general one, but was ſpecial, ſpiritual, and ſaving, which they had from the ſpirit of wiſdom and revelation in the knowledge of Chriſt; they approved of him as their ſaviour; they truſted in him as ſuch; they had an experimental acquaintance with him, and practically owned him; and which they attained to by hearing him.

Ver. 43. *Now after two days he departed thence,* &c.] When he had ſtaid two days at *Sychar* converſing with, and diſcourſing to the *Samaritans*, which were the means of the converſion of many of them; he departed out of that country, and paſſed on his way: *and went into Galilee*; as he firſt intended; ſee ver. 3.

Ver. 44. *For Jeſus himſelf teſtified,* &c.] *Matt.* xiii. 57. *that a prophet hath no honour in his own country*: all the *Oriental* verſions read, *in his own city*; that is, *Nazareth*: for theſe words muſt not be underſtood as a reaſon why Chriſt left *Judea*, and went into *Galilee*, becauſe he had no honour in *Judea*, in which was *Bethlehem*, the place of his nativity; but are a reaſon why, when he came into *Galilee*, he did not go to *Nazareth*, his own city, where he was educated, and had been brought up, and had lived the greateſt part of his life, becauſe they treated him with great diſreſpect and contempt; ſee the note on *Matt.* xiii. 57.

Ver. 45. *Then when he was come into Galilee,* &c.] That part of it in which Cana lay, as appears by what follows: *the Galileans received him*; willingly, readily, and chearfully, with much delight and pleaſure, and with marks of great eſteem and reſpect; they received him into their houſes, and entertained him, and provided for him and his diſciples: *having ſeen all the things that he did at Jeruſalem, at the feaſt* of the paſſover; the miracles he wrought there, ſee ch. ii. 23. *for they alſo went unto the feaſt*; as well as Jeſus and his diſciples: they kept the feaſt of the paſſover, and went yearly to *Jeruſalem* on that account: ſo *Joſephus* ſpeaks of the *Galileans* going to the *Jewiſh* feſtivals at *Jeruſalem*, when he ſays [c]; "it was the cuſtom, or "uſual with the *Galileans*, when they went to the "holy city at the feſtivals, to go thro' the country "of the *Samaritans*;" which was the way that Chriſt now came from thence to them.

Ver. 46. *So Jeſus came again unto Cana of Galilee,* &c.] Where he had been once before; ſee ch. ii. 1, 2. The *Syriac* verſion here, as there, calls it *Kotne* of *Galilee*; and the *Perſic* verſion, *Catneh* of *Galilee*: *where he made the water wine*; ſee ch. ii. 9, 11. *there was a certain nobleman*; the *Vulgate Latin* renders it, *a petty king*; the *Arabic* verſion, and *Nonnus*, call him, *a royal man*; and the *Syriac* verſion renders it, *a king's ſervant*; with which agrees the *Ethiopic*, calling him *a miniſter, a ſteward, the king's domeſtic*. The *Perſic* verſion makes it to be his name, reading it, *there was a great man, whoſe name was Abdo-lmelic*, which ſignifies a king's ſervant: from the whole he ſeems to be one that belonged to the palace of *Herod Antipas*, and was one of his courtiers; who, tho' he was but *tetrarch* of *Galilee*, yet is ſometimes called a king, *Mark* vi. 14. *whoſe ſon was ſick at Capernaum*; ſome verſions, as the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic*, read the phraſe, *in Capernaum*, with the former clauſe, *there was a nobleman in Capernaum*; and others, as we do with this; and both may be true; for he might be an inhabitant of *Capernaum*, and his houſe be there where his ſon lay ſick. Some think this nobleman was either *Chuza*, *Herod*'s ſteward, *Luke* viii. 3. or *Manaen*, who had been brought up with *Herod*, *Acts* xiii. 1.

Ver. 47. *When he heard that Jeſus was come out of Judea,* &c.] For the fame of Chriſt, for his doctrine and miracles, was ſpread every where; ſo that it was known, and talked, in moſt places where he was, and what courſe he was ſteering: and this nobleman underſtanding that he had left *Judea*,

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[b] Zohar in Gen. fol. 124. 4.

[c] Antiq. Jud. l. 20. c. 5.

*Judea*, and was come *into Galilee*; and having enquired in what parts of *Galilee* he was, *he went unto him*; though it was many miles from *Capernaum*, where Jeſus was, at leaſt a day's journey; ſince, when the ſervants met their maſter, the child had been healed at one o'clock the day before; ſee ver. 52. Some reckon it about fifteen miles, but one would think it ſhould be more: *and beſought him that he would come down*; for *Capernaum*, tho' it was built on a hill, lay lower down in the country of *Galilee* than *Cana* did, near the ſea of *Tiberias*: a like way of ſpeaking is uſed in chap. ii. 12. *and heal his ſon*. The nobleman believed that Chriſt had power to do it, by what he had heard concerning him, but thought his corporal preſence was abſolutely neceſſary to it: *for he was at the point of death*; or *would die*: he was very near it; there was no likelihood of his recovery; the phyſicians had given him over; and when he left him, he ſeemed to be near his death, and muſt die for any human help that could be obtained, or natural means that could be uſed.

Ver. 48. *Then ſaid Jeſus unto him*, &c.] With ſome degree of roughneſs in his ſpeech, and ſeverity in his countenance, in a way of reproof for his unbelief, as if he could not heal his ſon without going down to *Capernaum* along with him: *except ye ſee ſigns and wonders, ye will not believe*. This was the caſt of the *Jews* every where, both in *Judea* and *Galilee*; they required ſigns and miracles to be wrought, in confirmation of Chriſt's being the Meſſiah, and which indeed was but right; and Chriſt did perform them for that purpoſe: but their ſin of unbelief lay in this, that they wanted ſtill more and more ſigns; they could not be contented with what they had ſeen, but required more, being ſluggiſh and backward to believe. Our Lord ſeems to ſay this chiefly for the ſake of the *Galileans*, that were about him; who, tho' they might be acquainted with his former miracles, when among them, of turning water into wine, and had ſeen his wondrous works at the feaſt at *Jeruſalem*, yet were very deſirous of ſeeing more, and perhaps very preſſing for this cure.

Ver. 49. *The nobleman ſaith unto him, Sir*, &c.] Notwithſtanding this reproof, and ſeeming denial, he preſſes him again, and addreſſing him in a handſome and courteous manner, importunately intreats him ſaying: *come down ere my ſon die*; here was faith with a mixture of unbelief; he believed that Chriſt was able to heal his ſon, but he ſtill thought that his going down with him was neceſſary; that he muſt be corporally preſent, and muſt lay his hands on him, or touch him, or ſpeak, and command the diſtemper off, or ſomething of this kind, and which muſt be done before he died; for otherwiſe, ſhould he die firſt, all hope was then gone; he had no notion of Chriſt being able to raiſe him from the dead.

Ver. 50. *Jeſus ſaith unto him go thy way*, &c.] Return home in peace, be not over-much troubled and diſtreſſed about this matter; leave it with me, I'll take care of it; all will be well: ſo the *Perſic* verſion reads, *be not anxious, and go thy way*; don't be ſolicitous for my preſence, or urge me to go with thee; depart alone, there's no neceſſity for my being upon the ſpot: *thy ſon liveth*; he's now recovered of his diſeaſe, and is well, and in perfect health, and lives, and will live: *and the man believed the word that Jeſus had ſpoken to him*; ſuch power went along with the words of Chriſt, as not only cured the ſon at that diſtance, who lay at the point of death, but alſo the father of his unbelief; and he no more inſiſted on his going down with him, but firmly believed that his ſon was alive, and well, as Chriſt had ſaid he was: *and he went his way*; he took his leave of Chriſt, and ſet out for *Capernaum*; very probably, not the ſame day, it being now in the afternoon of the day; but the next morning, as ſhould ſeem from what follows.

Ver. 51. *And as he was now going down*, &c.] From *Cana* to *Capernaum*, the day after he had been with Chriſt: *his ſervants met him, and told him, ſaying, thy ſon liveth*; as ſoon as this cure was wrought, tho' it was not known in the family how, and by whom it was done, immediately ſome of the ſervants were diſpatched to carry the news to their maſter, that his ſorrow might be removed; and he give himſelf no further trouble in ſeeking for a cure: theſe meeting him on the road, with an air of pleaſure, at once addreſs him with the joyful news, that his ſon was thoroughly recovered of his diſorder, and was alive, and well; news which he was acquainted with, and believed before; tho' it muſt give him an additional pleaſure to have it confirmed.

Ver. 52. *Then enquired he of them the hour*, &c.] He did not at all heſitate about the truth of it, or was in any ſurprize upon it; but that he might compare things together, he aſked the exact time, *when he began to amend*; or grow better; for he ſeemed to think, that his recovery might be gradual, and not all at once, as it was: *and they ſaid unto him, yeſterday at the ſeventh hour*; which was one o'clock in the afternoon: *the fever left him*; entirely at once, ſo that he was perfectly well immediately.

Ver. 53. *So the father knew that* it was *at the ſame hour*, &c.] Preciſely; *in that which Jeſus ſaid to him, thy ſon liveth*: he had obſerved what time of day it was, in which he converſed with Jeſus; and particularly, when he told him his ſon was alive and well, and when he took his leave of him; and by comparing the account of his ſervants, with that, found that things entirely agreed, and that the cure was wrought exactly at the time, that Jeſus ſpoke the words: *and himſelf believed, and his whole houſe*; when he came home, he related the whole affair to his family, and he and they, all believed, that Jeſus was the Meſſiah, and became his diſciples and followers: if this nobleman was *Chuza*, *Herod*'s ſteward, we have an account of his wife, whoſe name was *Joanna*, that ſhe followed Chriſt, and miniſtred to him of her ſubſtance, with other women, *Luke* viii. 3. There is a ſtory told by the *Jews*, and which ſeems ſomewhat like to this[d]; "it is reported concerning *R. Chanina* "*ben Doſa*, that when he prayed for the ſick, he "uſed to ſay, זה חי, *this liveth*, and this dies; it "was ſaid to him, whence knoweſt thou this? he "replied, if my prayer be ready in my mouth, I "know that he is accepted (of God, *i. e.* the ſick "man for whom he prayed) but if not, I know "that he will be ſnatched away (by the diſeaſe:") upon which the *Gemariſts* give the following relation[e]; "it happened that the ſon of *Rabban Ga*"*maliel* (the apoſtle *Paul*'s maſter) was ſick, he "ſent two diſciples to *R. Chanina ben Doſa*, to aſk "mercy for him; when he ſaw them, he went up "to a chamber, and ſought mercy for him; and "when he came down, he ſaid unto them, "לכו שחלצתו חמה, *go your way, for the fever* "*has left him*; they ſaid unto him, art thou a "prophet? he replied, I am not a prophet, nor "the ſon of a prophet; but ſo I have received,

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[d] Miſn. Beracot, c. 5. §. 5.

[e] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 34. 2.

"that if my prayer is ready in my mouth, I know "that he is accepted; and if not, I know that he "ſhall be ſnatched away; and they ſat and wrote and "obſerved *the very hour*; and when they came to "*Rabban Gamaliel*, he ſaid unto them, this ſervice "ye have not been wanting in, nor abounded in; "but ſo the thing was, that in that hour the fever "left him, and he aſked of us water to drink." Which ſtory perhaps is told, to vye with this miracle of Chriſt, and to obſcure the glory of it.

Ver. 54. *This* is *again the ſecond miracle* that *Jeſus did*, &c.] That is, in that place, in *Cana* of *Galilee*; for otherwiſe in *Jeruſalem* and *Judea*, he had done many miracles, between the former and this; ſee ch. ii. 23. and iii. 2. and ſo the following words explain it: *when he was come out of Judea into Galilee*; this was the firſt he wrought, after his coming out of *Judea* into *Galilee*, this time, and was the ſecond that he wrought in *Cana* of *Galilee*; ſee ch. ii. 11.

## CHAP. V.

Ver. 1. *AFTER this there was a feaſt of the Jews*, &c.] After Chriſt had been in *Samaria*, which was four months ago, ch. iv. 35. and had been in *Galilee* for that time, and had cured the nobleman's ſon, and had done other mighty works, the time came on for one of the three feſtivals of the *Jews*; either the feaſt of *Pentecoſt*, as ſome think; or as others, the feaſt of tabernacles; or rather, the feaſt of the paſſover, ſo called, in ch. iv. 45. ſince *John* is very particular, in giving an account of the ſeveral paſſovers, in Chriſt's miniſtry: *and Jeſus went up to Jeruſalem*; according to the law of God, which obliged all the males to appear there at that time; and to ſhew his compliance with it, and obedience to it, whom it became to fulfil all righteouſneſs; and this he did alſo, that he might have an opportunity of diſcourſing, and doing his miracles before all the people, which came at this time, from the ſeveral parts of the land.

Ver. 2. *Now there is at Jeruſalem by the ſheep*-market, &c.] The word *market* is not in the text, and of ſuch a market, no account is given in the ſcripture, nor in the *Jewiſh* writings; and beſides, in our Lord's time, ſheep and oxen were ſold in the temple; rather therefore this ſignifies, the ſheep-gate, of which mention is made, in *Nehem.* iii. 1, 32. and xii. 39. through which the ſheep were brought into the city, to the temple. The *Vulgate Latin* and *Ethiopic* verſions read, *there is at Jeruſalem a ſheep-pool*; and ſo it is interpreted in the *Arabic* verſion, and *Jerom* calls it *the cattle-pool* [f]. The *Targumiſt* on *Jer.* xxxi. 39: ſpeaks of a pool called, בריכה עגלה, *the calf*, or *heifer-pool*, as Dr. *Lightfoot* renders it; though the tranſlations of it, both in the *London Polyglott*, and in the king of *Spain*'s bible, interpret it *the round pool*. This pool of *Betheſda*, is thought by ſome, to be the ſame which the *Jews* call the great pool in *Jeruſalem*; they ſay [g], "between *Hebron* and *Jeruſalem*, "is the fountain *Etham*, from whence the waters "come by way of pipes, unto *the great pool*, "which is in *Jeruſalem*." And *R. Benjamin* [h] ſpeaks of a pool, which is to be ſeen to this day, where the ancients ſlew their ſacrifices, and all the *Jews* write their names on the wall: and ſome think it was ſo called, becauſe the ſheep that were offered in ſacrifice, were there waſhed; which muſt be either before, or after they were ſlain; not before, for it was not required, that what was to be ſlain for ſacrifice, ſhould be waſhed firſt; and afterwards, only the entrails of a beaſt were waſhed; and for this there was a particular place in the temple, called, לשכת המדיחין, *the waſhing-room*; where they ſay [i], they waſhed the inwards of the holy ſacrifices. This pool here therefore, ſeems rather, as Dr. *Lightfoot* obſerves, to have been a bath for unclean perſons; and having this miraculous virtue hereafter ſpoken of, diſeaſed perſons only, at certain times, had recourſe to it. The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions call it, *a place of a baptiſtery*; and both leave out the clauſe, *by the ſheep-market*, or *gate*: it is not eaſy to ſay, where and what it was: *which is called in the Hebrew tongue*, *Betheſda*; which ſignifies, according to the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions, *an houſe of mercy*, or *grace*, or *goodneſs*; becauſe many miſerable objects here received mercy, and a cure. *Hegeſippus* [k] ſpeaks of a *Betheſda*, which *Ceſtius* the *Roman* general entered into, and burnt; and which, according to him, ſeems to be without *Jeruſalem*, and ſo not the place here ſpoken of; and beſides, this is called a pool, though the buildings about it doubtleſs went by the ſame name. The *Vulgate Latin* and *Ethiopic* verſions read *Bethſaida*, very wrongly; and it is called by *Tertullian* [l], the pool of *Bethſaida*. The *Hebrew* tongue here mentioned, is, כתב של עבר הנהר, *the language of thoſe beyond the river* [m], *i. e.* the river *Euphrates*; which is the *Chaldee* language, as diſtinct from the *Aſſyrian* language, which is called the holy and bleſſed language; the former is what the *Cuthites*, or *Samaritans* uſed; the latter, that in which the book of the law was written [n]. *Having five porches*; or cloiſtered walks, which were very convenient for the diſeaſed, which lay here for a cure, ſo *Nonnus*: *Athanaſius* [o] ſpeaks of the pool itſelf, as in being, though the buildings round about it, lay in ruins in his time; and [p] *Daviler* obſerves, there are ſtill remaining five arches of the *portico*, and part of the baſon. Now this place may be an emblem of the means of grace, the miniſtry of the word, and ordinances: the houſe of God, where the Goſpel is preached, may be called a *Betheſda*, an houſe of mercy; ſince here the free, ſovereign, rich, and abundant grace and mercy of God, through Chriſt, is proclaimed, as the ground and foundation of a ſinner's hope; the mercy of God, as it is diſplayed in the covenant of grace, in the miſſion of Chriſt, and redemption by him, in regeneration, and in the forgiveneſs of ſin, and indeed, in the whole of ſalvation, from firſt to laſt, is here held forth for the relief of diſtreſſed minds: and this *Betheſda* being a pool, ſome of the ancients have thought, it was an emblem of, and prefigured the ordinance of baptiſm; and that the miraculous virtue in it, was put into it, to give honour and credit to that ordinance, ſhortly to be adminiſtered: but as that is not the means of regeneration and converſion, or of a cure or cleanſing, but pre-requires them; rather it might be a ſymbol of the fountain of Chriſt's blood, opened for polluted ſinners to waſh in, and which cleanſes from all ſin, and cures all diſeaſes; and this is opened in the houſe of mercy, and by the miniſtry of the word: or rather beſt of all, the Goſpel itſelf, and the miniſtration of it, may be ſignified; which is ſometimes compared to waters, and a fountain of them; ſee *Iſa.* lv. 1. *Zech.* xiv. 8. *Joel* iii. 18. and whereas this pool was in *Jeruſalem*, and that ſo often deſigns the church of Chriſt under the Goſpel diſpenſation, it may fitly repreſent the miniſtry of the word there: and it being near the ſheep-market, or gate, or a ſheep-pool, may not be without its ſignificancy; and may lead us to obſerve, that near where Chriſt's ſheep are, which the Father has given him, and he has died for, and muſt bring in, he fixes his word and ordinances, in order to gather them in: and inaſmuch as there were five porches, or cloiſtered walks, leading unto, or adjoining to this place, it has been thought by ſome of the ancients, that the law, as lying in the five books of *Moſes*, may be intended by them; for under the law, and under a work of it, men are, before they come into the light and liberty, and comfort of the Goſpel; and as the people which lay in theſe porches, received no cure there, ſo there are no relief, peace, joy, life, and ſalvation, by the law of works.

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[f] De Locis Hebraicis, p. 89. L. Tom. III.

[g] Cippi Hebraici, p. 10.

[h] Itinerar. p. 43.

[i] Miſn. Middot, c. 5. §. 2. Maimon. Beth Habbechira, c. 5. §. 17.

[k] De Excidio, l. 2. c. 15.

[l] Adv. Judæos, c. 13.

[m] De Semente, p. 845. Tom. I.

[n] In Chambers's Dictionary in the word *Piſcina*.

[o] Vid. Gloſſ. in T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 115. 1. Megilla, fol. 18. 2. & Sanhedrin, fol. 21. 2.

[p] Maimon. & Bartenora in Miſn. Yadaim, c. 4. §. 5. Vid. Gloſſ. in T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 8. 2.

Ver. 3. *In theſe lay a great multitude of impotent folk*, &c.] Sick and weak perſons; who were an emblem of men under the law of works, and in a ſtate of unregeneracy; who are enfeebled by ſin, and are impotent and unable to do any thing of themſelves; as to keep the law of God, to which they have neither will nor power, and to atone for the tranſgreſſions of it; nor to redeem themſelves from the curſe of the law; or to begin and carry on a work of grace upon their ſouls; or to do any thing that is ſpiritually good; no, not to think a good thought, or to do a good action, as is required: *of blind*; theſe alſo may repreſent men in a ſtate of nature, who are ignorant of, and blind to every thing that is ſpiritual; as to the true knowledge of God in Chriſt, the way of ſalvation by him, the plague of their own hearts, and the exceeding ſinfulneſs of ſin; to the Spirit of God, and his work upon the ſoul; and to the truths of the Goſpel, in the power of them: *halt*, or *lame*; this word ſometimes is uſed, of perſons in ſuſpenſe about religious things, heſitating concerning them, halting between two opinions; and ſometimes deſigns the infirmities of the ſaints, and their faultering in religious exerciſes; and here may be expreſſive in a figurative way, of the incapacity of natural men, to go or walk of themſelves; as to come to Chriſt for grace and life, which no man can do, except the Father draw him; or to walk by faith in him: 'tis added, *withered*; one limb or another of them dried up; their arms or legs were withered, and their ſinews ſhrunk, and were without radical moiſture, or the free uſe of the animal ſpirits; and may point out carnal perſons, ſuch as are ſenſual, not having the Spirit, deſtitute of the grace of God, without faith, hope, love, knowledge, and the fear of God; without God, Chriſt, and the Spirit; and in a lifeleſs, helpleſs, hopeleſs, and periſhing condition: *waiting for the moving of the water*; hereafter mentioned: and ſo it is in providence, and a wonderful thing it is, that the hearts of ſo many unregenerate perſons, ſhould be inclined to attend upon the outward means of grace, and ſhould be waiting at wiſdoms gates, and watching at the poſts of her door.

Ver. 4. *For an angel went down at a certain ſeaſon into the pool*, &c.] This angel is not to be underſtood of a meſſenger ſent from the *Sanhedrim*, or by the prieſts, as Dr. *Hammond* thinks; who has a ſtrange conceit, that this pool was uſed for the waſhing of the entrails of the ſacrifices; and which at the paſſover being very numerous, the water in it mixed with the blood of the entrails, was poſſeſſed of an healing virtue; and which being ſtirred by a meſſenger ſent from the *Sanhedrim* for that purpoſe, whoever went in directly received a cure: but this angel was *an angel of the Lord*, as the *Vulgate Latin*, and two of *Beza*'s copies read; and ſo the *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *an angel of God*; who either in a viſible form came down from heaven, and went into the pool, the *Ethiopic* verſion very wrongly renders it, *was waſhed in the pool*; or it was concluded by the people, from the unuſual agitation of the water, and the miraculous virtue which enſued upon it, that an angel did deſcend into it; and this was not at all times, but at a certain time; either once a year, as *Tertullian* thought, at the time of the feaſt of the paſſover, or every ſabbath, as this was now the ſabbath-day; or it may be there was no fixed period for it, but at ſome times and ſeaſons in the year ſo it was, which kept the people continually waiting for it: *and troubled the water*; agitated and moved it to and fro, cauſed it to ſwell and riſe, to bubble and boil up, and to roll about, and be as in a ferment. The *Jews* have a notion of ſpirits troubling waters; they ſpeak of a certain fountain where a ſpirit reſided, and an evil ſpirit attempted to come in his room; upon which a conteſt aroſe, and they ſaw, ערבוביי״א דמיי״א, *the waters troubled*, and thick drops of blood upon them [q]: the *Syriac* [r] writers have a tradition, that "because the body of *Iſaiah* "the prophet was hid in *Siloah*, therefore an angel "deſcended and moved the waters." *Whoſoever then firſt after the troubling of the waters ſtepped in, was made whole of whatſoever diſeaſe he had*; from whence it ſeems, that only one perſon at a ſeaſon received a cure, by going in firſt into the water, ſo *Tertullian* thought [s]: the *Jews* aſcribe an healing virtue to the well of *Miriam*; they ſay, "a certain ulcerous perſon, went to dip himſelf in the "ſea of *Tiberias*, and it happened at that time, "that the well of *Miriam* flowed, and he waſhed, "ואיתסי, *and was healed* [t]." Now this angel may repreſent a miniſter of the Goſpel, for ſuch are called angels, *Rev.* i. 20. being called of God, and ſent by him, with meſſages of grace to the ſons of men; and the preaching of the Goſpel by ſuch, may be aptly ſignified by the troubling of the waters, as it is by the ſhaking of heaven, earth, and ſea; ſee *Hagg.* ii. 6, 7. compared with *Heb.* xii. 25, 26. eſpecially when attended with the Spirit of God, who moved upon the face of the waters in the firſt creation; and who, in and by the miniſtry of the word, troubles the minds of men, and whilſt the prophet propheſies, cauſes a ſhaking among the dry bones, which is done at certain ſeaſons; for as there are certain ſeaſons for the preaching of the Goſpel, ſo there is more eſpecially a fixed, ſettled, and appointed one, for the converſion of God's elect; who are called according to purpoſe, and at the time the Lord has appointed: and whoever now, upon the preaching of the Goſ-

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[q] Vajikra Rabba, §. 24. fol. 165. 2.

[r] Vid. Hackſpan. Interpr. Errabund. §. 20.

[s] De Baptiſmo, c. 5.

[t] Midraſh Kohelet, fol. 71. 4.

pel, are enabled to ſtep forth and come to Chriſt, and believe in him, are cured of all their ſoul-maladies and diſeaſes, be they what they will; all their iniquities are pardoned, their perſons juſtified, and they are ſaved in Chriſt, with an everlaſting ſalvation: and as this cure was not owing to any natural virtue in the water, nor even to the angels troubling it, but to a ſupernatural power; ſo the converſion of a ſinner, is not owing to miniſters, and to the word and ordinances as adminiſtered by them, but to the ſuperior power of the grace of God; and which is exerted in his time, and on whom he pleaſes.

Ver. 5. *And a certain man was there*, &c.] At *Betheſda*'s pool, in one of the five porches, or cloiſters, that belonged to it: *which had an infirmity thirty and eight years*; what his infirmity was, is not ſaid; he was one of the weak, or impotent folk, for ſo he is called, ver. 7. Some think his diſtemper was the palſy, and though he had had this infirmity ſo many years, it is not certain that he had waited ſo long in this place for a cure; tho' it may be, for that he had attended ſome time, is clear from ver. 7. Nor indeed can it be known, how long there had been ſuch a preternatural motion in this pool, and ſuch a miraculous virtue in the water; ſome have thought, that it began at the repairing of the ſheep-gate by *Eliaſhib*, in *Nehemiah*'s time; ſo *Tremellius* and *Junius*, on *Neh.* iii. 1. and others, have thought, that it had been ſome few years before the birth of Chriſt, and about the time that this man was firſt taken with his diſorder. *Tertullian* ſays [u], that there was in *Judea* a medicinal lake, before Chriſt's time; and that the pool of *Bethſaida*, (it ſhould be *Betheſda*) was uſeful in curing the diſeaſes of the *Iſraelites*; but ceaſed from yielding any benefit, when the name of the Lord was blaſphemed by them, through their rage and fury, and continuance in it [w]; but in what year it began, and the preciſe time it ceaſed, he ſays not. The *Perſic* verſion here adds, *and was reduced to ſuch a ſtate that he could not move*.

Ver. 6. *When Jeſus ſaw him lie*, &c.] In ſuch a helpleſs condition: *and knew that he had been now a long time*; in that caſe, or *in his diſeaſe*, as the *Ethiopic* verſion ſupplies; even ſeven years before Chriſt was born; which is a proof of his omniſcience: the words may be literally rendered, as they are in the *Vulgate Latin* and *Syriac* verſions, *that he had had much time*; or as the *Arabic* verſion, *that he had had many years*; that is, had lived many years, and was now an old man; he had his diſorder eight and thirty years, and which ſeems from ver. 14. to have ariſen from ſome ſin of his, from a vicious courſe of living, perhaps intemperance; ſo that he might be a middled aged man, when this diſtemper firſt ſeized him, and therefore muſt be now ſtricken in years: *he ſaith unto him, wilt thou be made whole?* which queſtion is put, not as if it was a doubt, whether he was deſirous of it, or no; for to what purpoſe did he lie and wait there elſe? but partly to raiſe in the man an expectation of a cure, and attention in the people to it: and it may be his ſenſe and meaning is, wilt thou be made whole on this day, which was the ſabbath; or haſt thou faith that thou ſhalt be made whole in this way, or by me?

Ver. 7. *The impotent man anſwered him, Sir*, &c.] Which was a common and courteous way of ſpeaking, much in uſe with the *Jews*, eſpecially to ſtrangers. The *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions read, *yea Lord*, which is a direct anſwer to the queſtion: *I have no man*; the *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *men*; he had no ſervant, ſo *Nonnus*, or ſervants, to wait upon him, and take him up in their arms, and carry him into the pool; he was a poor man, and ſuch God is pleaſed to chooſe and call by his grace: *when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool*; that is, as ſoon as it is troubled by the angel, to put him in firſt before any other; for it was the firſt man only that had a cure this way: *but while I am coming*; in a ſlow way, by the help of his crutches, or in the beſt manner he could: *another ſteppeth down before me*; not ſo much diſordered, or more active and nimble: ſo among thoſe that wait on the miniſtry of the word, ſome are ſooner in Chriſt, or earlier called by his grace, than others; ſome lie here a long time, and ſee one and another come to Chriſt, believe in him, profeſs his name, and are received into the church; and they ſtill left, in an uncalled and unconverted eſtate.

Ver. 8. *Jeſus ſaith to him, riſe*, &c.] From thy bed, or couch, on which he lay in one of the porches: *and take up thy bed and walk*; theſe words were ſpoken by the ſame power, as thoſe to *Lazarus*, which called him out of his grave; as appears from the effect they had upon the man, who was in himſelf impotent, weak, and helpleſs.

Ver. 9. *And immediately the man was made whole*, &c.] As ſoon as ever the words were ſpoken by Chriſt, ſuch power went with them, as reſtored the man to perfect health; and he finding himſelf to be quite well, roſe up directly: *and took up his bed and walked*; which may be expreſſive of a ſinner's riſing from the bed of ſin, and taking up the croſs, or carrying the body of ſin and death with him; and walking by faith in Chriſt, as he has received him: *and on the ſame day was the ſabbath*; which is remarked, for the ſake of what follows.

Ver. 10. *The Jews therefore ſaid unto him that was cured*, &c.] When they ſaw him, either at the place, or as he walked through the ſtreets, with his bed on his back: *it is the ſabbath-day*; don't you know it? ſurely you forget yourſelf, or you would never be guilty of ſuch an action as this; *it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed*. It was forbid by the law, to carry any burthen on the ſabbath-day; ſee *Neh.* xiii. 15, 19. and *Jer.* xvii. 22. for "carrying out and bringing in any thing, from "one place to another, is ſaid [x] to be work, and "one of the principal works;" and therefore forbid by the law, which ſays, *thou ſhalt not do any work*; and one of the traditions of the elders is this [y], "whoever carries any thing out (*i. e.* on "the ſabbath-day) whether in his right-hand, or "in his left, in his boſom, or, על כתיפו, *on his ſhoulder*, is guilty; for ſo carried the *Kohathites*." And particularly it is ſaid [z], that "he that rolls up "a bed of the braſiers or tinkers (*i. e.* on the ſab"bath-day) is bound to a ſin-offering." Which was a fold-up bed, ſuch as tinkers, and thoſe that went from city to city to work had; and who carried their beds with them, as the *Gloſs* obſerves; and were ſo far from being lawful to be carried by them, on the ſabbath, that they might not fold them up.

Ver. 11. *He anſwered them*, &c.] That is, the impotent man, who was now made whole, replied to the *Jews*: *he that made me whole, the ſame ſaid unto me, take up thy bed and walk*; intimating, that he that had ſuch divine power, as to make him whole, had power to diſpenſe with the ſabbath, and ſuch an action on it; and that his word was

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[u] De Anima, c. 50.

[w] Adv. Judæos, c. 13.

[x] Maimon. Hilchot Sabbat, c. 12. §. 8.

[y] Miſn. Sabbat, c. 10. §. 3.

[z] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 47. 1. & 138. 1.

warrant and authority ſufficient, to ſupport him in what he did; for he that had wrought this cure for him, he concluded muſt be from God; was at leaſt a great prophet, and to be hearkened to and obeyed, in one thing as well as another.

Ver. 12. *Then aſked they him*, &c.] Suſpecting who had made him whole, and gave him this order: *what man is that which ſaid unto thee, take up thy bed and walk?* they take no notice of the cure, being unwilling to give any glory to Chriſt, and ſtill leſs to ſpread it; but choſe rather that it ſhould be obſcured, hid, and unobſerved; but they laid hold on that, which they thought might be improved to his reproach and ſcandal; and they call him a man, as ſuppoſing him to be a mere man, and a wicked man too, for giving orders to tranſgreſs a tradition of the elders, though no mere man could work ſuch a cure as this was. And ſo the *Jews* ſince, though they can't find fault with the cure, which they put an if upon, yet are highly diſpleaſed with the order, to take up his bed and carry it: "if ſay they[a], he wrought a cure, lo, that is "good, but why did he bid him take up his bed?" the anſwer may be to ſhew, that he was cured.

Ver. 13. *And he that was healed, wiſt not who he was*, &c.] He had never ſeen, and perhaps had never heard of Chriſt before, and ſo knew him not; and beſides, Chriſt gave him no opportunity of converſing with him, or ſo much as to aſk him who he was: *for Jeſus had conveyed himſelf away*; had ſlided away, as ſoon as ever he had wrought the miracle: *a multitude being in* that *place*; or *from the multitude that were in* that *place*; not that he hid himſelf among them, and there remained undiſcovered; but he paſſed through them, and went his way to the temple, where he found the man he had healed, as in the following verſe.

Ver. 14. *Afterward Jeſus findeth him in the temple*, &c.] Perhaps on the ſame day; for as ſoon as he had been at home, and laid down his bed, it is very likely he went directly to the temple, there to ſhew himſelf, attend the worſhip of the place, and return thanks to God for the great mercy beſtowed on him: *and ſaid unto him, behold thou art made whole*; cured of the diſeaſe, that had attended him ſo many years; and a wonderful cure it was; well may a *behold* be prefixed; though this is here not only a note of admiration, but of attention, to what he was about to ſay to him: ſin is a diſeaſe, which is original, natural, and hereditary to men; it is an epidemical one, all are affected with it, and all the powers and faculties of the ſoul; and it is a nauſeous and loathſome one; and what is mortal and incurable in itſelf, and only to be cured by the great phyſician, Jeſus Chriſt: God's elect are attended with it as others, and being made ſenſible thereof, they come to Chriſt for a cure, and receive one, as this man did, to whom he ſaid, *ſin no more*; intimating, that as all diſeaſes of the body ſpring from ſin, ſo had his; and that the time paſt of his life ſhould ſuffice, for a courſe of ſinning; and that the mercy he had received, laid him under an obligation to guard againſt it, to which there would ſtill be a proneneſs in him; nor did our Lord imagine, that he could hereafter live without ſin, but that he ſhould not indulge himſelf in it, and give up himſelf unto it, and live in it: ſo all the diſeaſes of the ſoul ariſe from ſin; and when a perſon is converted, he ought not to walk as others do, or he himſelf has done; and though there is a propenſity to ſin and backſlide from God after converſion, yet the grace of God teaches men to deny ſin, and to live righteouſly; and though it cannot be thought that they ſhould be, and act without ſin, yet it becomes them not to live in ſin, or go on in a courſe of it, as heretofore: *leſt a worſe thing come unto thee*; for God could ſend a worſe diſeaſe, or a ſorer affliction, than he had yet done; an heavier puniſhment, either in this world, or that to come: and apply this to a good man, a converted man, one called by grace, and cured by Chriſt, and a worſe thing through ſin may come unto him than a bodily diſorder, namely, the hidings of God's face; for as his preſence is life, his abſence is death, to ſuch perſons; and as for ſuch who only make a profeſſion of religion, and are externally reformed only, ſuch, if they ſin and fall away, their latter end is worſe than the beginning.

Ver. 15. *The man departed*, &c.] From Chriſt, and from the temple, not thro' diſpleaſure, or as reſenting what was ſaid to him, but as highly delighted that he had found his kind benefactor and phyſician; and went either to *Betheſda*, where the miracle was wrought, and where a multitude of people were, and where he might expect to find ſome of the perſons that had queſtioned him about carrying his bed, and who it was that bid him do it; or rather to the *Sanhedrim*; ſee ver. 33. compared with ch. i. 19. and *told the Jews*; the members of that great council, the chief-prieſts, *Scribes*, and elders, whoſe buſineſs it was to judge of a prophet, and of any one that ſhould ſet up for the Meſſiah: *that it was Jeſus*; of *Nazareth*, of whom ſo much talk was about his doctrines and miracles, and who was thought to be the Meſſiah: *which had made him whole*; this he did, not out of any ill will to Chriſt, with any bad deſign upon him, to impeach and accuſe him as a violator of the ſabbath, for what he had ſaid and done to him; for this would have been moſt ungrateful, and even barbarous, brutiſh, and diabolical; but with a good intention, that Jeſus might have the glory of the cure, and that others of his fellow-creatures in diſtreſs might know where, and from whom to have relief; and chiefly that the *Sanhedrim* might be induced hereby to believe that Jeſus was the Meſſiah, and to declare and patronize him as ſuch: and that his end was good, is clear from this, that he does not ſay it was Jeſus that bid him take up his bed and walk, which was what the *Jews* cavilled at, not caring to hear of the cure; but that made him whole: he obſerves the miracle to them with a grateful ſpirit, to the honour of his phyſician, and that he might be thought to be what he really was.

Ver. 16. *And therefore did the Jews perſecute Jeſus*, &c.] With their tongues, reproaching and reviling him, as a ſabbath-breaker, a deſtroyer of the law, and a ſinful wicked man: *and ſought to ſlay him*; either in a violent way, by ſetting the zealots, a ſort of ruffians under the pretence of religion, upon him; or rather in a judicial way, ſummoning him before the *Sanhedrim*, in order to condemn him to death for the breach of the ſabbath, which by the law of *Moſes* was puniſhable with death: *becauſe he had done theſe things on the ſabbath-day*; becauſe he had cured the man of his diſeaſe, under which he had laboured eight and thirty years, and had ordered him to take up his bed, and walk home with it on his back on the ſabbath-day. This drew upon him their reſentment to ſuch a degree, that they not only perſecuted him with their tongues, but ſought to take away his life. Nothing would ſatisfy them but his blood.

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[a] Vet. Nizzachon, p. 207.

Ver. 17. *But Jeſus anſwered them*, &c.] Being convened before them, and charged by them with the violation of the ſabbath, he vindicated himſelf in the following manner, ſaying; *my Father worketh hitherto*: he who is my Father, not by creation, or adoption, but by nature, tho' he ended all his work on the ſeventh day, and reſted from what he had done; yet he did not ceaſe from working at all, but has continued to work ever ſince, on ſabbath-days, as well as on other days; in upholding and governing the world, in continuing the ſpecies of beings, and all creatures in their being; in providing for them, and in diſpenſing the bounties of his providence to them; in cauſing his ſun to ſhine, and ſhowers of rain to deſcend on the earth; and in taking care of, and protecting even the meaneſt of his creatures; and much more men; and ſtill more his own people: *and I work*; or *alſo I work*, as the *Syriac* and *Arabic* verſions read; *i. e.* in conjunction with him, as a co-efficient cauſe in the works of providence, in the government of the world, in upholding all things in it, in bearing up the pillars of the earth, in holding things together, and ſuſtaining all creatures: or I alſo work in imitation of him, in doing good both to the bodies and ſouls of men on the ſabbath-day, being the Lord of it: I do but what my Father does; and therefore, as he is not to be blamed for his works on that day, as none will ſay he is, no more am I. So *Philo* the *Jew* ſays[b], "God "never ceaſes to work; but as it is the pro"perty of fire to burn, and of ſnow to cool, ſo "of God to work." And what moſt men call fortune, he calls the divine Logos, or Word, to whom he aſcribes all the affairs of providence[c].

Ver. 18. *Therefore the Jews ſought the more to kill him*, &c.] They were the more deſirous to take away his life, and were more bent and reſolute upon it, and ſtudied all ways and means how to bring it about: *becauſe he had not only broken the ſabbath*; as they imagined; for he had not really broken it: and if they had known what that means, that God will have mercy, and not ſacrifice, they would have been convinced that he had not broke it by this act of mercy to a poor diſtreſſed object: *but ſaid alſo that God was his Father*; his own Father, his proper Father, his Father by nature, and that he was his own Son by nature; and this they gathered from his calling him *my Father*, and aſſuming a co-operation with him in his divine works: *making himſelf to be equal with God*; to be of the ſame nature, and have the ſame perfections, and do the ſame works; for by ſaying that God was his Father, and ſo that he was the Son of God, a phraſe, which, with them, ſignified a divine perſon, as they might learn from *Pſ.* ii. 7, 12. and by aſcribing the ſame operations to himſelf, as to his Father, they rightly underſtood him, that he aſſerted his equality with him; for had he intended no more, and they had imagined that he intended no more by calling God his Father, than that he was ſo by creation, as he is to all men, or by adoption, as he was to the *Jews*, they would not have been ſo angry with him; for the phraſe, in this ſenſe, they uſed themſelves: but they underſtood him otherwiſe, as aſſerting his proper deity, and perfect equality with the Father; and therefore to the charge of ſabbath-breaking, add that of blaſphemy, and on account of both, ſought to put him to death; for, according to their canons, both the ſabbath-breaker, and the blaſphemer, were to be ſtoned[d].

Ver. 19. *Then anſwered Jeſus, and ſaid unto them*, &c.] Charging him with blaſphemy for calling God his Father, and making himſelf equal to him: and his anſwer is ſo far from denying the thing, or obſerving any miſtake, or miſrepreſentation of his words, that he allows the whole, and vindicates himſelf in ſo ſaying: *verily verily*; nothing is more certain; it may be depended on as truth; I who am truth itſelf, the *Amen*, and faithful witneſs, aver it with the greateſt aſſurance: *the Son can do nothing of himſelf*; or he does do nothing of himſelf, nor will he do any thing of himſelf; that is, he neither does, nor will, nor can do any thing alone or ſeparate from his Father, or in which he is not concerned; not any thing without his knowledge and conſent, or contrary to his will: he does every thing in conjunction with him; with the ſame power, having the ſame will, being of the ſame nature, and equal to each other: for theſe words do not deſign any weakneſs in the Son, or want of power in him to do any thing of himſelf; that is, by his own power: for he has by his word of power ſpoke all things out of nothing, and by the ſame upholds all things; he has himſelf bore the ſins of his people, and by himſelf purged them away, and has raiſed himſelf from the dead; but they expreſs his perfection, that he does nothing, and can do nothing of himſelf, in oppoſition to his Father, and in contradiction to his will; as ſatan ſpeaks of his own, and evil men alienated from God, act of themſelves, and do that which is contrary to the nature and will of God; but the Son cannot do ſo, being of the ſame nature with God, and therefore never acts ſeparate from him, or contrary to him, but always co-operates and acts with him, and therefore never to be blamed for what he does. The *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions render it, *the Son cannot do any thing of his own will*; ſo *Nonnus*; as ſeparate from, or contrary to his Father's will, but always in agreement with it, they being one in nature, and ſo in will and work. He does nothing therefore *but what he ſeeth the Father do*; not that he ſees the Father actually do a work, and then he does one after him, as the creation of the world, the aſſumption of human nature, and redemption of man, or any particular miracle, as if upon obſerving one done, he did the like; but that he being brought up with him, and lying in his boſom, was privy to the whole plan of his works, and ſaw in his nature and infinite mind, and in his vaſt counſels, purpoſes, and deſigns, all that he was doing, or would do, and ſo did the ſame, or acted agreeable to them; and which ſtill ſhows and proves their unity of nature, and perfect equality, ſince there was nothing in the Father's mind but was known to the Son, ſeen, and obſerved, and acted up to by him: ſo *Philo* the *Jew*[e] ſays of the "Father's moſt ancient Son, "whom he otherwiſe calls the firſt-born; that being "begotten, he imitates the Father, and *ſeeing*, or "*looking to his exemplars and archetypes*, forms ſpe"cies;" that is, being converſant with the original and eternal ideas of things in the divine mind, acts according to them, which he could not do if he was not of the ſame nature with, and equal to his Father. Moreover, the Son ſees what the Father does by co-operating with him, and ſo does no other than what he ſees the Father do, in conjunction with him: to which may be added, that the phraſe ſhows, that the Son does nothing but in wiſdom, and with knowledge; and that as the Father, ſo he does all things after the counſel of his will: *for whatſoever things he doth, theſe alſo doth the Son likewiſe*; the Son does the ſelf-ſame works as the Father does, ſuch as the works of creation and providence, the government both of the church, and of the world; and he does theſe things in like manner, with the ſame power, and by the ſame authority, his Father does, and which proves him to be equal with him; the very thing the *Jews* underſtood him to have aſſerted, and which they charged him with; and this he ſtrongly maintained. The *Syriac* verſion reads, *for the things which the Father does, the ſame alſo does the Son*; and the *Perſic* verſion, *whatſover God has done, the Son alſo does like unto it*.

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[b] Leg. Allegor. l. 1. p. 41.

[c] Quod Deus ſit Immutab. p. 318.

[d] Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 7. §. 4.

[e] De Confuſ. Ling. p. 329.

Ver. 20. *For the Father loveth the Son*, &c.] As being his Son, his image, the brightneſs of his glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon; as being of the ſame nature, and having the ſame perfections, and ſo equal to him; ſee the note on ch. iii. 35. *and ſheweth him all things that himſelf doth*; not as if he was ignorant of them, ſince he lies in the boſom of his Father, is the wiſdom of God, is the omniſcient God, that knows all things; not only all things in men, but all things in God, even the deep things of God: but this is ſaid of the Father, as conſulting with him, communicating his deſigns to him, as his equal; doing nothing without him, as he never did in the works of nature, or of grace: he drew the plan of peace, reconciliation, and ſalvation in him; he made the worlds by him; and he does nothing in the government of the world without him; and indeed he ſhews him all things he does, by doing all things; and by him he ſhews himſelf, and his works, to men: *and he will ſhew him greater works than theſe*; or he will do greater works by him than theſe: either than the works of creation; namely, the redemption of the elect, the juſtification of their perſons by his righteouſneſs, and pardon of their ſins thro' his blood, and the regeneration and converſion of them by his Spirit and grace; either of which is a greater work than the making of the world: or greater than he has done under the Old Teſtament diſpenſation; than the redeeming of *Iſrael* out of *Egypt*, leading them thro' the wilderneſs, and ſettling them in the land of *Canaan*; giving them the law, the ſtatutes, and ordinances of God, and working miracles among them; for the redemption of God's people, by Chriſt, from ſin, ſatan, the world, the law, death, and hell, the publiſhing of the Goſpel, the effuſion of the Spirit, and ſetting up of the Goſpel-diſpenſation, are greater works than theſe; and more and greater miracles were wrought by Chriſt than by *Moſes*, or any prophet under the former diſpenſation. Tho' rather the ſenſe is, that greater miracles would be ſhewn, and done by Chriſt, than theſe he had now done, in curing a man of his diſorder, who had had it eight and thirty years, and bidding him take up his bed and walk; ſuch as raiſing *Jairus*'s daughter to life, when dead, and the widow of *Naim*'s ſon, when he was carrying to the grave, and *Lazarus*, when he had been dead four days: *that ye may marvel*; this was not properly the end of theſe greater works ſhewn to, and done by Chriſt, which were to prove his divine Sonſhip, his proper deity, his true Meſſiahſhip, to confirm the faith of his followers in him, and for the glory of God; but this eventually followed upon them: ſome wondered at them, and believed in him; and others were amazed at them, and confounded by them.

Ver. 21. *For as the Father raiſeth up the dead, and quickneth* them, &c.] Which may be underſtood either ſpiritually of raiſing dead ſinners from the death of ſin, to a life of grace and holineſs; and the rather, becauſe it is expreſſed in the preſent tenſe *raiſeth*, and not *hath raiſed*; or naturally of raiſing thoſe that are dead in a corporal ſenſe, and quickning them, as the widow of *Sarepta*'s ſon by *Elijah*, and the *Shunamite*'s ſon by *Eliſha*: *even ſo the Son quickneth whom he will*; both in a ſpiritual ſenſe, being the reſurrection and the life, or the author of the reſurrection from a moral death to a ſpiritual life, whoſe voice, in the Goſpel, the dead in ſin hear and live; and in a natural ſenſe, as in the above inſtances of *Jairus*'s daughter, the widow of *Naim*'s ſon, and *Lazarus*; and in the general reſurrection, when at his voice, and word of power, all that are in their graves ſhall come forth, ſome to everlaſting life, and ſome to everlaſting damnation; and all this as he wills: he quickens, in a ſpiritual ſenſe, whom he pleaſes, even as many as the Father has given him; and he will raiſe up to everlaſting life, at the laſt day, whom he pleaſes, even as many as were made his care and charge, whom he has redeemed by his blood, and called by his grace. Now as the quickning of the dead is an act of almighty power; and this being exerciſed by the Son in a ſovereign way, as is by his father, it ſhews his proper deity, and full equality with the Father. The reſurrection of the dead is here expreſſed by *quickning*, as it frequently is by the *Jews*, who often ſpeak of תחיית המתים, *the quickning of the dead*, for the reſurrection; ſo the *Targumiſt* on *Zech*. iii. 8. *in the quickning of the dead*, אחינך, *I will quicken thee*; ſee the *Jeruſalem Targum* on *Gen*. xix. 26. and xxv. 34.

Ver. 22. *For the Father judgeth no man*, &c.] That is, without the Son; which is another proof of their equality: for that he does judge is certain; he is the judge of the whole earth; he is God that judgeth in the earth, or governs the world with his Son, who works together in the affairs of providence: he judged and condemned the old world, but not without his Son, who by his Spirit, or in his divine nature, went and preached to the ſpirits now in priſon, then diſobedient in the times of *Noah*; he judged and condemned *Sodom* and *Gomorrha*, but not without the Son; for *Jehovah* the Son rained, from *Jehovah* the Father, fire and brimſtone upon thoſe cities, and conſumed them; he judged the people of *Iſrael*, and often chaſtized them for their ſins, but not without his Son, the angel of his preſence that went before them; he judges all men, and juſtifies and acquits whom he pleaſes, but not without his Son; but thro' his juſtifying righteouſneſs, which he imputes to them; in doing which he appears to be a juſt judge, and to do right; and he will judge the world in righteouſneſs at the laſt day by his Son, whom he has ordained; ſo as the Son does nothing without the Father, the Father does nothing without the Son, which ſhews perfect equality. The *Jews* had an officer in their *Sanhedrim*, whom they called *Ab Beth Din*, or *the father of the houſe of judgment*, to whom belonged the trying of cauſes, and of judging and determining them. Hence the *Targumiſt* on *Cant*. vii. 4. ſays, "ואב בית דינא, *and the father of the houſe of* "*judgment*, who judgeth thy judgments, or deter- "mines thy cauſes, is mighty over thy people, *&c*."

Whether there may not be ſome alluſion here to this officer, I leave to be conſidered: *but hath committed all judgment to the Son*; as the judgment, or government of his church and people, eſpecially under the Goſpel-diſpenſation; and which he exerciſes by giving ordinances peculiar to it, ſuch as baptiſm and the Lord's ſupper; and by enacting laws, and preſcribing rules for the diſcipline of his houſe, over which he is as a ſon; and by appointing proper officers under him, over his churches, to adminiſter theſe ordinances, and ſee that theſe laws are put in execution, which he qualifies them for, by beſtowing proper gifts upon them: and he exerciſes this judgment, by protecting and defending his people from all their enemies, ſo that they dwell ſafely under his government: as alſo the general judgment of the world at the laſt day, is committed to him; which affair will be managed by Chriſt, the Son of God, when he comes a ſecond time; he'll then raiſe the dead, that every one may receive for the things done in his body, whether good or evil; he'll gather all nations before him, and all ſhall ſtand before his judgment-ſeat, both great and ſmall; he'll ſeparate one from another, the ſheep from the goats, and ſet the one on his right hand, and the other on his left; he'll bring every work into judgment, with every ſecret thing, and ſhew himſelf to be the ſearcher of the hearts, and the trier of the reins of the children of men, and will paſs a moſt righteous and deciſive ſentence upon all: now for ſuch a truſt, and ſuch a work as this, whether the particular government of the church, or the general judgment of the world, he would not be fit, was he not God equal with the Father; the thing he had ſuggeſted, and which he ſupports and maintains in this vindication of himſelf.

Ver. 23. *That all men ſhould honour the Son*, &c.] This is the end of all judgment, and the exerciſe of all authority, and power being committed to him; namely, that he might have the honour given him by men that is due unto him: *even as they honour the Father*; that the ſame honour and glory may be given to the one, as to the other, which muſt never have been done was he not equal with him, ſince he gives not his glory to another, *Iſ.* xlii. 8. and xlviii. 11. Indeed, all men do not honour the Father as they ſhould; the *Gentiles*, who had ſome knowledge of God, glorified him not as God; and the *Jews*, who had an external revelation of the one, true, and living God, which other nations had not, yet were greatly deficient in honouring him, which made him complaining ſay, *if then I be a father, where is mine honour? Mal.* i. 6. And Chriſtians, who are favoured with a clearer revelation ſtill of the Father of Chriſt, are much wanting in giving him his due glory; but in common he is honoured, tho' in an imperfect manner; nor is there ſo much danger of his loſing his honour, as of the Son's loſing his: the reaſon is this, tho' the Son is in the form of God, and equal with him, yet by taking upon him the form of a ſervant, by becoming man, he has veiled the glory of his divine perſon, and made himſelf of no reputation; and by reaſon of this was reckoned by many, or moſt, as a mere man: wherefore, by agreement, that judgment, power, and authority, which equally belonged to the Father, and the Son, the exerciſe of it is put viſibly and openly into the Son's hands, that he might have his due honour and glory from all men, whether they will or no: from true believers in him he has it willingly, by their aſcribing deity to him, by putting their truſt in him, by attributing the whole of their ſalvation to him, and the glory of it, and by worſhipping him: and he will be honoured by all men at the laſt day; they will be obliged to do it; for all judgment being committed to him, and he being judge of all, every knee ſhall bow to him, and every tongue ſhall confeſs that he is Lord, to his own glory, and to the glory of God the Father; ſee *Iſ.* xlv. 23. *Phil.* ii. 10, 11. *He that honoureth not the Son*; that denies his divine Sonſhip, or his proper deity; that detracts from the dignity of his perſon or office; that ſhews no regard to him in point of ſalvation, or of obedience: *honoureth not the Father which hath ſent him*; they are ſo the ſame in nature and perfections, in power, will, affections, and operations; and their intereſts and honours are ſo involved together, that whatever diſhonour is done to one reflects on the other: and indeed, whatever is done in a way of diſreſpect to the Son, as incarnate, and in his office-capacity, highly reflects on his Father that ſent him in the fulneſs of time, in human nature, to obtain eternal redemption for his people, according to a rule often expreſſed by the *Jews*, "a man's meſſenger is as himſelf;" ſee the note on *Matt.* x. 40.

Ver. 24. *Verily verily, I ſay unto you*, &c.] Who am the *Amen*, the true and faithful witneſs: *he that heareth my word*; by which is meant the Goſpel, and is ſo called, both becauſe it is ſpoken by Chriſt, and firſt began to be ſpoken by him; and becauſe he is ſpoken of in it; his perſon, office, and work, peace, pardon, righteouſneſs, life, and ſalvation by him, being the ſum and ſubſtance of it: and by *hearing* it is meant, not a bare external hearing it; for ſo it may be heard, and not underſtood; and it may be underſtood in a notional and ſpeculative way, and yet the conſequences hereafter mentioned may not follow: but an internal hearing it is here deſigned, ſo as to underſtand it ſpiritually, or to have an experimental knowledge of it; ſo as to approve of it, love, and like it; to diſtinguiſh it from that which is not his doctrine, and to feel the power of it on the heart, and yield the obedience of faith unto it: for faith in Chriſt himſelf, the ſum and ſubſtance of the word of the Goſpel, is hereby expreſſed; to which is joined faith in God his Father, they being equally the object of it; and which is introduced as a further proof of the equality in nature which is between them; ſee *John* xiv. 1. *and believeth on him that ſent me*; he does not ſay that believes on me, which might have been expected from him; but that believes on him that ſent me, that is, on the Father; for as he that rejects Chriſt, and receives not his words, rejects and receives not him that ſent him; ſo he that hears Chriſt's words, and receives him, and believes in him, receives and believes in him that ſent him; and the ſame effects and conſequences follow upon the one as on the other, upon hearing the word of Chriſt, as upon believing on the Father of Chriſt; and which is no inconſiderable proof of their perfect equality: for ſuch a perſon that hears the one, and believes on the other, *hath everlaſting life*; not only in the purpoſe of God, and in the covenant of his grace, and in the hands of Chriſt, and in faith and hope; but he has a right unto it, and a claim of it, according to the declaration of the Goſpel; and beſides, has the principle of it in himſelf, the grace of God, which ſprings up into, is the beginning of, and iſſues in eternal life; he has alſo a meetneſs for it, and has the pledge and earneſt of it, the Spirit of God, and ſhall certainly enjoy it: *and ſhall not come into condemnation*; neither for original ſin, tho' judgment has paſſed upon all men unto condemnation for it; nor for actual ſins and tranſgreſſions; for tho' every one deſerves condemnation, yet were there as many ſentences of condemnation iſſued out as ſins committed, not one of them could be executed on ſuch who are in Chriſt Jeſus, as he that believes in him is openly and manifeſtatively in him: the reaſon is, becauſe the death of Chriſt is a ſecurity againſt all condemnation; and whoever believes in him ſhall not be condemned, but ſaved; and tho' he may come into judgment, yet not into condemnation: he ſhall ſtand in judgment, and be acquitted by the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, which he, by faith, receives as his juſtifying righteouſneſs. *But is paſſed from death unto life*; both from a moral death to a ſpiritual life, being quickned, who before was dead in treſpaſſes and ſins; and from under a ſentence of condemnation, and eternal death, which, as a deſcendant of *Adam*, and according to the tenor of the law of works, he was ſubject to, to an open ſtate of juſtification, according to the tenor of the covenant of grace; the righteouſneſs of Chriſt being revealed to him, and received by faith, and the ſentence of juſtification paſſed upon his conſcience by the Spirit; ſo that he who before, in his own apprehenſion, was a dead man in a law ſenſe, is now alive to God, and ſecure from the ſecond death, and being hurt by it.

Ver. 25. *Verily verily I ſay unto you*, &c.] With the ſame aſſeveration as before, and for the further illuſtration and confirmation of the ſame thing, occaſioned by the laſt clauſe of the preceding verſe, as well as improving upon the argument in ver. 21. for his equality with the Father, which he is ſtill purſuing: *the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead ſhall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear ſhall live*; which may be underſtood either of a corporal reſurrection, and of ſome particular inſtances of it, which ſhould ſhortly be; and of ſome perſons who would be in the ſtate of the dead, and to whom the voice of Chriſt would be attended with ſuch power as to cauſe them to hear and live; as did *Jairus*'s daughter upon his ſaying *Talitha Cumi*, damſel ariſe, and the widow of *Naim*'s ſon upon his ſaying, young man ariſe, and *Lazarus*, upon his calling to him, *Lazarus* come forth; and which is a full proof of his being equal to God that quickens the dead: or rather this is to be underſtood of a ſpiritual reſurrection, and the rather, becauſe this ſenſe beſt agrees with the foregoing verſe; and a corporal reſurrection is expreſſed in ſomewhat different words, and ſeems to be diſtinguiſhed from this in ver. 28, 29. And beſides, the hour, or time of the reſurrection of the above particular perſons was not ſtrictly come; nor could they, with propriety, be ſaid to be dead; to which may be added, that the phraſe, *they that hear ſhall live*, and none but them, beſt agrees with this ſenſe: ſo then by the *dead* are meant ſuch who are dead in treſpaſſes and ſins; who are ſeparated from God, alienated from the life of God, and in whom the image of God is defaced; who are dead in all the powers and faculties of their ſouls, to that which is ſpiritually good; and are without ſpiritual breath, ſenſe, feeling, and motion. And by *the voice* of Chriſt is intended his Goſpel, which is a voice of love, grace, and mercy, of life and liberty, of peace, pardon, righteouſneſs, and ſalvation by him; and which being attended with his power, is the means of quickening dead ſinners; who may be ſaid to *hear* it, when it comes not in word only, but in power, and works effectually in them; and is ſpirit and life, and the power of God unto ſalvation to them; when they receive it, underſtand, believe, and obey it: and ſuch perſons *ſhall live*; comfortably, pleaſantly, and delightfully, a life of faith on Chriſt, a life of communion with him, and ſhall live eternally with him hereafter.

Ver. 26. *For as the Father hath life in himſelf*, &c.] Is the living God, the fountain of life, and is the author of life to all living creatures; or rather has eternal life in his mind, his heart, his counſel, and his covenant, and in his hands, for all his choſen ones, which ſeems to be the peculiar ſenſe here: *ſo hath he given to the Son to have life in himſelf*; he hath not only made the purpoſe of it in him, and given the promiſe of it to him; but even eternal life itſelf, he has put into his hands, and ſecured it in him for them, 1 *John* v. 11. to give it to as many as he has given him: and he does give it to all his ſheep, ſo that not one of them ſhall periſh; which ſhows that he and his Father are one, tho' not in perſon, yet as in affection, will, and power, ſo in nature and eſſence. The Son has life in himſelf, eſſentially, originally, and inderivatively as the Father has, being equally the living God, the fountain of life, and donor of it, as he; and therefore this is not a life which he gives, or communicates to him; but eternal life is what the one gives, and the other receives, according to the œconomy of ſalvation ſettled between them: and hence it is, that all that hear Chriſt's voice ſpiritually ſhall live eternally; for theſe words are a reaſon of the former, and confirm the truth of them, as well as ſhow the equality of the Son with the Father, in that he is equal to ſuch a truſt, as to have eternal life committed to him.

Ver. 27. *And hath given him authority to execute judgment alſo*, &c.] Both in his church and kingdom, in the preſent ſtate of things, and at the laſt day, when all ſhall ſtand before his judgment-ſeat: and that *becauſe he is the ſon of man*; truly and properly man; becauſe, tho' he was in the form of God, and equal to him, yet became man, and was in the form of a ſervant: and ſo reads the *Ethiopic* verſion, *becauſe the Son of God is the ſon of man*; and therefore the authority of executing judgment, according to the council and covenant of peace, is committed to him; or that men might have a viſible judge, or be judged by one in their own nature: agreeably the *Perſic* verſion renders it, *becauſe the Son himſelf is he who judges the ſons of men*; or rather becauſe he is that *ſon of man* ſpoken of in prophecy, eſpecially in *Dan.* vii. 13. by whom is meant the Meſſiah, as the *Jews* themſelves allow[f], and who was not a mere man, but the man God's fellow; and ſo being both omniſcient and omnipotent, was equal to ſuch a work, which otherwiſe he would not have been; ſee the note on ver. 22. The *Syriac* verſion joins this clauſe to the beginning of the next verſe, and reads it thus, *becauſe he is the ſon of man, marvel not at this*; let this be no obſtruction to your faith of his quickning the dead, and having authority to execute judgment on all; ſince, tho' the ſon of man, he is not a mere man, but God over all, as what is next aſcribed to him manifeſtly ſhews.

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[f] Zohar in Gen. fol. 85. 4. Bemidbar Rabba, §. 13. fol. 209. 4. Jarchi & Saadiah Gaon in Dan. vii. 13. & R. Jeſhuah in Aben Ezra in ib.

Ver. 28. *Marvel not at this*, &c.] Either at the cure of the man that had been diſeaſed thirty and eight years, as ſome think; or at the Son of God being alſo the ſon of man, as the *Syriac* verſion ſuggeſts; or rather at the dead hearing the voice of the Son of God, and living upon it; and at his having authority to execute judgment upon all, to govern and defend his own church and people, and in the laſt day acquit them, and to take vengeance on his and their enemies, both now and hereafter: *for the hour is coming, in which all that are in their graves ſhall hear his voice.* This reſpects the general reſurrection; for there will be a reſurrection both of the juſt and unjuſt, of all that are in their graves; and tho' all that are dead are not in graves, or interred in the earth, ſome are in the ſea; yet, becauſe the greater part are in graves, this phraſe is choſen to expreſs the univerſality of the reſurrection: and this is alſo a proof of the reſurrection of the ſame body; for what elſe are in the graves but bodies? and what elſe can come forth from them but the ſame bodies? and the time is haſtening on when theſe bodies ſhall be quickned, and hear the voice of the Son of God; which whether the ſame with the voice of the archangel in 1 *Theſſ.* iv. 16. and whether an articulate voice, or a violent clap of thunder, which is the voice of God, or only the exertion of Chriſt's mighty power is intended, is not eaſy to determine, and may be needleſs to enquire. Certain it is, that this voice of Chriſt will be attended with almighty power, as the effect following upon it will ſhow. The *Jews* obſerve [g], that "there are three things which don't come into the world but *by voices*; there's the voice of a living creature, as it it written, *Gen.* iii. 16. *in ſorrow thou ſhalt bring forth children*, and as it is written, *Gen.* xxx. 22. *and God hearkened to her*; and there is the voice of rains, as it is written, 1 *Kings* xviii. 4. *for there is a voice of abundance of rain*, and it is written, *Pſ.* xxix. 3. *the voice of the Lord is upon the waters*; and קול תחיית המתים, *there is the voice of the reſurrection of the dead*, as it is written, *Iſ.* xl. 3. *the voice of him that crieth in the wilderneſs*;" but that was the voice of *John* the *Baptiſt*. It will be the voice of the Son of God that will quicken and raiſe the dead.

Ver. 29. *And ſhall come forth*, &c.] Out of their graves, as *Lazarus* came forth from his at the word of command, and as the bodies of the ſaints did after the reſurrection of Chriſt, when their graves were opened: *they that have done good*; which none of *Adam*'s poſterity naturally do, or can do of themſelves: ſuch are deſigned here who believe in Chriſt, which to do is the work of God, and the greateſt and beſt of works; and without which it is impoſſible to pleaſe God in any; and indeed, whatever is not of faith is ſin, and cannot be a good work: a good work is that which is done according to the will of God, from love to him, in faith, and with a view to his glory; and thoſe that do ſuch works ſhall come forth *unto the reſurrection of life*; that is, unto everlaſting life, glory, and happineſs; this is the firſt and better reſurrection; and thoſe that have part in it, over them the ſecond death ſhall have no power. All ſhall riſe to life, to an immortal life, ſo as never to die more; yet only good men ſhall riſe to enjoy an happy and glorious life; which will lie in communion with God, angels, and ſaints, and in conformity to Chriſt, and in the everlaſting viſion of him: *and they that have done evil*; who give up themſelves to work wickedneſs; whoſe continual employment, and the buſineſs, ſeries, and courſe of whoſe lives it is to commit ſin; who are ſlaves unto it, and vaſſals of it, and are properly workers of iniquity; otherwiſe there's no man but what does that which is evil, and that daily: theſe ſhall come forth *unto the reſurrection of damnation*; that is, to everlaſting damnation, ſhame, and reproach; they ſhall be condemned by the judge of the whole earth, and ſhall be pronounced curſed; and ſhall be ordered to go into everlaſting fire, and ſhall go into everlaſting puniſhment; which will be a puniſhment both of loſs and ſenſe: they'll loſe, or be deprived of, the preſence of God, and feel his wrath in their conſciences. All will riſe, but with a difference; the dead in Chriſt will riſe firſt, in the morning of the reſurrection, in the beginning of the thouſand years, and therefore are here mentioned firſt; the reſt, the wicked, will not riſe until the evening of that day, till the thouſand years are ended, and therefore are ſpoken of laſt. The former will riſe by virtue of union to Chriſt, the other by his power, and both at hearing his voice; the ſaints will riſe with bodies glorious, powerful, and ſpiritual; and wicked men, tho' with bodies immortal, yet vile, and diſhonourable: the one will riſe to a life of joy and happineſs that will laſt for ever, and which will be properly life; the other, tho' they'll riſe and live for ever, yet in miſery and wo, and which will be the ſecond, or eternal death; ſee a like diſtinction in *Dan.* xii. 2. to which there ſeems to be ſome reference here. And he at whoſe voice all this ſhall be, muſt be equal to God.

Ver. 30. *I can of mine own ſelf do nothing*, &c.] This is the concluſion of the matter, the winding up of the ſeveral arguments concerning the Son's equality to the Father, and the application of the whole to Chriſt. He had before been chiefly ſpeaking of the Son, in relation to the Father, as if he was a third perſon; but now he applies what he had ſaid of the Son to himſelf: and it is as if he had ſaid, I am the Son that can do nothing ſeparate from the Father, and contrary to his will, but do all things in conjunction with him; who ſees all that he does, by being in him, and co-operating with him, and do the ſelf-ſame. I am the Son to whom the father ſhews, and by whom he does, all he does; and to whom he'll ſhew, and by whom he'll do, as a co-efficient with him, greater works than what, as yet, he has done: I am the Son that quickens whom he pleaſes, and to whom all judgment is committed, and have the ſame honour the Father has: I am he that quickens dead ſinners now, and will raiſe all the dead at the laſt day; and have authority to execute judgment on all mankind: and, *as I hear, I judge*; not as he hears men, or, according to the evidence men will give one of another; for it is denied of him, that he will proceed in judgment in this manner, *Iſ.* xi. 3. but as he hears his Father; for being in his boſom, and one with him, as he ſees, and knows all he does, his whole plan of operations, and acts according to them; ſo he hears, knows, and is perfectly acquainted with all his counſels, purpoſes, and rules of judgment, and never deviates from them. Hearing here ſignifies perfect knowledge, and underſtanding of a cauſe; and ſo it is uſed in the *Jewiſh* writings, in matters of difficulty, that come before a court of judicature [h]: "there were three courts of judicature; one that ſat at the gate of the

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[g] Zohar in Gen. fol. 70, 4.

[h] Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 10. §. 2.

“ mountain of the houſe; and one that ſat at the “ gate of the court; and another that ſat in the “ paved chamber: they go (firſt) to that which is “ at the gate of the mountain of the houſe, and ſay, “ ſo have I expounded, and ſo have the companions “ expounded; ſo have I taught, and ſo have the com- “ panions (or collegues) taught: אם שמעו, *if they* “ *bear*, they ſay; (*i. e.* as one of their commentators “ explains it[i], if they know the law, and hear, or “ underſtand the ſenſe of the law; in ſuch a caſe “ they declare what they know) if not, they go to “ them that are at the gate of the court, and ſay “ (as before.)——And, *if they bear*, they tell them; “ but if not, they go to the great *Sanhedrim* in the “ paved chamber, from whence goes forth the law “ to all *Iſrael*.” Chriſt was now before the great *Sanhedrim*, and ſpeaks to them in their own language, and as a ſuperior judge to them: *and my judgment is juſt*; in the adminiſtration of the affairs of his church, which are done in the ſtricteſt juſtice; juſt and true are all his ways, as King of ſaints; and in the execution of the laſt judgment, which will be in righteouſneſs and truth: the judgment he paſſes muſt be right, ſince it is according to that perfect knowledge he has of his Father's will, which is an infallible rule of judgment: *becauſe I ſeek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath ſent me*; that is, he did not ſeek to gratify his own will, as diſtinct from his Father's, or in oppoſition to it; for he had no private end to anſwer, or ſeparate intereſt, or advantage to purſue; and ſeeing therefore he acted according to his Father's will, and not his own, as contrary to that; his judgment muſt be juſt, and the ſentence he paſſes right; ſince the will of God is indiſputably ſuch. The *Vulgate Latin*, and all the *Oriental* verſions, the *Alexandrian* copy, and two of *Beza*'s copies, leave out the word *father*, without altering or hurting the ſenſe at all.

Ver. 31. *If I bear witneſs of myſelf*, &c.] Which was not allowed any man to do; nor indeed is it proper that a man ſhould be a witneſs in his own cauſe: and, according to the *Jewiſh* canons, a man might not be a witneſs for his wife, becauſe ſhe was reckoned as himſelf. “ An huſband is not to be “ believed in bearing witneſs for his wife, that had “ been carried captive, that ſhe is not defiled, “ שאין אדם מעיד לעצמו, *for no man bears witneſs* “ *of himſelf*[k].” So likewiſe they ſay[l], “ a city “ that is ſubdued by an army, all the prieſteſſes “ (or prieſts daughters) that are found in it are re- “ jected, (from the prieſthood, as defiled;) but if “ they have witneſſes, whether a ſervant, or an “ handmaid, lo, they are to be believed; but no “ man is to be believed for himſelf: ſays *R. Zochariah ben Hakatzab*, by this habitation (ſwearing “ by the temple) her hand was not removed from “ my hand, from the time the *Gentiles* entered “ *Jeruſalem*, 'till they went out: they replied to “ him, *no man bears witneſs of himſelf*.” Chriſt reaſons here upon their own principles, and according to their ſenſe of things, that ſhould he bear witneſs of himſelf; then, ſays he, *my witneſs is not true*, לא נאמן, not to be believed, or admitted as an authentic teſtimony: and ſo the *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *is not credible*; not valid in law, or in ſuch a court of judicature in which Chriſt now was; for, as according to the *Jewiſh* law, no man was admitted a witneſs for himſelf, ſo neither was any thing eſtabliſhed by a ſingle teſtimony, but by the mouth of two or three witneſſes, *Deut.* xix. 15. Chriſt's meaning is, that his teſtimony alone, his ſingle witneſs, how true ſoever it was, would ſtand for nothing in their court; and therefore he would not inſiſt upon it, but drop it; for *true* here, is not oppoſed to that which is *falſe*, but to that which is not valid in law. Chriſt's teſtimony was true in itſelf; nor could it be any other, it coming from him, who is truth itſelf, the *Amen*, and faithful witneſs; but being conſidered as an human teſtimony, and in his own cauſe, was not to be admitted as ſufficient; and this he allows. From arguments, proving his equality with the Father, he paſſes to teſtimonies; and without making uſe of his own, he had enough to produce, and which were valid and authentic, and are as follow.

Ver. 32. *There is another that beareth witneſs of me*, &c.] Meaning not his father, who is another, and a diſtinct perſon, from him, as the ſpirit is another comforter; and both diſtinct teſtifiers from him, as well as of him. This is indeed the ſenſe of ſome interpreters; but the Father is particularly mentioned in ver. 37. and the thread of the diſcourſe, and the climax, or gradation, here uſed, ſhew, that it is to be underſtood of *another man*, as *Nonnus* paraphraſes it; of *John* the *Baptiſt*, who is ſpoken of by name in the next verſe, as a witneſs; and then a greater than he, the works of Chriſt, and then the Father: *and I know that the witneſs, which he witneſſeth of me, is true*; for *John* was now alive, tho' in priſon, and continued to bear a teſtimony to Chriſt; and therefore he ſpeaks of him as now bearing witneſs of him, and abiding by that which he had bore; and Chriſt knew not only that what he teſtified of him was true in itſelf, but that his teſtimony was a valid and authentic teſtimony, with the generality of the *Jews*; who held *John* to be a prophet, and looked upon him as a man of great probity and integrity, and whoſe word was to be taken: nor indeed could the *Sanhedrim*, before whom Chriſt now was, object to his character, nor to him as a witneſs; nor ought they, ſince they themſelves had ſo judged of him, as appears by their meſſage to him, which Chriſt next fails not to take notice of.

Ver. 33. *Ye ſent unto John*, &c.] The *Sanhedrim* at *Jeruſalem* made a deputation of prieſts, and *Levites* to him, to know who he was, whether the Meſſiah, or *Elias*, or that prophet, *John* i. 19. Now had they not looked upon him, from what they knew of him, or from the character they had of him, as a faithful witneſs, they would never have ſhewn him ſo much reſpect, and have been at ſo much pains, and charge, as to ſend ſuch a body of men ſo far unto him, as from *Jeruſalem* to beyond *Jordan*; which circumſtance our Lord improves in favour of this evidence he produces: *and he bare witneſs unto the truth*; to Chriſt, who is the truth itſelf; and to the truth of his perſon, and office; to his dignity, and eternity, as being before him, tho' coming after him; and to his divine ſonſhip, the thing now in debate, declaring, that he was the ſon of God; and to his office, as mediator, pointing to him as the lamb of God, who, by his blood, and ſacrifice, takes away the ſins of men. The *Ethiopic* verſion reads by way of interrogation, *did not you ſend unto John?* &c.

Ver. 34. *But I receive not teſtimony from man*, &c.] He ſtood in no need of an human teſtimony, nor did he reſt the truth of his deity, and divine ſonſhip thereon: he had other, and greater teſtimonies to produce; as he needed not that any man ſhould teſtify of man to him, he had no need that any man ſhould teſtify of him; and if the teſtimony of men was received, as this of *John* could not well be objected to, the teſtimony of God is greater, and which he had; and therefore ſhould not have mentioned *John*'s for his own ſake: *but theſe things I ſay, that ye might be ſaved*; that is, he produced this teſtimony of *John*, who was a perſon of ſo great a character among them, that they might be induced by it to believe in him as the Meſſiah; and ſo be ſaved from that ruin and deſtruction, that would come upon their nation, city, and temple, for their rejection and diſbelief of him.

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[i] Maimon. in ib.

[k] Maimon. Iſſure Bia, c. 18. §. 19.

[l] Miſn. Cetubot, c. 2. §. 9. T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 27. 2. Juchaſin, fol. 56. 1.

Ver. 35. *He was a burning and a ſhining light*, &c.] He was not that light, the famous light, the Meſſiah, the ſun of righteouſneſs; yet he was the *phoſphorus*, the fore-runner of that light, and was himſelf a very great one: he had much light himſelf into the perſon and office of the Meſſiah; in the doctrines of faith in Chriſt, and repentance towards God; in the Goſpel-diſpenſation, and in the abolition of the *Moſaic* œconomy; and gave great light to others, in the buſineſs of ſalvation, and remiſſion of ſins, and was the means of guiding the feet of many in the way of peace. His light of pure doctrine, and of an holy and exemplary converſation, ſhone very viſibly, and brightly before men; and he burned with ſtrong love and affection for Chriſt, and the ſouls of men; and with flaming zeal for the honour of God, and true religion, and againſt all ſin and prophaneneſs, which he was a faithful reprover of, and for which he loſt his life. It was common with the *Jews* to call their doctors, who were famous for their knowledge, and holineſs of life, lights, burning lights, and ſhining lights; or in words which amount to the ſame. So *R. Simeon ben Jochai* is often called in the book of *Zohar*, בוצינא קדישא, *the holy light*; and particularly it is ſaid of him [m], "*R. Simeon*, כבוצינא דשרגא דאדליק, "is as *the lamp of light which burns* above, and "*burns* below; and by the light which burns below "all the children of the world are enlightned: "woe to the world, when the light below, aſcends "to the light above." So *R. Abbu* is called, בוצינא דנהורא, *the lamp of light* [n]: and it is [o] ſaid of *Shuah*, *Judah*'s father-in-law, that he was, בוצינא דאתרא, *the light of the place*; that is, where he lived. The *Gloſs* on the place ſays, he was a man of note in the city, and enlightned their eyes; and it is very frequent with them ſtill, when they are praiſing any of their doctors, to ſay of him, he was, המאור הגדול, *a great light*, who enlightned the eyes of *Iſrael*, and in whoſe light the people walked [p]: ſo among the philoſophers, *Xenophon*, and *Plato*, are called, duo lumina [q], *two lights*; ſee the note on *Matt*. v. 14. *and ye were willing for a ſeaſon*, or *for an hour*, *to rejoice in his light*; or *to glory in it*, or *boaſt of* it, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions render it. When *John* firſt appeared among them, they were fond, and even proud of him; they gloried in him, that a man of ſuch uncommon endowments, and of ſuch exemplary holineſs, was raiſed up among them; and hoped that he was the Meſſiah, or *Elias*, that was to come before him; and pleaſed themſelves, that times of great outward honour and proſperity were haſtening: wherefore they flocked about him, and many of the *Phariſees* and *Sadducees* attended his miniſtry, and would have been baptized by him; but when they found that he was not the Meſſiah, nor *Elias*, nor that prophet, but bore a teſtimony to *Jeſus* of *Nazareth*, that he was the Meſſiah; and ran counter to their notions of a temporal kingdom, and of birth privileges, and their own righteouſneſs; and threatned them with ruin, and deſtruction, both in this world, and that which is to come, in caſe of their impenitence and unbelief; they grew ſick of him, and ſaid he had a devil, and rejected the counſel of God he declared, and deſpiſed his baptiſm. Such was their fickleneſs and inconſtancy, which Chriſt here tacitly charges them with. They were like the ſtony-ground hearers, and like ſome of the apoſtle *Paul*'s admirers among the *Galatians*, who at firſt could have plucked out their eyes for him, but afterwards became his enemies for telling them the truth.

Ver. 36. *But I have greater witneſs than that of John*, &c.] The *Vulgate Latin*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read, *greater than John*, but wrongly; for the teſtimonies of Chriſt's works, and of his father, are not compared with *John* himſelf, but with his teſtimony; and the ſenſe is, that Chriſt had a greater witneſs than the witneſs of *John*; and ſo it is expreſſed in the *Perſic* verſion: and his meaning is, that he had no need to inſiſt upon *John*'s teſtimony; he had other, and greater witneſſes to produce: *for the works which the father hath given me to finiſh*; ſuch as the preaching of the Goſpel, the fulfilling of the law, and the redemption of his people; all which were appointed by his father, and given him to do, and which he compleatly finiſhed. The whole Goſpel came, and was publiſhed by Jeſus Chriſt, and the law was entirely fulfilled by him; and the work of man's ſalvation was finiſhed by him, and theſe bear witneſs to the truth of his deity, and divine Sonſhip; for none but the Son of God could have done theſe things. The *Ethiopic* verſion reads in the ſingular number, *this work which my Father hath given me*, &c. and if it was a ſingle work that is referred to, the work of redemption bids fair to be it. But, theſe works include not only what Chriſt did on earth, in his ſtate of humiliation, but what he has done ſince, and will do; which his Father has given him to finiſh, and he has finiſhed, or will finiſh them; ſuch as the reſurrection of himſelf from the dead, the effuſion of the gifts and graces of the Spirit, the ſpreading and ſucceeding his Goſpel in the world, the converſion of his redeemed ones, the gathering in the fulneſs of the *Gentiles*, and the converſion of the *Jews*, the deſtruction of Antichriſt, the reſurrection of all the dead, and the judgment of the whole world. Tho' more eſpecially his miracles are here intended, and which, and not his mediatorial works, were demonſtrations and proofs to men of his divine Sonſhip; ſee *Matt*. xiv. 33. and xxvii. 54. *the ſame works that I do, bear witneſs of me, that the Father hath ſent me*; and that he was in the Father, and the Father in him; or that they were one in nature, and equal in power and glory, *John* x. 30—37. and xiv. 11.

Ver. 37. *And the father himſelf, which hath ſent me*, &c.] Not only the works he gave him to do, and which he did, but he himſelf in perſon: *hath born witneſs of me*; not only in the writings of *Moſes*, and the prophecies of the Old Teſtament, but by an audible, articulate voice from heaven, at the time of Chriſt's baptiſm, *Matt*. iii. 17. which was a full teſtimony of the Sonſhip of Chriſt, and of the Father's well-pleaſedneſs in him; and which was repeated at his transfiguration on the mount, *Matt*. xvii. 5. and the Sonſhip of Chriſt is the grand thing which the three that bear record in heaven, the

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[m] Zohar in Exod. fol. 79. 1.

[n] T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 17. 1.

[o] Bereſhit Rabba, §. 85. fol. 74. 4. & Mattanot Cehunah in ib.

[p] Vid. R. David Ganz. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 38. 1. 41. 1. 44. 2. 45. 1. 46. 2. & 47. 1.

[q] A. Gell. Noct. Attic. l. 14. c. 3.

Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghoſt teſtify of, 1 *John* v. 7. *ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor ſeen his ſhape*; for the voices that were heard, and the forms that were ſeen under the Old Teſtament diſpenſation, from the firſt of this kind in *Eden's* garden, to the incarnation of Chriſt, which are aſcribed to God, or to a divine perſon, were either by the miniſtry of angels, or they were voices uttered by the Son of God, or forms aſſumed by him, who often appeared in an human form, as a prelude of his incarnation; ſo that it was unuſual, and wonderful, and remarkable, that the Father ſhould bear a teſtimony to the Sonſhip of Chriſt by a voice from heaven; and which therefore ought to be attended to, and received as a ſufficient and valid teſtimony.

Ver. 38. *And ye have not his Word abiding in you*, &c.] Which ſome underſtand of Chriſt himſelf, the Logos, or Word; who, tho' he was now with them, being made fleſh, and dwelling among them, yet would not long continue with them; tho' rather this deſigns the written word, or the ſcriptures of truth; and eſpecially that part of them, which contains prophecies concerning the Meſſiah, which did not dwell in them richly, nor they dwell in their meditations on them, as was requiſite. Or rather, it may intend that word of God expreſſed in the teſtimony he bore to the Sonſhip of Chriſt at his baptiſm, by a voice from heaven, which made no laſting impreſſion upon the minds, and hearts of the *Jews* that heard it; as appears by what follows: *for whom he hath ſent him ye believe not*; meaning himſelf; for if they had had either a due regard to the ſacred oracles, or to that voice from heaven at his baptiſm, they would have received and embraced him as the Meſſiah, and ſent of God, and not have diſbelieved and rejected him, as now they did.

Ver. 39. *Search the ſcriptures*, &c.] The writings of *Moſes*, and the prophets, which were of divine inſpiration and authority, and are often appealed unto by Chriſt, and his Apoſtles, for the truth of what they delivered; and were the ſtandard of faith, and the teſt of doctrines; and therefore to be ſearched diligently into, for finding divine knowledge, and improvement in it, and for the trial of doctrines. The words may be rendered in the indicative, as an aſſertion, *ye do ſearch the ſcriptures*; the *Jews* had the ſacred oracles committed to them, and theſe they read, not only their kings, princes, and judges, but the common people, who brought up their children to the reading of them, and inſtructed them in them: and beſides this, theſe writings were read, and expounded publickly in their ſynagogues every ſabbath-day; and at this time eſpecially theſe records were examined, and particularly thoſe of them which reſpected the Meſſiah, ſince there was now a general expectation of him: and certain it is, that the chief-prieſts, *Scribes*, and elders, or the *Sanhedrim*, were very much verſed in the ſcriptures, and could readily refer to thoſe which concerned the Meſſiah; ſee an inſtance of this in *Matt.* ii. 4, 5, 6. *for in them ye think ye have eternal life*; not the doctrine of eternal life, nor the promiſes of it, nor the way to it; tho' all theſe are contained in them, and pointed out by them: for tho' life and immortality are brought to light by the Goſpel, and the promiſe of eternal life belongs to the covenant of grace, and the way of life and righteouſneſs by Chriſt is manifeſted without the law, and not by it; yet there is much of the Goſpel, and an exhibition of the covenant of grace, and its promiſes, and Chriſt, the way of life, is directed to typically by the tree of life, and the brazen ſerpent, and other things in thoſe writings. But the meaning here is, that they imagined, by having theſe writings in their hands, and by their reading them, and hearing them expounded every ſabbath-day, they ſhould obtain and inherit everlaſting life; hence they call [r] the law eternal life, and ſay [s] concerning the reading of it, that "he that begins to read in the book of the law is "obliged to bleſs after this manner: bleſſed be "he that has choſen us above all nations, and hath "given us his law.——And he that finiſhes bleſſes "after him in this manner: bleſſed is he who hath "given us his law, the law of truth, and has planted "*eternal life* in the midſt of us." This was an opinion of theirs: ſo the *Perſic* verſion reads, *for ſuch is your opinion*; and tho' this was a very vain one, yet it ſhows what a very high opinion they had of the ſcriptures: and now to theſe our Lord appeals as witneſſes for him, and againſt which they could not object, upon their own principles: *and they are they which teſtify of me*; as they do of his proper deity and divine Sonſhip, calling him Jehovah, God, the mighty God, and the Son of God; and of his offices as prophet, prieſt, and king; and of his incarnation of a virgin; and of the tribe, family, and place of his birth; of the miracles which he ſhould work; of the treatment he ſhould meet with from men; of his ſufferings and death; of the circumſtances leading on to them, and attending them; as his riding on an aſs into *Jeruſalem*, the betraying him by one of his familiar acquaintance, the ſelling him for thirty pieces of ſilver, the ſpitting upon, and ſcourging him, giving him gall for his meat, and vinegar for his drink, and parting his garments, and caſting lots for his veſture, and the crucifixion of him, and that between two thieves; and of his burial, reſurrection from the dead, aſcenſion to heaven, and ſeſſion at the right hand of God, and of his future coming to judgment.

Ver. 40. *And ye will not come to me*, &c.] Which is to be underſtood, not of a corporal coming to him; for many of the *Jews* did come to him in this ſenſe; ſome for one thing, and ſome for another; ſome for the loaves, that they might eat and be filled; ſome to ſee his miracles, and others to partake of the benefit of them; ſome to hear him preach, and others to catch and cavil at what they could: nor is bare coming to hear Chriſt preached, or an outward attendance on, and ſubmiſſion to his ordinances, ſuch a coming to him as is here deſigned; for with theſe eternal life is not connected: bodily exerciſe profiteth not in this way; but a ſpiritual coming to Chriſt, or a coming to him by faith is here meant; in which ſenſe the phraſe is frequently uſed in this Goſpel, eſpecially in the next chapter; ſee ver. 35, 37, 44, 45, 65. and thoſe who come aright to Chriſt, come to him as the alone, able, ſuitable, and ſufficient Saviour; and in themſelves as ſinners, and ready to periſh; and as ſuch they are received by him with a welcome: but theſe men did not ſee themſelves as ſuch; nor did they ſee any need they had of coming to Chriſt; for they thought they had eternal life elſewhere: and ſuch were their ignorance of themſelves and Chriſt; and ſuch their prejudices againſt him; and ſuch the depravity, perverſeneſs, and ſtubbornneſs of their wills, that they had no inclination, deſire, and will to come to Chriſt, any more than power; which is an argument againſt, and not for the free-will of man, unleſs it be to that which is evil: and this perverſeneſs of their wills to come to Chriſt, when revealed in the external miniſtry of the word, was blame-worthy in them, ſince this was not owing to any decree of God, but to the corruption and vitioſity of nature; which being blame-worthy in them, that which follows upon it muſt be ſo too; and it was the greater aggravation of their ſin, that they had the ſcriptures which teſtified of Chriſt, and pointed at him as the way of life, and yet would not come to him for it: *that ye might have life*; that is, eternal life, as is expreſſed in the foregoing verſe, and is ſo read here in *Beza*'s old copy, in the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions. This is in Chriſt, not only the purpoſe and promiſe of it, but that itſelf: he has the diſpoſal of it, gives the right unto it, and a meetneſs for it, with all the comforts ariſing from it, and all the promiſes and bleſſings relating to it; and all that come to Chriſt by faith may, and ſhall have it: this is the will of the Father, the end of his giving of Chriſt, and of his miſſion, and coming into the world, and is inſeparably connected with believing in him.

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[r] Zohar in Gen. fol. 100. 3.

[s] Maimon. in Miſn. Megilla, c. 4. §. 1.

Ver. 41. *I receive not honour from men.*] Not but that honour from men was due to Chriſt; and it becomes all men to honour him, as they do the Father; and he does receive honour and glory, and bleſſing from his ſaints, by their praying to him, praiſing him, believing in him, and ſerving him; but his ſenſe is, that in aſſerting his equality with the Father, and in producing the teſtimonies he did, in proof of it, his view was not to obtain honour and applauſe among men, but to vindicate himſelf, and glorify his Father: nor did he ſay what he had juſt now ſaid, about mens coming to him, with any ſuch intention, to gather a party to him, to ſet up himſelf as a temporal king, in great pomp and ſplendor, and receive worldly homage and honour from them, as his ſubjects; for his kingdom was not of this world, and coming and ſubjection to him, were things of a ſpiritual nature.

Ver. 42. *But I know you*, &c.] Being the omniſcient God, he knew not only their perſons, but their hearts, the thoughts of their hearts; what was in them, and what was wanting in them: particularly, *that ye have not the love of God in you*; and which is not in any man's heart naturally; for the carnal mind is enmity to God; and men by nature, are haters of him, and enemies in their minds to him, till this grace, which is a fruit of the Spirit, is implanted in them, in regeneration: love to God, is one of the weightier matters of the law, the *Jews* paſſed over; without which, all the actions of men ſignify nothing: this they made great pretenſions to, and would have had it thought, that it was from love to God, that they ſought to kill *Jeſus*, for his violation of the ſabbath, and making himſelf equal with God; but it was not from a delight in the ſabbath, or from love to the Lord of it, but out of ill-will to Chriſt, that they expreſſed ſuch diſſembled piety and falſe zeal: they were lovers of themſelves, and not God; they were covetous men, and loved the world, and the things in it, which is inconſiſtent with the love of the Father; and beſides, if they had loved him, they would have loved him that was begotten of him, and not ſought to have killed him.

Ver. 43. *I am come in my Father's name*, &c.] Power and authority; by his conſent, with his will, and according to a covenant with him: Chriſt came not of himſelf, of his own accord, by a ſeparate power and will of his own, but was called, and ſent, and came by mutual agreement; and brought his credentials with him, doing the works and miracles which his Father gave him to finiſh: *and ye receive me not*; notwithſtanding this they rejected him as the Meſſiah, and would not receive him as ſuch; yea, traduced him as an impoſtor, and a deceiver: *if another ſhall come in his own name*; which ſome underſtand of *Simon Magus*, others of antichriſt; rather the falſe Chriſts are intended, of whom our Lord ſpeaks, in *Matt.* xxiv. 24. who would riſe up of themſelves, and not be able to give any proof of their miſſion; or do any thing which might entitle them to the character of the Meſſiah, or Chriſt, a name they would take to themſelves: and ſo the *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *if another ſhall come in my name*; ſaying he is Chriſt, or the Meſſiah: *him ye will receive*; as thouſands of them did receive *Barchocab*, the falſe Chriſt, who roſe up ſome years after in *Adrian*'s time; and even ſome of their greateſt *Rabbins*, as particularly the famous *R. Akiba*, who was his armour-bearer: and it is eaſy to obſerve, that though they were ſo backward to receive, and ſo much prejudiced againſt the true Meſſiah, they were always forward enough to embrace a falſe one; and indeed to follow any, that ſet up himſelf for a temporal deliverer of them; as the inſtances of *Theudas*, and *Judas* of *Galilee*, with others, ſhow; ſee *Acts* v. 36, 37. And the true reaſon why they rejected Chriſt was, becauſe he did not appear in outward pomp and glory, nor ſet up a temporal kingdom, or give out that he would deliver them from the *Roman* yoke.

Ver. 44. *How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another?* &c.] As the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* did, who were ambitious of honour and reſpect from one another, as well as from the common people; doing all they did to be ſeen of men, and to gain applauſe among them; chuſing the uppermoſt rooms at feaſts, and chief places in the ſynagogues, and delighting in the pompous title of *Rabbi*, *Rabbi*; and were in expectation of the temporal kingdom of the Meſſiah, when they hoped to be advanced to places of great honour and profit: and all this was an hindrance to them from believing in Chriſt, who appeared in ſuch an abject form, and made ſo mean a figure; whoſe doctrine was ſo unſuitable to their carnal minds, and whoſe followers were ſo poor and contemptible; and beſides, it was made a law among them, that thoſe who profeſſed him to be the Meſſiah, ſhould be caſt out of the ſynagogue: hence many who were convinced that he was the Meſſiah, durſt not confeſs him, leſt they ſhould loſe their honour and reſpect among men, which they preferred to the praiſe of God: *and ſeek not the honour that* cometh *from God only*; or *from the only God*, as the *Vulgate Latin*; or *from the one God*, as the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions render it: the honour that comes from him is, that of being born of him; of being a ſon or daughter of his, having that new name, which is better than that of ſons and daughters of the greateſt princes on earth; of being made all glorious within, and clothed with gold of *Ophir*, with raiment of needle work, with the robe of righteouſneſs, and garments of ſalvation; of being tranſlated into the ſpiritual kingdom of Chriſt, and made kings and prieſts unto God by him; of being ſet on the ſame throne with Chriſt, having on a crown of life and righteouſneſs, and enjoying a kingdom and glory; being heirs of God, and joint heirs with Chriſt; which honour all the ſaints have, or ſhall have, and which theſe men cared not for.

Ver. 45. *Do not think that I will accuſe you to the Father*, &c.] To God the Father, as the *Ethiopic* verſion reads. The *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read by way of interrogation, *do ye think that I will, &c.?* Chriſt is no accuſer of men; no, not of the worſt of men; ſee *John* viii. 10, 11. he came not into the world, to bring charges againſt men and condemn them, but to ſave them; to be an accuſer is not agreeable to his characters of a ſurety, a ſaviour, an advocate, and judge: there were enough to accuſe theſe perſons of; as their perverſeneſs and ſtubborneſs, in not coming to Chriſt for life; their want of love to God; their rejection of him, tho' he came in his Father's name; their reception of another, that ſhould come in his own name; their taking honour one of another, and not ſeeking the true ſpiritual and eternal honour, which God gives; but though he hints theſe things to them, he would not have them think that he accuſed them of them to the Father: the *Jews* have a notion, that when the Meſſiah comes, there will be accuſations lodged againſt their doctors and wiſe men [t]. " *R. Zeira* " ſays, that *R. Jeremiah bar Aba* ſaid, that in the " generation in which the ſon of *David* ſhall come, " there will be, קטגוריא בתלמידי חכמים, *ac-* " *cuſations againſt the diſciples of the wiſe men.*" And one of their writers [u] thus interprets, *Dan.* xii. 1. " and at that time *ſhall Michael ſtand up*; " he ſhall be as ſilent as a dumb man, when he " ſhall ſee the holy bleſſed God contending with " him, and ſaying, how ſhall I deſtroy a nation " ſo great as this, for the ſake of *Iſrael? and there* " *ſhall be a time of trouble* in the family above, and " there ſhall be *accuſations* againſt the diſciples of " the wiſe men." However, there was no need for Chriſt to accuſe them; for as it follows, *there is* one *that accuſeth you,* even *Moſes, in whom ye truſt*; by whom is meant, not *Moſes* perſonally; for when on earth, he was a mediator between God and the people of *Iſrael*, and an interceſſor for them; and ſince he has been in heaven, as the dead know not any thing, he knew nothing of their affairs; and when he was on the mount with Chriſt, his diſcourſe with him turned upon another ſubject: but either the writings of *Moſes*, as in *Luke* xvi. 29, 31. and xxiv. 27. or the doctrine of *Moſes*, as 1 *Cor.* x. 2. *John* ix. 28. or rather the law of *Moſes*, *Matt.* xxii. 24. *Mark* vii. 10. *Acts* vi. 11. and xxi. 21. And in this the *Jews* truſted; they reſted in it, and made their boaſt of it; and expected eternal life and ſalvation on account of their having it, and through their hearing it read every ſabbath-day, and by their obedience to it: and now ſin being a tranſgreſſion of the law, this ſame law brings charges againſt them, and accuſes them of the breach of the ſeveral precepts of it, and pronounces them guilty before God; it curſes and paſſes a ſentence of condemnation on them, and according to it, will they periſh eternally, without an intereſt in Chriſt; for their own righteouſneſs by the law of works, will be of no avail to them; the law in which they truſt for life, will riſe up in judgment, and be a ſwift witneſs againſt them: ſo the *Jews* ſometimes ſpeak of the law, as witneſſing againſt the people of *Iſrael* [w].

Ver. 46. *For had ye believed Moſes,* &c.] The doctrine of *Moſes*, and what he ſays in his writings: *ye would have believed me*; for there is an agreement between *Moſes* and Chriſt; Chriſt is the end of the law of *Moſes*, and in him is the accompliſhment of his writings: *for he wrote of me*; in the books written by him, Chriſt is ſpoken of, as the ſeed of the woman, that ſhould bruiſe the ſerpent's head; as the ſeed of *Abraham*, in whom all nations of the earth ſhould be bleſſed; as the *Shiloh*, to whom the gathering of the people ſhould be; and as that prophet, who ſhould be like unto himſelf, to whom the people of *Iſrael* ſhould hearken; and he wrote many things typically of Chriſt; and indeed, the whole *Moſaic* œconomy was typical of Chriſt, as the epiſtle to the *Hebrews* ſhows: and therefore diſbelieving Chriſt, was diſbelieving *Moſes*; who therefore would be an accuſer of them, and a witneſs againſt them.

Ver. 47. *But if ye believe not his writings,* &c.] They believed them to be his writings, and that they were the word of God, and yet did not believe the things contained in them, reſpecting Chriſt; or did not ſee, and could not believe that they belonged unto, and were applicable to Jeſus of *Nazareth*; and therefore it could not be ſuppoſed, they would give credit to him, or his words: *how ſhall ye believe my words?* not that *Moſes* was greater than Chriſt, or rather to be credited than he; *Moſes* indeed was faithful, but Chriſt was worthy of more honour and credit than he was; *Moſes* was but a ſervant, but Chriſt was a ſon in his own houſe: but this is ſaid with reſpect to the *Jews*, with whom *Moſes* was in great veneration and eſteem; and it was more likely they ſhould regard what he ſhould ſay, than what *Jeſus* of *Nazareth* ſhould, whom they deſpiſed.

## CHAP. VI.

Ver. 1. AFTER *theſe things,* &c.] After Chriſt's curing the man at *Betheſda*'s pool, and the vindication of himſelf for doing it on the ſabbath-day, and for aſſerting his equality with God; near a year after theſe things: for theſe were done at the feaſt of the paſſover, and now it was near another; and what is related here, was after the death of *John* the *Baptiſt*, and when the diſciples had returned from preaching in the ſeveral cities and towns, where Chriſt afterwards went, and had given an account of their ſucceſs; ſee *Matt.* xiv. 12, 13. *Mark* vi. 30, 31. *Luke* ix. 10. Quickly after the paſſover was ended, Chriſt departed from *Jeruſalem*, and went into *Galilee*, and preached in the ſeveral cities and towns in thoſe parts, and wrought many miracles: and after theſe things, in proceſs of time, *Jeſus went over the ſea of Galilee*; the ſame with the lake of *Genneſareth*, *Luke* v. 1. *which is* the ſea *of Tiberias*; and is frequently ſo called by the *Jewiſh* writers [x], who often make mention of, ימה של טבריה, *the ſea of Tiberias*; and by other writers, it is called the lake of *Tiberias* [y]; *Pliny*, who calls it the lake of *Geneſara* [z], ſays, " it " was ſixteen miles long, and ſix broad, and was beſet " with very pleaſant towns; on the eaſt were *Julias* " and *Hippo*, and on the ſouth *Taricbea*, by which " name ſome call the lake, and on the weſt *Tiberias*, " wholeſome for the hot waters." And theſe are the waters which the *Jews* call, דימוסין דטבריא, or, חמי, the hot baths of *Tiberias* [a]; and from the city of *Tiberias* built by *Herod*, and called ſo in honour of *Tiberius Cæſar*, the ſea took its name.

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[t] T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 112. 2.

[u] Jarchi in Dan. xii. 1. Vid. Abkath Rocel, par. 2. p. 265.

[w] Prefat. Echa Rabbati, fol. 40. 1.

[x] T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 81. 2. & Bava Bathra, fol. 74. 2. Becorot, fol. 55. 1. Megilla, fol. 5. 2. & 6. 1. Moed Katon, fol. 18. 2. & T. Hieroſ. Kilaim, fol. 32. 3. & Erubin, fol. 25. 2.

[y] Solin, c. 48. Pauſan. l. 5. p. 298.

[z] Lib. 5. c. 15.

[a] T. Hieroſ. Peah, fol. 21. 2. & Sheviith, fol. 38. 4. Kiddushin, fol. 61. 1. R. Benj. Itinerar. p. 53.

Ver. 2. *And a great multitude followed him*, &c.] From ſeveral cities and towns in *Galilee*, where he had been preaching and working miracles: *becauſe they ſaw his miracles which he did on them that were diſeaſed*; ſo that it was not for the ſake of his doctrine, or for the good of their ſouls, they followed him; but either to gratify their curioſity in ſeeing his miracles, or to be healed in their bodies, as others had been.

Ver. 3. *And Jeſus went up into a mountain*, &c.] In a deſert place near *Bethſaida*, *Luke* ix. 10. *and there he ſat with his diſciples*; partly for ſecurity from the cruelty of *Herod*, having juſt heard of the beheading of *John*; and partly for privacy, that he might have ſome converſation alone with his diſciples, upon their return from off their journey; as alſo for the ſake of reſt and refreſhment; and according to the cuſtom of the *Jewiſh* doctors, which now prevailed, ſee the note on *Matt.* v. 1. he ſat with his diſciples, in order to teach and inſtruct them.

Ver. 4. *And the paſſover, a feaſt of the Jews was nigh.*] This was the third paſſover, ſince our Lord's baptiſm, and entrance on his publick miniſtry; ſee ch. ii. 13. and v. 1. Whether Chriſt went up to this feaſt, is not certain; ſome think he did not; but from what is ſaid in ch. vii. 1. it looks as if he did: how nigh it was to the feaſt, cannot well be ſaid. Thirty days before the feaſt, they began to talk about it; and eſpecially in the laſt fifteen days, they made preparations for it, as being at hand [b]; and if there was now ſo long time to it, there was time enough for Jeſus to go to it.

Ver. 5. *When Jeſus then lift up* his *eyes*, &c.] Being before engaged in cloſe converſation with his diſciples, and looking wiſhly and intently on them, whilſt he was diſcourſing with them: *and ſaw a great company come unto him*; who came on foot, over the bridge at *Chammath*, from *Capernaum*, and other cities of *Galilee*: *he ſaith unto Philip*; he directed his diſcourſe to him particularly, becauſe he was of *Bethſaida*, near to which place Chriſt now was, and therefore might be beſt able to anſwer the following queſtion: *whence ſhall we buy bread, that theſe may eat?* This, according to the other Evangeliſts, muſt be ſaid after Chriſt came from the mountain, and the people were come to him, and he had received them kindly, and had inſtructed them about the kingdom of God, and had healed the diſeaſed among them, and expreſſed great compaſſion for them; and after the diſciples had deſired him to diſmiſs them, that they might go to the adjacent towns, and provide food for themſelves; which Chriſt would not admit of, and declared it unneceſſary, and then put this queſtion, with the following view.

Ver. 6. *And this he ſaid to prove him*, &c.] Or *tempting him*, trying his faith, and not only his, but the reſt of the diſciples; not as ignorant of it himſelf, but in order to diſcover it to him and them, and to prepare them for the following miracle; and that it might appear the more illuſtrious and marvellous: *for he himſelf knew what he would do*; Chriſt had determined to work a miracle, and feed the large number of people that were with him, with that ſmall proviſion they had among them; and being God omniſcient, he knew that he was able to do it, and that he was determined to do it, and it would be done; but he was willing firſt to try the faith of his apoſtles.

Ver. 7. *Philip anſwered him*, &c.] Very quick and ſhort, and in a carnal and unbelieving way: *two hundred penny worth of bread is not ſufficient for them.* Two hundred pence, or *Roman denarii*, which may be here meant, amount to ſix pound five ſhillings of our money; and this ſum is mentioned, becauſe it might be the whole ſtock that was in the bag, or that Chriſt and his diſciples had; or becauſe this was a round ſum, much in uſe among the *Jews*; ſee the note on *Mark* vi. 37. Or this may be ſaid by *Philip*, to ſhow how impracticable it was to provide for ſuch a company; that ſuppoſing they had two hundred pence to lay out in this way; though where ſhould they have that, he ſuggeſts? yet if they had it, as much bread as that would purchaſe, would not be ſufficient: *that every one of them might take a little*; it would be ſo far from giving them a meal, or proper refreſhment, that every one could not have a ſmall bit to taſte of, or in the leaſt to ſtay or blunt his appetite: a penny with the *Jews*, would buy as much bread as would ſerve ten men; ſo that two hundred pence, would buy bread enough for two thouſand men; but here were three thouſand more, beſides women and children, who could not have been provided for with ſuch a ſum of money.

Ver. 8. *One of his diſciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother*, &c.] Who alſo, and his brother *Peter*, were of *Bethſaida*, as well as *Philip*, and was a diſciple of Chriſt's; he hearing what Chriſt ſaid to *Philip*, and what anſwer he returned, *ſaith unto him*; to Chriſt, with but little more faith than *Philip*, if any.

Ver. 9. *There is a lad here*, &c.] Who either belonged to Chriſt and his diſciples, and was employed to carry their proviſions for them; which if ſo, ſhews how meanly Chriſt and his diſciples lived; or he belonged to ſome in the multitude; or rather he came here to ſell what he had got: *which hath five barley loaves.* The land of *Canaan* was a land of barley, as well as wheat, *Deut.* viii. 8. this ſort of grain, grew there in plenty, and was in much uſe; the *Jews* had a barley harveſt, *Ruth* i. 22. which was at the time of the paſſover; for on the ſecond day after the paſſover, the ſheaf of the firſtfruits was waved before the Lord, which was of barley; hence the *Targumiſt* on the place juſt cited, paraphraſes it thus; "they came to *Bethlehem* in the beginning of the paſſover, and on the day the children of *Iſrael* began to reap the ſheaf of the wave-offering, which was of barley." And it was now about the time of the paſſover, as appears from ver. 4. and had it been quite the time, and the barley ſheaf had been waved, it might have been thought that theſe loaves were made of the new barley; but though barley was in uſe for bread among the *Jews*, as is evident, from the mention that is made of barley loaves and cakes, 2 *Kings* iv. 42. *Judges* vii. 13. yet it was bread of the coarſeſt ſort, and what the meaner ſort of people eat; ſee *Ezek.* iv. 12. Yea, barley was uſed for food for horſes and dromedaries, 1 *Kings* iv. 28. and ſince therefore theſe loaves were, if not deſigned for the uſe of Chriſt and his twelve apoſtles, yet for ſome of his followers, and which they all eat of; it is an inſtance of the meanneſs and poverty of them: but however, they had better bread than this, even the bread of life, which is afterwards largely treated of in this chapter, which ſome of them at leaſt eat of; and as our countryman Mr. *Dod* uſed to ſay, "brown bread and the Goſpel, are good fare:" and it may be further obſerved, that the number of theſe loaves were but few; there were but *five* of them, for *five thouſand* perſons; and theſe don't ſeem to be very large ones, ſince one lad was able to carry them; and indeed, theſe loaves were no other than cakes, in which form they uſed to be made: *and two ſmall fiſhes*; there were but *two*, and theſe *ſmall*; it is amazing, that five thouſand perſons ſhould every one have ſomething of them, and enough: theſe fiſhes, ſeem to be what the *Jews* [5] call, מוניני, and which the *Gloſs* interprets *ſmall fiſhes*; and by the word which is uſed of them, they ſeem to be ſalted, or pickled fiſhes, and ſuch it is very probable theſe were; *Nonnus* calls them, ἰχθυας ὀπταλέας, *fiſhes which were broiled*; or perhaps dried in the ſun; ſee *Luke* xxiv. 43. *But what are they among ſo many?* every one cannot poſſibly have a taſte, much leſs any refreſhment, ſtill leſs a meal.

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[b] T. Bab. Peſach. fol. 6. 1. Maimon. & Bartenora in Miſn. Shekalim, c. 3. §. 1.

Ver. 10. *Jeſus ſaid, make the men ſit down*, &c.] The *Syriac* verſion reads, *all the men*; and the *Perſic* verſion, *all the people*; men, women, and children: Chriſt, without reproving his diſciples for their unbelief, ordered them directly to place the people upon the ground, and ſeat them in rows by hundreds and by fifties, in a rank and company, as perſons about to take a meal: *now there was much graſs in the place*; at the bottom of the mountain; and it was green, as one of the Evangeliſts obſerves, it being the ſpring of the year, and was very commodious to ſit down upon: *ſo the men ſat down, in number about five thouſand*; beſides women and children, *Matt.* xiv. 21. ſo that there was but one loaf for more than a thouſand perſons.

Ver. 11. *And Jeſus took the loaves*, &c.] Into his hands, as alſo the fiſhes, in order to feed the multitude with them: *and when he had given thanks*; for them, and bleſſed them, or implored a bleſſing on them, that they might be nouriſhing to the bodies of men, as was his uſual manner, and which is an example to us; *he diſtributed to the diſciples, and the diſciples to them that were ſat down*. The *Vulgate Latin*, and all the *Oriental* verſions, only read, *he diſtributed to them that were ſat down*; but it was not by his own hands, but by the means of the diſciples, who received from him, and gave it to them; ſo that the ſenſe is the ſame: *and likewiſe of the fiſhes, as much as they would*; that is, they had as much, both of the bread and of the fiſhes, diſtributed to them, and which they took and eat, as they choſe: in ſome printed copies it is read, *as much as he would*, and ſo the *Perſic* verſion; that is, as much as *Jeſus* would; but the former is the true reading, and makes the miracle more illuſtrious.

Ver. 12. *When they were filled*, &c.] Had not only eaten, but had made a full meal; and were thoroughly ſatisfied, having eat as much as they could, or choſe to eat: *he ſaid unto his diſciples, gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be loſt*; this he ſaid, partly that the truth, reality, and greatneſs of the miracle might be clearly diſcerned; and partly, to teach frugality, that in the midſt of abundance, care be taken that nothing be loſt, of the good things which God gives; and which may be uſeful to other perſons, or at another time.

Ver. 13. *Therefore they gathered* them *together*, &c.] The ſeveral broken bits of bread, which lay about upon the graſs, which the people had left, after they had been ſufficiently refreſhed: *and filled twelve baſkets*; every diſciple had a baſket filled: *with the fragments of the five barley loaves*; and it may be of the fiſhes alſo: *which remained over and above unto them that had eaten*; ſuch a marvellous increaſe were there, through the power of Chriſt going along with them; inſomuch that they multiplied to ſuch a degree, either in the hands of the diſtributers, or of the eaters.

Ver. 14. *Then thoſe men*, &c.] The five thouſand men, who had been fed with the loaves and fiſhes: *when they had ſeen the miracle that Jeſus did*; in feeding ſo many of them, with ſo ſmall a quantity of food; in multiplying the proviſion in ſuch a prodigious manner, that after they had eat to the full, ſo many baſkets of fragments were taken up: *ſaid, this is of a truth that prophet that ſhould come into the world*; meaning that prophet, that *Moſes* ſpoke of, in *Deut.* xviii. 15. for the ancient *Jews* underſtood this paſſage of the Meſſiah, though the modern ones apply it to others; ſee the note on *Acts* iii. 22. And theſe men concluded that Jeſus was that prophet, or the true Meſſiah, from the miracle he wrought; in which he appeared, not only to be like to *Moſes*, but greater than he.

Ver. 15. *When Jeſus therefore perceived*, &c.] As being the omniſcient God, who knew their hearts, and the ſecret thoughts and purpoſes of them; or as man, underſtood by their words and geſtures: *that they would come and take him by force, and make him a king*; that they had *determined*, as the *Arabic* verſion renders it; or *had it in their mind*, as the *Perſic*; to gather about him as one man, and ſeize him in a violent manner, whether he would or no; and proclaim him the king Meſſiah; place him at the head of them, to deliver the nation from the *Roman* yoke, and ſet up a temporal kingdom, in which they might hope for great ſecular advantages: and they might the rather be induced to take ſuch a ſtep, ſince by this miracle, they could not doubt of his being able to ſupport ſuch an army of men, and to ſucceed in the enterprize; for he that could do this, what was it he could not do? but, *he departed again into a mountain, himſelf alone*; he left the company directly, upon this reſolution of theirs, and even took not his diſciples with him, who were in the ſame way of thinking about a temporal kingdom, as the people, and might encourage them in this undertaking: the mountain Chriſt went into, very probably was the ſame he went up to before; the reaſons of his departure, were to prevent the attempt; to ſhow that his kingdom was not of this world; to teach his followers to forſake the honours and riches of this world, for his ſake; and to let them know, that thoſe who ſought only for a temporal redeemer, were unworthy of his preſence: and alſo he went away alone, for the ſake of ſecret retirement, and private prayer; and it may be chiefly, that he prayed that God would open the minds of theſe men, and particularly the diſciples; that they might be convinced of their miſtaken notions of him as a temporal prince: ſome copies add, *and he prayed there*; the *Syriac*, *Ethiopic*, and *Perſic* verſions leave out the word *again*; and the latter, contrary to all others renders it, *Chriſt departed from the mountain alone*.

Ver. 16. *And when even was* now *come*, &c.] The laſt of the evenings, when night was coming on; for the firſt of the evenings took place, before they ſat down to eat, when the above miracle was wrought; ſee *Matt.* xiv. 15, 23. *His diſciples went down unto the ſea*; of *Galilee*, or *Tiberias*, to the ſea-ſide; and this was by the order, and even conſtraint of Chriſt, who would have them go before him, that he might be clear of the multitude, and have an opportunity for ſolitary prayer, *Matt.* xiv. 24. *Mark* vi. 45. ſee the notes there.

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[5] T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 60. 2. & Sanhedrin, fol. 49. 1.

Ver. 17. *And entered into a ſhip*, &c.] In which they came, and was waiting for them; or into another: *and went over the ſea towards Capernaum*; ſteered their courſe from *Bethſaida*, where they took ſhipping over the ſea of *Galilee*; at leaſt over one part of it, a creek or bay of it, as they intended, towards the city of *Capernaum*, which lay over-againſt *Bethſaida*: *and it was now dark*; quite night, which made their voyage more uncomfortable, eſpecially as it afterwards was tempeſtuous: but the worſt of all was, *and Jeſus was not come to them*; as they expected, and therefore were obliged to ſet ſail and go without him.

Ver. 18. *And the ſea aroſe*, &c.] Swelled, and was tumultuous and raging; the waves mounted up, and toſſed the ſhip to and fro: *by reaſon of a great wind that blew*; which agitated the waters of the ſea, and lifted up the waves; which ſtorm ſeems to have aroſe after they had ſet ſail, and were got into the midſt of the ſea.

Ver. 19. *So when they had rowed*, &c.] For the wind being contrary, they could not make uſe of their ſails, but betook themſelves to their oars, and by that means got *about five and twenty, or thirty furlongs*; which were three or four miles, or little more than a league; no farther had they got, though they had been rowing from the time it was dark, to the fourth watch, which was after three o'clock in the morning; all this while they had been toſſed in the ſea: *they ſaw Jeſus walking on the ſea*; ſee the notes on *Matt.* xiv. 25, 26, 29. *And drawing nigh unto the ſhip*; though *Mark* ſays, *he would have paſſed by them*; that is, he ſeemed as if he would, but his intention was to come to them, and ſave them from periſhing, as he did: *and they were afraid*; that he was a ſpirit, ſome nocturnal apparition, or dæmon, in an human form; ſee the note on *Matt.* xiv. 26.

Ver. 20. *But he ſaith to them, it is I, be not afraid.*] See the note on *Matt.* xiv. 27.

Ver. 21. *Then they willingly received him into the ſhip*, &c.] When they knew who he was; and eſpecially he was the more welcome, as they were in diſtreſs; and he able, as they well knew, to help them: *and immediately the ſhip was at the land whither they went*; which was done, as *Nonnus* obſerves, by a divine motion; for not only the wind ceaſed, but another miracle was wrought; the ſhip was in an inſtant at the place, whither they intended to go.

Ver. 22. *The day following*, &c.] The day after that, in which the miracle of feeding five thouſand men with five loaves and two fiſhes; the morning after the diſciples had had ſuch a bad voyage: *when the people which ſtood on the other ſide of the ſea*; from that in which the diſciples now were, being landed at *Capernaum*; that is, they ſtood on that ſide, or ſhore, where they took ſhipping, near *Bethſaida* and *Tiberias*: here, after they were diſmiſſed by Chriſt, they ſtood all night, waiting for boats to carry them over; or rather, knowing that Chriſt was not gone with his diſciples, they continued, hoping to meet with him in the morning, and enjoy ſome more advantage by him: for they *ſaw that there was none other boat there, ſave that one whereinto his diſciples were entered, and that Jeſus went not with his diſciples into the boat, but that his diſciples were gone away alone*; from whence they concluded, that ſince there was only that boat, and *Jeſus* did not go into it, but that the diſciples went off without him, that he muſt be therefore ſomewhere on ſhore, and not far off, and they hoped to find him in the morning; wherefore it was very ſurprizing to them, when they found him at *Capernaum*, when, and how he got there.

Ver. 23. *Howbeit there came other boats from Tiberias*, &c.] A city by the ſea-ſide, built by *Herod*, and called ſo in honour of *Tiberius Cæſar*; though the *Jews* give a different etymology of it; they ſay, it is the ſame with *Rakkath*, *Joſh.* xix. 35. and that it was a fortified place from the days of *Joſhua*, and that on one ſide, ימה חומתה, *the ſea was its wall*[d]: and ſo *Jonathan* the *Targumiſt* on *Deut.* iii. 17. ſays, that *Tiberias* was near the ſea of ſalt: this place became famous, for many of the wiſe men that lived here; here was a famous univerſity, and here the *Miſna* and *Jeruſalem Talmud* were written; and here the *Sanhedrim* ſat, after it removed from *Jeruſalem*: *nigh unto the place where they did eat bread*; where the day before they had been fed in ſo miraculous a manner: the meaning is, either that *Tiberias* was near to the place where the miracle was wrought, or the boats from *Tiberias* came near that place, and both were true; ſo that theſe men that were waiting by the ſea-ſide, had an opportunity of going over in theſe boats in queſt of Chriſt, to whom they were now become greatly attached, by feeding them in ſo wonderful a manner: *after that the Lord had given thanks*; which clauſe is added to ſhew, that the multiplication of the bread, and the refreſhment the men had by it, were owing to the power of Chriſt, and his bleſſing it; though this is wanting in *Beza*'s moſt ancient copy, and in ſome others.

Ver. 24. *When the people therefore ſaw that Jeſus was not there*, &c.] At the ſea-ſide, at the uſual place of taking boat; and having reaſon to think he was not on that ſide of the lake, but was gone from thence: *neither his diſciples*; when they found that there were neither of them there, but both were gone, and conſidering that it was to no purpoſe for them to ſtay there: *they alſo took ſhipping, and came to Capernaum ſeeking Jeſus*; they might obſerve, that the diſciples ſteered their courſe towards this place; and they knew that was a place of general reſort with Chriſt and his diſciples; therefore they took boat and came directly thither, and ſought for him in the ſynagogue, it being on a day in which the people uſed to go thither; and where Chriſt, as often as he had opportunity, attended.

Ver. 25. *And when they had found him on the other ſide of the ſea*, &c.] At *Capernaum*, and in the ſynagogue there; ſee ver. 59. *They ſaid unto him, Rabbi*; or *maſter*, a name now much in uſe with the *Jewiſh* doctors, and by which they delighted to be called; and theſe men being convinced by the miracle, that Chriſt was that prophet that ſhould come, honour him with this title, ſaying, *when cameſt thou hither?* ſince he did not go with his diſciples, and there was no other boat that went off the night before, but that in which they went; and they came over in the firſt that came out that morning, and he did not come in any of them; and therefore it was amazing to them, both when and how he came, ſince they could not deviſe how he ſhould get there by ſhipping, and alſo how he ſhould ſo ſoon get there a foot.

Ver. 26. *Jeſus anſwered them and ſaid*, &c.] Not by replying to their queſtion, or giving a direct anſwer to that, which he could have done, by telling them that he walked upon the water, and found his diſciples in great diſtreſs, and delivered them, and came early that morning with them to the land of *Geneſaret*, and ſo to *Capernaum:* but not willing to gratify their curioſity; and knowing from what principles, and with what views they ſought after him, and followed him; and willing to let them know that he knew them, being the ſearcher of hearts, and to reprove them for them, thus addreſſed them: *verily verily I ſay unto you*; this is a certain truth, and was full well known to Chriſt, and what their own conſciences muſt atteſt: *ye ſeek me not becauſe ye ſaw the miracles*; of feeding ſo large a number with ſo ſmall a quantity of food, and of healing them that needed it, *Luke* ix. 11. Not but that they did regard the miracles of Chriſt, and concluded from thence he muſt be that prophet that was to come, and were for taking him by force, and proclaiming him king; but then they had a greater reſpect to their own worldly intereſt, and their carnal appetites, than to theſe, as follows: *but becauſe ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled*; they regarded their own bellies more than the honour and glory of Chriſt, and even than the good of their immortal ſouls, and the ſpiritual and eternal ſalvation of them: and it is to be feared that this is the caſe of too many who make a profeſſion of religion; their view being their own worldly advantages, and not the ſpiritual and everlaſting good of their ſouls, and the real intereſt of a redeemer: hence the following advice,

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[d] T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 5. 2. & Hieroſ. Megilla, fol. 70. 1.

Ver. 27. *Labour not for the meat which periſheth*, &c.] Meaning either food for the body, which is periſhing; its virtue is periſhing; man cannot live by it alone, nor does it laſt long; its ſubſtance is periſhing; it is received into the ſtomach, and there digeſted; it goes into the belly, and is caſt out into the draught; and that which it ſupports, for a while, is periſhing; and both the one, and the other, ſhall be deſtroyed; even meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: now, though it becomes men to work for their bread, to provide it for themſelves and families; yet they ſhould not be anxiouſly ſolicitous about it, or labour only for that, and prefer it to ſpiritual food: or elſe food for the mind is meant, and that either in a ſenſual way, as ſinful luſt and pleaſures, the honours of this world, and the riches of it; which are ſweet morſels, tho' bread of deceit, to carnal minds, and which they labour hard for: or, in a religious way, as ſuperſtition, will worſhip, external works of righteouſneſs, in order to pleaſe God, and obtain eternal life and ſalvation; which to labour for in ſuch a way, is to ſpend money for that which is not bread, and labour for that which profiteth not; and in each of theſe ways were theſe *Jews* labouring for periſhing food, from which Chriſt diſſuades them: *but for that which endureth unto everlaſting life*; either the grace of Chriſt, which, as meat, is quickning and refreſhing, ſtrengthening and ſupporting, and which cauſes nouriſhment and growth, and by virtue of which work is done; and this ſprings up unto everlaſting life, and is inſeparately connected with it; and particularly the bleſſings of grace, ſuch as ſanctification, adoption, pardon, and juſtification: or the Goſpel, and the ordinances of it, which are refreſhing, and ſtrengthening, and by which the ſaints are nouriſhed up unto everlaſting life; or rather the fleſh of Chriſt eaten, in a ſpiritual ſenſe, by faith, of which Chriſt ſo largely diſcourſes in the following part of the chapter: *which the Son of man ſhall give unto you*; meaning either everlaſting life, which is in Chriſt's gift, and is a free-grace gift of his; or elſe the meat which endures unto it: for tho' it is to be laboured for, not ſo as to prepare it, or to purchaſe it, but by aſking for it in prayer, and by attending on Ordinances, and exerciſing faith on Chriſt; yet it is his gift, and he gives it freely; grace, and the bleſſings of it, are freely given by him, and ſo are the Goſpel and its Ordinances; and alſo his own fleſh, which is firſt given by him, by way of ſacrifice, in the room, and ſtead of his people, and for the life of them, ver. 51. and then it is given unto them to feed upon ſpiritually by faith, and which is here deſigned: *for him hath God the father ſealed*; deſignated and appointed to be the Saviour, and redeemer of his people, and has ſent, authorized, and commiſſioned him as ſuch; and has made him known, and approved of him, by the deſcent of the Spirit on him, and by a voice from heaven, declaring him his beloved Son; and has confirmed him to be the Meſſiah by the miraculous works he gave him to finiſh; for all which ſeveral uſes ſeals are, as to diſtinguiſh one thing from another, to render any thing authentic, to point it out, or to confirm it.

Ver. 28. *Then ſaid they unto him*, &c.] Underſtanding by what he ſaid, that they muſt labour and work, tho' not for periſhing food, yet for durable food; and as they imagined, in order to obtain eternal life by working: *what ſhall we do that we might work the works of God?* Such as are agreeable to his will, are acceptable to him, and well-pleaſing in his ſight: they ſeem to intimate, as if they deſired to know whether there were any other works of this kind, than what *Moſes* had directed them to, or than they had done; and if there were, they ſuggeſt they would gladly do them; for this was the general caſt and complexion of this people; they were ſeeking for righteouſneſs, and life, not by faith, but, as it were, by the works of the law.

Ver. 29. *Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto them, this is the work of God*, &c.] The main and principal one, and which is well-pleaſing in his ſight; and without which it is impoſſible to pleaſe him; and without which no work whatever is a good work; and this is of the operation of God, which he himſelf works in men; it is not of themſelves, it is the pure gift of God: *that ye believe on him whom he hath ſent*; there are other works which are well-pleaſing to God, when rightly performed, but faith is the chief work, and others are only acceptable when done in the faith of Chriſt. This, as a principle, is purely God's work; as it is an act, or as it is exerciſed under the influence of divine grace, it is man's act: *that ye believe*; the object of it is Chriſt, as ſent by the father, as the mediator between God and men, as appointed by him to be the ſaviour and redeemer; and believing in Chriſt, is believing in God that ſent him. The *Jews* reduce all the ſix hundred and thirteen precepts of the law, for ſo many they ſay there are, to this one, the *juſt ſhall live by his faith*, *Hab.* ii. 4.[e]

Ver. 30. *They ſaid therefore unto him*, &c.] Seeing he propoſed believing in him as the grand work of God to be done, and what is moſt acceptable in his ſight: *what ſign ſheweſt thou then, that we may ſee and believe thee?* The people of the *Jews* were always requiring ſigns and wonders, and when they had one and another ſhewn them, they ſtill ſought for more, and were never ſatisfied; ſee *Matt.* xii. 39. and xvi. 1. Theſe men had lately ſeen various ſigns and miracles of Chriſt, as healing the ſick, and feeding five thouſand of them, and more, with five loaves, and two fiſhes; and tho' for the time preſent, theſe had ſome influence upon them, and they were ready to believe he was that prophet; yet now, at leaſt ſome of them, begin to retract, and ſignify, that unleſs ſome other, and greater ſigns were ſhewn, they ſhould not believe in him as the Meſſiah: *what doſt thou work?* more than others, or *Moſes*. They ſeem to make light of the miracle of the loaves, or at leaſt require ſome greater ſign and miracle, to engage their belief in him as the Meſſiah; and as they were lovers of their bellies, and expected dainties in the times of the Meſſiah, they ſeem to move for, and deſire miracles of that kind to be wrought; and which ſenſe the following words confirm.

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[e] T. Bab. Maccot, fol. 23. 2. & 24. 1.

Ver. 31. *Our fathers did eat manna in the wilderneſs*, &c.] Which was a ſort of food prepared by angels in the air, and rained down from thence about the tents of the *Iſraelites*; it was a ſmall round thing, as ſmall as the hoar-froſt on the ground; it was like a coriander ſeed, and the colour of it was the colour of bdellium: it was ſo called, either from מנה, *to prepare*, becauſe it was prepared, and got ready for the *Iſraelites*; or from the firſt words that were ſpoken upon ſight of it, מן הו, *what is it?* for they knew not what it was: and this the *Jewiſh* fathers fed upon all the while they were in the wilderneſs, 'till they came to *Canaan*'s land, and they only; it was food peculiar to them: *our fathers did eat*; and ſo the *Jews*[f] obſerve on thoſe words in *Exod.* xvi. 35. "*and the children of* "*Iſrael did eat manna forty years*; the children of "*Iſrael*, ולא אחרא, *and not another*. And the "children of *Iſrael* ſaw, and ſaid, what is it? and "not the reſt of the mixt multitude." Now theſe *Jews* object this miracle to Chriſt, and intimate, that he indeed had fed five thouſand of them with barley loaves, and fiſhes, for one meal; but their fathers, in the times of *Moſes*, to the number of ſix hundred thouſand, and more, were fed, and that with manna, very ſweet and delightful food, and for the ſpace of forty years; even all the while they were in the wilderneſs: and therefore, unleſs he wrought as great a miracle, or a greater than this, and that of the like kind, they ſhould not think fit to relinquiſh *Moſes*, and follow him; and in proof of what they ſaid, they produce ſcripture, *as it is written* in *Pſal.* lxxviii. 24, 25. or rather in *Exod.* xvi. 15. and perhaps both places may be reſpected: *he gave them bread from heaven to eat*; they leave out the word *Lord*, being willing it ſhould be underſtood of *Moſes*, to whom they aſcribed it, as appears from the following words of Chriſt, who denies that *Moſes* gave it; and add the phraſe *from heaven*, to ſet forth the excellent nature of it, which is taken from *Exod.* xvi. 4. where the manna, as here, is called *bread from heaven*.

Ver. 32. *Then Jeſus ſaid unto them, verily verily I ſay unto you*, &c.] It is truth, and may be depended on, whether it will be believed or no: *Moſes gave you not that bread from heaven*; in which Chriſt denies that that bread, or manna, did come from heaven; that is, from the higheſt heavens, only from the air, and was not ſuch celeſtial bread he after ſpeaks of, and which came down from the heaven of heavens: and moreover, he denies that *Moſes* gave them that bread; it was the Lord that gave them it, as is expreſly ſaid in the paſſage referred to, in the above citation. *Moſes* had no hand in it; he did not ſo much as pray for it, much leſs procure it, or prepare it: it was promiſed and prepared by God, and rained by him, and who directed to the gathering and uſe of it. This ſtands oppoſed to a notion of the *Jews*, that the manna was given by means of *Moſes*, for his ſake, and on account of his merits: for they ſay[g], "there aroſe up "three good providers, or paſtors for *Iſrael*, and they "are theſe, *Moſes*, and *Aaron*, and *Miriam*; and three "good gifts were given by their means, and they "are theſe, the well, the cloud, and the manna; "the well by the merits of *Miriam*; the pillar of "cloud by the merits of *Aaron*; מן בזכות משה, "*the manna, by the merits of Moſes*." This our Lord denies; and affirms, *but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven*: he not only gave the manna to the *Jewiſh* fathers, and not *Moſes*; but he alſo gives that bread which the manna was typical of, by which he means himſelf; who may be compared to *bread*, becauſe of the original of it, or the matter of it, of which it is made, wheat, he is called a corn of wheat, *John* xii. 24. and from its preparation for food, being threſhed, and winnowed, and ground, and kneaded, and baked; all which may expreſs the ſufferings and death of Chriſt, by which he becomes fit food for faith; and from its being the main part of human ſuſtenance, and from its nouriſhing and ſtrengthening nature, and from its being a means of maintaining and ſupporting life: and he may be called the *true* bread, becauſe he is the truth and ſubſtance of the types of him; the unleavened bread, eat at the paſſover, was typical of him, as he was free from ſin in nature and life, and from all error in doctrine; and ſo was the ſhew-bread a type of his interceſſion, and ſet forth the continuance of it, its efficacy and acceptance, of which the prieſts only ſhared; and ſo were the meat-offerings in the ſacrifices, which were offered up day by day; and particularly the manna, the bread from heaven, the *Jews* were now ſpeaking of: Chriſt was the truth of that type; that was but ſhadowy bread, Chriſt is the true bread, or the antitype of it in its name; whether it be derived from *manah*, to prepare, Chriſt being the bread of life, and ſalvation of God, prepared in the council and covenant of grace, and by his ſufferings and death before the face of all people; or from the words *man hu*, what is it? Chriſt being as little known by carnal men, as the manna was at firſt to the *Iſraelites*: and in its nature, kind, form, and quality; it was round in form, which might be expreſſive of the perfections of Chriſt, and particularly his eternity, being without beginning or end; it was white in colour, which may denote the purity and innocence of him; it was ſweet in taſte, as he, his fruits, his word, and ordinances, are to them that are born again; it was ſmall in quantity, which may ſet forth the meanneſs of Chriſt in his ſtate of humiliation: it was alſo typical of Chriſt in its uſefulneſs; it was ſufficient to ſupply a great multitude, and that for many years, as the fulneſs of grace in Chriſt is ſufficient for the whole family in heaven, and in earth, in time, and to all eternity; the *Iſraelites* all ſhared in it, and had all an equal portion of it; ſo all the people of God have an intereſt in Chriſt, and equally participate of the bleſſings of his grace, and ſhall enjoy the ſame eternal life and glory by him: one has neither more nor leſs than another; Chriſt is all in all, and made alike all things to them: and he may be called the bread *from heaven*, becauſe he came from thence, not by change of place, but by aſſumption of nature, even from the higheſt heavens, the third heaven,

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[f] Zohar in Exod. fol. 75. 2.

[g] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 9. 1. Seder Olam Rabba, p. 28.

ven, from whence the manna came not; he is the Lord from heaven, and is ſuch bread as has a virtue and tendency in it to nouriſh men for heaven, and is truly of a heavenly nature: and this is Chriſt's Father's gift, and is of pure grace, without any conſideration of works and merits in men. *Philo* the *Jew* ſays [h], the heavenly food of the ſoul, which is called *manna*, the divine Word diſtributes alike to all that aſk.

Ver. 33. *For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven*, &c.] In the way and manner juſt now mentioned: and which clearly points out Chriſt himſelf, who may be called *the bread of God*; to diſtinguiſh him from common bread, and to ſhew the excellency of him, and that he is of God's providing and giving, and which he would have his children feed upon: *and giveth life unto the world*; a ſpiritual life, which he is the author, ſupporter, and maintainer of; and eternal life, which he gives a right unto, and meetneſs for, and nouriſhes up unto; and this not to a few only, or to the *Iſraelites* only, but to the *Gentiles* alſo, and even to the whole world of God's elect: not indeed to every individual in the world, for all are not quickened now, nor ſhall inherit eternal life hereafter; but to all the people of God, in all parts of the world, and in all ages of time; of ſuch extenſive virtue and efficacy is Chriſt, the bread of God, in which he appears greatly ſuperior to that *manna* the *Jews* inſtance in.

Ver. 34. *Then ſaid they unto him*, &c.] At leaſt ſome of them: *Lord, evermore give us this bread*; that is ſo divine and heavenly, and has ſuch a quickening virtue in it: theſe words are ſaid by them either ſeriouſly, and to be underſtood of bread for their bodies, of which they imagined Chriſt was ſpeaking; and ſo ſprung from ignorance of his ſenſe; and from ſenſuality in them who followed him for the loaves; and from a covetous diſpoſition, being deſirous of being ſupplied with ſuch excellent food without charge; and from idleneſs, to ſave labour and pains in working for it; and from a vain deſire of the continuance of this earthly life, being willing to live for ever, and therefore would have this bread evermore; and from a groſs opinion of plenty and delicacy, of corporal food in the times of the Meſſiah; ſee the note on *Luke* xiv. 15. or elſe theſe words are ſpoken ironically, by way of deriſion, as if there was no ſuch bread; and if there was, that Chriſt could not give it. However, the words may be improved, when conſidered as a petition coming from, and ſuitable, to a ſenſible and enlightened ſoul; for ſuch who are ſenſible of their famiſhing condition by nature, and of their need of Chriſt, the bread of life, and whoſe taſte is changed, and have taſted how good this bread is, will earneſtly deſire always to be ſupplied with it, and to live upon it; for nothing is more grateful to them, and more nouriſhing and ſatiſfying to their ſouls; they are never weary of it; it is always new and delightful to them, and they always ſtand in need of it, and wait in the uſe of means and ordinances for it; and this has always an abiding, laſting virtue in it to feed their ſouls, and nouriſh them up to everlaſting life. *Joſephus* [i] ſays of the *manna*, which was a type of this bread, that there was ſuch a divine quality in it, that whoever taſted of it needed nothing elſe: and the *Jews* alſo ſay [k], that "in the manna were "all kinds of taſtes, and every one of the *Iſraelites* "taſted all that he deſired; for ſo it is written in "*Deut.* ii. 7. *theſe forty years the Lord thy God hath* "*been with thee, thou haſt lacked nothing*, or *not* "*wanted any thing*; what is any thing? when he "deſired to eat any thing, and ſaid with his mouth, "O that I had fat to eat, immediately there was "in his mouth the taſte of fat.——Young men "taſted the taſte of bread, old men the taſte of "honey, and children the taſte of oil." Yea, they ſay [l], "whoever deſired fleſh, he taſted it, and who"ever deſired fiſh, he taſted it, and whoever deſired "fowl, chicken, pheaſant, or pea-hen, ſo he taſted "whatever he deſired." And to this agrees what is ſaid in the apocryphal book of *Wiſdom*, ch. xvi. ver. 20, 21.——"Thou feddeſt thine own people "with angels food, and didſt ſend them from "heaven bread, prepared without their labour, "able to content every man's delight, and agree"ing to every taſte; for thy ſuſtenance (or manna) "declared thy ſweetneſs unto thy children, and "ſerving to the appetite of the eater, tempered "itſelf to every man's liking." All which muſt be underſtood of that pleaſure, ſatisfaction, and contentment which they had in it; for it was a very uncommon caſe to eat it, and live upon it as their common food for forty years together: and no doubt but there was ſomething remarkable in ſuiting it to their appetites, or in giving them appetites ſuitable to that, to feed upon it, and reliſh it for ſo long a time: twice indeed in that length of time we read they complained of it, ſaying, that they had nothing but this manna before their eyes, and their ſouls loathed it as light bread, *Numb.* xi. 6. and xxi. 5. and luſted after the fleſh, and the fiſh they had eat in *Egypt*. And ſo it is with ſome profeſſors of Chriſt, and his Goſpel; for there is a mixed multitude among them, as there was among the *Iſraelites*, who diſreliſh the preaching of Chriſt, and the truths of the Goſpel reſpecting his perſon, blood, and righteouſneſs, and ſalvation by him; they can't bear to have theſe things frequently inculcated and inſiſted upon; their ſouls are ready to loath them as light bread, and want to have ſomething elſe ſet before them more ſuitable to their carnal appetites: but to ſuch who are true believers in Chriſt, who have taſted that the Lord is gracious, Chriſt, the true manna, and bread of God, is all things to them; nor do they deſire any other: they taſte every thing that is delightful, and find every thing that is nouriſhing in him.

Ver. 35. *And Jeſus ſaid unto them, I am the bread of life*, &c.] Chriſt is ſo called, becauſe he gives life to dead ſinners: men in a ſtate of nature are dead in treſpaſſes and ſins; and whatever they feed upon tends to death; Chriſt, the true bread, only gives life, which is conveyed by the word, and made effectual by the Spirit: and becauſe he ſupports and maintains the life he gives; it is not in the power of a believer to ſupport the ſpiritual life he has; nor can he live on any thing ſhort of Chriſt; and there's enough in Chriſt for him to live upon: and becauſe he quickens, and makes the ſaints lively in the exerciſe of grace, and diſcharge of duty, and renews their ſpiritual ſtrength, and ſecures for them eternal life. *He that cometh to me*; not corporally to hear him preach, or preached, or merely to his ordinances, to baptiſm, or the Lord's table; but ſo as to believe in him, feed, and live upon him, as the next clauſe explains it: *and he that believeth on me ſhall never thirſt*; and which is owing,

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[h] Quis rer. divin. hæreſ. p. 507.
[i] Antiq. l. 3. c. 1. §. 6.
[k] Shemot Rabba, §. 25. fol. 108. 4.
[l] Bemidbar Rabba, §. 7. fol. 188. 1.

not to the power and will of man, but to divine teachings, and the powerful drawings of the efficacious grace of God; ſee ver. 44, 45. Now of ſuch it is ſaid, that they ſhall never hunger and thirſt; which is true of them in this life, tho' not to be underſtood as if there were no ſinful deſires in them; much leſs, that there are no ſpiritual hungerings and thirſtings after they are come to Chriſt; but that they ſhall not deſire any other food but Chriſt; they ſhall be ſatisfied with him; nor ſhall they hereafter be in a ſtarving and famiſhing condition, or want any good thing: and in the other world there will be no deſires after that which is ſinful, nor indeed after outward ordinances, in order to enjoy communion with God in them, as now, for they will then be needleſs; nor ſhall they have any uneaſy deſires after Chriſt, and his grace, and the enjoyment of him, ſince he will be all in all to them.

Ver. 36. *But I ſaid unto you*, &c.] The ſubſtance of what follows in ver. 26. tho' the *Perſic* and *Ethiopic* verſions render it, *I ſay unto you*; and ſo refers not to any thing before ſaid, but to what he was about to ſay: *that ye alſo have ſeen me, and believe not*; that is, they had not only ſeen him in perſon, which many kings, prophets, and righteous men had deſired, but not enjoyed, yet nevertheleſs believed; but they had ſeen his miracles, and had ſhared in the advantages of them, being healed, and fed corporally by him, and yet believed not in him as the ſpiritual ſaviour and redeemer of their ſouls; nor did they come to him in a ſpiritual way, for eternal life and ſalvation.

Ver. 37. *All that the Father giveth me*, &c.] The *all* deſign not the apoſtles only, who were given to Chriſt as ſuch; for theſe did not all, in a ſpiritual manner, come to him, and believe in him; one of them was a devil, and the ſon of perdition; much leſs every individual of mankind: theſe are, in ſome ſenſe, given to Chriſt to ſubſerve ſome ends of his mediatorial kingdom, and are ſubject to his power and controul, but do not come to him, and believe in him: but the whole body of the elect are here meant, who, when they were choſen by God the Father, were given and put into the hands of Chriſt, as his ſeed, his ſpouſe, his ſheep, his portion, and inheritance, and to be ſaved by him with an everlaſting ſalvation; which is an inſtance of love and care on the Father's part, to give them to Chriſt; and of grace and condeſcenſion in him to receive them, and take the care of them; and of diſtinguiſhing goodneſs to them: and tho' Chriſt here expreſſes this act of his Father's in the preſent tenſe, *giveth*, perhaps to ſignify the continuance and unchangeableneſs of it; yet he delivers it in the paſt tenſe, in ver. 39. *hath given*; and ſo all the *Oriental* verſions render it here. And it certainly reſpects an act of God, antecedent to coming to Chriſt, and believing in him, which is a fruit and effect of electing love, as is clear from what follows: *ſhall come unto me*; ſuch who are given to Chriſt in eternal election, and in the everlaſting covenant of grace, ſhall, and do, in time, come to Chriſt, and believe in him to the ſaving of their ſouls; which is not to be aſcribed to any power and will in them, but to the power and grace of God. It is not here ſaid, that ſuch who are given to Chriſt have a *power* to come to him, or *may* come if they will, but they *ſhall* come; efficacious grace will bring them to Chriſt, as poor periſhing ſinners, to venture on him for life and ſalvation: *and him that cometh to me I will in no wiſe caſt out*; ſuch who come to Chriſt in a ſpiritual manner, and are brought to believe in him truly and really, he not only receives kindly, but keeps and preſerves them by his power, and will not caſt them out, or thruſt them from him into perdition: the words are very ſtrongly and emphatically expreſſed in the original, *I will not, not*, or *never, never, caſt out without*; or caſt out of doors. Chriſt will never caſt them out of his affections; nor out of his arms; nor out of that family that is named of him; nor out of, and from his church, which is his body, and of which they are members; nor out of a ſtate of juſtification and ſalvation; and therefore they ſhall never periſh, but have everlaſting life. The three glorious doctrines of grace, of eternal election, efficacious grace in converſion, and the final perſeverance of the ſaints, are clearly contained in theſe words.

Ver. 38. *For I came down from heaven*, &c.] Not by change of place, or local motion; for Chriſt is the immenſe, infinite, and omnipreſent God, and can't be ſaid properly to move from place to place; for he fills all places, even heaven and earth with his preſence, and was in heaven as the Son of God, at the ſame time he was here on earth as the ſon of man: wherefore this muſt be underſtood in a manner becoming his proper deity, his divine Sonſhip, and perſonality: this deſcent was by the aſſumption of the human nature into union with his divine perſon, which was an inſtance of amazing grace and condeſcenſion. The *Jew* [m] objects to this, and ſays, "if this reſpects the deſcent " of the ſoul, the ſoul of every man deſcended " from thence; but if it reſpects the body, the " reſt of the Evangeliſts contradict his words, particularly *Luke*, when he ſays, ch. ii. 7. that his " mother brought him forth at *Bethlehem*." But this deſcent regards neither his ſoul nor body, but his divine perſon, which always was in heaven, and not any local deſcent of that; but, as before obſerved, an aſſumption of human nature, which he took of the virgin on earth; and ſo there is no contradiction between the Evangeliſts; nor is deſcent from heaven unſuitable to Chriſt as a divine perſon, ſince it is aſcribed to God, *Gen.* xi. 7. and xviii. 21. and if God may be ſaid to go down from heaven by ſome diſplay of his power, and intimation of his preſence, Chriſt may be ſaid to deſcend from heaven by that marvellous work of his, taking upon him our nature, and walking up and down on earth in the form of a ſervant; and which was done with this view, as he ſays, *not to do mine own will, but the will of him that ſent me*; that is, not to do his own will, as ſeparate from his Father's, and much leſs as contrary to it; otherwiſe he did come to do his own will, which, as God, was the ſame with his Father's, he being one with him in nature, and ſo in power and will; and tho' his will, as man, was diſtinct from his Father's, yet not repugnant, but reſigned unto it: and this will he came to do, was to preach the Goſpel, fulfil the law, work miracles, and obtain the eternal redemption and ſalvation of his people. What the above *Jewiſh* writer [n] objects to this part of the text is of very little moment: whoſe words are; "moreover, what he ſays, *not to do mine own will, but* " *the will of him that ſent me*, ſhews, that he that " ſent, is not one, and the ſame, with him that is " ſent, ſeeing the will of him that is ſent, is not " as the will of him that ſends." It is readily granted that they are not one and the ſame perſon; they are two diſtinct perſons, which ſending, and being ſent, do clearly ſhew; but then they are one in nature, tho' diſtinct in perſon, and they agree in will and work. Chriſt came not to do any will of his own different from that of his Father's; nor do theſe words imply a difference of wills in them, much leſs a contrariety in them, but rather the ſameneſs of them.

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[m] R. Iſaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 44. p. 434.

[n] Ib.

Ver. 39. *And this is the Father's will which hath ſent me*, &c.] This explains both who he was that ſent him; the Father of him, and of his people; whoſe ſending of him does not ſuppoſe any change of place, or inequality between them, or diſreſpect unto him, or compulſion of him, but agreement between them, and love to the perſons on whoſe account he was ſent; and alſo what is the will he came to do, and is what was declared by him to Chriſt, when he gave the elect to him: for this expreſſes his ſecret will in the council and covenant of grace, *that of all which he hath given me, I ſhould loſe nothing*; that is, that of all the elect which were given to Chriſt by his Father, in eternal election, he ſhould not loſe any one of them, not the meaneſt among them, nor any thing of theirs, their grace, or glory, or any thing belonging to them, either to their ſouls or bodies, and particularly the latter: *but ſhould raiſe it up again at the laſt day*; even every part of their bodies, and every duſt belonging to them; their bodies being given to Chriſt, and redeemed by his blood, as well as their ſouls: ſo the *Jews* [o], ſpeaking of the reſurrection, and making mention of that paſſage in *Numb.* xxiii. 10. *who ſhall count the duſt of Jacob?* add, "and he (*i. e.* "God) ſhall order it all, ולא יתאביד כלום, *and* "*not any thing ſhall be loſt*, but all ſhall riſe again; "for, lo, it is ſaid, *Dan.* xii. 2. *and many of them* "*that ſleep in the duſt*, &c."

Ver. 40. *And this is the will of him that ſent me*, &c.] The *Vulgate Latin* adds, *of my Father*; and all the *Oriental* verſions read only, *and this is the will of my Father*; this is his declared, his revealed will in the Goſpel, which the ſons of men are made acquainted with, as the other was his ſecret will, which was only known to the Son till he diſcovered it. *That every one which ſeeth the Son, and believeth on him*; who ſo ſees him as to believe in him; for this is not to be underſtood of a corporal ſight of Chriſt, or of a mere ſpeculative knowledge of him, or hiſtorical faith in him; for it is not ſo to ſee him, as merely to believe what he is, the Son of God, the Meſſiah and Saviour of the world, or what he ſays, but to truſt in him for righteouſneſs, life, and happineſs. Men are by nature blind, their eyes are ſhut to all that is ſpiritually good: it is the Spirit of God that opens blind eyes, and illuminates the underſtanding; and in his light men ſee not only themſelves, their ſin, and want of righteouſneſs, and their loſt ſtate and condition, but Chriſt, and a beauty, glory, and excellency in him, ability and willingneſs to ſave, a ſuitableneſs in him for them, and a fulneſs of all grace; they ſee righteouſneſs, peace, pardon, cleanſing, wiſdom, ſtrength, grace, life, and ſalvation, and go out of themſelves to him for all: and ſuch a ſight, tho' it may be but glimmering, is ſaving, and is ſelf-abaſing, ſoul-rejoicing, ſurprizing, and transforming; is attended with certainty, reality, and evidence, and is a foretaſte of glory; for it is the will of God, and not man, of a gracious Father, of an unchangeable and eternal being, whoſe will cannot be reſiſted, and made void, that ſuch *may have everlaſting life*; which will be a life of glory, and will conſiſt in poſſeſſing glory both in ſoul and body; in beholding glory, the glory of one another, the glory of angels, the glory of divine truths, and myſterious providences, the glory of the divine perfections, and of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; and it will be a life of perfection, of perfect knowledge, holineſs, obedience, love, peace, and joy; a life free from all the miſeries and inconveniencies of this, both in a natural and ſpiritual ſenſe; a life of pleaſure, and which will laſt for ever: to which Chriſt adds, *and I will raiſe him up at the laſt day*; Chriſt will be the efficient cauſe, as well as he is the exemplar, the earneſt, and firſt-fruits of the reſurrection of the dead: he will indeed raiſe all the dead by his power, but the ſaints particularly, by virtue of union to him, as the members of his body, and in the firſt place; and the very ſame ſhall riſe, and with the ſame numerical body, that were given to him, and believe in him: and this will be at the laſt of the laſt days, at the end of all things; and is mentioned to ſhow, that length of time will not hinder the reſurrection of the dead, and in oppoſition to a *Jewiſh* notion, that the reſurrection of the dead would be at the Meſſiah's coming: it will be at his ſecond coming, but was not to be at his firſt; there was indeed then a reſurrection of ſome particular perſons, but not a general one of all the ſaints: that the *Jews* expect the reſurrection of the dead when the Meſſiah comes, appears from their *Targums*, *Talmuds*, and other writers; ſo the *Targumiſt* on *Hoſ.* xiv. 8. "They ſhall be gathered "from their captivity, they ſhall ſit under the "ſhadow of their Meſſiah, *and the dead ſhall live*, "and good ſhall be multiplied in the land." And in the *Talmud* [p] it is ſaid, "the holy, bleſſed God "will quicken the righteous, and they ſhall not "return to their duſt." The *Gloſs* upon it is, "the holy, bleſſed God will quicken them *in the* "*days of* the Meſſiah." And ſo the land of the living is ſaid to be, "the land, whoſe dead live "firſt in the days of the Meſſiah [q]." And hence *R. Jeremiah* deſired to be buried with his clothes, and ſhoes on, and ſtaff in his hand, that when the Meſſiah came, he might be ready [r]; with which agree others of the more modern writers: ſo *Kimchi* on *Iſ.* lxvi. 5. "They ſhall live at the reſurrec-"tion of the dead, in the days of the Meſſiah." And the ſame writer on *Jer.* xxiii. 20. obſerves it is ſaid, "*ye* ſhall conſider, and not *they* ſhall con-"ſider; which intimates the "reſurrection of the "dead in the days of the Meſſiah." And ſays *Aben Ezra* on *Dan.* xii. 2. "The righteous which "die in captivity ſhall live, when the redeemer "comes;" tho' ſome of their writers differ in this point, and will not allow the days of the Meſſiah, and the reſurrection of the dead, to be one and the ſame [s].

Ver. 41. *The Jews then murmured at him*, &c.] When they found that he ſpoke of himſelf as the true bread, the bread of God, and bread of life, and as deſcending from heaven; and which was to be fed upon in a ſpiritual manner by faith, which they were ignorant of, and had no deſire unto: and thus being diſappointed of the delicious corporal food they expected, they grew uneaſy and diſpleaſed, becauſe he ſaid *I am the bread which came down from heaven*; for though, as yet, he had not ſaid this in ſo many words, and in this direct form, as afterwards, in ver. 51. yet he had ſaid what amounted to it, and which might be eaſily gathered from ver. 35, 38. The *Vulgate Latin* reads, *I am the living bread*; and the *Perſic* verſion, *I am the bread of life.* And this laſt renders the firſt clauſe *mocked at him.*

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[o] Zohar in Exod. fol. 43. 4.

[p] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 92. 1.

[q] T. Hieroſ. Kilaim, fol. 32. 3.

[r] Ib. col. 2.

[s] Zohar in Gen. fol. 82. 4.

Ver. 42. And *they ſaid, is not this Jeſus the ſon of Joſeph?* &c.] From murmuring they go to mocking and ſcoffing at his parentage and deſcent, and object this to his coming down from heaven; and intend by it to upbraid him with the meanneſs of his birth, being the ſon of *Joſeph*, a poor carpenter; and ſuggeſt, that it was great arrogance in him to claim an heavenly original, and to aſcribe ſuch things to himſelf that he was the bread of God, and the bread of life, and came from heaven: *whoſe father and mother we know?* for *Capernaum* and *Nazareth* were not at a great diſtance from each other; ſo that *Joſeph* and *Mary* might be perſonally known by the inhabitants of *Capernaum*, and they might be intimately acquainted with them. *How is it then that he ſaith, I came down from heaven?* they could not tell how to reconcile theſe things, not knowing either his miraculous conception and incarnation, nor his divine Sonſhip; otherwiſe his being made of a woman, or born of a virgin on earth, is conſiſtent with his being the Lord from heaven.

Ver. 43. *Jeſus therefore anſwered and ſaid unto them*, &c.] Either over-hearing what they ſaid, or knowing, as God, their ſecret murmurs, and private cavils among themſelves, thus addreſſed them, *murmur not among yourſelves:* meaning neither about his deſcent from heaven, nor about coming to him, and believing in him; for it follows,

Ver. 44. *No man can come to me*, &c.] That is, by faith, as in ver. 35. for otherwiſe they could corporally come to him, but not ſpiritually; becauſe they had neither power nor will of themſelves; being dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, and impotent to every thing that is ſpiritual: and whilſt men are in a ſtate of unregeneracy, blindneſs, and darkneſs, they ſee no need of coming to Chriſt, nor any thing in him worth coming for; they are prejudiced againſt him, and their hearts are ſet on other things; and beſides, coming to Chriſt, and believing in Chriſt being the ſame thing, it is certain faith is not of a man's ſelf, it is the gift of God, and the operation of his Spirit; and therefore efficacious grace muſt be exerted to enable a ſoul to come to Chriſt; which is expreſſed in the following words, *except the Father which hath ſent me, draw him:* which is not to be underſtood of moral ſuaſion, or a being perſuaded and prevailed upon to come to Chriſt by the conſideration of the mighty works which God had done to juſtify that he was the true Meſſiah, but of the internal and powerful influence of the grace of God; for this act of drawing is ſomething diſtinct from, and ſuperior to both doctrine and miracles. The *Capernaites* had heard the doctrine of Chriſt, which was taught with authority, and had ſeen his miracles, which were full proofs of his being the Meſſiah, and yet believed not, but murmured at his perſon and parentage. This gave occaſion to Chriſt to obſerve to them, that ſomething more than theſe was neceſſary to their coming to him, or ſavingly believing in him; even the powerful and efficacious grace of the Father in drawing: and if it be conſidered what men in converſion are drawn off *from* and *to*, from their beloved luſts and darling righteouſneſs; to look unto, and rely upon Chriſt alone for ſalvation; from that which was before ſo very agreeable, to that which, previous to this work, was ſo very diſagreeable; to what elſe can this be aſcribed, but to unfruſtrable and inſuperable grace? but tho' this act of drawing is an act of power, yet not of force; God in drawing of unwilling, makes willing in the day of his power: he enlightens the underſtanding, bends the will, gives an heart of fleſh, ſweetly allures by the power of his grace, and engages the ſoul to come to Chriſt, and give up itſelf to him; he draws with the bands of love. Drawing, tho' it ſuppoſes power and influence, yet not always coaction and force: muſic draws the ear, love the heart, and pleaſure the mind. *Trahit ſua quemque voluptas*, ſays the poet. The *Jews* have a ſaying [t], that the proſelytes, in the days of the Meſſiah, ſhall be all of them, גרים גרורים, *proſelytes drawn*; that is, ſuch as ſhall freely and voluntarily become proſelytes, as thoſe who are drawn by the Father are. *And I will raiſe him up at the laſt day*; ſee the note on ver. 40. compare with this verſe *Judg.* iv. 7.

Ver. 45. *It is written in the prophets*, &c.] In the book of the prophets, as the *Ethiopic* verſion renders it: the *Jews* divided the books of the Old Teſtament into three parts, the law, the prophets, and the hagiographa; now in that diviſion which was called the prophets, are the following words: or in one of the prophets, namely, in *Iſ.* liv. 13. ſo the *Syriac* verſion reads, *in the prophet*; tho' ſome think reference is had to more prophets, and more paſſages than one, as beſides the above mentioned, *Jer.* xxxi. 34. *Mic.* iv. 2. and *they ſhall be all taught of God*; by his Spirit to know themſelves, and Jeſus Chriſt; that is, all that are ordained to eternal life, all that are given to Chriſt, and are choſen in him; all the children of *Zion*, and who are the children of God; theſe are all, ſooner or later, in a ſpecial manner, taught of God: and which does not intend mere external inſtructions, and objective teachings by the miniſtry of the word, for many are ſo taught, who never come to Chriſt; but ſpecial teachings, ſuch as are attended with the energy of divine grace, and the power of the Spirit of God, who guides into all truth, ſavingly and ſpiritually: for this is to be underſtood of their being taught, in the Goſpel of Chriſt, and not in the law, as the *Targum* paraphraſes it, "all thy children ſhall learn in the law of the Lord." And that this prophecy refers to Goſpel-times, is clear from the citation and application of the firſt verſe of it, to the church in the times of the Apoſtles, *Gal.* iv. 27. The *Jews* themſelves acknowledge the prophecy belongs to the times of the Meſſiah, to which they expreſly apply [u] the words in the *fifth* verſe, *thy maker is thy huſband*, &c. And one of their modern commentators allows [w], that this very paſſage, *all thy children ſhall be taught of God*, refers, לעתיד, *to the time to come*; that is, to the times of the Meſſiah: in this citation, thoſe words, *thy children*, are left out, to ſhew that the words are not to be reſtrained to the people of the *Jews*, as they might ſeem by that clauſe, and to whom the *Jews* would limit them: for ſo they ſay [x], "they are truly taught of God from whom prophecy comes, which does not to all the world, but to *Iſrael* only, of whom it is written, *and all thy children are taught of God.*" But our Lord, by theſe words, inſtructs us, and would have us obſerve, that all that the Father hath given him, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, of whom he had been ſpeaking in the preceding verſes, ſhould be taught of God; and ſo taught, as to be drawn and brought

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[t] T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 3. 2. & 24. 1.

[u] Shemot Rabba, §. 15. fol. 102. 4.

[w] Kimchi in loc.

[x] Zohar in Exod. fol. 70. 1.

to him, and believe in him, and have everlaſting life: wherefore he infers from hence, that every man, whether a *Jew* or a *Gentile*, that is taught of God, will come to him in a ſpiritual way, and truſt in him for eternal life and happineſs, as follows: *every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me*; every one that has heard the voice of the Father's love, grace, and mercy in the Goſpel, and has learned of him the way of peace, life, and ſalvation by Chriſt, under the influence of his grace, comes unto Chriſt; being encouraged by the declarations and promiſes of grace he has heard and learned, and ventures his ſoul on Chriſt, and commits it to him; truſting and relying on his perſon, blood, righteouſneſs, and ſacrifice, for juſtification, pardon, atonement, acceptance with God, and eternal life.

Ver. 46. *Not that any man hath ſeen the Father*, &c.] This is ſaid, leſt it ſhould be thought from the above words, that our Lord meant that men ſhould be ſo taught of God, as that they ſhould viſibly ſee the Father, and vocally hear his voice, and be perſonally inſtructed by him; for his voice is not heard, nor his ſhape ſeen; ſee ch. i. 18. and v. 37. *ſave he which is of God*; who is begotten of him, and of the ſame nature and perfections with him, tho' a diſtinct perſon from him, and who was always with him, and lay in his boſom: *he hath ſeen the Father*; has perfect knowledge of him, perſonal communion with him; has ſeen the perfections and glory of his perſon, and the thoughts, purpoſes, and counſels of his heart, his whole mind, and will, and all the grace, goodneſs, and mercy which is in him, and has declared it; ſee *John* i. 18.

Ver. 47. *Verily verily I ſay unto you*, &c.] This is a certain truth, and to be depended on: *he that believeth on me hath everlaſting life*; not only he may have it, as in ver. 40. and ſhall have it, but he has it; he has it in Chriſt his head and repreſentative; he has it in the covenant of grace; he has it in faith and hope; he has a right unto it, and a meetneſs for it; he has the earneſt of it, the grace and Spirit of God; and he has the beginning and foretaſtes of it in his ſoul, and ſhall certainly enjoy it.

Ver. 48. *I am that bread of life.*] See the note on ver. 35.

Ver. 49. *Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderneſs*, &c.] All the while they were in the wilderneſs, for the ſpace of forty years, till they came to the borders of the land of *Canaan*; this was their only food on which they lived, during their travels thro' the wilderneſs. It is obſervable, that Chriſt ſays, not *our fathers*, but *your fathers*; for tho' Chriſt, as concerning the fleſh, came of theſe fathers, yet in every ſenſe they were rather theirs than his; becauſe regard may be had to ſuch of them more eſpecially who eat the manna as common food, and not as ſpiritual meat, as typical of the Meſſiah, as others did; and whom, theſe their offspring, did very much reſemble. Tho' perhaps the reaſon of the uſe of this phraſe may be, becauſe the *Jews* themſelves had uſed it in ver. 31. and Chriſt takes it up from them. *And are dead.* This food, though it ſupported them in life for a while, could not preſerve them from a corporal death, and ſtill leſs from an eternal one; for ſome of them not only died the firſt, but the ſecond death.

Ver. 50. *This is the bread which cometh down from heaven*, &c.] Namely, that of which he had ſpoken ver. 32, 33, 35, 48. meaning himſelf: *that a man may eat thereof, and not die*; for this heavenly bread is ſoul-quickening, ſoul-ſtrengthening, and ſoul-ſatiſfying food; nor can there be any want where this is: eating of it is not to be underſtood corporally, as theſe *Capernaites* took it; nor ſacramentally, as if it was confined to the ordinance of the Lord's ſupper, which was not, as yet, inſtituted; but more largely of eating and feeding upon Chriſt ſpiritually by faith: he is, by the believer, to be fed upon wholly, and only; all of him, and none but him, and that daily; for there is the ſame need of daily bread for our ſouls, as for our bodies; and alſo largely and freely, as ſuch may do; and likewiſe joyfully, with gladneſs and ſingleneſs of heart: ſuch as are Chriſt's beloved, and his friends, *may* eat; they have liberty, a hearty welcome to eat; and ſo have every one that have a will, an inclination, a deſire to eat, and all overcomers, whom Chriſt makes more than conquerors, *Cant.* v. 1. *Rev.* ii. 7, 17. and xxii. 17. which liberty is owing to Chriſt's gracious invitation, and to his, and the Father's free gift; and to the openneſs and eaſe of acceſs of all ſenſible ſinners to him: and the conſequence and effect of ſuch eating is, that it ſecures from dying, not from a corporal death, to which men are appointed, and ſaints themſelves are ſubject; though it is indeed aboliſhed by Chriſt as a penal evil; nor ſhall his people continue under the power of it, but ſhall riſe again to everlaſting life; but then they are, thro' eating this bread, ſecured from a ſpiritual death; for tho' there may be a decline, as to the exerciſe of grace, and a want of livelineſs, and they may fear they are ready to die, and conclude they are free among the dead, and that their ſtrength and hope are periſhed; yet he that lives and believes in Chriſt, the reſurrection, and the life, ſhall never die; and ſuch are alſo ſecure from an eternal death, on them the ſecond death ſhall have no power, nor ſhall they ever be hurt by it.

Ver. 51. *I am the living bread which came down from heaven*, &c.] This is the ſame with what is ſaid in ver. 33, 35, 48. which is true of Chriſt, as he has life in him; and is the author and giver of life to others; and is of an heavenly original, and came from heaven to give life to men: and ſuch is the virtue of this living and heavenly bread, that *if any man eat of this bread he ſhall live for ever*; not a natural, but a ſpiritual life; a life of ſanctification, which is begun here, and will be perfected hereafter; and a life of glory, which will never end: *and the bread that I will give is my fleſh*; or *body*, as all the *Oriental* verſions render it. Here our Lord explains more clearly and fully what he means, under the notion of bread; and which ſhows, that by bread he did not deſign merely his doctrine, but his fleſh, his human nature; though not as abſtracted from his deity, but as in union with it: *which I will give for the life of the world*; and which he did by the offering up of his body, and making his ſoul, or giving himſelf an offering, a propitiatory ſacrifice for ſin; which was done in the moſt free and voluntary manner, in the room and ſtead of his people, to procure eternal life for them, even for the whole world of his elect, whether among *Jews* or *Gentiles*; particularly the latter are here meant, in oppoſition to a notion of the *Jews*, that the world, or the *Gentiles*, would receive no benefit by the Meſſiah when he came; ſee the note on ch. iii. 16.

Ver. 52. *The Jews therefore ſtrove among themſelves*, &c.] Fell to cavilling and diſputing one among another; ſome underſtanding Chriſt, and others not; ſome being for him, and vindicated what he ſaid; and others being againſt him, and who were the majority, objected, *ſaying, how can this man give us his fleſh to eat?* which is to be underſtood, not phyſically, but as morally impoſſible and unlawful; ſince, with the *Jews*, it was not lawful to eat the fleſh of any creature alive, and much leſs the fleſh of man; for the *Jews* underſtood Chriſt of a corporal eating of his fleſh, being ſtrangers to a figurative or ſpiritual eating of it by faith, in which ſenſe he meant it.

Ver. 53. *Then Jeſus ſaid unto them,* &c.] The *Jews*, who were litigating this point among themſelves: *verily verily I ſay unto you*; or you may aſſure yourſelves of the truth of what follows, *except ye eat the fleſh of the ſon of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you*: by *the ſon of man*, Chriſt means himſelf; under which title he often ſpeaks of himſelf; becauſe it was a title of the Meſſiah under the Old Teſtament; and was expreſſive of the truth of his human nature, tho' as attended with weakneſs and infirmities. The *fleſh* and *blood* of Chriſt do not deſign thoſe diſtinct parts of his body; much leſs as ſeparate from each other; nor the whole body of Chriſt, but his whole human nature; or Chriſt, as having united a perfect human nature to him, in order to ſhed his blood for the remiſſion of ſin, and to offer up his ſoul and body a ſacrifice for it: and the eating of theſe is not to be underſtood of a corporal eating of them, as the *Capernaites* underſtood them; and ſince them the *Papiſts*, who affirm, that the bread and wine in the Lord's ſupper are tranſubſtantiated into the very body and blood of Chriſt, and ſo eaten: but this is not to be underſtood of eating and drinking in the Lord's ſupper, which, as yet, was not inſtituted; and ſome, without participating of this, have ſpiritual life in them now, and will enjoy eternal life hereafter; and all that partake of that ordinance have not the one, nor ſhall have the other: and beſides, having a principle of ſpiritual life in the ſoul, is previouſly neceſſary to a right eating of the ſupper of the Lord. Theſe words, underſtood in this ſenſe, once introduced infants to the Lord's ſupper; as a miſinterpretation of *John* iii. 5. brought in the baptiſm of them. But the words deſign a ſpiritual eating of Chriſt by faith. To eat the fleſh, and drink the blood of Chriſt, is to believe that Chriſt is come in the fleſh, and is truly and really man; that his fleſh is given for the life of his people, and his blood is ſhed for their ſins, and this with ſome view and application to themſelves: it is to partake of, and enjoy the ſeveral bleſſings of grace procured by him, ſuch as redemption, pardon, peace, juſtification, &c. and ſuch a feeding upon him as is attended with growth in grace, and in the knowledge of him, and is daily to be repeated, as our corporal food is, otherwiſe perſons have no life in them; without this there is no evidence of life in them; not ſuch live as feed on ſinful pleaſures, or on their own righteouſneſs; only ſuch that believe in Chriſt are living ſouls; and without this there's nothing to ſupport life; every thing elſe that a man eats tends to death; but this is what will maintain and preſerve a ſpiritual life; and without this there is no juſt expectation of eternal life; but where there is this, there is good reaſon to expect it, and ſuch ſhall enjoy it: ſome copies and verſions read, *ye ſhall not have life in you*; eternal life. Now, tho' the acts of eating and drinking do not give the right to eternal life, but the fleſh, blood, and righteouſneſs of Chriſt, which faith lays hold, and feeds upon; yet it is by faith the right is claimed; and between theſe acts of faith, and eternal life, there is an inſeparable connexion.

Ver. 54. *Whoſo eateth my fleſh, and drinketh my blood,* &c.] Spiritually by faith, as explained in the preceding verſe: *hath eternal life*; the principle of ſpiritual life, which is evidently implanted in him, as appears from his eating and drinking; and is a durable and laſting principle: grace is an incorruptible ſeed; every part of it is abiding and permanent; and it is itſelf the beginning, pledge, and earneſt of everlaſting life, and is inſeparably connected with it: moreover, ſuch have eternal life itſelf, not only in Chriſt their head, but in themſelves; they have a right unto it, and a meetneſs for it: and may be aſſured of it, as if they were perſonally poſſeſſed of it, from their election to it; the ſecurity of it in Chriſt; from the grace they have received, which is the beginning of glory; and the earneſt of it in themſelves: *and I will raiſe him up at the laſt day*; to enjoy it in ſoul and body; ſee the notes on ver. 39, 40.

Ver. 55. *For my fleſh is meat indeed,* &c.] Not in a corporal, but in a ſpiritual ſenſe; and the ſame is ſaid of his blood: *and my blood is drink indeed*; that is, they are both *truly* meat and drink, as the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, and *Ethiopic* verſions render it; or are *true* meat and drink, as the *Arabic* verſion: in oppoſition to what was typical meat and drink; as the manna in the wilderneſs, the water out of the rock, the fleſh and wine at the paſſover, the meat and drink-offerings under the law, or any other meats and drinks under that diſpenſation; and which, tho' not when Chriſt ſaid theſe words, yet now are aboliſhed, being unprofitable, and not to be fed upon. Moreover, theſe phraſes may denote the reality, ſubſtance, and ſolidity of that ſpiritual food believers have in Chriſt, in oppoſition to the imaginary food of ſenſual ſinners, who feed on aſhes and bread of deceit; and to that of ſelf-righteous perſons, who ſpend their labour and money for, and live upon that which is not bread, even upon their works of righteouſneſs; and to the ſuperficial taſtes of hypocrites and formal profeſſors; and to the charge of enthuſiaſm; and even to the outward elements of bread, and wine, in the Lord's ſupper, ſince inſtituted; and as it may be attended upon by perſons deſtitute of the grace of God. And theſe words may alſo be expreſſive of the virtue, efficacy, and excellency of this food, it being ſoul-quickning, nouriſhing, ſtrengthening, ſatisfying, and delightful food, as well as ſpiritual and ſavory; not to carnal perſons, or outward profeſſors, but to new-born babes, and true believers; and which, by them, may be had, and to the full, and that in due ſeaſon, even every day, and is what will abide for ever.

Ver. 56. *He that eateth my fleſh, and drinketh my blood,* &c.] In the ſenſe above given; ſee the note on ver. 53. *dwelleth in me, and I in him.* There is a mutual indwelling of Chriſt, and believers; Chriſt is the habitation, or dwelling-place of his people: there is a ſecret dwelling in Chriſt; ſo the elect of God dwelt in the heart, and in the hands, and arms of Chriſt from everlaſting; and as members in their head in election grace, and repreſentatively in him, as the mediator of the covenant; and they ſecretly and ſafely dwelt in him, when all mankind fell in *Adam*; and when he was on the croſs, in the grave, and now he is in heaven; all which is owing to his own love, his father's gift, and to ſecret union to him. But there is an open dwelling in him in time, which is here meant: God's elect, as in their nature ſtate, are without Chriſt, and

and lie open to the law, and juſtice of God; the ſpirit of God convinces them of this ſtate, and directs them to flee to Chriſt, as a city of refuge; when they find him a ſtrong hold, a place of defence, and a proper dwelling for them, where they reſolve to abide, and do abide; and where they dwell ſafely, peaceably, comfortably, and pleaſantly; and from which dwelling-place they will never be turned out. Likewiſe, the ſaints are the habitation or dwelling-place of Chriſt; he dwells not in their heads and tongues, but in their hearts, and by faith; which is here expreſſed, by eating his fleſh, and drinking his blood; and which, tho' it is not the cauſe of Chriſt's dwelling here, yet is the means or inſtrument by which men receive him into their hearts, and retain him, and have communion with him: for he dwells in believers, not in ſuch ſenſe as he dwells in the world, by his omnipreſence, and power; or in the human nature, by hypoſtatical union to it; but by his ſpirit, and by faith, which is an inſtance of wonderful condeſcending grace, and is owing to union to him, and is expreſſive of communion with him, and is what will continue for ever.

Ver. 57. *As the living Father hath ſent me*, &c.] Into the world, to be the Saviour of it; not by local motion, but by aſſumption of human nature; and not againſt his will, or as having ſuperiority over him, but by joint conſent and agreement: the firſt perſon in the Godhead is here ſtiled, *the living Father*; not becauſe he is the Father of ſpirits, of angels, and the ſouls of men; and the Father of all men by creation, and of ſaints by adoption; and the Father, or author of all mercies, ſpiritual and temporal; but becauſe he is the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; and this character is peculiar to him: he is indeed the living God, and has life in himſelf, and is the fountain of life to others; but not in diſtinction from, and to the excluſion of the Son, or Spirit; but then none but he is the living Father, who ever did, and ever will, live as the Father of Chriſt: *and I live by the Father*; which is to be underſtood of Chriſt, not as God, but as mediator, and as man. As mediator he was ſet up by his Father, as the head of life to the elect; and was entruſted by him with a fulneſs of life for them; and was ſent to open the way of life unto them, and beſtow it on them. As man, he had his human life from God, and was preſerved and upheld in it by him; and he laid it down at his command, and at his death committed his ſoul or ſpirit to him; and which was reſtored unto him, and is continued with him. The *Vulgate Latin*, and all the *Oriental* verſions, read, *for the Father*, or *becauſe of* him; and may deſign either that near union and conjunction of Chriſt with him, by virtue of which they live the ſame life; or elſe his living to the glory and honour of his Father, as he did, and does: *ſo he that eateth me*; in a ſpiritual ſenſe, by faith. The phraſe of eating the Meſſiah was a familiar one, and well known to the *Jews*; though theſe *Capernaites* cavilled at it, and called it an hard ſaying. "Says *Rab*, the *Iſraelites* ſhall *eat* the "years of the Meſſiah: (the *Gloſs* on it is, the "fulneſs which the *Iſraelites* ſhall have in thoſe "days) ſays *R. Joſeph*, it is certainly ſo; but who "ſhall *eat him?* ſhall *Chillek* and *Billek* (two judges "in *Sodom*) אכלי לה, *eat him?* contrary to the "words of *R. Hillell*, who ſays, *Iſrael* ſhall have "no Meſſiah, for, אכלוהו, *they eat him* in the "days of *Hezekiah* [y];" that is, they enjoyed him then; for he thought that *Hezekiah* was the Meſſiah; but that was the doctor's miſtake. The Meſſiah now was, and to be enjoyed and eaten by faith in a ſpiritual ſenſe, and every one that does ſo, *even he ſhall live by me:* ſuch have their life from Chriſt; he is their food, on which they lived; and by him they are continued, upheld, and preſerved in their ſpiritual life, and are by him brought to the life of glory: or they live *for*, or *becauſe of* him, as the above verſions render it; they derive their life from him, and becauſe he lives, they live alſo; and they live to his glory, and will do ſo to all eternity.

Ver. 58. *This is that bread which came down from heaven*, &c.] That true bread, the bread of God, the bread of life, living bread; meaning himſelf, as in ver. 32, 33, 35, 48, 50, 51. *not as your Fathers did eat manna, and are dead:* this is bread of a quite different nature from that; that was only typical bread, this true; that was the bread of angels, but this is the bread of God; that came but from the air, this from the third heaven; that men eat of, and died; but whoever eats of this, lives for ever; ſee ver. 49. as follows: *he that eateth of this bread ſhall live for ever*; ſee the note on ver. 51.

Ver. 59. *Theſe things ſaid he in the ſynagogue*, &c.] Openly and publickly, in the place of divine worſhip, where the *Jews* reſorted for that purpoſe: *as he taught in Capernaum*; his own city, and where there was a ſynagogue, into which he often went and taught his doctrines, and wrought miracles; ſee *Matt.* iii. 13. and viii. 5, 14. and ix. 1, 2. and xii. 9.

Ver. 60. *Many therefore of his diſciples*, &c.] Not of the twelve, nor of the ſeventy, but of the multitude of the diſciples, who followed him from place to place, attended on his miniſtry, and might be baptized in his name; ſee *John* iv. 1. *when they had heard* this; that his fleſh and blood were truly and really meat and drink, and that none had life in them, or ſhould have eternal life, but ſuch as eat and drink the ſame: *ſaid, this is an hard ſaying*; or it is to be objected to; ſo קשיא, *an hard thing*, the word here uſed in the *Syriac* verſion, and קשה הוא עלי, *it is to me a hard thing*, are phraſes uſed to expreſs an objection in the *Talmudic* writings, where they are often met with: or it is difficult to be underſtood and received; ſo הדבר הקשה, *an hard ſaying*, or *an hard cauſe*, is a cauſe difficult to be tried and determined, *Exod.* xviii. 26. and is uſed of that which ſeems incredible and abſurd, and is ſurprizing and unaccountable: ſo it is ſaid [z], that "it happened to a certain woman, that "ſhe came before *R. Akiba*; ſhe ſaid to him, I "have ſeen a ſpot; he ſaid to her, perhaps there "is a wound in thee; ſhe anſwered him, yes, and "it is healed; he replied, perhaps it may be "opened, and the blood brought out; ſhe an"ſwered him, yes; and he pronounced her clean. "*R. Akiba* ſaw his diſciples look upon one an"other; and he ſaid unto them, מה הדבר קשה, "*is this an hard ſaying* with you?" is it a difficult thing with you? does it ſeem abſurd to you? or are you ſurprized at it? any thing difficult, or which ſeems irreconcilable, is ſo called: ſo the ſlaying the paſſover between the two evenings is called by *Aben Ezra*, in *Exod.* xii. 6. מלה קשה, *an hard ſaying*. In like ſenſe the phraſe is uſed here; and the alluſion may be to food that is hard of digeſtion, ſince Chriſt had been ſpeaking of himſelf under the metaphors of bread and meat. As ſome of the doctrines of Chriſt are comparable to milk, which is eaſy of digeſtion; others are like to ſtrong meat, which belongs to thoſe of full age, and cannot be digeſted by children, by babes in Chriſt, and much leſs be received, eat, and digeſted, with eaſe and pleaſure, by carnal minds; who therefore ſay, as theſe *Capernaites* did, *who can hear it?* this ſaying, or doctrine, concerning eating the fleſh, and drinking the blood of Chriſt; or *him* Chriſt, who delivered this doctrine: ſuch preaching, and ſuch a preacher, are intolerable; there's no hearing, nor bearing them: hence we afterwards read, that theſe withdrew from the miniſtry of Chriſt, ver. 66.

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[y] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 98. 2. & 99. 1.

[z] Miſn. Nidda, c. 8. §. 3.

Ver. 61. *When Jeſus knew in himſelf,* &c.] And of himſelf, without any intelligence from others, or hearing what was ſaid, being the omniſcient God: *that his diſciples murmured at it*; at the doctrine he had delivered, looking upon it as abſurd, incredible, and contrary to ſenſe and reaſon: *he ſaid unto them, does this offend you?* or trouble you? can't you get over this? can't you underſtand it? or account for it? if not, how will you be able to digeſt ſome other things, or reconcile them to your minds, which are leſs known, and more unexpected, and will appear at firſt ſight more ſurprizing?

Ver. 62. What *and if ye ſhall ſee the ſon of man,* &c.] Meaning himſelf then in a ſtate of humiliation, and was taken for a mere man, tho' the true Meſſiah, and Son of God: *aſcend up where he was before?* for Chriſt was, he exiſted before his incarnation, and he was in heaven before; not in his human nature, but as the Word and Son of God: and he intimates, that when he had done his work, and the will of his Father, for which he came down from heaven, by the aſſumption of the human nature, he ſhould aſcend up thither again; and which would be ſeen, as it was, by his Apoſtles; and which would prove that he came down from heaven, as he had aſſerted; ſee *Eph.* iv. 9, 10. and that his fleſh and blood were not to be eaten in a corporal ſenſe; in which ſenſe they underſtood him: and he hereby ſuggeſts, that if it was difficult to receive, and hard to be underſtood, and was ſurprizing and incredible, that he ſhould come down from heaven, as bread, to be eat and fed upon; it would be much more ſo to them to be told, that he who was in ſo mean and lowly a form, ſhould aſcend up into heaven.

Ver. 63. *It is the Spirit that quickeneth,* &c.] It is the ſpirit of man that quickens him; or which being breathed into him, he becomes a living ſoul; for the body, without the ſpirit, is dead; it is a lifeleſs lump: and it is the Spirit of God that quickens dead ſinners, by entering into them as the Spirit of life, and cauſing them to live: and it is ſpiritual eating, or eating the fleſh, and drinking the blood of Chriſt in a ſpiritual ſenſe, which quickens, refreſhes, and comforts the minds of believers; 'tis that by, and on which they live, and by which their ſpiritual ſtrength is renewed: unleſs, by Spirit, is meant the divine nature of Chriſt, by which he was quickened and raiſed from the dead, and aſcended up into heaven, and was declared to be the Son of God with power: *the fleſh profiteth nothing*; the human nature of Chriſt, tho' profitable, as in union with the Son of God, to be given for the life of his people, and to be an offering, and a ſacrifice for their ſins, yet not as alone, or as abſtracted from the divine nature; nor would his fleſh and blood, corporally eaten, could, or ſhould it be done, be of any avail to eternal life; nor is any other fleſh literally underſtood, profitable of itſelf for life; for man lives not by bread, or meat, or fleſh alone, but by the word and bleſſing of God upon it, and along with it; nor fleſh, in a figurative ſenſe, as creature acts and performances, ſelf-righteouſneſs, obedience to the ceremonial law, carnal deſcent, and birth privileges: *the words that I ſpeak unto you,* they *are ſpirit, and* they *are life*; the doctrines which Chriſt had then been delivering concerning himſelf, his fleſh and blood, being ſpiritually underſtood, are the means of quickening ſouls. The Goſpel, and the truths of it, which are the wholeſome words of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, are the means of conveying the Spirit of God, as a Spirit of illumination and ſanctification, into the hearts of men, and of quickening ſinners dead in treſpaſſes and ſins: the Goſpel is the Spirit that giveth life, and is the ſavour of life unto life, when it comes not in word only, or in the bare miniſtry of it, but with the energy of the Holy Ghoſt, and the power of divine grace.

Ver. 64. *But there are ſome of you that believe not,* &c.] Notwithſtanding the miniſtry they ſat under, and the words they heard; for tho' they profeſſed to believe in Jeſus, as the Meſſiah, yet they did not truly believe in him; their faith was not a living faith, or of a ſpiritual kind, but a mere hiſtorical and temporary one, and was feigned and hypocritical: *for Jeſus knew from the beginning*; of his miniſtry, and of their profeſſion of him, being God omniſcient, and the ſearcher of hearts: *who they were that believed not*; i. e. in him, as the *Arabic* verſion reads: notwithſtanding their following him, and profeſſing to believe in him, and the great outward reſpect and eſteem they ſhewed to him, he could ſee thro' all thoſe maſks they put on, and knew they had no true faith of him in them; and the ſame knowledge he has of every profeſſor of his name: he knows whether their faith is of the right kind or no; whether they have obtained the like precious faith with God's elect; or whether their profeſſion is only a verbal one. In ſome copies it is read, *who they were that believed*; who were true believers, as well as who were hypocrites. *And who ſhould betray him*: he not only knew how it was with the multitude of the diſciples that profeſſed love to him, and faith in him; but he alſo particularly knew the caſe of the twelve Apoſtles, and that one of them ſhould betray him, and who he was. This was determined in the decrees of God, and was foretold in the prophecies of the Old Teſtament, and was predicted by Chriſt; and the perſon was pointed at by him before it was done.

Ver. 65. *And he ſaid, therefore ſaid I unto you,* &c.] Referring to ver. 44. where the ſubſtance of what is here ſaid, is there delivered; though the *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *therefore I ſay unto you,* what follows: *that no man can come to me, except it be given him of my Father*; which is the ſame, as to be drawn by the Father; for faith in Chriſt is the gift of God, and coming to him, is owing to efficacious grace, and is not the produce of man's power and free-will; ſee the note on ver. 44.

Ver. 66. *From that* time *many of his diſciples went back,* &c.] Not any of the twelve apoſtles, for they are diſtinguiſhed from theſe in the next verſe; nor any of the ſeventy diſciples, for their names were written in heaven, and could not apoſtatize totally and finally, as theſe did; but ſome of the multitude of the diſciples, who followed Chriſt, heard him, and profeſſed to believe in him, and were baptized in his name, but were not true diſciples, only nominal ones: they had never heard and learned of the Father, otherwiſe they would have known what it was to come to Chriſt, as the

Father's gift, and under the drawings of his grace; and would not have been offended at the words of our Lord, juſt now ſpoken by him, concerning that ſort of coming to him: but from the time he ſpoke thoſe words; *becauſe of this word*, as the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions render it; they withdrew themſelves from his miniſtry, they dropped their profeſſion of faith in him, and relinquiſhed him as a ſaviour and redeemer: for finding that he would not be made king, nor ſet up for a temporal redeemer; and talking of himſelf as the bread of life, and of coming to him, in a ſenſe they did not underſtand; they turned their backs on him; and as the words may be literally read, *returned to the things that were behind*; to the world, and to their old companions, to ſatan and their own hearts luſts; like the dog to its vomit, and the ſwine to its wallowing in the mire: their true picture is drawn, in the parable of the unclean ſpirit going out of the man, and returning, *Matt.* xii. 43. And they returned to their quondam teachers, the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, and to the law of works, and to ſeek for righteouſneſs by it; ſetting up their own righteouſneſs, and not ſubmitting to the righteouſneſs of Chriſt; and thus to look back and draw back, is a ſad caſe indeed: *and walked no more with him*; never returned to him more, or went with him from place to place as before; never more attended on his miniſtry, or had any intimacy and fellowſhip with him: and ſo it commonly is with apoſtates from the profeſſion of Chriſt; they ſeldom or ever return, or are recovered; it is difficult, if not impoſſible, which is ſometimes the caſe, to renew them again to repentance.

Ver. 67. *Then ſaid Jeſus unto the twelve*, &c.] *To his own twelve*, as the *Perſic* verſion reads; that is, to his twelve apoſtles, whom he had choſen to that office; Chriſt takes no notice of thoſe that went away from him, he ſhewed no concern about them; he knew what they were, that the truth of grace was not in them, and that they did not belong to him, and therefore was not uneaſy about their departure; but turns himſelf to his apoſtles, whom he dearly loved, and in a very tender manner thus ſaid to them, *will ye alſo go away?* this he ſaid, not as ignorant of what they were, or of what they would do in this caſe; he knew full well their faith in him, their love to him, and eſteem of him, and cloſe attachment to him, at leaſt in eleven of them; nor did he ſay this, as having any fears or jealouſies concerning them, by obſerving any thing in their countenances or geſtures, which looked like a departure from him; but it was ſaid out of a tender regard and ſtrong affection for them: and 'tis as if he ſhould have ſaid, as for theſe men that have walked with me for ſome time, and have now turned their backs upon me, it gives me no concern; but ſhould you, my dear friends and companions, go alſo, it would give me, as man, real pain and great uneaſineſs; or he might ſay this to ſhew, that as they were not preſſed into his ſervice, but willingly followed him, and became his diſciples, being made a willing people by him, in the day of his power on them; ſo they willingly continued with him, and abode by him; as alſo to ſtrengthen their faith in him, and cauſe them the more to cleave to him, with full purpoſe of heart, when others left him; as well as to draw out from them, expreſſions of their regard for him, and faith in him, which end was anſwered.

Ver. 68. *Then Simon Peter anſwered him*, &c.] Who was ſtrong in the faith of Chriſt, and full of zeal for him, and love to him; and who was the mouth of the apoſtles, and always forward to ſpeak out of the abundance and ſincerity of his heart, in their name; believing, that they all of them, for he had now no ſuſpicion of *Judas*, no more than of the reſt, had the ſame faith in Chriſt, love to him, and eſteem of him, as he himſelf had; wherefore out of a good opinion of them, and love to Chriſt, he thus addreſſed him: *Lord*; or *my Lord*, as the *Syriac* verſion renders it; which was either a title of reſpect, and the ſame with *Sir* with us; or elſe, as acknowledging the dominion and authority of Chriſt, as Lord of all, and eſpecially of the ſaints, and as claiming his intereſt in him; and which carries in it a reaſon, why he ſhould abide by him; *to whom ſhall we go?* as a teacher, whoſe miniſtry we can attend upon, to greater profit and advantage? not to the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, whoſe leaven, or doctrine, Chriſt had bid them beware of; who taught for doctrines, the commandments of men, and were blind leaders of the blind; nor to *John* the *Baptiſt*, who had declared he was not the Meſſiah; but had pointed him out to them in his perſon, as the Son of God; and in his office as the Lamb of God, that takes away the ſins of men; and perhaps, he might not be now living; and if he was, he would have encouraged them not to follow him, but abide with their maſter; ſo that there was no other, that was *better*, as *Nonnus* expreſſes it, that they could go unto; and therefore it would be folly and madneſs in them, to leave him: and as it was with *Peter* and the reſt of the diſciples, ſo it is with all ſenſible ſinners, and true believers, who ſee there is no other to go to for life and ſalvation, but Chriſt; not to the law of *Moſes*, which accuſes, curſes, and condemns, and by which, there is neither life nor righteouſneſs; nor to any creature, or creature performance; for there is a curſe on him that truſts in man, and makes fleſh his arm; nor to their own righteouſneſs, which is impure and imperfect, and cannot juſtify before God, nor anſwer for them in a time to come; nor to their tears of repentance, which will not ſatisfy the law, atone for ſins, or waſh them away; nor to carnal deſcent, birth-privileges, a religious education, ſobriety, and civility, to truſt to which, is to have confidence in the fleſh, which will be of no avail; nor to ceremonial ſervices, or moral duties, or even evangelical ordinances, neither of which can take away ſin. There is no other Saviour, but Chriſt, to look to; no other Mediator between God and man, to make uſe of; no other phyſician of value, for diſeaſed and ſin-ſick ſouls to apply unto; no other fountain but his blood, for polluted ſouls to waſh in, and be cleanſed; no other city of refuge, or ſtrong-hold, for ſouls ſenſible of danger, to flee unto and be ſafe; no other to come to as the bread of life, where hungry ſouls may be fed; no other place of reſt, for thoſe that are weary and heavy laden; nor is there any other, where there is plenty of all grace, and ſecurity from every enemy, as in him: and therefore, to whom can they have recourſe, but unto him? and that for the following reaſon, *thou haſt the words of eternal life*: meaning, either the promiſes of eternal life, which were made before the world began, and were put into Chriſt's hands, for his people, and are yea and amen in him; or the doctrines of eternal life; for ſo the Goſpel, and the truths of it, are called, *Acts* v. 20. and that becauſe the Goſpel brings life and immortality to light, gives an account of eternal life; of the nature of it, that it is a glorious life, a life free from all the ſorrows of the preſent one; a life of pleaſure, and of perfect knowledge and holineſs, and which will laſt for ever: and becauſe it points out the way to it, that it is not by the works of the law, but by the grace of God; that it is his free-gift, through Chriſt; and that Chriſt is the way, the truth, and the life, or the true way to eternal life: and becauſe it is a means of quickening dead ſinners, and of reviving true believers, and of nouriſhing them up unto everlaſting life: or this phraſe may deſign the power and authority which Chriſt has, to diſpoſe of, and diſpenſe eternal life; for he has the thing itſelf in his hands, and a power to give it to as many as the Father has given him; and to them he does give it: and each of theſe ſenſes carry in them a reaſon, why ſouls ſhould go to Chriſt, and to him only, for life and ſalvation.

Ver. 69. *And we believe and are ſure*, &c.] Or *know* of a certainty: they believed upon the firſt call of them by Chriſt, and their following of him, that he was the true Meſſiah; and they came to an aſſurance of it, by the miracles he wrought, and by the doctrines which he taught; their faith, how weak ſoever it might be at firſt, roſe up to a full aſſurance of faith, and of underſtanding; there was a reality and a certainty in it, as there is in all true faith, with reſpect to the object, though not always with reſpect to intereſt in it; which former was the caſe here, as appears by what follows: *that thou art that Chriſt*; or Meſſiah, that was promiſed by God of old, ſpoken of by the prophets, and expected by the *Jews*; that anointed prophet *Moſes* had ſpoken of, that ſhould ariſe out of *Iſrael*, like unto him; that anointed prieſt, who, according to the oath of God, was to be a prieſt for ever, after the order of *Melchizedeck*; and that anointed king, whom God has ſet over his holy hill of *Zion*: *the Son of the living God*; this they knew, and were ſure of, both by *John*'s teſtimony, and by the Father's voice from heaven; which three of them heard, at Chriſt's transfiguration on the mount: God the Father is called *the living God*, though the *Vulgate Latin* verſion leaves out the word *living*; not to diſtinguiſh him from his Son; for he alſo is the living God; and is ſo called, *Heb*. iii. 12. but to diſtinguiſh him from the idols of the *Gentiles*, who have no life nor breath in them: and Chriſt is called the Son of the living God, as he is a divine perſon, as he is truly God; and to ſhow that he has the ſame life his Father has; being a partaker of the ſame nature, and divine perfections: and this is another reaſon, why ſenſible ſouls will go to Chriſt, and no other; becauſe he is the Meſſiah, the Saviour, and Redeemer, and an able one; and becauſe he is God, and there is none elſe.

Ver. 70. *Jeſus anſwered them*, &c.] The diſciples, taking *Peter*'s anſwer to his queſtion, as delivered in the name of them all, and as expreſſing their mind and ſenſe: *have not I choſen you twelve*; not to grace and glory, to holineſs and happineſs; though this was true of eleven of them, but to be apoſtles: *and one of you is a devil?* or like to one, is a deceiver, a liar, and a murderer, as the devil is from the beginning; all which *Judas* was, and appeared to be, in the betraying of his maſter. The *Syriac*, *Perſic*, and *Ethiopic* verſions read, *is ſatan*; which name, if given to *Peter*, as it once was on a certain occaſion, *Matt*. xvi. 23. might very well be given to *Judas*; who, notwithſtanding his profeſſion of faith in Chriſt, was in the hands and kingdom of ſatan, and under his influence and power: and this our Lord ſaid, partly that they might not too much preſume upon their faith and love, and ſteady attachment, and be over confident of their ſtanding; and partly, to prepare them for the apoſtacy of one from among them.

Ver. 71. *He ſpake of Judas Iſcariot*, the ſon *of Simon*, &c.] Theſe are the words of the Evangeliſt, pointing out the perſon Chriſt intended, leſt any other ſhould be ſuſpected: *for he it was that ſhould betray him*; as it was determined and foretold, and which Chriſt knew full well, and therefore ſaid the above words: *being one of the twelve*; apoſtles, whom Chriſt had choſen, and which was an aggravation of his crime.

# CHAP. VII.

Ver. 1. AFTER *theſe things Jeſus walked in Galilee*, &c.] That is, after he had fed the five thouſand with five loaves and two fiſhes, near *Bethſaida*; and had had that long diſcourſe with the *Jews* at *Capernaum*, concerning himſelf, as the bread of life, and about eating his fleſh, and drinking his blood; and had been up to the feaſt of the paſſover at *Jeruſalem*, ſaid to be nigh, when he went over the ſea of *Galilee*, ch. vi. 4. otherwiſe the above places were in *Galilee*: but the caſe ſeems to be this, that after he had been at *Capernaum*, he went to *Jeruſalem*, to keep the paſſover; and finding that the *Jews* ſtill ſought to take away his life, he returned to *Galilee*, and *walked* there; he did not ſit ſtill, or lie at home, and live an inactive indolent life, but went about from place to place, preaching the Goſpel, and healing diſeaſes; he walked, and walked about; but not as the enemy of ſouls, ſeeking to do all miſchief, but to do all good, to the bodies and ſouls of men: *for he would not walk in Jewry*; in the land of *Judea*, where he had been, and tarried, and made diſciples; but being rejected and ill-treated, he left them; which was a prelude of the Goſpel being taken from them, and carried to another people; which afterwards took place, in the times of the apoſtles: his reaſon for it was, *becauſe the Jews ſought to kill him*; for healing a man on the ſabbath-day, and for aſſerting his equality with God: not that he was afraid to die, but his time was not come; and he had work to do for the glory of God, and the good of men; and therefore it was both juſt and prudent, to withdraw and preſerve his life; for like reaſons he adviſed his diſciples, when perſecuted in one city, to flee to another: and very lawful and adviſeable it is for good men, when their lives are in danger, to make uſe of proper means to preſerve them, for further uſefulneſs in the cauſe of God, and for the benefit of men.

Ver. 2. *Now the Jews feaſt of tabernacles was at hand*.] Which began on the fifteenth day of the month *Tiſri*, which anſwers to part of our *September*; when the *Jews* erected tents or booths, in which they dwelt, and eat their meals during this feſtival; and which was done, in commemoration of the *Iſraelites* dwelling in booths in the wilderneſs; and was typical of Chriſt's tabernacling in human nature; and an emblem of the ſaints dwelling in the earthly houſes and tabernacles of their bodies, in this their wilderneſs and pilgrimage ſtate. Some aſſign other reaſons of this feaſt, as that it was appointed in commemoration of the divine command, for building the tabernacle; and others, that it was inſtituted in memory of the protection of the people of *Iſrael* under the cloud, as they travelled through the wilderneſs; by which they were preſerved, as in a tent or booth; and to this inclines the *Targum* of *Onkelos*, on *Levit.* xxiii. 43. which paraphraſes the words thus, *That your generations may know, that in the ſhadow of the clouds, I cauſed the children of Iſrael to dwell, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt*: and one of the *Jewiſh* commentators[a] ſuggeſts, that the reaſon why the firſt place the *Iſraelites* pitched at, when they came out of *Egypt*, was called *Succoth*, which ſignifies *tents*, or *tabernacles*, is, becauſe there they were covered with the clouds of glory: but the true reaſon of this feaſt is, that which is firſt given, as is clear from *Levit.* xxiii. 43. and becauſe they were obliged to dwell in tents, as ſoon as they came out of *Egypt*, therefore the firſt place they encamped at, was called *Succoth*, or tabernacles, *Exod.* xii. 37. *Numb.* xxxiii. 5. This feaſt was not kept at the time of year the people came out of *Egypt*; for that was at the time of the paſſover; but was put off, as it ſeems, to a colder ſeaſon of the year; and which was not ſo convenient for dwelling in booths; leſt it ſhould be thought they obſerved this feaſt for the ſake of pleaſure and recreation, under the ſhade of theſe bowers; which, as appears from *Neh.* viii. 15, 16. were made of olive, pine, myrtle, and palm-branches, and branches of thick trees; and were fixed, ſome on the roofs of their houſes, others in their courts, and in the courts of the houſe of God; and others in the ſtreets: an account of the ſacrifices offered at this feaſt, is given in *Numb.* xxix. 13—38. in which may be obſerved, that on the firſt day thirteen young bullocks were offered; on the ſecond, twelve; on the third, eleven; on the fourth, ten; on the fifth, nine; on the ſixth, eight; and on the ſeventh, ſeven; and on the eighth, but one. The *Jews*, in their *Miſna*, have a treatiſe called *Succa*, or *the Tabernacle*, in which they treat of this feaſt; and which contains various traditions, concerning their booths, their manner of living in them, and other rites and uſages obſerved by them, during this feſtival: they are very particular about the meaſure and form, and covering of their booths; a booth might not be higher than twenty cubits, nor lower than ten hands breadth; and its breadth, might not be leſs than ſeven hands breadth by ſeven; but it might be carried out as wide as they pleaſed[b], provided it had three ſides: they might not cover their booths with any thing, but what grew out of the earth, or was rooted up from thence; nor with any thing that received uncleanneſs, or was of an ill ſmell, or any thing that was fallen and faded[c]: into theſe booths they brought their beſt goods, their beſt bedding, and all their drinking veſſels, *&c.* and left their houſes empty; for here was their fixed dwelling; they only occaſionally went into their houſes[d]; for here they were obliged to dwell day and night, and eat all their meals, during the ſeven days of the feaſt; and however, it was reckoned praiſe-worthy, and he was accounted the moſt religious, who eat nothing out of his booth[e]: they were indeed excuſed when it was rainy weather, but as ſoon as the rain was over, they were obliged to return again[f]: and beſides, their dwelling and ſleeping, and eating and drinking in their booths, there were various other rites which were performed by them; as particularly, the carrying of palm-tree branches in their hands, or what they call the *Lulab*; which was made up of branches of palm-tree, myrtle, and willow, bound up together in a bundle, which was carried in the right-hand, and a pomecitron in the left; and as they carried them, they waved them three times towards the ſeveral quarters of the world; and every day they went about the altar once, with theſe in their hands, ſaying the words in *Pſal.* cxviii. 25. *Save now I beſeech thee, O Lord, O Lord I beſeech thee, ſend now proſperity*: and on the ſeventh day, they went about the altar ſeven times[g]: alſo there were great illuminations in the temple; at the going out of the firſt day of the feaſt, they went down to the court of the women; they made a great preparation, (*i. e.* as *Bartenora* explains it, they ſet benches round it, and ſet the women above, and the men below;) and there were golden candleſticks there, and at the head of them four golden baſons, and four ladders to every candleſtick; and four young prieſts had four pitchers of oil, that held a hundred and twenty logs, which they put into each baſon; and of the old breeches and girdles of the prieſts, they made wicks, and with them lighted them; and there was not a court in *Jeruſalem*, which was not lighted with that light; and religious men, and men of good works, danced before them, with lighted torches in their hands, ſinging ſongs and hymns of praiſe[h]; and this continued the ſix nights following[i]: there was alſo on every one of theſe days, another cuſtom obſerved; which was that of fetching water from the pool of *Siloah*, and pouring it with wine upon the altar, which was attended with great rejoicing; of which, ſee the note on ver. 37. of this chapter: to which may be added, the muſic that was uſed during the performance of theſe rites; at the illumination in the court of the women, there were harps, pſalteries, cymbals, and other inſtruments of muſic, playing all the while; and two prieſts with trumpets, who ſounded, when they had the ſignal; and on every day, as they brought water from *Siloah* to the altar, they ſounded with trumpets, and ſhouted; the great *Hallel*, or hymn, was ſung all the eight days, and the pipe was blown, ſometimes five days, and ſometimes ſix[k]; and even on all the eight days; and the whole was a feaſt of rejoicing, according to *Levit.* xxiii. 40.

Ver. 3. *His brethren therefore ſaid unto him*, &c.] That is, the brethren of Jeſus, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions expreſs it; who were not *James* and *Joſes*, and *Simon* and *Judas*, the ſons of *Alpheus*, the brother of *Joſeph*, the huſband of *Mary*, ſo called, *Matt.* xiii. 55. for ſome of theſe were of the number of the twelve; and all of them believers in Chriſt; whereas theſe his brethren were not. The *Jew*[l] therefore is miſtaken, who ſuppoſed the above perſons are here intended; and objects this their unbelief to *Jeſus*, as if they knew him too well, to give him any credit; whereas they did believe in him, and abode by him to the laſt; and ſome of them, if not all, ſuffered death for his ſake. They therefore are to be underſtood of ſome diſtant relations of *Mary* or *Joſeph*, that dwelt at *Nazareth*, or *Capernaum*, or in ſome of thoſe parts; and the feaſt of tabernacles being at hand, they put him upon going up to it, being willing to be rid of him: ſaying, *depart hence*;

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[a] Baal Hatturim in Numb. xxxiii. 5.
[b] Miſn. Succa, c. 1. §. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Succa, c. 4. §. 1.
[c] Miſn. ib. §. 4, 5, 6. Maimon. ib. c. 5. §. 1, 2, &c.
[d] Maimon. ib. c. 6. §. 5.
[e] Miſn. ib. c. 2. §. 5, 6. Maimon. ib. §. 6, 7.
[f] Maimon. ib. §. 10.
[g] Miſn. ib. c. 4. §. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Maimon. Hilch Lulab, c. 7. §. 5, 6, 9, 23.
[h] Miſn. ib. c. 5. §. 2, 3, 4.
[i] Maimon. ib. c. 8. §. 12.
[k] Miſn. ib. c. 4. §. 8, 9. & c. 5. 1, 4, 5. & Eracin, c. 2. §. 3.
[l] R. Iſaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 45. p. 434, 435.

which is the language of carnal men, who deſire not the company of Chriſt, nor the knowledge of his ways; and like the *Gergeſenes*, who preferred their ſwine to Chriſt, and deſired him to depart out of their coaſts: *and go into Judea*; among his moſt inveterate enemies, who ſought to take away his life; and which doubtleſs they knew; which ſhowed a quite different regard to him, from that of his true diſciples, ch. xi. 7, 8. for which they give ſome plauſible reaſons: *that thy diſciples alſo may ſee the works that thou doeſt*; meaning not his twelve diſciples, who were now with him, but the diſciples he had made, and baptized in *Judea*, ch. iv. 1, 2. Or his diſciples in the ſeveral parts of the land, who would all be at *Jeruſalem*, at the feaſt of tabernacles; and ſo ſhould he go, would have an opportunity of ſeeing his miracles, and thereby be the more confirmed in the faith of him.

Ver. 4. *For there is no man that doeth any thing in ſecret*, &c.] For ſo they reckoned his doing miracles in ſuch a corner of the land, and in ſo obſcure a place as *Galilee: and he himſelf ſeeketh to be known openly*; ſuggeſting hereby, that Chriſt was an ambitious perſon, and ſought popular applauſe, and honour and glory from men; when nothing was more foreign from him; ſee ch. v. 41. and viii. 50. *If thou do theſe things*; for they queſtion whether the miracles he wrought were real; and ſuſpected, that they were deceptions of the ſight, and deluſions; or at leaſt they queſtioned their being done by him; and rather thought that they were done by diabolical influence, by *Beelzebub* the prince of devils: but if they were real ones, they adviſe him, ſaying, *ſhew thyſelf to the world*; or do theſe openly, and in the preſence of the great men of the world; the princes of it, the rulers of the people, the chief prieſts and *Sanhedrim*; and before all the males of *Iſrael*; who at this feaſt would come up from all parts of the land, and are for their multitude called the world: the reaſon of this their advice was, that if his miracles were real, and he was the perſon he would be thought to be, the doing of them before ſuch, would gain him great credit and eſteem; and if not, he might be detected by ſuch numbers, and by men of ſuch penetration as were among them.

Ver. 5. *For neither did his brethren believe in him.*] At firſt they might take to him, and embrace him as the Meſſiah, and expect he would ſet up a temporal kingdom; in which they might hope, on account of their relation to him, according to the fleſh, to enjoy great honours and privileges; but finding that he was not inclined to any thing of that nature, and talked in a quite different way, they grew ſick of him, and rejected him, as the Meſſiah: ſo, little regard is to be had, or confidence placed, in carnal deſcent from, or alliance to the beſt of men; as to *Abraham*, or any other true believer, if they have not the ſame grace, or the ſame faith as ſuch have; and which comes not by blood, or natural generation, but by the free favour of God; for it matters not, if men have known Chriſt, or have been allied to him after the fleſh, unleſs they are new creatures in him; they may be the one, and not the other; even the carnal brethren of Chriſt, and yet not believers in him; and 'tis only ſuch who are ſo in a ſpiritual ſenſe, that are regarded by him, *Matt.* xii. 49, 50.

Ver. 6. *Then Jeſus ſaid unto them*, &c.] In anſwer to their ſolicitations and arguments uſed with him, to go up to the feaſt: *my time is not yet come*; meaning, not the time of his death, or of his exaltation and glorification, or of the ſhewing of himſelf forth unto the world; though all this was true; but of his going up to this feaſt; as appears from ver. 8. *but your time is always ready*; intimating, they might go at any time; their lives were not in any danger, as his was, and had nothing to conſult about the preſervation of them; it was all one to them when they went up, whether before the feaſt, that they might be ready for it, or at the beginning, middle, or end of it, as to any notice that would be taken of them, unleſs they ſhould be guilty of an omiſſion of their duty; but not on any other account; which was not his caſe.

Ver. 7. *The world cannot hate you*, &c.] Becauſe they were of the world, belonged to it; they were like unto it, and every like loves its like; and they were the world's own, and therefore inſtead of being hated, were loved by it; and they walked according to the courſe of it; and wicked men not only take pleaſure in ſin, but in them that do it: *but me it hateth*; though without a cauſe; that is, without a juſt cauſe, or reaſon; a cauſe there was, and it follows: *becauſe I teſtify of it, that the works thereof are evil*; even thoſe works of it, which were reckoned good works; Chriſt bore his teſtimony of theſe, that they were evil; being done either not according to the command of God, but the traditions of the elders; or not from a right principle, as of faith and love; nor to a right end, as the glory of God; but only to be ſeen of men: and very ſeverely did he inveigh againſt the pride, covetouſneſs, hypocriſy, and uncleanneſs of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*; and ſo he continued to do, and this drew upon him their hatred and ill-will.

Ver. 8. *Go ye up unto this feaſt*, &c.] Suggeſting, that he would not have them ſtay for him, or hinder themſelves on his account: he encourages them to go up, and obſerve this feſtival; for the ceremonial law was not yet aboliſhed; and though they were carnal men, and did not underſtand what it typified: and ſo unregenerate perſons ought to attend on the outward means, as the hearing of the word, *&c.* though they do not underſtand it; it may be God may make uſe of it, for the enlightning of their minds; and bleſſed are they that wait at wiſdom's gates, and there find Chriſt, and life and ſalvation by him: *I go not up yet unto this feaſt*; this clauſe, in one of *Beza*'s copies, is wholly left out; and in ſome, the word *this* is not read; and in others it is read, *I go not up unto this feaſt*, leaving out the word *yet*; and ſo read the *Vulgate Latin* and *Ethiopic* verſions; and the *Perſic* verſion only, *I do not go up*; which occaſioned *Porphyry*, that great enemy of Chriſtianity, to reproach Chriſt, as guilty of inconſtancy, or of an untruth, ſince he afterwards did go up: but in almoſt all the ancient copies the word is read; and ſo it is by *Chryſoſtom* and *Nonnus*; and to the ſame ſenſe the *Syriac* and *Arabic* verſions render it, *I do not go up now to this feaſt*; that is, juſt at that very time, that very day or hour: which is entirely conſiſtent with what is afterwards ſaid, *for my time is not yet full come*; not to die, or to be glorified, but to go up to the feaſt.

Ver. 9. *When he had ſaid theſe words unto them*, &c.] Had exhorted them to go up to the feaſt, and told them that he ſhould not go yet, and the reaſon of it: *he abode ſtill in Galilee*; and went not up with his brethren, nor at all at preſent; ſhowing hereby a firmneſs and reſolution of mind, not uſing lightneſs of ſpeech; and his words being not yea and nay, but all of a-piece, and by which he abode.

Ver. 10. *But when his brethren were gone up,* &c.] To the feaſt, as all the *Oriental* verſions read, from the next clauſe: *then went he alſo up unto the feaſt*; the *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *he went up that day*; which is very likely, and no ways contrary to what is ſaid, in ver. 14. for though he did not go up to the temple to teach, till the middle of the feaſt, he might be up at the feaſt ſooner: and according to the law, it was neceſſary that he ſhould be there on the firſt and ſecond days, and keep the *Chagigah*, and make his appearance in the court; though there was a proviſion made for ſuch that failed, the canon runs thus [m]; "he that "does not make his feſtival ſacrifice, on the firſt "good day of the feaſt, may make it throughout "the whole feaſt, and on the laſt good day of the "feaſt; and if the feaſt paſſes, and he has not "made the feſtival ſacrifice, he is not obliged to a "compenſation; and of this it is ſaid, *Eccl.* i. 15. "*That which is crooked cannot be made ſtraight,* "&c." But however, whatever day he went on, he went up *not openly, but as it were in ſecret*: as he was made under the law, and came to fulfil all righteouſneſs, it was neceſſary that he ſhould obſerve every precept, and fulfil the whole law; and therefore he went up to this feaſt; yet in the moſt private manner, that he might eſcape thoſe who would lie in wait for him, and ſought to kill him: and this he did, not through fear of death, but becauſe his hour was not yet come; this was not the feaſt he was to ſuffer at, but the paſſover following; which when near at hand, he went up to it, and entered *Jeruſalem* in the moſt publick manner.

Ver. 11. *Then the Jews ſought him at the feaſt,* &c.] Some to take him and kill him, and others to hear his doctrine, and ſee his miracles; for all expected him at the feaſt, knowing it was always his cuſtom, as it was his duty, as an *Iſraelite*, to attend at it: *and ſaid, where is he?* not naming his name; either through contempt, which might be the caſe of the far greater part; or through fear of the *Jews*; or becauſe that he was ſo well known.

Ver. 12. *And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him,* &c.] There was a general whiſper, and a private controverſy and contention among the people about him, upon enquiry being made after him: *for ſome ſaid he is a good man*; a man of a good principle, of a good life and converſation; and who is good, kind, and beneficent, both to the bodies and ſouls of men; preaches good doctrine, and does many good things: *others ſaid, nay*; or denied him to be a good man: *but he deceiveth the people*; drawing them off from the law of *Moſes*, teaching them to break the ſabbath, ſetting himſelf up for the Meſſiah, and aſſerting himſelf to be the Son of God.

Ver. 13. *Howbeit, no man ſpoke openly of him,* &c.] So loud as to be overheard, at leaſt by many, but in a ſecret and whiſpering way; or did not ſpeak with freedom, or all their mind, what they really thought of him, nor with courage and boldneſs: *for fear of the Jews*; for fear of being mobbed by them, or taken up and proſecuted, or turned out of the ſynagogue; for a law was made, that whoever confeſſed him, ſhould be ſo uſed; and this deterred perſons, from expreſſing the true ſentiments of their minds about him.

Ver. 14. *Now about the midſt of the feaſt,* &c.] About the fourth day of it, for it laſted eight days; this might be on the ſabbath-day, which ſometimes was, בתוך החג, *in the middle of the feaſt* [n]; and the rather, ſince it follows, *Jeſus went up into the temple*; as the Lord and proprietor of it, and as was his uſual method; he had for ſome reaſons kept himſelf retired till now, and now he appeared publickly: *and taught*; the people his doctrine; he expounded the ſcriptures, gave the true ſenſe of them, and inſtructed the people out of them.

Ver. 15. *And the Jews marvelled,* &c.] Both at the matter, and manner of his doctrine; it was ſuch, as never man ſpake; his words were ſo gracious, and there were ſuch truth and evidence in them, and they were delivered with ſuch power and authority, that they were aſtoniſhed at them: *ſaying, how knoweth this man letters?* or *the ſcriptures*, as the *Arabic* and *Perſic* verſions render it; which are called *holy letters*, 2 *Tim.* iii. 15. according to which, the ſenſe is; that they were ſurprized at his knowledge of the ſcriptures, that he ſhould be converſant with them, and be able to interpret them, and give the ſenſe and meaning of them, in ſo full and clear a manner, as he did: or elſe the ſenſe is, how came this man to be ſuch a learned man? whence has he this wiſdom, and all this learning which he ſhows? as in *Matt.* xiii. 54. So a learned man is in *Iſa.* xxix. 11. ſaid to be one that, יודע הספר, επιςαμενος γραμματα, *knows letters*, as the *Septuagint* there tranſlate the *Hebrew* text; but how Chriſt ſhould know them, or be a learned man, *having never learned*, was ſurprizing to them: that is, he had not had a liberal education, but was brought up to a trade; he was not trained up at the feet of any of their *Rabbins*, in any of their univerſities, or ſchools of learning; and in which they were certainly right. Modern *Jews* pretend to ſay he had a maſter, whom they ſometimes call *Elchanan* [o], but moſt commonly they make him to be *R. Joſhua ben Perachiah* [p]; with whom they ſay, he fled into *Alexandria* in *Egypt*, for fear of *Jannai* the king; and one of their writers [q], on this account, charges the *Evangeliſt* with a falſhood: but who are we to believe, the *Jews* who lived at the ſame time with Jeſus, and knew his education and manner of life, or thoſe that have lived ages ſince?

Ver. 16. *Jeſus anſwered them and ſaid,* &c.] Having heard them expreſs their ſurprize, and ſtate their objection: *my doctrine is not mine*; it was his, as he was God; as ſuch, he was the author of it, it was from him, by the revelation of him; and it was of him, or he was the ſubject of it, as Mediator; it reſpected his perſon as God man, his offices, as prophet, prieſt, and king, and his grace, righteouſneſs, and ſalvation; and it was his, as preached by him as man; it came by him, and firſt began to be ſpoken by him; and was ſo ſpoken by him, as it never was before, or ſince: but it was not human; it was not acquired by him, as man; he did not learn it of man; he needed no human teachings; he increaſed in wiſdom without them, from his infancy: they ſaid right, in ſaying he had never learned; the ſpirit of wiſdom and knowledge reſted on him, and the treaſures of them were hid in him; nor was it a device or invention of his, as man; it was not from himſelf as ſuch, but it was from heaven, from his Father: wherefore he adds, *but his that ſent me*; thereby intimating, that it was of God, and was communicated to him by his Father; from whom he received it, and from whom he had a commiſſion to preach it; ſo that his doctrine was that wiſdom which comes from above, and is pure and peaceable, divine and heavenly, and ought to be received by men.

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[m] Miſn. Chagiga, c. 1. §. 6. Maimon. Hilch. Chagiga, c. 2. §. 4, 5, 6, 7.

[n] Miſn. Succa, c. 5. §. 5.

[o] Toldos Jeſu, p. 5.

[p] Juchaſin, fol. 159. 1. Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 21. 1. & 24.

[q] R. Iſaac. Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 46. p. 435.

Ver. 17. *If any man will do his will*, &c.] Meaning, not one that perfectly fulfils the law, which is the good, and perfect, and acceptable will of God; for there is no man that does this, or can do it; nor is it ſo ſaid here, *if any man do his will*, but *if any man will do* it; that is, is deſirous of doing it; who has it wrought in him both to will and do, of the good pleaſure of God, by his grace and Spirit; with whom to will is preſent, though he has not power to perform, and ſo is a ſpiritual man; and who believes in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which is one branch of the will of God; and who depends upon the Spirit and grace of God, and acts from a principle of love to God, and in the exerciſe of faith on Chriſt: *he ſhall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or* whether *I ſpeak of myſelf*; not a man of mere natural knowledge and learning, or a man of theory and ſpeculation, is a judge of doctrine; but he that leans not to his own underſtanding, and implores the aſſiſtance of the divine Spirit, and who is for reducing doctrine into practice: he knows by the efficacy of the doctrine upon his heart, and the influence it has on his life and converſation; by its coming not in word only, but in power; and by its working effectually in him, whether it is divine or human, of God or of man.

Ver. 18. *He that ſpeaketh of himſelf*, &c.] What he himſelf has deviſed, and is a ſcheme of his own; for which he has no divine warrant and commiſſion: *ſeeketh his own glory*; honour and applauſe from men; as did the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, who taught for doctrines the commandments of men, the traditions of the elders, their own gloſſes upon the law, and their own deciſions and determinations; and as did the falſe teachers, who had nothing elſe in view but themſelves, their worldly intereſt, or vain glory; theſe ſuited their doctrines to the minds and luſts of men, in order to gain their point: *but he that ſeeketh his glory that ſent him*; that gave him in commiſſion what he ſhould ſay and ſpeak, and his only; as did Chriſt, and ſo his apoſtles after him: *the ſame is true, and no unrighteouſneſs is in him*; he is an upright and faithful man, and what he ſays is truth; he brings true doctrine along with him, and there is no fraud or impoſture in him; nor any inſincerity *in his heart*, as the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions render it; nor any diſhoneſty in his conduct; he is no cheat or deceiver; was he, he would ſeek his own glory and intereſt; but as he appears to be a man of no deſign, his doctrine is to be depended on and received; and ſuch was Chriſt.

Ver. 19. *Did not Moſes give you the law*, &c.] After Chriſt had vindicated himſelf and his doctrine, he proceeds to reprove the *Jews* for their breaking the law, which contained the will of God; by which it appeared, that they were no proper judges of his doctrine, though they cavilled at it: the queſtion he puts, could not be denied by them; for though properly ſpeaking, God was the law-giver, yet inaſmuch as it was delivered by *Moſes*, it is aſcribed to him, and ſaid to come by him; and it was put into his hands, to be delivered by him, peculiarly to the people of *Iſrael*; and being given to the *Jewiſh* fathers, not only for themſelves, but for their poſterity in ages to come, is ſaid to be given to the then preſent generation; and may be underſtood, either of the whole ſyſtem of laws, moral, ceremonial, and judicial, belonging to that people; or elſe of the particular law, concerning the keeping of the ſabbath, which was a peculiar law of *Moſes*, and proper to the children of *Iſrael* only: *and yet none of you keepeth the law*; though they boaſted of it as a ſingular privilege, and reſted in it, and their obedience to it for life and ſalvation, yet daily broke it in various inſtances, in thought, word, or deed; yea, thoſe that ſat in *Moſes*'s chair, and taught it, did not obſerve and do what they taught; nor could the moſt holy and righteous man among them, perfectly keep it; and many of them, who were moſt forward to cenſure others, for the violation of it, paid the leaſt regard to it; and particularly to the law of the ſabbath, which both prieſts and people tranſgreſſed, in one point or another, every ſabbath-day: wherefore our Lord reaſons with them, *why go ye about to kill me?* an harmleſs and innocent man, who never injured you in your perſons and properties; and which is a proof of their not keeping that body of laws *Moſes* gave them, ſince *thou ſhalt not kill* is one of them: though rather this may refer to the law of the ſabbath, and the ſenſe be, that ſince *Moſes* had given them the law of the ſabbath, and they did not keep it themſelves, why ſhould they ſeek to take away his life, for what they pretended was a breach of it? for our Lord here, as appears by what follows, refers to what they ſought to do, above a year and a half ago, and ſtill continued to ſeek after; namely, to kill him, becauſe he had healed a man on the ſabbath-day, ch. v. 16, 18. and vii. 1.

Ver. 20. *The people anſwered and ſaid*, &c.] Theſe ſeem to be the country people, who came from *Galilee* and other parts, who knew nothing of the deſigns of the *Jeruſalem Jews* upon him; nor were they his downright enemies at leaſt, but rather ſeemed to favour him, and were on his ſide, though greatly provoked to hear him talk after this manner: *thou haſt a devil*; or art poſſeſſed with one; thou talkeſt like one of the demoniacks, like a mad man, one beſide thyſelf; whom the devil has ſo much power over, and has ſo deprived of thy ſenſes, that thou knoweſt not what thou ſayeſt: *who goeth about to kill thee?* no man; for they could not believe that any man, or body of men, would be ſo wicked, as to attempt to take away the life of ſo harmleſs a perſon, and who did ſo much good both to the bodies and ſouls of men.

Ver. 21. *Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto them*, &c.] Taking no notice of their paſſion, reproach, and blaſphemy; but proceeding upon the thing he had in view, and which he was determined to reaſſume, and vindicate himſelf in: *I have done one work*; that is, on the ſabbath-day; meaning, his cure of the man that had had a diſorder eight and thirty years, who lay at *Betheſda*'s pool; which ſingle action, they charged with being a breach of the ſabbath, he mentions with a view to their many, and daily violations of it: *and ye all marvel*; at it, as a thing unheard of, as a moſt ſhocking piece of iniquity, as an intolerable evil; wondring that any man ſhould have the front, to bid another take up his bed and walk, on the ſabbath-day: they did not marvel at the miracle that was wrought; but were amazed, offended, and diſturbed, at its being done on the ſabbath day.

Ver. 22. *Moſes therefore gave unto you circumciſion*, &c.] The command of circumciſion, which he renewed and eſtabliſhed, *Lev.* xii. 3. (*not becauſe*, or *that it is of Moſes*; originally, or that he was the firſt giver of it, for it was enjoined before his time; this is a correction of what is before ſaid, giving a more accurate account of the riſe of circumciſion: *but of the fathers*;) *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, to whom it was enjoined by God, and who practiſed it before the times of *Moſes*; ſo that this command was in force before him, and obligatory upon the deſcendants of *Abraham*, before he delivered it; and would have been, if he had never mentioned it; though the *Jews* ſay [r], “we don't circumciſe becauſe *Abraham* our father, on whom be peace, circumciſed himſelf and his houſhold, but becauſe the holy bleſſed God commanded us by *Moſes*, that we ſhould be circumciſed, as *Abraham* our father was circumciſed.” But no doubt it would have been binding on them, if *Moſes* had ſaid nothing about it; the command to *Abraham* is ſo expreſs, for the circumciſion of his male offspring, *Gen.* xvii. 10, 11, 12. however, it being both of *Moſes* and of the fathers, laid a very great obligation on the *Jews* to obſerve it: *and ye on the ſabbath-day circumciſe a man*; a male child, as they did, when the eighth day fell on a ſabbath-day; for the law of circumciſion, was before the law of the ſabbath, and therefore was not to be made void by it, nor was it made void by it; and ſo much is intimated by our Lord's obſerving, that it was not of *Moſes*, but of the fathers; and this is the reaſon which the *Karaite Jews* give, for circumciſion on the ſabbath-day: for [s] “ſay they, becauſe it is a former command, from the time of *Abraham* our father, on whom be peace, before the giving of the law of the ſabbath, היו מלים בשבת, *they circumciſe on the ſabbath-day*; and when the command of the ſabbath afterwards took place, it was not poſſible it ſhould diſannul circumciſion on the ſabbath-day; and for the ſame reaſon, they alſo allow the ſacrifice of the paſſover to be done on the ſabbath-day, becauſe it is a command which went before the command of the ſabbath.” And this was alſo the ſenſe and practice of the other *Jews*: thus citing the law of *Moſes* in *Lev.* xii. 3. *And in the eighth day, the fleſh of his foreſkin ſhall be circumciſed*, by way of Gloſs upon it add, ואפילו בשבת, *and even on the ſabbath-day* [t]; and on the ſame text another writer obſerves [u], that by *Gematry*, every day is fit for circumciſion. *R. Joſe* ſays [w], “they do all things neceſſary to circumciſion, on the ſabbath-day.” *R. Akiba* ſays [x], “all work that can be done on the evening of the ſabbath, does not drive away the ſabbath; but circumciſion, which cannot be done on the evening of the ſabbath, drives away the ſabbath: they do all things neceſſary to circumciſion; they circumciſe, and make bare, and ſuck, and put (on the wound) a plaiſter and cummin; and which, if not bruiſed on the evening of the ſabbath, they may chew with their teeth.”—Alſo it is allowed of [y], to “waſh the infant on the third day of circumciſion, which happens to be on the ſabbath.” Moreover, a caſe is put after this manner [z]; “if a man has two infants, one to be circumciſed after the ſabbath, and the other to be *circumciſed on the ſabbath*, and forgets, and circumciſes that, that was to be after the ſabbath, on the ſabbath, he is guilty of ſin; if one is to be circumciſed in the evening of the ſabbath, and the other on the ſabbath, and he forgets, and circumciſes that which ſhould be on the evening of the ſabbath, on the ſabbath, *R. Eliezer* pronounces him guilty, but *R. Joſhua* abſolves him.” And we have an inſtance [a] of “*R. Sheſhana*, the ſon of *R. Samuel bar Abdimo*, that when he was to be circumciſed, it was the ſabbath-day, and they forgot the razor; and they enquired of *R. Meni* and *R. Iſaac ben Eleazar*, and it was drove off to another day.” From all which it appears, that circumciſion on the ſabbath-day, was a common practice, and which confirms the aſſertion of Chriſt.

Ver. 23. *If a man on the ſabbath-day receive circumciſion*, &c.] As it was certain in many inſtances he did: *that the law of Moſes might not be broken*; either the law concerning circumciſion, which confirmed the law given to *Abraham*, and required it ſhould be on the eighth day, let it fall when it would, even on a ſabbath-day; and therefore on that day, male children received circumciſion, that that law might be kept, and not be broken: or elſe the law concerning the ſabbath; and the ſenſe be, if circumciſion was adminiſtered on the ſabbath-day, *without breaking the law of Moſes*, as ſome render the words, which commanded the obſervation of the ſabbath, *are ye angry at me*; and purſue me with ſo much wrath and bitterneſs, *becauſe I have made a man every whit whole on the ſabbath-day?* or *a man that was whole ſound on the ſabbath-day*; who was wholly, or all over diſordered, every limb of whom ſhook with the palſy: or as ſome think the ſenſe is, he was made every whit whole, both in ſoul and body; and then the argument is, if it was no breach of the ſabbath to make a wound, and lay a plaiſter on it, as in circumciſion; it would be no violation of it, nor ought any to be offended with it, that Chriſt ſhould heal a diſeaſed man, who was ſo in every part of his body, and reſtore health to his ſoul likewiſe: and nothing is more common with the *Jews* than to ſay, the danger of life, and, פיקוח נפש, *the preſervation of the ſoul*, or life, drive away the ſabbath [b].

Ver. 24. *Judge not according to the appearance*, &c.] Or through reſpect of perſons, and ſo as to pleaſe men, the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*; who had condemned the action of Chriſt, in curing the diſeaſed man on the ſabbath-day, and ſought to kill him for it: *but judge righteous judgment*; give your ſenſe and judgment of things, according to the truth and evidence of them; and don't find fault with that, which you yourſelves allow of, and which *Moſes* and his law, and your own practices juſtify.

Ver. 25. *Then ſaid ſome of them of Jeruſalem*, &c.] Who were inhabitants of *Jeruſalem*, and ſo are diſtinguiſhed from the people, ver. 20. who came up out of the country to the feaſt; ſo *Joſe ben Jochanan* is called, איש ירושלים, *a man of Jeruſalem* [c]; that is, an inhabitant of it: now theſe men living in the city, knew more of the temper and diſpoſition, the deſigns and attempts, of the chief prieſts, *Scribes*, and elders, to take away the life of Chriſt; and therefore ſay, *is not this he whom they ſeek to kill?* they knew that they had formed a deſign to kill him, ever ſince the paſſover before the laſt; when he wrought the miracle referred to in the text, and that they had been ever ſince plotting againſt his life, and were now at this feaſt ſeeking an opportunity to lay hold on him and kill him.

Ver. 26. *But lo, he ſpeaketh boldly*, &c.] And with great freedom, and openly and publickly in the temple, as if he had a licence from the chief prieſts for ſo doing: *and they ſay nothing to him*; don't contradict him, or forbid him ſpeaking; he goes on without controul; tho' he takes great liberty in charging the *Jews* with an intention to kill him, in arguing from their practices in vindication of himſelf, and in ſuggeſting that they judged in favour of men, and not according to the truth of things. *Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Chriſt?* have they changed their minds concerning him, and ſo their conduct towards him? are they convinced, and do they know by plain demonſtrations, and full proof, that he is really the Meſſiah that has been promiſed of old, and long expected?

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[r] Maimon. in Miſn. Cholin, c. 7. §. 6.

[s] R. Eliahu in Adderet apud Trigland. de Sect. Karæorum, c. 9. p. 134.

[t] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 132. 1. Mitzvot Tora, pr. Affirm. 28.

[u] Baal Hatturim in Lev. xii. 3.

[w] Miſna Sabbat, c. 18. §. 3.

[x] Ib. c. 19. §. 1, 2. T. Bab. Peſachim, fol. 69. 2. Maimon. Hilchot Milah, c. 2. §. 6, 7.

[y] Ib. §. 3. Bereſhit Rabba, §. 8. fol. 70. 3. Maimon. ib. §. 8.

[z] Ib. §. 4. T. Bab. Ceritot, fol. 19. 2.

[a] Juchaſin, fol. 105. 2.

[b] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 132. 1.

[c] Pirke Abot, c. 1. §. 4, 5.

Ver. 27. *Howbeit, we know this man whence he is*, &c.] They ſignify, that if the rulers had altered their minds, and had gone into the belief of Jeſus of *Nazareth* being the Meſſiah, they ſhould not follow them in it, for this reaſon; becauſe they knew from whence he came; meaning not ſo much the place of his birth, which they ſuppoſed was *Galilee*, and *Nazareth* in *Galilee*, in which they were miſtaken as the manner of his birth, which they could account for: they pretended to know his extract, that he was the ſon of *Joſeph* and *Mary*, that he was begotten in wedlock, and was born as other perſons are; there was no difficulty with them in accounting for his coming into the world, no more than any other ordinary perſon; his deſcent from *Joſeph* and *Mary* was well known to them, and to be accounted for in a rational way, and therefore concluded he could not be the Meſſiah: *but when Chriſt cometh, no man knoweth whence he is*; they knew the place from whence he was to come; ſo the chief-prieſts and *Scribes* did, *Matt.* ii. 4, 5. and ſo did theſe *Jews*, ver. 42. They knew he would come from *Bethlehem*, and they knew that he would come out of the ſeed of *David*; but then he was to be born of a virgin, according to *Iſ.* vii. 14. and ſuch a coming into the world was not to be known, reaſoned upon, and accounted for: wherefore ſince Jeſus, according to the notion of theſe men, came into the world in the common and ordinary way, they thought they had an invincible argument againſt his being the Meſſiah; and therefore, let their rulers do what they would, for their parts, they were determined to reject him: and becauſe it could not be known from whence the Meſſiah ſhould come; hence the ancient *Jews* uſed to call him the ſeed which comes from another place; not from the place from whence ſeed ordinarily comes, from the loins of men, but from ſome other place they knew not where: their words are very remarkable on that paſſage in *Gen.* iv. 25. *and ſhe called his name Seth, for God hath appointed me another ſeed*, &c. This obſervation is made by *R. Tanchuma*, in the name of *R. Samuel* [d]; ſays he, "ſhe has reſpect to that ſeed, which is he that comes, ממקום אחר, *from another place*, and what is this? this is the king Meſſiah." And elſewhere [e], the ſame *Rabbi* obſerves on thoſe words in *Gen.* xix. 32. *that we may preſerve ſeed of our father*: it is not written, *that we may preſerve a ſon of our father*, but *that we may preſerve ſeed of our father*; that ſeed which is he that comes from *another place*; and what is this? this is the king Meſſiah. The modern *Jews* [f] endeavour to explain away the ſenſe of this phraſe, *another ſeed*, as if it regarded ſtrange ſeed; and that the ſenſe of the expreſſion is only, that the Meſſiah ſhould ſpring from the family of *Moab*, and from *Ruth* the *Moabiteſs*: nor is their ſenſe what *Aquinas* [g] attributes to the *Jewiſh Rabbins*, "that the more noble part of that maſs, of which *Adam* was made, remained untouched (by ſin) and was afterwards transfuſed into *Seth*; and ſo thro' all deſcending from him, unto *Joakim*, or *Eliakim*, or *Heli*, the father of the virgin, out of which the body of the bleſſed virgin was made:" which is no other than a Popiſh device, fathered upon the *Jews*, and made for the ſake of the virgin *Mary*, rather than for the ſake of Chriſt. But their meaning is, that Chriſt ſhould not be begotten of man, or come into the world in the ordinary way of generation, but ſhould be born of a virgin; and ſo it could not be known, and accounted for from whence he was, or from whence that ſeed was of which he was made. The Angel gives the beſt account of this in *Luke* i. 35. a body was prepared for Chriſt by the Lord; it was conceived by the power of the Holy Ghoſt; his birth of a virgin was miraculous; it is beyond the comprehenſion of men, and can't be explain'd by any mortal; from whence he is it can't be ſaid; no man can be pointed to as his father; all that can be ſaid is, he was made of a woman, a virgin.

Ver. 28. *Then cried Jeſus in the temple as he taught*, &c.] Over-hearing the reaſonings of theſe men, or however knowing what they ſaid; ſo the *Perſic* verſion adds, *having ſecretly known this*; exalted his voice as he was teaching in the temple, and in the midſt of his diſcourſe, publickly before all the people, in the temple, ſpoke out with a loud voice, that all might hear: *ſaying, ye both know me, and ye know whence I am*; ſome, as the *Ethiopic* verſion read theſe words by way of interrogation, *do ye both know me*, and *do ye know from whence I am?* no; you do not. Or they may be conſidered as an ironical conceſſion; yes, you know me, and you know whence I am; you know me to be Jeſus of *Nazareth*, but you are wrong, I am not of *Nazareth*; you ſuppoſe I come from *Galilee*, but that is your ignorance; you take me to be the real ſon of *Joſeph*, to be begotten by him on *Mary*, but that is your miſtake: ſuch is your knowledge of me; you know me indeed who I am, and from whence I come. *And I am not come of myſelf*; into this world, by incarnation, or the aſſumption of human nature, to work out the ſalvation of men: the Father called him to it, and he agreeing to do it, was in the fulneſs of time ſent about it; this was not a device of his own, or an honour he took to himſelf; he was not alone in it; it was a mutual agreement between him and his Father, in conſequence of which he was ſent, and came. *But he that ſent me is true*; to the covenant he made with Chriſt, and to the promiſes he made to the Fathers of the Old Teſtament, concerning the miſſion of his ſon; and he is true to be believed, in the teſtimonies he gave of him, particularly by a voice from heaven, declaring him his beloved ſon. *Whom ye know not*; ſo that notwithſtanding all their boaſted knowledge of him, they knew not his Father, from whence he came, and by whom he was ſent; and notwithſtanding alſo their boaſted knowledge of the one, only, true, and living God, ſee *Rom.* ii. 17. yet they knew him not in a ſpiritual ſenſe; they knew him not in Chriſt, nor as the Father of Chriſt; they knew neither the Father nor the Son; and this their ignorance of both was the reaſon of their hatred of Chriſt, and of his followers, *John* xv. 21. and xvi. 3.

Ver. 29. *But I know him*, &c.] His nature and perfections, his purpoſes and promiſes, his council and covenant, his mind and will; and indeed none knows him but he, and thoſe to whom he pleaſes to reveal him; and there is good reaſon why he ſhould have intimate and perfect knowledge of him: *for I am from him*; being the only-begotten of him, and as ſuch lay in his boſom, and knew him, and his whole heart, and was privy to all of him, and that that is within him: *and he hath ſent me*; in an office-capacity to redeem his people. This is the original deſcent of Chriſt, which the *Jews* knew not, tho' they pretended to know him, and whence he was.

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[d] Bereſhit Rabba, §. 23. fol. 20. 4. Midraſh Ruth, fol. 36. 1.

[e] Bereſhit Rabba, §. 51. fol. 46. 1. Midraſh Ruth, fol. 35. 4.

[f] Mattanot Cehunah & Jade Moſeh in ib.

[g] In 3 ſent. diſtinct. 3. art. 2.

Ver. 30. *Then they ſought to take him*, &c.] By force, and carry him before the *Sanhedrim*, in order to be tried and condemned as a blaſphemer, being enraged to hear him claim a deſcent from God, whom they took to be a mere man, the ſon of *Joſeph* the carpenter: *but no man laid hands on him*; tho' they had a good will to it, they had no power to do it, being reſtrained by the ſecret providence of God from it, and awed by the majeſty of Chriſt, which ſhewed itſelf in his looks and words; and perhaps alſo they might be afraid of the people, leſt they ſhould riſe in his favour; and ſo every man being fearful of being the firſt that ſhould ſeize him, no man did: however, ſo it was ordered by divine providence, that he ſhould not be apprehended at this time, *becauſe his hour was not yet come*; to ſuffer and die, to depart out of this world, and go to the Father: there was a preciſe time fixed for this in the council and covenant of God, by mutual compact, called *due time*; as his coming into the world is called *the fulneſs of time*: nor could he die before that time, and therefore no man was ſuffered to lay hands on him, whatever good will he had to it. And there is a time for every man's death; nor can any man die before that time, or live beyond it; ſee *Eccl.* iii. 2. *Job* xiv. 5. and this is the ſenſe of the ancient *Jews*; for they ſay [h], "a man before his years, or his "time, does not die;" that is, before he comes to the years appointed for him: and they aſk [i], "who is there that goes before his time? *i. e.* dies "before his time?" And it is ſaid [k] of a certain perſon who was in his houſe, and מטא זמניה, *his time was come*, and he died without ſickneſs: tho' it muſt be owned ſome of them were otherwiſe minded, and ſay [l], that death, by the hand of heaven, or God, ſhortens a man's years; and that there are ſome reaſons for which righteous men depart out of this world before their time is come; and particularly of *Enoch* they ſay, God took him before his time was come [m].

Ver. 31. *And many of the people believed on him*, &c.] Whilſt ſome were diſpleaſed at his doctrine, others were induced by his miracles to believe on him, as an extraordinary perſon, if not the Meſſiah; and theſe were the common people, eſpecially thoſe that came out of the country; for the city *Jews*, and above all the rulers, were very averſe to him: and it is eaſy to obſerve, that faith in Chriſt, and true religion, ſpread and flouriſh moſt among the meaner ſort of people. *And ſaid, when Chriſt cometh, will he do more miracles than theſe which this man hath done?* referring not ſo much to the miracles, many of them might have ſeen done by him in other parts of *Judea*, and in *Galilee*; nor only to thoſe he had done in the preceding feaſts at *Jeruſalem*, but to thoſe that were done by him now, tho' not recorded by the Evangeliſt. The *Jews* expected many miracles to be wrought by the Meſſiah when he came, and they had good reaſon for it from *Iſ.* xxxv. 5, 6. To theſe Chriſt ſends *John* the *Baptiſt*, and the *Jews*, for proofs of his being the Meſſiah, *Matt.* xi. 4. *John* x. 37, 38. and by theſe he was approved of God as ſuch, *Acts* ii. 23. And it is certain that the ancient *Jews* expected miracles in the days of the Meſſiah. "Says *R. Simeon* to "*Eleazar* his ſon, *Eleazar*, at the time that the "king Meſſiah is raiſed up, how many *ſigns and* "*other wonders* will be done in the world? a little "after, from that day all the *ſigns*, and *wonders*, "and *mighty works*, which the holy bleſſed God "did in *Egypt*, he will do to the *Iſraelites*, as it is "ſaid, *Mic.* vii. 15. *according to the days of thy* "*coming out of the land of Egypt, will I ſhew unto him* "*marvellous things* [n]." So the *Targumiſt* on *Iſ.* liii. 8. paraphraſes thus, "from afflictions and puniſhment "he will deliver our captivity, and *the wonderful* "*things* which ſhall be done for us in his days, "who can tell?" It is true indeed that the modern *Jews* have laid aſide ſuch expectations, and pretend they were not looked for formerly. *Maimonides* ſays [o], "let it not enter into thy heart, that "the king Meſſiah hath need to do ſigns and won-"ders, (as that he ſhall renew things in the world, "or raiſe the dead, and the like; theſe are things "which fools ſpeak of); the thing is not ſo." And he inſtances, in *Ben Coziba*, who ſet up for the Meſſiah, of whom *R. Akiba*, and the reſt of the wiſe men of that age, did not require a ſign or miracle; yet this ſame writer elſewhere ſays [p], that "all nations ſhall make peace with the Meſſiah, "and ſerve him, becauſe of his great righteouſ-"neſs, and the miracles which ſhall be done by "him."

Ver. 32. *The Phariſees heard that the people murmured*, &c.] Or whiſpered, privately talked among themſelves: *ſuch things concerning him*; as that ſurely he muſt be the Meſſiah, ſince ſuch wonderful things were done by him, and might alſo expreſs ſome uneaſineſs and ſurprize, that the rulers did not receive him as ſuch: *and the Phariſees, and the chief-prieſts, ſent officers to take him*; and bring him before the *Sanhedrim*, by them to be condemned, and ſo a ſtop be put to the peoples receiving him, and believing in him as the Meſſiah; fearing, that ſhould things go on at this rate, their principles and practices would be rejected, and their perſons and authority be brought into contempt.

Ver. 33. *Then ſaid Jeſus unto them*, &c.] To the officers that were ſent to take him, and other unbelieving *Jews* that were about him: *yet a little while am I with you*; no longer than till the next paſſover, which was but about half a year at moſt: this he might ſay, partly to quicken the attention of the people to him, to make the beſt uſe and improvement of his miniſtry whilſt they had it, ſince in a little time he would be removed from them; and partly to ſuggeſt to the officers that were ſent to take him, that they, and their maſters, need not have given themſelves that trouble, for in a ſhort time he ſhould be gone from them, and till that time he ſhould continue in ſpite of them. *And* then *I go unto him that ſent me*; ſtill confirming his miſſion from God, expreſſing his death by going, and as being voluntary, and ſignifying his glory and happineſs after it.

Ver. 34. *Ye ſhall ſeek me*, &c.] That is, the Meſſiah, who he was; meaning, that after his departure they ſhould be in great diſtreſs, and be very much on the enquiry after, and ſolicitous for the coming of the Meſſiah, to be a redeemer and deliverer of them out of their troubles: *and ſhall not find* me; no Meſſiah will appear, no Saviour will be ſent, no Redeemer will come to relieve them; they ſhall enquire, and look for one in vain, as they did. *And where I am*, thither *ye cannot come*; intimating hereby, that not only their temporal eſtate and condition would be very diſtreſſed and miſerable, but alſo their eternal eſtate; ſince they ſhould not be able to come where he would be in his human nature, and where he now was, as a divine perſon, namely, in heaven.

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[h] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 114. 2. & Sanhedrin, fol. 29. 1. & Bava Metzia, fol. 85. 1.
[i] T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 4. 2.
[k] Zohar in Exod. fol. 71. 4.
[l] Piſke Toſephot. Sabbat. art. 113.
[m] Zohar in Exod. fol. 4. 4.
[n] Ib. fol. 3. 4. & 4. 2.
[o] Hilchot Melakim, c. 11. §. 3.
[p] In Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 11. §. 1.

Ver. 35. *Then ſaid the Jews among themſelves*, &c.] That is, the unbelieving, ſcoffing *Jews*; it may be the officers, at leaſt ſome of them, that were ſent to take him: *whither will he go that we ſhall not find him?* what diſtant, or obſcure part of the world will he betake himſelf to, and there hide himſelf, that ſo he cannot be found? *will he go unto the diſperſed among the Gentiles?* or *Greeks*; and ſo may deſign the *Jews*, who were ſcattered abroad in the times of the *Grecian* monarchy, under the ſucceſſors of *Alexander*, and particularly *Antiochus*, in diſtinction from the *Babyloniſh* diſperſion; or the ſtrangers ſcattered through *Pontus Galatia*, &c. to whom *Peter* writes, 1 *Pet*. i. 1. The *Arabic* verſion renders it, *the ſect of the Greeks*; by which the *Helleniſtic Jews* ſeem to be meant: or the *Jews* in general, wherever, and by whomſoever ſcattered, who might be thought to be more ignorant than the *Jews* in *Judea*, and therefore more eaſily to be impoſed upon: hence, in a flouting manner, they enquire, whether he'll go to thoſe when he is rejected by them. The *Syriac* and *Ethiopic* verſions read, *will he go into the countries, or country of the Gentiles*; into heathen countries, not to the *Jews* there, but to the *Gentiles* themſelves: *and teach the Gentiles?* ſuggeſting, that he was more fit to be a teacher of them, than of the *Jews*, and might meet with more encouragement and ſucceſs among them, who would not be able to detect him.

Ver. 36. *What* manner of *ſaying is this that he ſaid*, &c.] It is not eaſy to be underſtood; and if that is not meant, which is ſuggeſted, what ſhould he mean by ſaying, *ye ſhall ſeek me, and ſhall not find* me, *and where I am*, thither *ye cannot come?* repeating the words of Chriſt juſt now expreſſed by him.

Ver. 37. *In the laſt day, that great* day *of the feaſt*, &c.] That is, of tabernacles, as appears from ver. 2. which was uſually called, חג, *the feaſt*, in diſtinction from the paſſover and pentecoſt [q]; and the eighth day of it was called, הרגל האחרון, *the laſt* day *of the feaſt* [r], as here: and it was a *great* day, being, as is ſaid in *Lev*. xxiii. 36. an holy convocation, a ſolemn aſſembly, in which no ſervile work was done, and in which an offering was made by fire unto the Lord. According to the traditions of the *Jews*, fewer ſacrifices were offered on this day than on the reſt; for on the firſt day they offered thirteen bullocks, and leſſened one every day; ſo that on the ſeventh day, there was but ſeven offered, and on the eighth day but one, when the prieſts returned to their lots, as at other feaſts [s]: but nothwithſtanding the *Jews* make out this to be the greater day for them, ſince the ſeventy bullocks offered on the other ſeven days, were for the ſeventy nations of the world; but the one bullock, on the eighth day, was peculiarly for the people of *Iſrael* [t]: and beſides, they obſerve, that there were ſeveral things peculiar on this day, as different from the reſt; as the caſting of lots, the benediction by itſelf, a feaſt by itſelf, an offering by itſelf, a ſong by itſelf, and a bleſſing by itſelf [u]: and on this day they had alſo the ceremony of drawing and pouring water, attended with the uſual rejoicings as on other days; the account of which is this [w]: "the pouring out of water was "after this manner; a golden pot, which held "three logs, was filled out of *Siloah*, and when "they came to the water-gate, they blowed (their "trumpets) and ſhouted, and blowed; (then a "prieſt) went up by the aſcent of the altar, and "turned to the left hand, (where) were two ſilver "baſons——that on the weſt ſide was filled with "water, and that on the eaſt with wine; he poured the baſon of water into that of wine, and that "of wine into that of water." At which time there were great rejoicing, piping, and dancing, by the moſt religious and ſober people among the *Jews*; inſomuch that it is ſaid [x], that "he that never ſaw the "rejoicing of the place of drawing of water, never "ſaw any rejoicing in his life." And this ceremony, they ſay [y], is a tradition of *Moſes* from mount *Sinai*, and refers to ſome ſecret and myſterious things; yea, they plainly ſay, that it has reſpect to the pouring forth of the Holy Ghoſt [z]. "Says *R. Joſhua ben Levi*, why is its name called "the place of drawing water? becauſe, from "thence, שואבים רוח הקודש, *they draw the Holy* "*Ghoſt*, as it is ſaid, *and ye ſhall draw water with* "*joy out of the wells of ſalvation*, *Iſ*. xii. 3." Moreover, it was on this day they prayed for the rains for the year enſuing: it is aſked [a], "from "what time do they make mention of the powers "of the rains (which deſcend by the power of "God)? *R. Eliezer* ſays, from the firſt good day "of the feaſt (of tabernacles); *R. Joſhua* ſays, "from the laſt good day of the feaſt.——They "don't pray for the rains, but near the rains;" that is, the time of rains; and which, one of their commentators ſays [b], is the eighth day of the feaſt of tabernacles; for from the feaſt of tabernacles, thenceforward is the time of rains. The *Jews* have a notion, that at this feaſt the rains of the enſuing year were fixed: hence they ſay [c], that "at the "feaſt of tabernacles judgment is made concerning "the waters;" or a decree or determination is made concerning them by God. Upon which the *Gemara* [d] has theſe words, "wherefore does the law "ſay pour out water on the feaſt of tabernacles? "Says the holy, bleſſed God, pour out water before me, that the rains of the year may be bleſſed "unto you." Now when all theſe things are conſidered, it will eaſily be ſeen with what pertinency our Lord expreſſes himſelf on this day, with reſpect to the effuſion of the gifts and graces of the Spirit of God, as follows: *Jeſus ſtood and cried*; he now ſtood up, whereas at other times he uſed to ſit, and ſpoke with a loud voice, both to ſhow his fervour and earneſtneſs, and that all might hear: *ſaying, if any man thirſt, let him come to me and drink.* This is to be underſtood not of a natural thirſt, tho' the alluſion is to it, which is very painful and diſtreſſing; as the inſtances of the *Iſraelites* in the wilderneſs, *Sampſon* after he had ſlain the *Philiſtines*, and our Lord upon the croſs, ſhow; much leſs a ſinful thirſt, a thirſt after the riches, honours, and pleaſures of this life; but a ſpiritual thirſt, or a thirſt after ſpiritual things, after ſalvation by Chriſt, and a view of intereſt in it, free and full pardon of ſin thro' him, juſtification by his righteouſneſs, a greater degree of knowledge of him, more communion with him, and conformity to him, and after the ſincere milk of the word, and the breaſts of Goſpel-ordinances: and ſuch that thirſt after theſe things, and eagerly deſire them, and are in pain and uneaſineſs without them, as a man is, who has a violent thirſt upon him, are ſuch as are regenerated and quickened by the Spirit of God, and are made ſenſible of themſelves, and of their ſtate and condition by nature. Now theſe Chriſt invites to *come* unto him, not to *Moſes* and his law, moral or ceremonial, and to obedience to them, and works of righteouſneſs done by them, to any creature, or creature acts; for theſe are ciſterns without water, where there no true peace, joy, righteouſneſs, and ſalvation are to be had; but to himſelf, who is the fountain of gardens, the well of living waters, and who is as rivers of water in a dry land, to thirſty ſouls: and when come to him, which is by believing in him, they are encouraged to *drink*; that is, to take of the water of life freely, or to take of his grace freely; ſalvation by him is of free grace, and the pardon of ſin is according the riches of grace, and juſtification is freely by his grace, and ſo all other bleſſings; and of this they may drink abundantly, or they may partake of it largely: there is a fulneſs of grace in Chriſt, and there is an abundance of it communicated to his people; it is exceeding abundant; it flows, and overflows, and may be drank of to ſatisfaction, till their ſouls are as a watered garden, and they are ſatisfied with the goodneſs of the Lord.

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[q] Shirſhaſhirim Rabba, fol. 5. 3. & 7. 3.
[r] Miſn. Bava Metzia, c. 7. §. 6. & Maimon. in ib.
[s] Bartenora in Miſn. Succa, c. 5. §. 6.
[t] T. Bab. Succa, fol. 55. 2. Bemidbar Rabba, §. 21. fol. 231. 1.
[u] T. Bab. Succa, fol. 48. 1.
[w] Miſn. Succa, c. 4. §. 9.
[x] Ib. c. 5. §. 1, 4.
[y] T. Zebachim, fol. 110. 2. Maimon. in Miſn. Succa, c. 4. §. 9. & Hilchot Tamidin, c. 10. §. 6.
[z] T. Hieroſ. Succa, fol. 55. 1. Bereſhith Rabba, §. 70. fol. 62. 3. & Midraſh Ruth, fol. 32. 2. Caphtor, fol. 52. 1.
[a] Miſn. Taanith, c. 1. §. 1, 2.
[b] Bartenora, in ib.
[c] Miſn. Roſhhaſhana, c. 1. §. 2.
[d] T. Bab. Roſhhaſhana, fol. 16. 1.

Ver. 38. *He that believeth on me*, &c.] Which explains what is meant by coming to Chriſt, and drinking; for theſe acts are no other than for a man to go out of himſelf to Chriſt, and live by faith on him, and his grace. To which, what follows is a great encouragement; *as the ſcripture hath ſaid:* ſome refer theſe words to the preceding clauſe concerning believing in Chriſt, which the writings of the Old Teſtament ſpeak of, as in *Deut.* xviii. 15. *Iſ.* xxviii. 16. *Hab.* ii. 4. and the ſenſe is, that he that believes on Chriſt, the object of faith, the ſcripture points at, and in him, as that directs and requires; that believes in him as the mighty God, and as the prophet, prieſt, and king, and as the only foundation of the church, and lives by faith upon him, as juſt men do, then *out of his belly ſhall flow*, &c. tho' rather they belong to what follows; and do not deſign any particular place of ſcripture; for no ſuch one is to be found, where the following paſſage is expreſſed in ſo many words; but all thoſe ſcriptures which ſpeak of grace, under the metaphors of water, and abundance of water, as rivers and floods of water, and of the effuſion of the holy Spirit, under ſuch figurative expreſſions, ſuch as *Iſ.* xli. 17, 18. and xliii. 20. and xliv. 3. and lviii. 11. *Joel* ii. 28. Hence the *Syriac* verſion reads in the plural number, *as the ſcriptures hath ſaid*; referring to more than one: *out of his belly ſhall flow rivers of living water*; the grace of the Spirit of God is ſignified by *water*, becauſe it is of a cleanſing and purifying nature, as faith and hope are, having to do with the blood of Chriſt, which cleanſes from all ſin; and becauſe it fructifies and cauſes the ſaints, as trees of righteouſneſs, to grow, and bring forth fruit; and eſpecially becauſe it is cooling to thoſe who are ſcorched with the heat of a fiery law, and very refreſhing to thirſty ſouls: and it is called *living* water, becauſe by it dead ſinners are quickened, drooping ſaints are revived, and comforted; ſpiritual life in them is maintained and ſupported, and it ſprings up to, and iſſues in eternal life: and it is expreſſed by *rivers* of living water, becauſe of the abundance of it in regeneration, juſtification, and pardon; it is grace for grace, abundance of grace believers receive from Chriſt; and from him, in whom thoſe large meaſures of grace are, they *flow out* again, even *out of his belly:* from within him, out of his heart, the ſeat of it, by his lips, both in prayer to God, and in converſation with the ſaints, to whom he communicates his rich experiences of grace, to their comfort, and the glory of God; for grace is of a diffuſive and communicative nature; out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth ſpeaketh: and alſo it flows out by his life and converſation, which is ſober, righteous, and godly; and this the grace of God teaches and influences: and this grace, as it is permanent and laſting itſelf, even perpetual, and always abiding; ſo it continues to flow, and to ſhow itſelf in its acts and effects, in one way or another. The *Jews* ought not to find fault with Chriſt's uſing ſuch expreſſions, myſtically underſtood, ſince they, comparing *Moſes* and the Meſſiah together, ſay, “as “the firſt redeemer cauſed a well to ſpring up, “ſo the laſt redeemer ſhall cauſe waters to ſpring “up, according to *Joel* iii. 18[e].”

Ver. 39. *But this ſpake he of the Spirit*, &c.] Theſe are the words of the Evangeliſt, explaining the figurative expreſſions of Chriſt; ſhewing, that by rivers of living water, he meant the Spirit in his gifts and graces; and which is the plain ſenſe of the paſſages referr'd to by him, particularly *Iſ.* xliv. 3. *Joel* ii. 28. and which, as before obſerved, the *Jews* ſuppoſed were intimated by their drawing and pouring water at the feaſt of tabernacles. *Which they that believe on him ſhould receive*; the apoſtles, and others, that had believed in Chriſt, and had received the Spirit, as a Spirit of regeneration and ſanctification; as a Spirit of illumination and converſion; as a Spirit of faith and adoption; but on the day of Pentecoſt they were to receive a larger, even an extraordinary meaſure of his gifts and grace, to qualify them for greater work and ſervice: *for the Holy Ghoſt was not yet* given; the word *given* is not in the original text, but is very properly ſupplied, as it is in the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, and *Perſic* verſions. The *Arabic* verſion renders it, *for the Holy Ghoſt was not yet come:* he was; he was in being as a divine perſon, equal with the Father and Son, ſo he was from everlaſting; and he had been beſtowed in his grace upon the Old Teſtament ſaints, and reſted in his gifts upon the prophets of that diſpenſation; but, as the *Jews* themſelves confeſs[f], “after the death of the latter “prophets, *Haggai*, *Zachariah*, and *Malachi*, the “Holy Ghoſt removed from *Iſrael*.” And they expreſly ſay, he was not there in the time of the ſecond temple. *Maimonides* ſays[g], “they made “the *Urim* and *Thummim* in the ſecond temple, to “compleat the eight garments (of the prieſts), tho' “they did not enquire by them; and why did

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[e] Midraſh Kohelet, fol. 63. 2.

[f] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 9. 2. Sota, fol. 48. 2. & Sanhedrin, fol. 11. 1.

[g] Hilchot Cele Hamikdaſh, c. 10. §. 10. Vid. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 73. 2.

“ they not enquire by them? *becauſe the Holy* “ *Ghoſt was not there*; and every prieſt that does “ not ſpeak by the Holy Ghoſt, and the *Shekinah*, “ does not dwell upon him, they don't enquire “ by him.” They obſerve [h] there were five things in the firſt temple which were not in the ſecond, and they are theſe, “ the ark with the mercy- “ ſeat, and cherubim, the fire (from heaven), and “ the Shekinah, ורוח הקודש, *and the Holy Ghoſt*, “ and the Urim and Thummim.” Now, tho' he had removed, he was to return again; but as yet the time was not come, at leaſt for the more plentiful donation of him: the reaſon of which was, *becauſe that Jeſus was not yet glorified*; he had not as yet gone thro' his ſtate of humiliation; he had not yet ſuffered, and died, and roſe again, and aſcended, and ſat down at the right hand of God; for the holy Spirit was to come upon his departure, and in conſequence of his ſufferings and death, and being made ſin, and a curſe for his people; and thro' his mediation and interceſſion, and upon his exaltation at the Father's right hand; when being made, and declared Lord and Chriſt, this ſhould be notified by the effuſion of his ſpirit; ſee *Acts* ii. 33, 36.

Ver. 40. *Many of the people therefore*, &c.] Of the common people, and it may be chiefly thoſe that came out of the country: *when they heard this ſaying*; or diſcourſe of Chriſt, on the laſt and great day of the feaſt, relating to the large meaſure of grace, and the effuſion of the Spirit on him, that believed: *ſaid, of a truth this is the prophet*; ſpoken of in *Deut.* xviii. 15. which ſome underſtood not of the Meſſiah, but of ſome extraordinary prophet diſtinct from him, who ſhould come before him, or about the ſame time; or they imagined he was one of the old prophets raiſed from the dead, whom they alſo expected about the times of the Meſſiah: or their ſenſe might only be, that he was a prophet, which was true, tho' not all the truth; they had ſome knowledge, tho' but ſmall; and they ſpake of him, though but as children in underſtanding.

Ver. 41. *Others ſaid this is the Chriſt*, &c.] The true Meſſiah, which they concluded, not only from the miracles, ver. 31. but from his ſpeaking of rivers of living water flowing from him that believes in him; for the ſame prophecy that ſpeaks of miracles to be performed in the times of the Meſſiah, ſpeaks alſo of waters breaking out in the wilderneſs, and ſtreams in the deſert, of the parched ground becoming a pool, and the thirſty land ſprings of water, *Iſ.* xxxv. 5, 6, 7. *But ſome ſaid, ſhall Chriſt come out of Galilee?* as they ſuppoſed Jeſus did; and becauſe he was educated at *Nazareth*, and *Capernaum* was his city, and he chiefly converſed, preached, and wrought his miracles in theſe parts, they concluded that he was born there; and therefore object this to his being the true Meſſiah. For if they did not mean this, according to their own accounts, the Meſſiah was to be in *Galilee*, and to be firſt revealed there; for they affirm [i] this in ſo many words, that יתגלי מלכא משיחא בארעא דגליל, *the king Meſſiah ſhall be revealed in the land of Galilee*; accordingly Jeſus, the true Meſſiah, as he was brought up in *Galilee*, tho' not born there, ſo he firſt preached there, and there wrought his firſt miracle; here he chiefly was, unleſs at the public feaſts; and here he manifeſted himſelf to his diſciples after his reſurrection.

Ver. 42. *Hath not the ſcripture ſaid*, &c.] Theſe objectors were thoſe who were accounted the more wiſe and knowing; who were converſant with the ſcriptures, and pretended at leaſt to a large knowledge of them: *that Chriſt cometh out of the ſeed of David*; that he ſhould be a rod out of the ſtem of *Jeſſe*, and a branch out of his roots; that he ſhould be one of *David*'s loins, and of the fruit of his body, referring to *Iſ.* xi. 1. *Pſ.* cxxxii. 11, 17. which was very true, and what was commonly known, and expected among the *Jews*, that the Meſſiah ſhould be *David*'s ſon, as Jeſus of *Nazareth* was, *Acts* xiii. 23. *and out of the town of Bethlehem where David was?* where his parents lived, and he was born; and, according to *Jerom* [k], he was buried here. The account he gives of this city, where he himſelf for ſome time lived, is; “ *Bethlehem*, the city of *David*, in the lot of the “ tribe of *Judah*, in which our Lord and Saviour “ was born, is ſix miles from *Ælia*, (i. e. *Jeruſalem*) to the ſouth, by the way which leads to “ *Hebron*, where alſo is ſhewed the ſepulchre of “ *Jeſſe* and *David*.” In which may be obſerved likewiſe the exact diſtance of this place from *Jeruſalem*; which, according to *Joſephus* [l], at leaſt as he is generally underſtood, was but twenty furlongs; and, according to *Juſtin* [m], thirty-five: but that this is the true diſtance, is clear from the old *Jeruſalem* itinerary [n], and which agrees with *Jerom* about the ſepulchre of *David*; for not far from it is the monument of *Ezekiel*, *Aſaph*, *Job*, *Jeſſe*, *David*, and *Solomon*: however, it is certain that *David* was born here, and therefore it is called his city; and from hence the Meſſiah was to come; and here *Jeſus*, the true Meſſiah, was born, and which the *Jews* themſelves own; ſee the notes on *Matt.* ii. 1. and *Luke* ii. 4. and in vain it is for them to expect the Meſſiah from thence, where none of their nation live, nor have lived, for many hundreds of years; being particularly forbid by *Adrian*, after he had ſubdued them, living in or near *Jeruſalem*, and alſo *Bethlehem*. *Tertullian* [o] refers to this when he thus argues with them, and very juſtly, and ſtrongly; “ if he is not yet born, who, 'tis ſaid, “ ſhall come forth a ruler out of *Bethlehem*, of the “ tribe of *Judah*, he muſt come, ſays he, out of “ the tribe of *Judah*, and from *Bethlehem*; but we “ now obſerve, that no one of the ſtock of *Iſrael* “ remains in *Bethlehem*, becauſe it is forbidden that “ any one of the *Jews* ſhould continue on the bor- “ der of that country——how ſhall the gover- “ nour be born in *Judea*, come forth from *Bethle-* “ *hem*, as the divine books of the prophets de- “ clare, when there is none of *Iſrael* left there at “ this day, of whoſe lineage Chriſt can be born?— “ how ſhall he come out of *Bethlehem*, when there “ is none in *Bethlehem* of the ſtock of *Iſrael*?” And the paſſage they had in view, is *Mic.* v. 2. Now theſe very things they object to Jeſus, being the Meſſiah, were what were fulfilled in him, and proved him to be the perſon; for his ſuppoſed father, and real mother *Mary*, were of the houſe and lineage of *David*; and tho' he was conceived at *Nazareth*, and brought up there, yet by a remarkable providence, which brought *Joſeph* and *Mary* to *Bethlehem*, he was born there, *Luke* ii. 4, 5, 6, 7.

Ver. 43. *So there was a diviſion among the people concerning him*.] Some, tho' they did not go ſo far as to believe him to be the Meſſiah, yet took him to be a prophet, and a very extraordinary one: others made no difficulty to aſſert him to be the Chriſt; and others objected to it on account of the country from whence he came, and ſo fulfilled the words of Chriſt, *Luke* xii. 51.

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[h] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 21. 2. Vid. Jarchi & Kimchi in Hagg. i. 8.

[i] Zohar in Gen. fol. 74. 3. & in Exod. fol. 3. 3. & 4. 1.

[k] De locis Hebraicis, fol. 89. E.

[l] Antiq. l. 7. c. 12. §. 4.

[m] Apolog. 2. p. 75.

[n] In Reland. Paleſtina illuſtrata, l. 2. c. 4. p. 416. Vid. c. 9. p. 445. & l. 3. p. 645.

[o] Adv. Judæos, c. 13. p. 224, 225.

Ver. 44. *And ſome of them would have taken him,* &c.] Some of the latter ſort, who did not believe he was the Meſſiah; who were the moſt averſe to him, and hot and furious againſt him; theſe were for ſeizing him at once in a violent manner, and for carrying him before the *Sanhedrim*, as an impoſtor and blaſphemer, to be examined, and tried, and judged by them, to whom it belonged to judge and determine concerning ſuch perſons: *but no man laid hands on him*; tho' they had a good will to it, no man had power to do it; they were held back and reſtrained by the providence of God; and were diverted from it upon one conſideration or another; either fearing the people, or being awed by the majeſty of Chriſt's countenance, or words; the true reaſon of which was, that which is before given, that his hour was not yet come.

Ver. 45. *Then came the officers to the chief-prieſts and Phariſees,* &c.] Who were aſſembled together in council, as the great *Sanhedrim* of the nation; who were ſitting and expecting Jeſus to be brought before them. The ſame officers they ſent to take him, ver. 32. returned to them without him; for tho' they were ſent on that errand which they intended to have performed, yet they were not on the ſide of thoſe who were for ſeizing him by force, nor of thoſe who objected to his being the Meſſiah; but rather took part with thoſe who affirmed he was the Meſſiah; or at leaſt looked upon him to be ſome extraordinary prophet: *and they ſaid unto them*; that is, the chief-prieſts and *Phariſees* ſaid to the officers; the *Syriac* verſion reads, *the prieſts ſaid unto them: why have ye not brought him?* They mention not the name of Jeſus by way of contempt, and knowing that the officers would eaſily underſtand them; tho' the *Perſic* verſion expreſſes it, reading the words thus, *why have ye not brought Jeſus?* ſeeing them returned without him, they were tranſported with rage and fury, and fell upon them in a fierce and furious manner, for diſobeying their orders, who had ſat there waiting ſome time, and hoping, and not doubting, but they ſhould have him in their hands, whoſe blood they were thirſting after: wherefore it was a great diſappointment to them, and much enraged them to ſee them come without him.

Ver. 46. *The officers anſwered,* &c.] Very honeſtly and uprightly, making uſe of no ſhifts and excuſes; as that they could not find him, or could not come at him, becauſe of the multitude about him, or that they were afraid of the people, leſt they ſhould riſe upon them, and ſtone them, and reſcue Jeſus; which would have carried a ſhew of probability, and have brought them off; but they tell the naked truth, ſaying, *never man ſpake like this man*; not *Moſes*, the ſpokeſman of the people of *Iſrael*; nor *David*, the anointed of the God of *Jacob*, the ſweet *Pſalmiſt* of *Iſrael*; nor *Solomon*, the wiſeſt of men; nor that ſublime and evangelical prophet *Iſaiah*; nor any of the other prophets; nor *John Baptiſt* his fore-runner, the voice of one crying in the wilderneſs: never man ſpoke words for matter like him; ſuch gracious words, or words, and doctrines of grace, which ſo fully expreſs the grace of God, and are ſo grateful to men; ſuch as free juſtification by his righteouſneſs, full pardon by his blood, peace and reconciliation by his ſacrifice, the liberty of captives from the bondage of ſin, ſatan, and the law, and ſpiritual and eternal ſalvation by him: never man ſpoke ſuch words of truth, as he who is full of truth, and truth itſelf did: or ſuch words of wiſdom, who is the wiſdom of God, on whom the ſpirit of wiſdom reſted, and in whom are hid all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge; nor ſuch wholeſome and ſalutary words, which nouriſh up unto eternal life. Nor did ever any ſpeak words for form and manner, as he did; words ſo apt and pertinent, with ſuch propriety, beauty, and gracefulneſs, with ſuch majeſty and authority, and with ſuch power and efficacy; which at once charmed the ear, affected the heart, carried evidence and conviction with them, enlightened the underſtanding, and faſtened attention to them; which was the caſe with theſe men, ſo that they had not power to execute their commiſſion. He delivered ſuch excellent things, and in ſuch a charming manner, they could not find in their hearts to uſe any violence towards him; or be the means of bringing him into any trouble or danger. The *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Perſic* verſions read, *never man ſpake as this man ſpeaks.*

Ver. 47. *Then anſwered them the Phariſees, are ye alſo deceived?*] As well as the common people; you that have been ſo long in our ſervice, and ſhould know better; or who, at leaſt, ſhould have taken the ſenſe of your ſuperiors, and ſhould have waited to have had their opinion and judgment of him, and been determined by that, and not ſo haſtily have joined with a deluded ſett of people. It was the common character of Chriſt, and his Apoſtles, and ſo of all his faithful miniſters in all ſucceeding ages, that they were deceivers, and the people that followed them deceived, a parcel of poor deluded creatures, carried aſide by their teachers; when, on the other hand, they are the deceived ones, who live in ſin, and indulge themſelves in it; or who truſt in themſelves that they are righteous; who think they are ſomething, when they are nothing; who imagine, that touching the righteouſneſs of the law, they are blameleſs, are free from ſin, and need no repentance; who follow the traditions and commandments of men: whereas theſe cannot be deceived, who follow Chriſt, the way, the truth, and the life, and his faithful miniſters, who ſhew unto men the way of ſalvation.

Ver. 48. *Have any of the rulers,* &c.] In the *Sanhedrim*, or of the ſynagogues; or the civil magiſtrates, the noble, rich, and wealthy: *or of the Phariſees, believed on him?* men famous for wiſdom, learning, and holineſs. It muſt be owned, there were but very few of this ſort, and perhaps not an inſtance of this kind had as yet occured to them; there was *Nicodemus*, who is mentioned in the context, who was both a ruler and a *Phariſee*; and *Joſeph* of *Arimathea*, a rich counſellor; but they neither of them openly ſhowed themſelves to be the diſciples of Chriſt till his death: and beſides theſe, there were ſome women, as *Joanna*, the wife of *Chuza*, *Herod*'s ſteward, *Suſanna*, and ſome other women, who miniſtred to him of their ſubſtance; but the far greater part of his followers were poor and illiterate: and this has been the common caſe of thoſe that have believed in Jeſus, for the moſt part, ever ſince, and therefore ſhould not be a ſtumbling to any. God is pleaſed to hide the great things of the Goſpel from the wiſe and prudent, the rich and noble, and preach and reveal them to the poor and fooliſh: nor is a doctrine a whit the truer for being eſpouſed by the rich, and wiſe men of this world, but rather to be ſuſpected on that account.

Ver. 49. *But this people who knoweth not the law are curſed.*] With great contempt they ſtile the followers of Jeſus *this people*; the common people, the dregs of them, the refuſe of the earth; and whom they call, עם הארץ, *the people of the earth*, in diſtinction from the wiſe men, and their diſciples: and when they ſpeak the beſt of them, their account is this [p]; "one of the people of the "earth is one that has moral excellencies, but not "intellectual ones; that is, there is in him com"mon civility, but the law is not in him;" as here, *who knoweth not the law:* they always reckon them very ignorant. Says one [q] of their writers, "they that are without knowledge are the multi"tude." And elſewhere 'tis ſaid [r], "the old men "of the people of the earth, when they grow old "their knowledge is diſturbed, (or is loſt) as it is "ſaid, *Job* xii. 20. but ſo it is not with the old men "of the law, when they grow old, their knowledge "reſts upon them, as it is ſaid, *Job* xii. 12. *with* "*the ancient is wiſdom.*" Upon which one of the commentators [s] has this Gloſs; "theſe are the diſ"ciples of the wiſe men; for the people of the "earth, what wiſdom is there in them?" By the *law* here, is meant either the written law of *Moſes*, which the *Phariſees* boaſted of, and of their knowledge of it, as having the key of knowledge to open it; as underſtanding the true ſenſe, and capable of giving a right interpretation of it, to the people; tho' they themſelves were wretchedly ignorant of it, as appears by their falſe Gloſſes on it, refuted by our Lord in *Matt.* v. or elſe the oral law is here intended, which they pretended was given by word of mouth to *Moſes*, and handed down to poſterity from one to another; and this lay among the doctors: they tell us [t], that *Moſes* received it at *Sinai*, and delivered it to *Joſhua*, and *Joſhua* to the elders, and the elders to the prophets, and the prophets to the men of the great ſynagogue (*Ezra*'s) the laſt of which was *Simeon* the juſt; *Antigonus*, a man of *Socho*, received it from him; and *Joſe ben Joezer*, and *Joſe ben Jochanan*, received it from him; and *Joſhua ben Perachia*, (whom they ſometimes ſay was the maſter of *Jeſus* of *Nazareth*) and *Nittai* the *Arbelite*, received it from them; by whom it was delivered to *Judah ben Tabai*, and *Simeon ben Shetach*; and from them it was received by *Shemaiah*, and *Abtalion*, who delivered it to *Hillell*, and *Shammai*; who, or whoſe ſcholars were, at this time, when theſe words were ſpoken, the preſent poſſeſſors of it, and taught it their diſciples in their ſchools: and thus it was handed down from one to another, until the times of *R. Judah*, who collected the whole of the traditions of the elders together, and publiſhed it under the title of the *Miſna*; and then, as *Maimonides* ſays [u], it was revealed to all *Iſrael*; whereas before it was but in a few hands, who inſtructed others in it: but as for the common people, they knew little of it, eſpecially of the nice diſtinctions and deciſions of it; and theſe people were always had in great contempt by the wiſe men: they would not receive a teſtimony from them, nor give one for them, nor deliver a ſecret to them, nor proclaim any thing of theirs that was loſt, nor walk with them in the way, nor make a guardian of any of them [w]. The people of the earth were not reckoned holy or religious [x], but generally profane and wicked; that they were abandoned to ſin, rejected of God, and to be caſt off by men; yea, they will not allow that they ſhall riſe again at the laſt day, unleſs it be for the ſake of ſome wiſe men they are allied unto, or have done ſome ſervice for. They ſay [y], "whoever miniſters in the "light of the law, the light of the law will quicken "him; but whoever does not miniſter in the light "of the law, the light of the law will not quicken "him.—tho' it is poſſible for ſuch an one to cleave "to the *Shekinah*—for every one that marries his "daughter to a ſcholar of a wiſe man, or makes "merchandize for the diſciples of the wiſe men, "and they receive any advantage from his goods, "this brings on him what is written, as if he "cleaved to the *Shekinah*." Thus we ſee in what contempt the common people were with the learned doctors, and what an opinion theſe men had of the followers of Chriſt; though, in truth, they were not ſo ignorant of the law as themſelves: they knew the ſpirituality of it, that it reached to the thoughts of the heart, as well as to external actions; they knew what it required, and their own impotence to anſwer its demands; they knew the wrath, terror, and curſes of it, and that Chriſt only was the fulfilling end of it, for righteouſneſs to thoſe that believed in him: and they were far from being curſed perſons; they were bleſſed with all ſpiritual bleſſings; with the pardon of their ſins, and the juſtification of their perſons; with grace and peace in their ſouls, and would be introduced as the bleſſed of the Father into his kingdom and glory.

Ver. 50. *Nicodemus ſaith unto them,* &c?] To the *Jewiſh Sanhedrim*, who were running down Chriſt, and his followers, in great wrath and fury: *he that came to Jeſus by night*; ſee *John* iii. 1, 2. *being one of them*; a member of the *Sanhedrim*.

Ver. 51. *Doth our law judge any man,* &c.] Or condemn any man; or can any man be lawfully condemned: *before it hear him*; what he has to ſay for himſelf; is this the uſual proceſs in our courts? or is this a legal one to condemn a man unheard? *and know what he doth?* what his crimes are. This he ſaid, having a ſecret reſpect for Chriſt, though he had not courage enough openly to appear for him.

Ver. 52. *They anſwered and ſaid unto him,* &c.] Being diſpleaſed with him, and as reproaching him, tho' they could not deny, or refute what he ſaid: *art thou alſo of Galilee?* a follower of Jeſus of *Galilee*, whom, by way of contempt, they called the *Galilean*, and his followers *Galileans*, as *Julian* the apoſtate after them did; for otherwiſe they knew that *Nicodemus* was not of the country of *Galilee*: *ſearch and look*; into the hiſtories of former times, and eſpecially the ſcriptures: *for out of Galilee ariſeth no prophet*; but this is falſe, for *Jonah* the prophet was of *Gath Hepher*, which was in the tribe of *Zebulun*, which tribe was in *Galilee*; ſee 2 *Kings* xiv. 25. *Joſh.* xix. 10, 13, 16. And the *Jews* [z] themſelves ſay, that *Jonah*, the ſon of *Amittai*, was, מזבולן, of *Zebulun*, and that his father was of *Zebulun*, and his mother was of *Aſher* [a]; both which tribes were in *Galilee*: and if no prophet had, as yet, ariſe from thence, it did not follow that no one ſhould ariſe: beſides, there is a prophecy in which it was foretold, that a prophet, and even the Meſſiah, the great light, ſhould ariſe in *Galilee*; ſee *Iſ.* ix. 1, 2. and they themſelves ſay, that the Meſſiah ſhould be revealed in *Galilee*; ſee the note on ver. 41.

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[p] Maimon. in Pirke Abot, c. 2. §. 5. & c. 5. §. 7.

[q] Abarbinel in proph. poſt. fol. 473.

[r] Miſn. Kenim, c. 3. §. 6. Vid. T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 152. 1.

[s] Bartenora in Miſn. ib.

[t] Pirke Abot, c. 1. §. 1—12.

[u] Præfat. ad Yad Hazaka.

[w] Buxtorf. Lex. Talmud. col. 1626.

[x] Ib. Florileg. Heb. p. 276.

[y] T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 111. 2.

[z] T. Hieroſ. Succa, fol. 55. 1.

[a] Bereſhit Rabba, §. 98. fol. 85. 4.

Ver. 53. *And every man went unto his own houſe.*] The officers not bringing Jeſus with them, and the *Sanhedrim* being poſed with *Nicodemus*, broke up without doing any buſineſs, and every member of it went home: this we may ſuppoſe was about the time of the evening ſacrifice; for "the great *Sanhedrim* ſat from the time of the morning daily ſacrifice, to the time of the evening daily ſacrifice [b]:" and it is ſaid [c], that "after the evening daily ſacrifice, the *Sanhedrim* went, לביתם, *to their own houſes*;" as they now did, and not to their booths, the feaſt of tabernacles being now over.

## CHAP. VIII.

Ver. 1. *JESUS went unto the mount of Olives.*] Which lay eaſtward of *Jeruſalem*, about a mile from it; hither Chriſt went on the evening of the laſt day of the feaſt of tabernacles; partly to decline the danger, and avoid the ſnares the *Jews* might lay for him in the night-ſeaſon, having been diſappointed and confounded in the day-time; and it may be for the ſake of recreation and diverſion, to ſup with his dear friends *Lazarus*, *Martha*, and *Mary*, who lived at *Bethany*, not far from this mount; and chiefly for private prayer to God, on account of himſelf as man, and for his diſciples, and for the ſpread of his Goſpel, and for the enlargement of his intereſt; this being his common and uſual method, *Luke* xxi. 37.

Ver. 2. *And early in the morning he came again into the temple*, &c.] Which ſhows his diligence, conſtancy, and aſſiduity, in his miniſterial work, as well as his courage and intrepidity; being fearleſs of his enemies, though careful to give them no advantage againſt him, before his time: *and all the people came unto him*; which alſo commends the induſtry and diligence of his hearers, who were forward to hear him, and were early at the temple for that purpoſe, and that in great numbers: *and he ſat down and taught them*; he ſat, as his manner was; ſee the note on *Matt.* v. 1. and taught them as one having authority, and ſuch doctrine, and in ſuch a manner, as never man did; with all plainneſs, boldneſs, and freedom.

Ver. 3. *And the Scribes and Phariſees*, &c.] The members of the *Sanhedrim*, who had been ſo miſerably diſappointed the day before, were no leſs diligent and induſtrious in their wicked way, ſeeking all opportunities, and taking all advantages againſt Chriſt; and fancying they had got ſomething whereby to enſnare him, and bring him into diſgrace or danger, they purſue it; and *brought unto him a woman taken in adultery*; who, as ſome conjecture, might have been taken in it the day before, in one of their booths; being drawn into it through intemperance and carnal mirth, which at this feaſt they greatly indulged themſelves in; which ſhows, that they were far from drawing the Holy Ghoſt at this time upon them; that on the contrary, they fell into the hands, and under the power of the unclean ſpirit: who this woman was, is not material to know; what is pretended to be taken out of the annals of the *Spaniſh Jews*, is no doubt a fable; that ſhe was the wife of one *Manaſſeh* of *Jeruſalem*, an old man, whoſe name was *Suſanna* [d]: *and when they had ſet her in the midſt*; of the company, as the *Perſic* verſion reads, to be ſeen by all the people. This hiſtory of the woman taken in adultery, is wanting in the *Alexandrian* copy, and in other ancient copies; nor is it in *Nonnus*, *Chryſoſtom*, and *Theophylact*; nor in any of the editions of the *Syriac* verſion, until it was reſtored by *De Dieu*, from a copy of Archbiſhop *Uſher*'s; but was in the *Arabic* and *Ethiopic* verſions, and in the Harmonies of *Tatian* and *Ammonius*; the former of which, lived about the year 160, and ſo within 60 years, or thereabouts, of the death of the Evangeliſt *John*, and the other about the year 230; it was alſo in *Stephens*'s ſixteen ancient *Greek* copies, and in all *Beza*'s ſeventeen, excepting one; nor need the authenticneſs of it be doubted of; *Euſebius* [e] ſays, it is in the Goſpel according to the *Hebrews*; nor ſhould its authority be called in queſtion.

Ver. 4. *They ſay unto him, Maſter*, &c.] They applied to him in a handſome and reſpectful manner, the better to cover their ill deſign: *this woman was taken in adultery*; by two perſons at leaſt, who could be witneſſes of it; otherwiſe the accuſation was not legal; ſee *Deut.* xix. 15. though in the caſe of a wife ſuſpected of adultery, they admitted a ſingle witneſs as valid [f]: *in the very act*; or *in the theft itſelf*, for adultery is a theft; it is an unlawful uſe of another's property; ſee this word uſed in the ſame ſenſe, in *Heliodor. l.* 1. §. 11.

Ver. 5. *Now Moſes in the law commanded us, that ſuch ſhould be ſtoned*, &c.] Not in *Lev.* xx. 10. for though according to the law there, an adultereſs, one that was a married woman, and ſo an adulterer, that was a married man, were to be put to death; yet the death was not ſtoning, but ſtrangling; for it is a rule with the *Jews* [g], that where death is ſimply mentioned (without reſtraining it to any particular kind) ſtrangling is intended, and which rule they apply to this law: and accordingly in their *Miſna*, or oral law, one that lies with another man's wife, is reckoned among thoſe that are to be ſtrangled [h]: *Kimchi* indeed ſays [i], that adultereſſes, according to the law, are to be ſtoned with ſtones; but then this muſt be underſtood of ſuch as are betrothed, but not married; and ſuch a perſon, *Moſes* has commanded in the law, to be ſtoned, *Deut.* xxii. 23, 24. And with this agree the traditions of the *Jews* [k]; "a daughter of *Iſrael* muſt be ſtoned, who is, ארוסה ולא נשואה, *betrothed, but not married.*" And ſuch an one we muſt believe this woman was; ſhe was betrothd to a man, but not married to him, and therefore to be ſtoned: the *Jews* [l] have alſo a ſaying, that "if all adulterers were puniſhed with ſtoning, according to the law, the ſtones would be conſumed, but they would not be conſumed;" adultery was ſo common with that people: but *what ſayeſt thou?* doſt thou agree with *Moſes*, or not?

Ver. 6. *This they ſaid, tempting him*, &c.] For they brought this woman, and expoſed her in this manner, not becauſe of their abhorrence and deteſtation of the ſin; nor did they put the above queſtion to Chriſt, out of their great reſpect to the law of *Moſes*; which in many inſtances, and ſo in this, they in a great meaſure made void, by their traditions;

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[b] Maimon. Hilchot Sanhedrin, c. 3. §. 1.

[c] Piſke Toſephot Sanhedrin, art. 35.

[d] Vid. Selden. Uxor Hebr. l. 3. c. 11. p. 377.

[e] Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 3. c. 39.

[f] Maimon. Hilchot Eduth, c. 5. §. 2.

[g] Maimon. Hilchot Iſſure Bia, c. 1. §. 6.

[h] Miſn. Sanhedrin, c. 10. §. 1.

[i] In Ezek. xvi. 40.

[k] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 51. 2.

[l] Apud Caſtell. Lex. Polyglott, col. 2180.

tions; for they ſay, that for ſuch an offence as adultery, they did not put to death, nor beat, unleſs there was a previous admonition; the uſe of which was, to diſtinguiſh between preſumptuous ſins, and wilful ones [m]; but if there was no admonition, and the woman, even a married woman, if ſhe confeſſed the crime, all her puniſhment was to have her dowry taken from her, or to go away without it [n]: now theſe maſters ſay nothing about the admonition, nor do they put the queſtion, whether this woman was to be dealt with according to their traditions, or according to the law of *Moſes?* but what was the ſenſe of Chriſt, whether *Moſes*'s law was to be attended to, or whether he would propoſe another rule to go by? and their view in this was, *that they might have to accuſe him*; that ſhould he agree with *Moſes*, then they would accuſe him to the *Roman* governour, for taking upon him to condemn a perſon to death, which belonged to him to do; or they would charge him with ſeverity, and acting inconſiſtently with himſelf, who received ſuch ſort of ſinners, and eat with them; and had declared, that publicans and harlots would enter into the kingdom of heaven, when the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* would not; and if he ſhould diſagree with *Moſes*, then they would traduce him among the people, as an enemy to *Moſes* and his law, and as a patron of the moſt ſcandalous enormities: *but Jeſus ſtooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground*; ſome think [o], he wrote in legible characters the ſins of the woman's accuſers; and the learned *Wagenſeil* [p] makes mention of an ancient *Greek* manuſcript he had ſeen, in which were the following words, *the ſins of every one of them:* Dr. *Lightfoot* is of opinion, that this action of Chriſt, tallies with, and has ſome reference to, the action of the prieſt at the trial of the ſuſpected wife; who took of the duſt of the floor of the tabernacle, and infuſed it in the bitter waters for her to drink; but it is moſt likely, that Chriſt on purpoſe put himſelf into this poſture, as if he was buſy about ſomething elſe, and did not attend to what they ſaid; and hereby caſt ſome contempt upon them, as if they and their queſtion were unworthy of his notice: and this ſenſe is confirmed by what follows, *as though he heard them not*; though this clauſe is not in many copies, nor in the *Vulgate Latin*, nor in any of the *Oriental* verſions, but is in five of *Beza*'s copies, and in the *Complutenſian* edition.

Ver. 7. *So when they continued aſking him*, &c.] For obſerving that he put himſelf in ſuch a poſture, they concluded that they had puzzled and perplexed him, and that he knew not what to ſay; and therefore they were more urgent for a ſpeedy anſwer, hoping they ſhould get an advantage of him; and that they ſhould be able to expoſe him, and that his confuſion would appear to all the people: *he lift up himſelf and ſaid unto them*; having raiſed up himſelf, he looked wiſhly at them, and returned them this wiſe anſwer to their confuſion: *he that is without ſin among you*; meaning, not that was entirely free from ſin, in heart, in lip, and life; for there is no ſuch perſon; the moſt holy man in life, is not in ſuch ſenſe, free from ſin; but that was without any notorious ſin, or was not guilty of ſome ſcandalous ſin, and particularly this of adultery; which was in this age a prevailing ſin, and even among their doctors; hence our Lord calls that generation, an adulterous one, *Matt.* xii. 39. and which was literally true of them; with this compare, *Rom.* ii. 22. Adultery increaſed to ſuch a degree in this age, that they were obliged to leave off the trial of ſuſpected wives, becauſe their huſbands were generally guilty this way; and the waters would have no effect, if the huſband was criminal alſo: ſo the *Jews* ſay [q], “when adulterers increaſed, the “bitter waters ceaſed; and *Rabban Jochanan ben* “*Zaccai* (who was now living) cauſed them to “ceaſe.” In vindication of which, he cited the paſſage in *Hoſ.* iv. 14. and this agrees with their own account of the times of the Meſſiah, and the ſigns thereof, among which ſtands this [r]; “in the age “in which the Son of *David* comes, the houſe of “aſſembly (the *Gloſs* interprets it the place where “the diſciples of the wiſe men meet to learn the “law) ſhall become, לזונות, *a brothel houſe.*” And that this ſin ſo greatly prevailed, our Lord well knew; and perhaps none of thoſe *Scribes* and *Phariſees* were free from it, in one ſhape or another; and therefore bids him that was, *firſt caſt a ſtone at her*; alluding to the law in *Deut.* xvii. 7. which required the hands of the witneſſes to be upon a perſon firſt, to put him to death; and as Dr. *Lightfoot* thinks, referring to their own ſenſe and opinion, in trying a wife ſuſpected of adultery; that if the huſband was guilty the ſame way, the waters would have no effect: by this anſwer of our Lord, he at once wrought himſelf out of the dilemma, they thought to diſtreſs him with; for though he paſſed no ſentence upon the woman, and ſo took not upon him the judiciary power, with which they could accuſe him to the *Roman* governour, yet he manifeſtly appeared to agree with *Moſes*, that ſuch an one deſerved to be ſtoned; wherefore they could not charge him with being contrary to *Moſes*; and by putting him that was without ſin, to caſt the firſt ſtone at her, he ſhewed himſelf merciful to the woman, and to them, to be the ſearcher of hearts.

Ver. 8. *And again he ſtooped down, and wrote on the ground.*] As before, having ſaid enough to confound them; and yet unwilling to purſue the matter any further, or publickly expoſe them in any other way; and that they might have an opportunity of withdrawing themſelves without any further notice of his, he took this method.

Ver. 9. *And they which heard it*, &c.] Not all, not the diſciples of Chriſt, nor the multitude, but the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*: *being convicted by their own conſcience*; that they were not without ſin, nor free from this; they had a beam in their own eye, who were ſo forward to obſerve the mote in another's; and oftentimes ſo it is, that thoſe who are moſt forward to reprove, and bare hardeſt on others for their ſins, are as culpable in another way, if not in the ſame; when ſin lies at the door, and conſcience is awakened and open, it is as good as a thouſand witneſſes; and lets in, and owns the ſin which lies heavy, and makes ſad work; and fills with anguiſh, confuſion, and ſhame, as it did theſe men: *who went out one by one*; from the temple, in as private a manner, and as unobſerved as they could: *beginning at the eldeſt*; who might have been moſt culpable, or however ſooneſt took the hint, being more wiſe and ſagacious: *unto the laſt*; this is wanting in the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, and *Perſic* verſions, and in two of *Beza*'s copies, and the *Baſil* edition: *and Jeſus was left alone*; not by his diſciples, nor the multitude, but his antagoniſts, who came to tempt and enſnare him: for it follows, *and the woman ſtanding in the midſt*; that is, of the company as before.

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[m] Maimon. ib. §. 3.

[n] Miſn. Sota, c. 1. §. 5.

[o] Hieron. adv. Pelagianos, l. 2. fol. 96. H. Tom. II.

[p] In Miſn. Sota, c. 1. §. 5.

[q] Miſn. Sota, c. 9. §. 9.

[r] Miſn. ib. c. 9. §. 15. T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 97. 1.

Ver. 10. *When Jeſus had lift himſelf up*, &c.] From the earth, towards which he ſtooped, and on which he had been writing: *and ſaw none but the woman*; that is, none of thoſe that had brought her there, and had accuſed her to him: *he ſaid unto her, woman, where are thoſe thine accuſers?* the *Syriac* and *Arabic* verſions read only, *where are theſe?* theſe men, that brought thee here, and charged thee with this crime: *hath no man condemned thee?* has no one offered to do unto thee, what I propoſed? what, not one that could take up a ſtone, and caſt at thee? was there not one of them free from this ſin? could no man take upon him to execute this ſentence?

Ver. 11. *She ſaith, no man, Lord*, &c.] No man ſaid a word to me, or lift up his hand againſt me, or moved a ſtone at me: *and Jeſus ſaid unto her, neither do I condemn thee*; Chriſt came not into the world to act the part of a civil magiſtrate, and therefore refuſed to arbitrate a caſe, or be concerned in dividing an inheritance between two brethren, *Luke* xii. 13, 14. Nor did he come into the world to condemn it, but that the world through him, might be ſaved, *John* iii. 17. nor would he paſs any other ſentence on this woman, than what he had done; nor would he inflict any puniſhment on her himſelf; but ſuitable and agreeable to his office, as a prophet, he declares againſt her ſin, calls her to repentance, and bids her *go and ſin no more*; leſt as he ſaid to the man he cured at *Betheſda*'s pool, a worſe thing ſhould come unto her. Wherefore the *Jew* [s] has no reaſon to object to this conduct of Chriſt, as if he acted contrary to the law, in *Deut.* xiii. 5. *Thou ſhalt put the evil away from the midſt of thee*; and alſo to the ſanctions of all civil laws among men, which order the removal of evil, by putting delinquents to death; and he obſerves, that thoſe that believe in him, don't follow him in this, but put adulterers and adultereſſes to death; and that indeed, ſhould his example and inſtructions take place, all courts of judicature muſt ceaſe, and order be ſubverted among men: but it ſhould be obſerved, that our Lord manifeſted a regard, even to the law of *Moſes*, when he bid this woman's accuſers that were without ſin, to caſt the firſt ſtone at her; though as for the law in *Deut.* xiii. 5. that reſpects a falſe prophet, and not an adulterer or an adultereſs; nor do the civil laws of all nations, require death in the caſe of adultery; and did they, Chriſt here neither by his words or actions, contradicts and ſets aſide any ſuch laws of God or man; he left this fact to be enquired into, examined, and judged, and ſentence paſſed by proper perſons, whoſe buſineſs it was: as for himſelf, his office was not that of a civil magiſtrate, but of a ſaviour and redeemer; and ſuitable to that, he acted in this caſe; he did not connive at the ſin, he reproved for it; nor did he deny that ſhe ought to ſuffer according to the law of *Moſes*, but rather ſuggeſts ſhe ought; but as this was not his province, he did not take upon him to pronounce any ſentence of condemnation on her; but called her to repentance, and as the merciful and compaſſionate Saviour, gave her reaſon to hope for pardon and eternal life.

Ver. 12. *Then ſpake Jeſus again unto them*, &c.] The *Syriac* fragment of Biſhop *Uſher*'s, publiſhed by *De Dieu*, prefaces this verſe thus, *when they were gathered together, Jeſus ſaid*, &c. that is, the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, who went out and returned again; or ſome others of them, who came after this, to whom Chriſt addreſſed himſelf thus: *I am the light of the world*; which he might ſay, on occaſion of the riſing ſun, which was now up, and might ſhine brightly in their faces; ſee ver. 2. which is, אור העולם, *the light of the world*, as *Aben Ezra* in *Pſal.* xix. 8. rightly calls it: thus on occaſion of the water in *Jacob*'s well, he diſcourſed of living water; and upon the *Jews* at *Capernaum* mentioning the manna, he treated at large concerning himſelf as the bread of life: and he might alſo make uſe of this character, and apply it to himſelf, with a view to ſome paſſages in the Old Teſtament, which ſpeak of him under the metaphor of the ſun, as *Pſal.* lxxxiv. 11. *Mal.* iv. 2. and repreſent him as the light; and the *Jews* [t] themſelves ſay, that light is one of the names of the Meſſiah; and God himſelf is called by them, *the light of the world* [u]: and likewiſe he may have regard to thoſe pompous titles and characters, which the *Jewiſh* doctors aſſumed arrogantly to themſelves, and oppoſe himſelf to them; for they not only called *Moſes* their maſter, אור העולם, *the light of the world* [w], and alſo the law of *Moſes* [x], but their Rabbins and doctors; ſee the note on *Matt.* v. 14. By the world here is meant, not the whole world, and all the individuals of it; for though Chriſt, as the creator of all things, is the light of men, and does lighten every individual man, with the light of nature and reaſon, yet not in a ſpiritual and ſaving manner, as is here intended; nor the whole body of the elect of God, though they are ſometimes called the world, being the better part of it, and are made light in the Lord, in a ſpecial ſenſe; nor the *Jews* only, and the choſen of God among them, though Chriſt was a great light to many of them, that ſat in darkneſs, and in the ſhadow of death; but the *Gentiles* are here deſigned, who were uſually called by the *Jews*, the world; ſee the note on *John* iii. 16. And theſe were in groſs darkneſs before the coming of Chriſt, about the divine being, concerning the object, nature, and manner of worſhip; the ſcriptures, the law, and Goſpel; the Meſſiah, and his office and work; the Spirit of God, and his operations of grace; the reſurrection of the dead, and a future ſtate; now Chriſt came to be a light of the *Gentiles*, as well as the glory of his people *Iſrael*: our Lord ſeems to have reſpect to the prophecy of him, in *Iſa.* xlii. 6. as well as alludes to the ſun in the firmament; whoſe light is diffuſed to all the nations of the earth, and not confined to one ſpot of land only: but ſince Chriſt was the miniſter of the circumciſion, and was ſent only to the loſt ſheep of the houſe of *Iſrael*, it may be aſked, how could he be the light of the *Gentiles*? to which it may be replied, that he was ſo by his apoſtles, who were ſent by him with the light of the Goſpel, into all the world; and by his Spirit, who enlightens the minds of men, who were darkneſs itſelf, with the light of Chriſt: for he is not only the author and giver of the light of nature to all men, but alſo of the light of grace to all his choſen ones, *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*; who in his light, ſee light; ſee themſelves loſt and undone, and him to be the only willing, able, ſuitable, and compleat Saviour; and behold wondrous things in the doctrines of the Goſpel, and have ſome glimpſe of glory: and he is likewiſe the author of all the light of glory, the ſaints enjoy in the other world; the Lamb is the light of that ſtate; he is their everlaſting light, and their glory; and happy are they who are his followers now: *he that followeth me*; not corporally, but ſpiritually, by faith; for as believing is expreſſed

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[s] R. Iſaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 47. p. 435, 436.

[t] Bereſhit Rabba, fol. 1. 3. Echa Rabbati, fol. 50. 2. & Jarchi in Pſal. xliii. 3.

[u] Bemidbar Rabba, §. 15. fol. 217. 2.

[w] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 114. 3.

[x] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 4. 1.

by coming to Chriſt, ſo by following after him; compare with this, *John* xii. 46. and with love and affection to him, the deſires of the ſoul being unto him, and to the remembrance of him; and in the exerciſe of every grace, and diſcharge of every duty, in imitation of him; and through a variety of ſufferings and tribulations, preſſing after him as the guide, captain, and fore-runner: and ſuch *ſhall not walk in darkneſs*; in the darkneſs of unregeneracy, not knowing what they are, and where they are, and whither they are going; for ſuch know they are in the light; and though they were blind, now they ſee; they know in whom they have believed, and that they are in Chriſt, in the covenant of grace, and in the love of God, and are going to heaven and eternal happineſs; ſuch ſhall not walk in the darkneſs of unbelief, but walk by faith on Chriſt; nor in the darkneſs of error, but in the truth of the Goſpel, and as becomes it; and though they may ſometimes walk without the light of God's countenance, yet light ſhall ariſe to them; and ſuch *ſhall not go into darkneſs*, as the *Ethiopic* verſion renders the words, into outer darkneſs, or the darkneſs of eternal death: *but ſhall have the light of life*; the grace of God abiding in them now; which as it is a well of living water, ſpringing up to eternal life, ſo it is a ſhining light, which increaſes to the perfect day: as darkneſs and death, ſo light and life go together; grace, which is enlightning, is alſo quickening and comforting, and iſſues in eternal light and life; a light that will never be extinguiſhed, and a life that will continue for ever, with never fading joys and pleaſures; ſee *Job* xxxiii. 30.

Ver. 13. *The Phariſees therefore ſaid unto him*, &c.] On account of his declaring himſelf the light of the world: theſe were either the ſame who went out of the temple, filled with remorſe of conſcience, and were now returned, and bearing him a grudge, came to take ſome advantage againſt him, if they could; or they were others of the ſame complexion, ſent by them, to make their obſervations on him: *thou beareſt record of thyſelf*. The *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *doſt thou praiſe thyſelf?* which does not ſeem ſo decent and comely; ſee *Prov*. xxvii. 2. though it does not follow, that what a man ſays of himſelf is not truth, as theſe ſuggeſt: *thy record is not true*; for *John* teſtified of himſelf, that he was not the Chriſt, nor *Elias*, nor that prophet; but the voice of one crying in the wilderneſs; and this teſtimony he bore of himſelf, at the importunity of the *Jews* themſelves, *John* i. 19—23. and his teſtimony was true; ſo was that which Chriſt bore of himſelf; but their ſenſe rather ſeems to be, that it was not firm and authentic, and would not paſs in any court of judicature, ſince no man can be a witneſs in his own cauſe.

Ver. 14. *Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto them*, &c.] In vindication of himſelf, and his teſtimony: *though I bear record of myſelf, yet my record is true*; which ſeems contradictory to what he ſays, in ch. v. 31. and may be reconciled thus; there he ſpeaks of himſelf as man, and in the opinion of the *Jews*, who took him to be a mere man; and alſo as alone, and ſeparate from his Father, as the context ſhows; therefore his ſingle teſtimony, and eſpecially concerning himſelf, could not be admitted as authentic among men; but here he ſpeaks of himſelf as a divine perſon, and in conjunction with his Father, with whom he was equal; and therefore his teſtimony ought to be looked upon, and received as firm and good, giving this as a reaſon for it: *for I know whence I came, and whither I go*; that he was truly the Son of God, the only-begotten of the Father, and had his miſſion and commiſſion from him into this world; and which, as he knew himſelf, he was able to make known, and make appear to others, by his credentials, the doctrines taught, and the miracles wrought by him; which proved him to be what he ſaid he was, the light of the world; and he knew that when he had done his work he came about, he ſhould go to his God and Father, and take his place at his right-hand: *but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go*; they took him to be the ſon of *Joſeph*, and that he came out of *Galilee*; in which they were miſtaken; and when he talked of going away, they did not underſtand him, nor know whither he was going; they aſk if he was going to the diſperſed among the *Gentiles*, and teach them? and at another time, whether he would kill himſelf? they knew not, that through a train of ſufferings and death, he muſt, and would enter into his glory: the *Perſic* verſion inſerts another clauſe without any foundation; *but ye know not from whence ye come, and whither ye go*, and then follows the former; there might be a truth in this, they did not know their true original, that they were from beneath; nor whither they were going, to what diſmal abode, when they expected to enter, and enjoy the kingdom of heaven.

Ver. 15. *Ye judge after the fleſh*, &c.] According to their carnal affections and prejudices; taking the Meſſiah to be a temporal prince, and his kingdom to be of this world, they judged that Jeſus could not be he; they looked upon him as a mere man, and ſeeing him in much outward meanneſs, in his human nature, they judged of him according to this outward appearance: or *ye* that are *after the fleſh judge*; to which ſenſe the *Perſic* verſion agrees, *for ye are carnal*; and ſo judged as carnal men, who are very improper perſons to judge of ſpiritual things: *I judge no man*; in the ſame way, after the fleſh, or in a carnal manner, nor according to outward appearances, according to the ſight of the eyes, or the hearing of the ears: Chriſt did not take upon him to judge and determine in civil affairs, or in things pertaining to a court of judicature among men; this was not his province; an inſtance of this there is in the context, in not condemning the woman brought to him; nor did he judge the perſons and ſtates of men, or proceed to paſs any ſentence of condemnation on them; he came not to condemn, but ſave the world; this was not his buſineſs now; otherwiſe, all judgment is committed to him, and which he will exerciſe another day.

Ver. 16. *And yet if I judge, my judgment is true*, &c.] Becauſe he ſaw not as man did, nor looked unto, and judged according to the outward appearance of things; but looked into the heart, and knew what was in it, being the ſearcher and trier of it; to whom all things are naked and open, and therefore cannot be deceived or impoſed upon; his judgment muſt be ſure and infallible: *for I am not alone, but I and the Father that ſent me*; he was not ſeparate from the Father, or at a diſtance from him, when he was here on earth; he was in his boſom, and in heaven, as the Son of God, when as the Son of man; he was below; nor was he alone in his teſtimony and judgment, the Father joined with him therein; and which is a farther proof of the truth of his teſtimony, and the certainty of his judgment.

Ver. 17. *It is alſo written in your law*, &c.] The law of *Moſes*, which was given unto them, and they boaſted of; the paſſage referred to, is in *Deut.* xix. 15. ſee alſo *Deut.* xvii. 6. where though what follows, is not to be found in ſo many words, yet the ſenſe is there expreſſed: *that the teſtimony of two men is true*; concerning which the *Jewiſh* writers ſay [y], "they uſed not to determine any judiciary matter by the mouth of one witneſs, neither pecuniary cauſes, nor cauſes of life and death, as it is ſaid, *Deut.* xvii. 6." It is aſked [z] in their oral law, "if *the teſtimony of two men ſtand*, why does the ſcripture particularly mention three? (for no other reaſon) but to compare or equal three with two, that as three convict two of a falſhood, two may alſo convict three." On which one of their commentators [a] has this obſervation, taking notice of *Deut.* xix. 18. which ſpeaks of a ſingle witneſs; "*Mar* (a doctor) ſays, wherever it is ſaid a *witneſs*, it is to be underſtood of two, unleſs the ſcripture particularly ſpecifies one." In the caſe of a wife ſuſpected of adultery, and in the buſineſs of ſtriking off the neck of the heifer in caſe of murder, they admitted of one witneſs [b].

Ver. 18. *I am one that bear witneſs of myſelf*, &c.] As he does of his ſonſhip, in 1 *John* v. 7. *And the Father that ſent me, beareth witneſs of me*; as he did, by the deſcent of the Spirit upon him at his baptiſm, and by a voice from heaven, both at that time, and at his tranſfiguration, and by the miracles which he wrought; and particularly he bore teſtimony of him, long before in prophecy, that he was the light of the world, he now ſaid he was, *Iſa.* xlii. 6. ſo that here were two teſtifiers, his Father and himſelf; which ſhow them to be two diſtinct divine perſons, and equal to each other: and now if the teſtimony of two men is true, firm, and authentic, and to be depended upon and received, then much more the teſtimony of two divine perſons; ſee 1 *John* v. 9.

Ver. 19. *Then ſaid they unto him, where is thy father?* &c.] The *Perſic* verſion adds, *ſhew him unto us*; produce this witneſs boaſted of, let us ſee him; this they ſaid in a ſneering, taunting, and inſulting manner; where's thy father? what! he is in *Galilee*, fetch him from thence; it is *Joſeph* the carpenter you mean; a goodly witneſs indeed! *Jeſus anſwered, ye neither know me nor my Father; if ye had known me, ye ſhould have known my Father alſo*; they did not know the divine original of Chriſt, that he was the Son of God, and that God was his Father; they greatly boaſted of their knowledge of God, but they knew him not; their ignorance of Chriſt ſhowed it: the knowledge of both go together, and which is life eternal; nor can any truly know the one, without the other; and where the one is known, the other will be alſo; Chriſt is the brightneſs of his Father's glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon; ſo that he that has ſeen the one, muſt know the other; and indeed, no one can know the Father, but he to whom the Son reveals him: this was a ſevere mortification to theſe men of knowledge.

Ver. 20. *Theſe words ſpake Jeſus in the treaſury*, &c.] The place where the thirteen cheſts ſtood, into which the people put their voluntary contributions for the ſacrifices, and ſervice of the temple; the *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *at the alms-cheſt*; ſee the note on *Mark* xii. 41. The deſign of this obſervation of the Evangeliſt, is to ſuggeſt to us, that it was in a very publick place, in the temple, openly, that Chriſt delivered the above words: *as he taught in the temple*; where the *Jews* reſorted, where his miniſtry was publick, and he ſpake freely, and without reſerve; in a very bold manner, with intrepidity, and without fear of man: *and no man laid hands on him*; though they had ſought to do it the day before; had ſent officers to take him; and they themſelves had a good-will to it; and yet they were ſo awed and over-ruled by one means, or one account or another, that no man did it: the reaſon was, *for his hour was not yet come*; the time appointed for his ſufferings and death.

Ver. 21. *Then ſaid Jeſus again unto them*, &c.] It may be, immediately after he had ſaid the above words; or rather ſome time after, it may be on the ſame day: *I go my way*; meaning, the way of all fleſh, or that he ſhould die: the way of ſpeaking ſhews, that his death was certain, a determined thing; which muſt be, and yet was voluntary; he was not drove, nor forced, but went freely; this being the path, the way, through which he muſt enter into his kingdom and glory: *and ye ſhall ſeek me*; that is, ſhall ſeek the Meſſiah, as their deliverer and ſaviour, when in diſtreſs; and whom he calls himſelf, becauſe he was the true Meſſiah, and the only Saviour and Redeemer of his people, in a ſpiritual ſenſe; otherwiſe they would not, nor did they ſeek Jeſus of *Nazareth*: *and ſhall die in your ſins*; or *in your ſin*; ſo it is in the *Greek* text, and in the *Vulgate Latin*, and *Perſic* verſions; meaning, in their ſin of unbelief, and rejection of him the true Meſſiah: the ſenſe is, that in the midſt of their calamities, which ſhould come upon them, for their ſin againſt him, they ſhould in vain ſeek for the Meſſiah, as a temporal deliverer of them; for their nation, city, and temple, and they therein ſhould utterly periſh, for their iniquity; and their ruin would not only be temporal, but eternal: ſince it follows, *whither I go ye cannot come*; ſignifying, that whereas he was going to his Father, to heaven and glory; to enjoy eternal happineſs at his Father's right-hand, in the human nature; they ſhould never come there, but whilſt many ſat down in the kingdom of heaven, with their fathers *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, who ſhould come from afar, they would be ſhut out, and not ſuffered to enter in.

Ver. 22. *Then ſaid the Jews, will he kill himſelf?* &c.] Which was not only a wicked, but a fooliſh conſequence, drawn from his words; for it by no means followed, becauſe he was going away, and whither they could not come, that therefore he muſt deſtroy himſelf; this ſeems to be what they would have been glad he would have done, and ſuggeſted the thought that he might do it, in which they imitated ſatan, *Matt.* iv. 6. under whoſe influence they now apparently were, and hoped that he would, which would at once extricate them out of their difficulties on his account: *becauſe he ſaith, whither I go ye cannot come*; this is no reaſon at all; for had Chriſt's meaning been, as they blaſphemouſly intimate, they might have deſtroyed themſelves too, and have gone after him.

Ver. 23. *And he ſaid unto them*, &c.] Upon this wicked remark of theirs, and query on his words: *ye are from beneath*; not only of the earth, earthy, and ſo ſpoke of the earth, and as carnal men; but even of hell, they were the children of the devil; they breathed his ſpirit, ſpoke his language, and did his luſts, as in ver. 44. *I am from above*; not with reſpect to his human body, which

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[y] Maimon. Hilchot Eduth, c. 5. §. 1.
[z] Miſn. Maccot, c. 1. §. 7.
[a] Bartenora in ib.
[b] Maimon. Hilchot Eduth, ib. §. 2.

he did not bring with him from heaven, that was formed below, in the virgin's womb; otherwiſe he would not have been the ſeed of the woman, the ſon of *Abraham*, *David*, and *Mary*: but either with regard to his divine nature and perſon, he was of God, the Son of God, the only-begotten of the Father, who then lay in his boſom, and was in heaven above at that time; or to his miſſion, which was from heaven. *Ye are of this world*; they were, as they were born into the world, ſinful, carnal, and corrupt; they were in it, and belonged to it, had never been choſen, or called out of it; they had their converſation according to the courſe of it, and conformed to its evil cuſtoms and manners; they were under the influence of the God of the world, and were taken with the ſinful and ſenſual luſts thereof; they were men of worldly ſpirits; they minded earth, and earthly things, and had their portion in this world, and might be truly called the men of it. *I am not of this world*; he was in it, but not of it; he was come into it to ſave the chief of ſinners, but he did not belong to it, nor did he conform to it; for tho' he converſed with ſinners, eat with them, and received them, being called to repentance by him; yet he was ſeparate from them, and did not as they did: nor did he purſue the pleaſures, honours, and riches of this world, being all his days a man of ſorrows, and deſpiſed of men; and though Lord of all, had not where to lay his head.

Ver. 24. *I ſaid therefore unto you*, &c.] Becauſe they were from beneath, and of the world, and diſcovered an earthly, worldly, carnal, yea, deviliſh diſpoſition, in their conduct towards him: *that ye ſhall die in your ſins*; this he had ſaid in ver. 21. and now repeats it, and confirms it by the following reaſon: *for if ye believe not that I am he*; the everlaſting and unchangeable I am, the true God, God over all, bleſſed for ever; the eternal Son of God, God manifeſt in the fleſh, really made fleſh, and become incarnate; the true Meſſiah, the only saviour of ſinners; the one and only mediator between God and man; the head of the church, prophet, prieſt, and king, and the judge of quick and dead; as alſo the light of the world he had declared himſelf to be: theſe are things that are neceſſary to be believed concerning Chriſt; indeed, carnal and unregenerate men may believe all theſe things; the devils themſelves do, and tremble at them; but then they, and ſo unconverted men, have no faith in them, with an application of them to themſelves: true faith in Chriſt deals not with him in a general way, but in a ſpecial regard to a man's ſelf; it is a ſeeing of Chriſt for a man's ſelf; it is not an implicit faith, or a believing him to be what he is, merely upon report, but upon ſight; it is a going out of the ſoul to Chriſt, a renouncing its own righteouſneſs, and a truſting in him alone for life and ſalvation; it is with the heart, and from it, and is unfeigned; it works by love to Chriſt, and his people, and is attended with the fruits of righteouſneſs, and a chearful obedience to the commands and ordinances of Chriſt. Tho' perhaps no more than a general faith is here intended, for want of which, and their rejection of Jeſus, as the Meſſiah, the *Jews* ſuffered temporal ruin; and had they but believed that Jeſus was the Son of God, and true Meſſiah, they had been ſaved from that temporal deſtruction which came upon their nation, city, and temple; but not believing this in a general and notional way, they periſhed, as is here threatened: *ye ſhall die in your ſins*; in which they were, being defiled with them, guilty before God for them, under the power of them, and liable to puniſhment for them; and ſo they remained, and did remain, and were yet in their ſins, even until death, when they died in them, and for them, not only a corporal, but an eternal death: for dying in their ſins, theſe would be found upon them, and they would be charged with them, and muſt be anſwerable for them, and conſequently endure the puniſhment of them, which is the ſecond death. Dying in ſin, and dying in Chriſt, are too widely different things. They that die in faith, die in Chriſt; they that die in unbelief, die in ſin; and this is dreadful dying; ſee *Joſh.* xxii. 2[illegible] where the *Targum* paraphraſes it, *and he, one man*, (or alone) לא מות בחוביה, *did not die in his ſins*.

Ver. 25. *Then ſaid they unto him, who art thou?* &c.] That talks at this rate, and threatens with death, in caſe of unbelief; this they ſaid with an haughty air, and in a ſcornful manner: *And Jeſus ſaith unto them, even* the ſame *that I ſaid unto you from the beginning*; meaning, either of this diſcourſe, as that he was the light of the world, and which he continued to aſſert; or of his being had before the *Sanhedrim*, when he affirmed that God was his Father, and by many ſtrong arguments proved his divine Sonſhip; or of his miniſtry, when by miracles, as well as doctrines, he made it to appear that he was he that was to come, the true Meſſiah; or who ſpake from the beginning to *Moſes*, ſaying, I am that I am, hath ſent thee, and to the church, and *Jewiſh* fathers in the wilderneſs; and who is that Word that was from the beginning with God; and who is called the beginning, the firſt cauſe of all things, and of the creation of God; and ſome think this is intended here.

Ver. 26. *I have many things to ſay, and to judge of you*, &c.] Being God omniſcient, he knew their perſons and actions, their lives and converſations, and all their ſins and tranſgreſſions, which he could juſtly have complained of, and charged them with, and proved againſt them, and judged and condemned them for; but this was not his preſent buſineſs, he came not to judge and condemn, but to ſave: wherefore he waved theſe things, and took no notice of them, leaving them to his Father, who would call them to an account, and puniſh them for them: *but he that ſent me is true*; as to his promiſes concerning the miſſion of his Son, to be the ſaviour of ſinners; ſo to his threatenings, to bring down vengeance on thoſe that diſbelieve him, and reject him: *and I ſpeak to the world*, or *in the world*, *thoſe things which I have heard of him*; as concerning his love, grace, and mercy to thoſe that ſhould believe in him, ſo of the deſtruction of the deſpiſers and rejecters of him; which things he ſpoke not in ſecret, in a corner, but publickly and openly, before all the world, to *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and to as many as were in the treaſury, in the temple at this time; ſee *John* xviii. 20.

Ver. 27. *They underſtood not that he ſpake to them of the Father.*] That ſent him, and who was true and faithful to all he had ſaid, whether in a way of promiſe, or threatning; ſuch was their ſtupidity, that they did not know that he meant God the Father by him that ſent him, ſo deriving his miſſion and doctrine from him; their hearts were made fat, and hardened, and their eyes were blinded. The *Vulgate Latin* verſion reads, *they did not know that he ſaid, God was his father*; and ſo *Beza*'s moſt ancient copy, and another exemplar of his.

Ver. 28. *Then ſaid Jeſus unto them*, &c.] Upbraiding them with their ignorance, and giving them a ſign, as well as pointing out the time when they either, by good or ſad experience, ſhould have knowledge of him: *when ye have lift up the ſon of man*; meaning himſelf, who was to be liſted up upon the croſs, as the ſerpent was upon the pole, in the wilderneſs; and which ſignified the manner of death he ſhould die, the death of the croſs; and ſuggeſted, that what the *Jews* deſigned for his reproach, ſhame, and abaſement, would be the way and means of his riſe and exaltation; and this lifting him up, or crucifying him, he aſcribes to them, becauſe they would deliver him to *Pontius Pilate* to be condemned, and ſtir up the people to aſk, and be importunate themſelves for his crucifixion: *then ſhall ye know that I am* he; the Son of God, and true Meſſiah, as the centurion, and thoſe that were with him did, when they obſerved the earthquake, and the things that were done at his death; and after the death, reſurrection, and aſcenſion of Chriſt, and the pouring forth of his Spirit, many of the *Jews* had not only a notional, but a true and ſpiritual knowledge of Jeſus, as the Meſſiah; and upon the deſtruction of their temple, city, and nation, and their diſappointment by falſe Chriſts, they doubtleſs many of them muſt, and did know, that the true Meſſiah was come, and that Jeſus of *Nazareth* was he: *and that I do nothing of myſelf*; ſee the note on ch. v. 19. *but as my Father hath taught me, I ſpeak theſe things*; this he ſays not as leſſening himſelf, or making himſelf inferior to the Father, but to ſhew the excellency of his doctrine, and to aſſert the original, authority, and divinity of it; ſuggeſting that it was not an human doctrine, or a device of man's, or his own, as man, but was divine, and from God; ſee ch. vii. 16.

Ver. 29. *And he that ſent me is with me*, &c.] By virtue of that near union there is between them, they being one in nature, eſſence, power, and glory, and by the gracious, powerful, comfortable, aſſiſting, and ſtrengthening preſence of his father, which he vouchſafed to him as man, and mediator: *the Father hath not left me alone*; Chriſt, as the Word, was with the Father from all eternity, and as the Son of God was in heaven, and in the boſom of the Father, when he, as the ſon of man, was here on earth; for tho' he came forth from the Father into this world, by aſſumption of the human nature, yet the Father was always with him, and he with the Father, thro' the unity of the divine nature; nor did he with-hold his ſupporting and aſſiſting preſence from him, as man; nor did he withdraw, at leaſt he had not yet withdrawn his gracious and comfortable preſence from him, tho' he afterwards did, when upon the croſs: compare with this ch. xvi. 32. *for I do always thoſe things that pleaſe him*; by ſubmitting to Goſpel-ordinances, as to baptiſm, at which the Father declared his well-pleaſedneſs in him; and by complying with the ordinances of the ceremonial law, which were typical of him; and by perfectly obeying the precepts of the moral law, and bearing the penalty of it; or by ſuffering and dying in the room and ſtead of his people; all which were the will of God, and well-pleaſing to him.

Ver. 30. *As he ſpake theſe words*, &c.] Concerning his being lifted up, or his crucifixion, and the knowledge the *Jews* ſhould then have of him; of the excellency and divinity of his doctrine, of his miſſion from the Father, and of the Father's preſence with him, and of his always doing the things that are pleaſing in his ſight; which were ſpoken by him with majeſty and authority, and came with power: *many believed on him*; as the Son of God, and true Meſſiah: faith came by hearing; Chriſt's hearers were of different ſorts; ſome underſtood him not, and diſbelieved, and rejected him; others had their eyes, and their hearts opened, and received him, and his words.

Ver. 31. *Then ſaid Jeſus to thoſe Jews that believed on him*, &c.] For he knew inſtantly who they were, and when they believed on him; and therefore he immediately turned himſelf to them, and thus addreſſed them: *if ye continue in my word*; meaning the Goſpel, called his, becauſe he was both the author, and preacher, and ſum, and ſubſtance of it: and to continue in it, is having cordially received it, to abide by it, and hold it faſt, and not to be moved from it, by the temptations of ſatan; the cunning of thoſe that lie in wait to deceive; nor by the revilings and perſecutions, the frowns and flatteries of men: and when men continue thus ſtedfaſt in it, and faithful to it, it is an evidence that it has come with power, and has a place in their hearts, and that they are the true followers of Chriſt: *then are ye my diſciples indeed*; there are two ſorts of diſciples of Chriſt; ſome are only nominal, and merely in profeſſion ſuch; and theſe ſometimes draw back from him, diſcontinue in his word, and go out from among his people; which ſhows that they never were of them, nor are the true diſciples of Jeſus; for the genuine diſciples of Chriſt, continue in his Goſpel, hold faſt to him the head, and remain with his people; which to do to the end, is an evidence of their being diſciples indeed.

Ver. 32. *And ye ſhall know the truth*, &c.] Either the truth of the Goſpel, the truth as it is in Jeſus; meaning, that they ſhould have a larger knowledge of it, while others are ever learning, and never come to the knowledge of the truth; but the Spirit of truth ſhould lead them into all truth, and cauſe them to grow and increaſe in Goſpel-light and knowledge; or Jeſus himſelf, who is the way, the truth, and the life: and the ſenſe is, that they ſhould know more of him, of the dignity of his perſon, of the nature and uſefulneſs of his offices, of the efficacy of his blood, the excellency of his righteouſneſs, and the fulneſs of his grace, and that for themſelves: *and the truth ſhall make you free*; from ignorance and error, and the prejudices of education, under which the whole nation laboured, and from the thraldom of the law.

Ver. 33. *They anſwered him*, &c.] Not the believing *Jews*, whom he peculiarly addreſſed, but the unbelieving *Jews*, who were preſent, and heard theſe things: *we be Abraham's ſeed*; this the *Jews* always valued themſelves upon, and reckoned themſelves, on this account, upon a level with the nobles and the princes of the earth. “Says *R. Akiba*[c], “even the poor of *Iſrael* are to be conſidered as if “they were, בני חורין, *noblemen*, that are fallen “from their ſubſtance, becauſe they are the children “of *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*;” *and were never in bondage to any man*; which is a very great falſhood, for it was declared to *Abraham* himſelf, that his ſeed ſhould ſerve in a land, not theirs, and be afflicted four hundred years, as they were; and as the preface to the law which the *Jews* gloried in, ſhows, which ſays, that the Lord their God brought them out of *Egypt*, out of the houſe of bondage; and they were frequently overcome by their neighbours, the *Moabites*, *Ammonites*, and *Philiſtines*, and reduced to ſervitude under them, until delivered by one judge, or another: and not to take notice of their ſeventy years captivity in *Babylon*, they were at this very time under the *Roman* yoke, and paid tribute to *Cæſar*; and yet ſuch was the pride of their hearts, they would not be thought to be in bondage; and therefore, with an haughty air, add, *how ſayeſt thou, ye ſhall be made free?* when they thought themſelves, and would fain have been thought by others, to have been free already, and ſo to ſtand in no need of being made free.

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[c] Miſn. Bava Kama, c. 8. §. 6. & T. Bab. Bava-Kama, fol. 86. 1. & 91. 1.

Ver. 34. *Jeſus anſwered them, verily verily I ſay unto you,* &c.] Taking no notice of their civil liberty, to which he could eaſily have replied to their confuſion and ſilence, he obſerves to them their moral ſervitude and bondage, and in the ſtrongeſt manner affirms, that *whoſoever committeth ſin, is the ſervant of ſin:* which muſt be underſtood, not of one that commits a ſingle act of ſin, tho' ever ſo groſs, as did *Noah*, *Lot*, *David*, *Peter*, and others, who yet were not the ſervants of ſin; or of ſuch who ſin thro' ignorance, weakneſs of the fleſh, and the power of ſatan's temptations, and eſpecially who commit ſin with reluctance, the ſpirit luſting againſt it; nor indeed of any regenerate perſons tho' they are not without ſin; nor do they live without the commiſſion of it, in thought, word, or deed; and tho' they fall into it, they don't continue and live in it, but riſe up out of it, thro' the grace of God, and by true repentance; and ſo are not to be reckoned the ſervants of ſin, or to be of the devil. But this is to be underſtood of ſuch whoſe biaſs and bent of their minds are to ſin; who give up themſelves unto it, and ſell themſelves to work wickedneſs; who make ſin their trade, buſineſs, and employment, and are properly workers of it, and take delight and pleaſure in it: theſe, whatever liberty they promiſe themſelves, are the ſervants of corruption; they are under the government of ſin, that has dominion over them; and they obey it in the luſts thereof, and are drudges and ſlaves unto it, and will have no other wages at laſt but death, even eternal death, if grace prevent not; ſee *Rom.* vi. 16. 2 *Pet.* ii. 19.

Ver. 35. *And the ſervant abideth not in the houſe for ever,* &c.] The ſervant of God, and of Chriſt, does, but not the ſervant of ſin: there may be ſervants of ſin in the houſe or church of God here below; and ſuch were theſe *Jews* Chriſt is ſpeaking to; but ſuch ſhall not abide there for ever: ſome that get into this houſe are quickly diſcerned, as *Simon Magus* was, and are ſoon removed; and others that may ſtay longer, are ſometimes ſuffered to fall into ſome foul ſin, or into ſome groſs error and hereſy, for which they are caſt out of the houſe or church of God, according to the rules of God's word; others make parties, draw diſciples after them, and ſeparate themſelves, and go out of their own accord, to ſerve their own purpoſes; and others, when perſecution and tribulation ariſe becauſe of the word, they are offended and gone; this is the fan with which Chriſt ſometimes winnows his floor, and removes the chaff; and thoſe that continue longeſt, even to the end of their days, or of the world, or the ſecond coming of Chriſt, as the fooliſh virgins, will then be diſcerned and ſeparated; for the ungodly ſhall not ſtand in judgment, nor ſinners in the congregation of the righteous; they ſhall not enter into the houſe above, into the houſe not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, which is Chriſt's Father's houſe: none but ſons are brought to glory; theſe are the only heirs of ſalvation; others will be bid to depart, as workers of iniquity, as the ſervants of ſin; even ſuch who have made a profeſſion of religion, and have been, and have had a ſtanding in the houſe of God below. The alluſion is to the caſe of ſervants in common; and, in a literal ſenſe, it is true both of good and bad ſervants: good ſervants don't always continue in their maſter's houſe; even an *Hebrew* ſervant, that loved his maſter, and would not go out free at the end of his ſervitude; and who, after having his ear bored, is ſaid to ſerve him for ever, *Exod.* xxi. 6. yet that *for ever* was but until the year of jubilee, whether near or remote, as the *Jewiſh* commentators [d] in general explain it; nay, if his maſter died before that time, he went out free; he was not obliged to ſerve his ſon or heirs; and ſo ſay the *Miſnic* doctors [e]: "one that is bored is obtained by boring, and he poſſeſſes himſelf (or becomes free) by the year of jubilee, and by the death of his maſter." And to this agrees what *Maimonides* [f] ſays; "he that has ſerved ſix years, and will not go out, lo, this is bored, and he ſerves until the year of jubilee, or until his maſter dies; and altho' he leaves a ſon, he that is bored does not ſerve the ſon; which may be learned from the letter of the words, *he ſhall ſerve him*, not his ſon, *for ever*, for his ever of the jubilee: from whence it appears, that he that is bored does not poſſeſs himſelf, (or is free) but by the jubilee, and by the death of his maſter." And one of their writers [g] obſerves, that the word rendered, *ſhall ſerve him*, is by *Gematry*, and not his ſon. And among the *Romans*, good ſervants were oftentimes made free, and bad ones were turned out, and put into a work-houſe, to grind corn in mills, a ſort of bridewell; and ſuch evil ſervants may more eſpecially be reſpected, ſince Chriſt is ſpeaking of ſervants of ſin: *but the Son abideth ever*; the Son of God, the only-begotten Son of God, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt will always continue as a Son in his own houſe, as the Lord and proprietor of it; and as an high-prieſt over it, having an unchangeable prieſthood; and as he that takes care of it, provides for it, and manages all the affairs thereof, the family in heaven and in earth being named of him. And as he, ſo all the adopted ſons of God ſhall continue, being pillars in this houſe, that ſhall never go out; ſuch are no more ſervants, nor foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the ſaints, and of the houſhold of God; and being ſons, are heirs, and ſhall never be caſt out, as the bond-woman and her ſon have been: but theſe being the children of the free, ſhall for ever enjoy the inheritance they are adopted to; once ſons, always ſo; the relation ever continues; they will ever remain in the family, and being intitled to the heavenly eſtate, ſhall ever poſſeſs it.

Ver. 36. *If the Son therefore ſhall make you free,* &c.] Alluding to the cuſtom of adoption by the ſons or brethren in the family, which obtained in *Greece*, called αδελφοθεσια, *the adoption of brethren*, as *Grotius*, and others have obſerved; or rather to a cuſtom among the *Romans*, of a ſon's making free after his father's death, ſuch as were born ſlaves in his houſe. Such a caſe as this is ſuppoſed [h]; "a man having a ſon or a daughter by his ſervant-maid, that which is born of her, ſince of a ſervant, is without doubt a ſervant: wherefore, if he (the ſon) ſhould ſay, this is my natural brother, or my natural ſiſter; for ſince my father

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[d] Jarchi, Aben Ezra & ben Gerſom in Exod. xxi. 6.

[e] Miſn. Kidduſhin, c. 1. §. 1.

[f] Hilchot Abadim, c. 3. §. 6, 7.

[g] Baal Hatturim in Exod. xxi. 6.

[h] Theophili Antecenſor. Inſtitut. Imperat. Juſtinian. l. 1. tit. 6. §. 5. p. 38.

"had children by his maid-ſervant, *whom he did not make free*; and he dying, the law has made me lord of theſe, εγω τȣτȣς ελευθερωσα, *I have made theſe free*, becauſe of their natural kindred." This is allowed to be a juſt and good reaſon of manumiſſion. Now this anſwers very much to the caſe in hand. Men are home-born ſlaves; the choſen people of God are ſuch by nature; they are born in ſin, and are the ſervants of it; Chriſt the Son makes them free; and then they are no more foreigners and ſtrangers, but fellow-citizens with the ſaints, and of the houſhold of God. This ſuggeſts, that true freedom is by Jeſus Chriſt, the Son of God; ſee *Gal.* v. 1. He it is that makes the ſaints free from ſin; not from the being of it in this life, but from the bondage and ſervitude of it, from its power and dominion, and from its guilt and liableneſs to puniſhment for it, by procuring the pardon of their ſins thro' his blood, and juſtifying their perſons by his righteouſneſs: he alſo makes them free, or delivers them from the captivity of ſatan, by ranſoming them out of his hands, taking the prey from the mighty, binding the ſtrong man armed, and delivering them from him, and from the power of darkneſs, and putting them into his own kingdom; he does not indeed free them altogether from his temptations, but he preſerves them by his power, from being hurt and deſtroyed by him: he likewiſe makes his people free from the law, not only the ceremonial law, which is aboliſhed by him, but from the moral law; not from obedience to it, as it is in his hands, and a rule of walk and converſation to them, but as in the hands of *Moſes*, and as a covenant of works, and from the rigorous exaction of it, and from ſeeking juſtification and life by it, and from its curſe and condemnation: and he gives them freedom of acceſs to God, as their father, thro' his blood, and by his Spirit; and admits them to all the privileges and immunities of the church below; and gives them a right to, faith in, and an expectation of the glorious liberty of the children of God hereafter; and ſuch are truly Chriſt's freemen: *ye ſhall be free indeed*; this is true freedom; what the *Jews* boaſted of, ſuppoſing what they ſaid was right, was but a ſhadow of freedom in compariſon of this; and that liberty which ſinful men promiſe themſelves in ſin, is all deceit; there's no true, ſolid, ſubſtantial freedom but what is by Chriſt, the ſon of God. Even that freedom which the children of God had under the legal diſpenſation, was a ſervitude, in compariſon of that which the ſaints enjoy by Chriſt under the Goſpel-diſpenſation; tho' they were ſons and heirs, yet being in nonage, differed nothing from ſervants, being under tutors and governours, in bondage under the elements of the world, and under the influence of a ſpirit of bondage unto fear; ſee *Gal.* iv. 1, 2, 3. *Rom.* viii. 15. but ſuch that have received the Spirit of adoption from Chriſt, they are really free: they have not only the name of children, and of freemen, but they are truly ſuch, and wholly ſo; perhaps there may be ſome reference had to ſuch ſort of perſons among the *Jews*, who were partly ſervants, and partly free: ſo it is ſaid [i], "מי שחציו עבד, *he who is half a ſervant*, or partly a ſervant, and partly free, ſhall ſerve his maſter one day, and himſelf another." And ſuch an one, as the commentators [k] ſay, is one who is a ſervant of two partners, and is made free by one of them; or who has paid half his price to his maſter (for his freedom) but the other half is ſtill due: and of one in ſuch circumſtances it is ſaid [l], that "he that is partly a ſervant, and partly free, may not eat of his maſter's" (lamb at the paſſover): but now thoſe who are made free by Chriſt the Son of God, they are not in part only, but are wholly free, and have a right to all the privileges of his houſe, to the ſupper of the Lord, and to every other immunity.

Ver. 37. *I know that ye are Abraham's ſeed*, &c.] In anſwer to the other part of the *Jews* objection to Chriſt, and in favour of themſelves, Chriſt owns that they were the natural ſeed of *Abraham*; for truth muſt be allowed to an adverſary. But then this hindered not but they might be, as they were, in moral bondage to ſin, and a generation of vipers, as thoſe of them who came to *John*'s baptiſm were; and might not be the ſons of God, for not becauſe they were the natural ſeed of *Abraham*, were they all the adopted ſons of God; and might be caſt out of the houſe of God, as *Iſhmael* was caſt out of *Abraham*'s, though he was his natural ſeed. And what follows, proves them to be under the power, and in the ſervitude of ſin, and that they were the ſeed of the ſerpent that was to bruiſe the heel of the woman's ſeed, or put the Meſſiah to death, tho' they were the natural ſeed of *Abraham*: *but ye ſeek to kill me*; which none but ſuch who are under the governing power of ſin, are ſlaves unto it, and the vaſſals of the devil, would ever do: the reaſon of which is, *becauſe my word hath no place in you*; their hearts were barred and bolted againſt it, with ignorance, enmity, and unbelief; it had no entrance into them; it did not come with power to their hearts, nor work effectually in them; it had no place at all in them, much leſs a dwelling; had it had one, it would have produced another effect in them, even love to Chriſt; which the doctrine of Chriſt, wherever it comes with power, and takes place in the ſoul, brings along with it; but where it does not, as here, hatred, and indignation, envy and malice, more or leſs, ſhew themſelves. This clauſe is differently rendered, and ſo admits of different ſenſes. The *Vulgate Latin* renders it, *my word does not take in you*; it did not take place in them, nor did it take with them; they could not receive it; in which ſenſe the word is uſed in *Matt.* xix. 11. for the natural man cannot receive the doctrines of Chriſt; they are not ſuited to his taſte; they are diſagreeable to him. The *Syriac* verſion renders it, *ye are not ſufficient for my word*, to take it in; they were not capable of it; they could not underſtand it; it requires divine illumination, and a ſpiritual diſcerning, which they had not: the *Perſic* verſion is, *ye are not worthy of my words*; of having the Goſpel preached to them, and continued with them; they contradicting and blaſpheming it, and rejecting the author of it; ſee *Acts* xiii. 45, 46. The *Ethiopic* verſion renders it, *my word does not remain with you*; and to the ſame purpoſe the *Arabic* verſion, *my word is not firm in you*; as ſoon as it was heard by them, it was catched away from them by ſatan, whoſe children they were; it made no laſting impreſſions on them, but was like water ſpilt upon the ground: it may be rendered, *my word does not enter into you*; it did not make its way and penetrate into their hearts; for though, when attended with the demonſtration of the Spirit, and of power, it is quick and powerful, and ſharper than a two-edged ſword, and enters into the conſcience, and penetrates to the dividing aſunder of ſoul and ſpirit, and lays open the ſecret thoughts and intents of the heart; yet of itſelf is an inſufficient means of converſion; it can't make its own way; there muſt be an exertion of powerful and efficacious grace; which ſhows the hardneſs and obſtinacy of the heart of man.

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[i] Miſn. Gittin, c. 4. §. 5. & Ediot, c. 1. §. 13.

[k] Maimonides, Jarchi, & Bartenora in ib.

[l] Miſn. Peſachim, c. 8. §. 1.

Ver. 38. *I ſpeak that which I have ſeen with my Father*, &c.] This is an aggravation of the ſin of the *Jews*, in ſeeking to kill Chriſt, on account of his doctrine, ſince it was not his own, but his Father's; was not merely human, but divine; was what he the only-begotten Son, that lay in the boſom of his Father, had ſeen in his heart, in his purpoſes, and decrees, in his council, and covenant, and ſo was clear, compleat, certain, and to be depended on: *and ye do that which ye have ſeen with your father*; meaning the devil, whom, tho' they had not ſeen with their eyes, nor any of his perſonal actions; yet acted ſo much under his influence, and according to his will, as if they had cloſe and intimate conſultation with him, and took their plan of operation from him, and had him continually before them, as their example and pattern, to copy after. The *Ethiopic* verſion reads, *what ye have heard*; and ſo it is read in three of *Beza*'s copies, and in three of *Stephens*'s.

Ver. 39. *They anſwered and ſaid unto him*, &c.] On account of his making mention of a father, whoſe works they did, and whom they imitated: *Abraham is our father*; meaning their only one, nor had they any other: *Jeſus ſaith unto them, if ye were Abraham*'s children, *ye would do the works of Abraham*; for who ſhould children imitate but their parents? *Abraham* was a merciful, charitable, and hoſpitable man, as well as a man of ſtrict juſtice and integrity; he feared God, believed in him, and was ready to receive every meſſage and revelation which came from him; and they are his genuine children and offspring, who walk in the ſteps of his faith, charity, juſtice, and piety: and this is a rule which the *Jews* themſelves give [m], whereby the ſeed of *Abraham* may be known: "whoever is merciful "to the creature (man), it is evident, that he is "of the ſeed of *Abraham*, our father; but whoever "has not mercy on the creature, it is a clear caſe "that he is not of the ſeed of *Abraham* our father." And if this is a ſure rule of judging, theſe men could not be the ſeed of *Abraham*, who were a mercileſs, barbarous, and cruel generation. Another of their writers [n] has this obſervation, agreeable to the way of reaſoning Chriſt uſes; "a diſciple is to "be judged of according to his manners; he that "walks in the ways of the Lord, he is of the *diſciples of Abraham*, our father, ſeeing he is uſed "to his manners, and learns of his works; but "the diſciple who is corrupt in his manners, tho' "he is of the children of *Iſrael*, lo, he is not of "the diſciples of *Abraham*, ſeeing he is not accuſtomed to his manners." Whence it appears, that they ſay theſe things not to diſtinguiſh themſelves from other people who claimed a deſcent from *Abraham*, as the *Iſhmaelites* or *Saracens* did; as did alſo the *Spartians* or *Lacedemonians*; for ſo writes *Areus* their king, to *Onias* the high-prieſt of the *Jews*, "it is found in writing, that the *Lacedemonians* and *Jews* are brethren, and that they are "of the ſtock of *Abraham*, 1 *Maccab*. xii. 20, 21." But to diſtinguiſh thoſe who were religious and virtuous among the *Jews* themſelves, from thoſe that were not; and ſo our Lord means not to deny, that the *Jews*, tho' they were evil men, were the ſeed of *Abraham*, according to the fleſh; but that they were not ſo in a ſpiritual ſenſe, they did not tread in his ſteps, or do the works he did. The *Perſic* verſion reads in the ſingular number, *ye would do the work of Abraham*; and if any particular work is deſigned, it is moſt likely to be the work of faith, ſince it was that which *Abraham* was famous for; and the doing of which denominated men, even *Gentiles*, the children of *Abraham*, and which the *Jews* were wanting in, they diſbelieving and rejecting the Meſſiah.

Ver. 40. *But now ye ſeek to kill me*, &c.] A temper and diſpoſition very foreign from that of *Abraham*'s: *a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God*; to ſeek to kill a man is a very great crime, and puniſhable with death; to kill an innocent one, that had done no ſin, who was pure, holy, harmleſs, and inoffenſive to God and man, was an aggravation of the iniquity; and to kill a prophet, and one more than a prophet, who brought a revelation from God himſelf, and declared the whole truth of the Goſpel, and particularly that of his divine, eternal ſonſhip, which incenſed them againſt him, and put them upon ſeeking to take away his life, ſtill increaſed the ſin. *This did not Abraham*: the ſenſe is not, that *Abraham* did not tell the truth he had heard of God; for he did inſtruct, and command his children after him, to walk in the ways of the Lord, which he had learned from him; but that *Abraham* did not reject any truth that was revealed unto him, and much leſs ſeek to take away the life of any perſon that brought it to him; and indeed not the life of any man that deſerved not to die: and our Lord ſuggeſts, that if he had been on the ſpot now, he would not have done as theſe his poſterity did, ſince he ſaw his day by faith, and rejoiced in the foreſight of it, ver. 56. The *Jew* [o] makes an objection from theſe words againſt the deity of Chriſt; "you ſee, ſays he, that "Jeſus declares concerning himſelf, that he is not "God, but man; and ſo ſays *Paul* concerning him, "*Rom*. v. 15. and ſo Jeſus, in many places, calls him- "ſelf the ſon of man: nor do we find in any "place that he calls himſelf God, as the *Nazarenes* believe." To which may be replied, that Jeſus does not declare in theſe words, nor in any other place, that he is not God; he ſays no ſuch thing; he only obſerves, that he was a man, as he really was: nor is his being man, any contradiction to his being God; for he is both God and man; and ſo thoſe that believe in him affirm: and tho' Chriſt does not in expreſs terms call himſelf God, yet he owned himſelf to be the Son of God, *Mark* xiv. 61. and ſaid ſuch things of himſelf, as manifeſtly declared him to be God; and upon account of which the *Jews* concluded, that he not only made himſelf equal with God, but that he made himſelf God, *John* v. 17, 18. and x. 33. Beſides, he ſuffered himſelf to be called God by a diſciple of his, which he would never have done, had he not been really and truly God, *John* xx. 28. yea, he ſeems to call himſelf ſo, when being tempted by ſatan, he obſerved to him what is written, *thou ſhalt not tempt the Lord thy God*, *Matt*. iv. 7. The reaſon why he ſo often calls himſelf the ſon of man, is, becauſe it was more ſuitable to him in his ſtate of humiliation; and indeed, there was no need for him to aſſert his deity in expreſs words, ſince his works and miracles moſt clearly proved that he was God: and as for the Apoſtle *Paul*, though he ſometimes ſpeaks of him as a man, he alſo ſays of him, that he is God over all, bleſſed for ever; and calls him the great God, and our Saviour, and God manifeſt in the fleſh, *Rom.* ix. 5. *Tit.* ii. 13. 1 *Tim.* iii. 16.

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[m] T. Bab. Betza, fol. 32. 2.

[n] Abarbinel Nachaleth Abot, fol. 183. 1.

[o] R. Iſaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 48. p. 436. & par. 1. c. 10. p. 118.

Ver. 41. *Ye do the deeds of your father*, &c.] Not *Abraham*, but the devil. *Then ſaid they unto him, we be not born of fornication*; meaning either literally, that they were not a brood of baſtards, children of whoredom, illegitimately begotten in unlawful copulation, or wedlock; or figuratively, that they were not the children of idolaters, idolatry being called fornication in ſcripture; but that they were the holy ſeed of *Iſrael*, and children of the prophets, who had retained the pure word, and the true worſhip of God; tho' in all this they might have been contradicted and confuted; to which they add, *we have one father*, even *God*; *Iſrael* being called by God his ſon, and firſt-born, to them belonged the adoption, in a national ſenſe, and of this they boaſted; tho' few of them were the children of God by ſpecial adoption, or God their father by regenerating grace.

Ver. 42. *Jeſus ſaid unto them, if God were your father*, &c.] By adoption; and this was diſcovered by the grace of regeneration; or in other words, if they had been born of God, *ye would love me*; for in regeneration love to Chriſt, is always implanted: it is a fruit of the ſpirit, which always comes along with the ſuper-abounding grace of God in converſion; whoever are begotten again, according to abundant mercy, love an unſeen Jeſus; and where there is no love to Chriſt, there can be no regeneration: ſuch perſons are not born again; nor is God their father, at leaſt manifeſtatively: *for I proceeded forth, and came from God*; the former of theſe phraſes is obſerved by many learned men, to be uſed by the *Septuagint*, of a proper, natural birth, as in *Gen.* xv. 4. and xxxv. 11. and here deſigns the eternal generation of Chriſt, as the ſon of God, being the only-begotten of the father, and the ſon of the father in truth and love; and the other is to be underſtood of his miſſion from him, as mediator: *neither came I of myſelf*; or did not take the office to himſelf, without being called unto it, and inveſted with it, by his Father: *but he ſent me*; not by force, or againſt the will of Chriſt, or by change of place, but by aſſumption of nature; he ſent him at the time agreed upon, in human nature, to obtain eternal redemption for his people: and upon both theſe accounts, Chriſt is to be loved by all regenerate perſons, or who have God for their father; both on account of his being the ſon of God, of the ſame nature and eſſence with him, ſee 1 *John* v. 1. and on account of his miſſion into this world, as Mediator, ſince he was ſent, and came to be the Saviour of loſt ſinners.

Ver. 43. *Why do ye not underſtand my ſpeech?* &c.] Language, idiom, dialect, and form of ſpeaking, in a figurative way; for they did not know what he meant by liberty, and bondage, and by having another father than *Abraham*, or by his own proceſſion and coming forth from God: even *becauſe ye cannot hear my word*; as they had no ſpiritual diſcerning and underſtanding of the doctrine of Chriſt, which ſhewed them to be carnal, and natural men, and not regenerate ones, and the children of God; ſo they had an averſion to it, and could not bear to hear it.

Ver. 44. *Ye are of your father the devil*, &c.] Not of his ſubſtance, but by imitation and example; and as being under his authority and influence, his inſtructions and directions, and ready to follow after him, and obey his commands; the word *your* is rightly ſupplied, and is in ſome copies: *and the luſts of your father ye will do*; the *Syriac* and *Perſic* verſions read in the ſingular number, *the luſt*, or *deſire of your father*; by which may be particularly meant, his eager deſire after the death of Chriſt, which he ſhewed at different times; he inſtigated *Herod* to ſeek to deſtroy his life in his infancy, and when he was juſt entering on his publick miniſtry, he tempted him to deſtroy himſelf; and often ſtirred up the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, to ſtone him or kill him, ſome other way; and at laſt put it into the heart of one of his diſciples, *Judas Iſcariot*, to betray him: this looks as if though the devil had a notion of the ſalvation of men by Chriſt, yet that he thought, as ſome erroneous men have alſo done, that it was only by his doctrine and example, and therefore he was in haſte to get him out of the world, that he might not be uſeful, or any more ſo that way; and not by the ſhedding of his blood, the ſacrifice of himſelf, or by his ſufferings and death, in the room of ſinners; or otherwiſe it is ſcarcely credible, that he would have ſought his death ſo earneſtly: now this ſelf-ſame luſt and inſatiable deſire after the death of Chriſt, prevailed in the *Jews*; and they were reſolute and bent upon fulfilling it at any rate, nor could any thing divert from it; this is the thing Chriſt is ſpeaking of in the context, and is what fully proved the devil to be their father, and them to be his children: *he was a murderer from the beginning*; he was not only ſpoken of from the beginning, as he that ſhould bruiſe the Meſſiah's heel, or ſhould compaſs his death, but he was actually a murderer of *Adam* and *Eve*, and of all their poſterity, by tempting them to ſin, which brought death and ruin upon them; and who quickly after that, inſtigated *Cain* to ſlay his brother; and has had, more or leſs, a concern in all murders committed ſince; and has been in all ages, and ſtill is, a murderer of the ſouls of men; and therefore is rightly called *Abaddon*, and *Apollyon*, which ſignify the deſtroyer: the phraſe *from the beginning*, does not intend the beginning of his own creation; for he was created a holy creature, was in the truth, though he abode not in it; and was in an happy ſtate, though he loſt it: nor ſtrictly the beginning of time, or of the creation of the world, which were ſome days at leaſt before the fall of man, when the devil commenced a murderer; but it being very near it, therefore this phraſe is made uſe of: the *Syriac* verſion renders it, *from Bereſhith*, which is the firſt word in the *Hebrew* bible, and is frequently uſed by the *Jewiſh Rabbins*, for the ſix days of the creation; and if *Adam* fell, as ſome think, the ſame day he was created, it might be properly ſaid that the devil was a murderer from thence. *Philo* [p] ſpeaks of *Eve*'s ſerpent, as ανθρωπου φονωντα, *a murderer of man*; applying to this purpoſe, the text before referred to, *Gen.* iii. 15. *and abode not in the truth*; neither in the integrity, innocence, and holineſs, in which he was created; nor in veracity, or as a creature of veracity, but ſpake lies, and formed one, by which he deceived *Eve*, ſaying, *ye ſhall not ſurely die*, when God had ſaid they ſhould; nor in the truth of the Goſpel, which was at leaſt in part made known unto him; particularly that the Son of God ſhould become man, and in that nature be the head of angels and men: this he and his aſſociates, in the pride of their hearts, not bearing that the human nature ſhould be exalted above that of theirs, left their firſt eſtate, broke off their allegiance to God, and turned rebels againſt him: *becauſe there is no truth in him*; not that this is a reaſon why he continued not in the truth,

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[p] De Agricultura, p. 203.

truth, for there was originally truth in him, though he abode not in it; but a reaſon, ſhewing there was none in him now, ſince he was fallen from it, and abode not in it; there is no truth in him, that is natural and genuine, and eſſential to him; and if at any time he ſpeaks it, it is not from his heart, but becauſe he is forced to it, or has an evil deſign in it: *when he ſpeaketh a lie, he ſpeaketh of his own*; that is genuine and natural, of his own deviſing, willing, and approving: *for he is a liar, and the father of it*; he was a liar, as early as he was a murderer, or rather earlier; it was with a lie he deceived, and ſo murdered our firſt parents, and he has continued ſo ever ſince; he was the firſt author of a lie; the firſt lie that ever was told, was told by him; he was the firſt inventor of one; he was the firſt of that trade; in this ſenſe the word *father* is uſed, *Gen.* iv. 20, 21. ſo the ſerpent is by the *Cabbaliſtic Jews* [q] called, the lip of lie, or the lying lip.

Ver. 45. *And becauſe I tell you the truth*, &c.] And no lie, the whole truth of the Goſpel, and particularly the truth of his divine ſonſhip: *ye believe me not*; to ſuch an infatuation and judicial blindneſs were they given up, to diſbelieve him, becauſe he told the truth, and to believe a lie, that they might be damned; which ſhewed them to be the children of the devil, and under his power and influence.

Ver. 46. *Which of you convinceth me of ſin?* &c.] Of any immorality in life, or of any impoſture, corruption, or deceit in doctrine. There were many of them that were forward enough to charge him with both ſcandalous ſins, and falſe doctrines; but none of them all could prove any thing againſt him, ſo as to convict him according to law: they called him a wine-bibber, and a glutton; gave out they knew he was a ſinner; charged him with blaſphemy and ſedition; ſought to bring proof of it, but failed in their attempt: *and if I ſay the truth, why do ye not believe me?* ſince as no ſin in life, ſo no corruption in doctrine, could be proved againſt him, what he ſaid muſt be truth; and therefore it was a moſt unreaſonable thing in them, and ſhewed invincible obſtinacy, not to believe him.

Ver. 47. *He that is of God*, &c.] Who is born, not of blood, by carnal deſcent from any perſon, or of the carnal will, or by the power of free-will, or of the will of the beſt man in the world; but of God, according to his abundant mercy, of his own will, by the power of his grace; and ſo has God to be his Father: ſuch an one *heareth God's words*; the doctrines of the Goſpel, which have God for their author, being of his ordaining, ſending, and publiſhing; and his grace for the matter of them, diſplayed in election, redemption, juſtification, pardon, adoption, and eternal ſalvation, and his glory for the end: now a regenerate man has eyes to ſee into the glory, lovelineſs, excellency, ſuitableneſs, and uſefulneſs of theſe things; and he has ears to hear, and a heart to underſtand them, which others have not; and therefore hears them with pleaſure, receives them in the love of them, cordially embraces them by faith, and diſtinguiſhes them from the words of man; and puts ſuch of them in practice, as requires it: *ye therefore hear them not, becauſe ye are not of God*; becauſe God was not their father, or they were not born of him, as they boaſted; therefore they had not eyes to ſee, nor ears to hear, nor hearts to underſtand: and it may as fairly be inferred, that becauſe they did not hear the words of God, therefore they were not of God; for theſe two neceſſarily put each other; it looks very dark on ſuch perſons, who neither hear the doctrines of the Goſpel, externally nor internally.

Ver. 48. *Then anſwered the Jews, and ſaid unto him*, &c.] Being incenſed to the laſt degree, that he ſhould ſay they were of their father the devil, and not of God; and that he ſpoke the truth, and no one could convince him of ſin: *ſay we not well, that thou art a Samaritan?* it ſeems they had ſaid ſo before, though it is not recorded; and now they thought themſelves juſtified in it, ſince he treated them, the true ſons of *Abraham*, in ſuch a manner; and the rather, ſince he had been lately among the *Samaritans*, and had in a parable ſpoken in favour of a *Samaritan*: they meant by this expreſſion, that he was an irreligious man, and one that had no regard to the law of *Moſes*; or at leaſt played faſt and looſe with religion and the law, and was for any thing, as times ſerved: the *Jews* had a very ill opinion of the *Samaritans*, on theſe accounts; and to call a man a *Samaritan*, was all one as to call him an heretick, an idolater, or an excommunicated perſon; for ſuch were the *Samaritans* with the *Jews*; they charged them with corrupting the ſcriptures, and with worſhipping idols, which were hid in mount *Gerizzim*; and they give us a dreadful account of their being anathematized by *Ezra*, *Zorobabel*, and *Joſhua*; who they ſay [r], "gathered the whole congregation into the temple, and brought in three hundred prieſts, and three hundred children, and three hundred trumpets, and three hundred books of the law, in their hands; they blew the trumpets, and the *Levites* ſung, and they anathematized the *Samaritans*, by the inexplicable name of God, and by the writing on tables, and with the anathema of the houſe of judgment, above and below; (ſaying,) let not any *Iſraelite* for ever eat of the fruit, or of the leaſt morſel of a *Samaritan*; hence they ſay, whoſo eateth the fleſh of a *Samaritan*, it is all one as if he eat ſwines fleſh; alſo let not a *Samaritan* be made a proſelyte, nor have a part in the reſurrection of the dead; as it is ſaid, *You have nothing to do with us, to build an houſe unto our God*, *Ezra* iv. 3. neither in this world, nor in the world to come: moreover, alſo let him have no part in *Jeruſalem*; as it is ſaid, *But you have no portion, nor right, nor memorial in Jeruſalem*, *Neh.* ii. 20. and they ſent this anathema to the *Iſraelites* that were in *Babylon*, and they added thereunto, curſe upon curſe: moreover, king *Cyrus* added an everlaſting anathema to it, as it is ſaid, *And the God that hath cauſed his name to dwell there, deſtroy, &c. Ezra* vi. 12." And hence, becauſe the *Samaritans* were had in ſuch abhorrence by the *Jews*, they would not aſk a bleſſing over food in company with them [s], nor ſay *Amen* after they had aſked one [t]; nor indeed, after the better ſort of them had aſked, unleſs the whole bleſſing was diſtinctly heard [u], that ſo they might be ſure there was no hereſy in it; by all which it appears, how opprobrious this name was, and what a ſad character was fixed upon a man that bore it; ſee the note on *John* iv. 9. and as Chriſt was called by the *Jews* a *Samaritan*, they having no name more hateful and reproachful to call him by, ſo the chriſtians are ſtill in their writings called *Cuthites*, or *Samaritans*; and it is indeed with them a general name for all *Gentiles* and idolaters, or whom they eſteem ſuch: *and haſt a devil*; familiarity and converſe with one; by which means they imagined he knew their thoughts, and their actions, and by his aſſiſtance performed his miracles; or they took him for a lunatick, or a madman; whoſe lunacy and madneſs proceeded from the devil, with whom he was poſſeſſed: and this rather ſeems to be the ſenſe, ſince in ver. 52. the *Jews* ſay they knew he had a devil, which they concluded from his ſaying, that ſuch that obſerved his words, and kept them, ſhould never die; which they conſidered as the words of a man out of his ſenſes, ſeeing all men, even the beſt of men die, they not underſtanding his meaning; whereas they could not gather from hence, that he dealt with familiar ſpirits; and what ſtill confirms this ſenſe is, that theſe two are joined together in *John* x. 20. *he hath a devil, and is mad*, and ſuch as were demoniacks, men poſſeſſed with devils, were either mad, or lunatick, and melancholy; ſee *Matt.* viii. 28. *Mark* v. 2—5. *Matt.* xvii. 15. compared with *Mark* ix. 17, 25. To which may be added, that it was a prevailing notion with the *Jews*, that madneſs and melancholy were owing to evil ſpirits, which had the predominancy over men: and ſeeing Chriſt was thought to be beſides himſelf by his friends and relations, *Mark* iii. 21. it need not be wondered at, that his enemies ſhould fix ſuch a character on him; nor was this an unuſual one to be given to good men; the prophets and ſpiritual men of the Old Teſtament, were accounted madmen, 2 *Kings* ix. 11. *Hoſ.* ix. 7. And ſince our Lord was uſed in this abuſive manner, it need not ſeem ſtrange, that his followers ſhould be treated in the ſame way; as the apoſtle *Paul* and his companions in the miniſtry were, *Acts* xxvi. 24. 2 *Cor.* v. 13. ſee *John* x. 20.

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[q] Lex. Cabaliſt. p. 724.

[r] Pirke Eliezer, c. 38.

[s] Bartenora in Miſn. Beracot, c. 7. §. 1.

[t] Elias in Tiſhbi in voce כות.

[u] Miſn. Beracot, c. 8. §. 8. & Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

Ver. 49. *Jeſus anſwered, I have not a devil*, &c.] He takes no notice of the firſt charge and ſcandalous character, that he was a *Samaritan*; it being ſo notorious to all the *Jews*, that he was not; but was, as they ſuppoſed, a *Galilean*, and of *Nazareth*; and beſides, this was a term of reproach, which they gave to any man, that they had no good opinion of; juſt as we call a man a *Turk*, or a *Jew*; not meaning that he is in fact ſuch an one, but behaves like one: to the other Chriſt replies, that he had not a devil, had no converſation with one, nor was he poſſeſſed or aſſiſted by him, or was mad, and acted the part of a madman: in proof of which he obſerves, *but I honour my Father*; by aſcribing his doctrine and miracles to him, by doing his will, ſeeking his glory, and ſpeaking well of him; all which he would not, had he been in confederacy with the devil; for no man can be familiar with him, or be aſſiſted by him, and honour God; nor could a man out of his ſenſes, do all this: *and ye do diſhonour me*; by ſuch wicked charges, and ſcandalous imputations: and *Jews*, who deny Jeſus to be the Meſſiah, and treat him in this opprobrious manner, are not the only perſons that diſhonour Chriſt; there are many that are called by his name, who greatly diſhonour him; ſome by their bad principles, and others by their evil practices: ſuch highly reflect upon him, who deny his proper deity, and eternal ſonſhip; who aſſert, that he is only God by office, and did not exiſt before his incarnation; who deſpiſe and reject his righteouſneſs, ſubmit not to it, but eſtabliſh their own; who account his blood as common and uſeleſs, and ſpeak diſreſpectfully of his ſacrifice and ſatisfaction; and who conſider his ſufferings and death, only as an example to men, and for the confirmation of his doctrine, but not as in the room and ſtead of his people, to anſwer and ſatisfy divine juſtice for them: and others they diſhonour him, though they talk much of him, and pretend to faith in him, and love to him, and hope of eternal life by him, through their ſcandalous lives and converſations; diſhonour his name and Goſpel; give the enemy an occaſion to reproach and blaſpheme, and by reaſon of them, the ways and truths of Chriſt are evil ſpoken of.

Ver. 50. *I ſeek not mine own glory*, &c.] In his doctrine, or in his miracles; which ſhowed, that he was no impoſtor, but a true, faithful, and upright perſon; and though he was ſo very much reproached and abuſed, he was not over ſolicitous of his own character, and of retrieving his honour, and of ſecuring glory from man; he knew that wiſdom was juſtified of her children, and he committed himſelf to God that judgeth righteouſly, who would take care of his glory, and vindicate him from all the unjuſt charges and inſults of men: *there is one that ſeeketh and judgeth*; meaning God his Father, who had his glory at heart; who had glorified him on the mount, and would glorify him again, when he ſhould raiſe him from the dead, and ſpread his Goſpel in all the world; and when he would judge the nation of the *Jews*, and bring wrath upon them, upon their nation, city and temple, for their contempt and rejection of him.

Ver. 51. *Verily, verily, I ſay unto you*, &c.] This is truth, and may be depended upon, as coming from the *Amen*, and faithful witneſs: *if a man keep my ſaying*; or doctrine, receives the Goſpel in the love of it, obeys it from his heart, and cordially embraces and firmly believes it; and retains and holds it faſt, having a ſpiritual and comfortable experience of the doctrines of Chriſt, and yielding a chearful and ready obedience to his commands and ordinances, in faith and love: *he ſhall never ſee death*; the ſecond death, eternal death, which is an everlaſting ſeparation of a man, body and ſoul from God; this death ſhall have no power on ſuch a perſon, he ſhall never be hurt by it; and though he dies a corporal death, that ſhall not be a curſe, a penal evil to him; nor ſhall he always lie under the power of it, but ſhall riſe again, and live in ſoul and body, for ever with the Lord: ſeeing and taſting death as in the next verſe, are *Hebraiſms* expreſſive of dying.

Ver. 52. *Then ſaid the Jews unto him*, &c.] Upon theſe laſt words that he ſpake, giving aſſurance, that whoever kept his ſaying, ſhould not die: *now we know that thou haſt a devil*; they thought and ſaid ſo before, but now they were aſſured, that he muſt be under diabolical influence, muſt be poſſeſſed with the devil, and mad, and out of his ſenſes; for they thought no man in his ſenſes, would ever talk at this rate: *Abraham is dead, and the prophets*; that is, they are dead alſo, as the *Ethiopic* verſion adds; ſee *Zech.* i. 5. *and thou ſayeſt, if a man keep my ſaying, he ſhall never taſte of death*: *Abraham* and the prophets, were ſo far from pretending by their doctrine to communicate life and ſecure men from death, that they could not keep themſelves from dying; and therefore it muſt be diabolical madneſs and phrenzy, to aſſert any thing of this kind.

Ver. 53. *Art thou greater than our father Abraham?* &c.] So the woman of *Samaria* ſaid, concerning *Jacob*, ch. iv. 12. The *Jews* had a mighty opinion of their anceſtors, eſpecially of *Abraham*;

and yet they allow the Meſſiah to be greater than he, as Jeſus truly was: ſo one of their ancient commentators [w] on thoſe words of *Iſa.* lii. 13. thus paraphraſes them, "*Behold my ſervant ſhall deal prudently*, this is the king Meſſiah; *he ſhall be exalted* above *Abraham*, as it is written, *Gen.* xiv. 22. *and extolled* above *Moſes*, as it is written, *Numb.* xi. 12. and he ſhall be higher than the miniſtring angels, as it is written, *Ezek.* i. 18. *Zech.* iv. 7. for he ſhall be, גדול מן אבות, *greater than the fathers.*" They add here, of *Abraham, which is dead*; he was a great and good man, and yet dead: *and the prophets are dead*; though they truly kept, and faithfully delivered the word of God: *whom makeſt thou thyſelf?* who art a poor carpenter's ſon, a *Galilean*, a *Nazarene*, and yet makeſt thyſelf greater than *Abraham*, or any of the prophets; yea, makeſt thyſelf to be God, to promiſe ſecurity from death, and an everlaſting continuance of life, upon keeping thy word.

Ver. 54. *Jeſus anſwered, if I honour myſelf, my honour is nothing*, &c.] It is empty and vain, and will not continue; ſee 2 *Cor.* x. 18. *it is my father that honoureth me*; by a voice from heaven, both at his baptiſm, and transfiguration, declaring him to be his beloved ſon, and by the works and miracles he did by him; as he afterwards alſo honoured him by raiſing him from the dead, and ſetting him at his own right hand, by pouring forth his Spirit on his diſciples, and ſucceeding his Goſpel in every place: *of whom ye ſay that he is your God*; your covenant God and Father, being the God of *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*; of this the *Jews* boaſted. The *Alexandrian* copy, and ſome others, and all the *Oriental* verſions read, *our God*.

Ver. 55. *Yet ye have not known him*, &c.] Not as the Father of Chriſt, nor as in Chriſt, whom to know is life eternal: they had no ſpiritual knowledge of him, nor communion with him; nor did they know truly his mind and will, nor how to worſhip and ſerve him as they ought: *but I know him*; his nature and perfections, being of the ſame nature, and having the ſame perfections with him; and his whole mind and will lying in his boſom: nor did, or does any know the Father, but the Son, and he to whom he is pleaſed to reveal him: *and if I ſhould ſay, I know him not, I ſhould be a liar, like unto you.* Our Lord ſtill intimates, that they were of their father the devil, and imitated him not only as a murderer, but as a liar: this is quite contrary to the character they give of themſelves, for they ſay [x], that an *Iſraelite* will not tell a lye. *But I know him, and keep his ſaying*; do his will, and always the things that pleaſe him, obſerve his law, preach his Goſpel, fulfil all righteouſneſs, and work out the ſalvation of men, which were the will and work of his Father he came to do.

Ver. 56. *Your father Abraham rejoiced to ſee my day*, &c.] Or *he was deſirous to ſee my day*, as the *Syriac* and *Arabic* verſions rightly render the word; or *very deſirous*, as the *Perſic* verſion: and indeed, this was what many kings and prophets, and righteous men, were deſirous of, even of ſeeing the Meſſiah and his day: we often read of, ימות המשיח, *the days of the Meſſiah*; and the *Jews* in their *Talmud* [y], diſpute much about them, how long they will be; one ſays forty years, another ſeventy, another three ages: it is the opinion of ſome, that they ſhall be according to the number of the days of the year, three hundred and ſixty-five years; ſome ſay [y] ſeven thouſand years, and others as many as have been from the beginning of the world; and others, as many as from *Noah*; but we know the day of Chriſt better, and how long he was here on earth; and whoſe whole time here is called his day; this *Abraham* had a very great deſire to ſee: *and he ſaw it and was glad*; he ſaw it with an eye of faith, he ſaw it in the promiſe, that in his ſeed all the nations of the earth ſhould be bleſſed; and when it was promiſed him he ſhould have a ſon, which was the beginning of the fulfilment of the other, he laughed, and therefore his ſon was called *Iſaac*, to which ſome reference is here made; he ſaw him in the birth of his ſon *Iſaac* and rejoiced, and therefore called his name *Iſaac*, that is, *laughter*: he ſaw alſo Chriſt and his day, his ſufferings, death, and reſurrection from the dead, in a figure; in the binding of *Iſaac*, in the ſacrifice of the ram, and in the receiving of *Iſaac*, as from the dead; and he not only ſaw the Meſſiah in his type *Melchizedeck*, and who ſome think was the Son of God himſelf, but he ſaw the ſecond perſon, the promiſed Meſſiah, in an human form, *Gen.* xviii. 2. and all this was matter of joy and gladneſs to him. This brings to mind what the *Jews* ſay at the rejoicing at the law, when the book of the law is brought out [z]: "*Abraham* rejoiced with the rejoicing of the law, he that cometh ſhall come, the bra[illegible]h the joy of the law; *Iſaac*, *Jacob*, *Moſes*, *Aaron*, *Joſhua*, *Samuel*, *David*, *Solomon*, rejoiced with the joy of the law; he that cometh ſhall come, the branch with the joy of the law."

Ver. 57. *Then ſaid the Jews unto him, thou art not yet fifty years old*, &c.] One copy reads *forty*, but he was not that; no, not much more than thirty; not above two or three and thirty years old: the reaſon of their fixing on this age of fifty might be, becauſe Chriſt might look like ſuch an one, being a man of ſorrows and acquainted with griefs, as well as of great gravity; or they might be free in allowing him as many years, as could be thought he ſhould be of, and gain their point; for what were fifty years, when *Abraham* had been dead above two thouſand? and therefore he could never ſee *Abraham*, nor *Abraham* ſee him: moreover, this age of fifty, is often ſpoken of by the *Jews*, and much obſerved; at the age of fifty, a man is fit to give counſel they ſay [a]; hence the *Levites* were diſmiſſed from ſervice at that age, it being more proper for them then to give advice, than to bear burdens; a *Methurgeman*, or an interpreter in a congregation, was not choſen under fifty years of age [b]; and if a man died before he was fifty, this was called the death of cuting off [c]; a violent death, a death inflicted by God, as a puniſhment; Chriſt lived not to that age, he was now many years ſhort of it: *and haſt thou ſeen Abraham?* if he had not, *Abraham* had ſeen him, in the ſenſe before given, and in which Chriſt aſſerted it, and it is to be underſtood.

Ver. 58. *Jeſus ſaid unto them, verily verily I ſay unto you*, &c.] Whether it will be believed or no, it is certainly fact: *before Abraham was, I am*; which is to be underſtood, not of his being in the purpoſe and decree of God, fore-ordained to ſufferings, and to glory; for ſo all the elect of God may be ſaid to be before *Abraham*, being choſen in Chriſt before the foundation of the world: or that Chriſt was man, before *Abraham* became the father of many nations; that is, before the calling of the *Gentiles*;

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[w] Tanchuma apud Hulſ. p. 321.

[x] Maimon. in Miſn. Peſachim, c. 8. §. 6.

[y] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 99. 1.

[z] Seder Tephillot, fol. 309. 1. Ed. Baſil.

[a] Pirke Abot, c. 5. §. 21.

[b] T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 14. 1. Juchaſin, fol. 44. 2.

[c] T. Hieroſ. Biccurim, fol. 64. 3. T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 28. 1. Maſſecheth Semachot, c. 3. §. 9. Kimchi in Iſa. xxxviii. 10.

*Gentiles*; for nothing is ſaid in the text about his being the father of many nations; it is a bold and impudent addition to it: and beſides, *Abraham* was made the father of many nations, as *Iſhmaelites*, *Iſraelites*, *Hagarenes*, &c. long before the incarnation of Chriſt; yea, he was ſo from the very promiſe in *Gen.* xvii. 5. which ſo runs, *a father of many nations have I made thee*; ſo that this appears a falſe ſenſe of the text, which is to be underſtood of the deity, eternity, and immutability of Chriſt, and refers to the paſſage in *Exod.* iii. 14. *I am that I am*——*I am hath ſent me unto you*, the true *Jehovah*; and ſo Chriſt was before *Abraham* was in being, the everlaſting I am, the eternal God, which is, and was, and is to come: he appeared in an human form to our firſt parents before *Abraham* was, and was manifeſted as the mediator, ſaviour, and living redeemer, to whom all the patriarchs before *Abraham* looked, and by whom they were ſaved: he was concerned in the creation of all things out of nothing, as the efficient cauſe thereof; he was ſet up from everlaſting as mediator; and the covenant of grace was made with him, and the bleſſings and promiſes of it were put into his hands before the world began; the eternal election of men to everlaſting life was made in him before the foundation of the world; and he had a glory with his father before the world was; yea, from all eternity he was the Son of God, of the ſame nature with him, and equal to him; and his being of the ſame nature proves his eternity, as well as deity, that he is from everlaſting to everlaſting God; and is what he ever was, and will be what he now is: he is immutable, the ſame to-day, yeſterday, and for ever; in his nature, love, grace, and fulneſs, he is the invariable and unchangeable I am.

Ver. 59. *Then they took up ſtones to caſt at him*, &c.] Suppoſing that he had ſpoken blaſphemy; for they well underſtood that he, by ſo ſaying, made himſelf to be the eternal God, the unchangeable Jehovah. Should it be aſked how they came by their ſtones in the temple? it may be replied, the temple was ſtill building, *John* ii. 20. and ſtones, or pieces of ſtones might lie about, with which they furniſhed themſelves, in order to have deſtroyed Chriſt: and this they attempted, tho' it was on the ſabbath-day, as appears from ch. ix. 1, 14. and with them, סקילה בשבת, *ſtoning on the ſabbath-day*[d] was allowed in ſome caſes. *But Jeſus hid himſelf*, not in any corner of the temple, or behind a pillar; but he withdrew himſelf from them directly, and made himſelf inviſible to them, by holding their eyes, or caſting a miſt before them, that they could not ſee him: *and went out of the temple*; by one of the gates of it: *going through the midſt of them*; not of the perſons that took up ſtones to ſtone him; but the reſt of the people, who were there in great multitudes to hear his doctrine, and ſee his miracles: *and ſo paſſed by*, and eſcaped out of their hands; the laſt words, *going through the midſt of them, and ſo paſſed by*, are not in *Beza*'s moſt ancient copy, and in the *Vulgate Latin* verſion.

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[d] T. Hieroſ. Yom Tob, fol. 63. 2.

# The END of the Firſt VOLUME.

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THE *Errata* and eſcapes of this volume, though they are ſuch as do not much affect the ſenſe, at leaſt but few, yet the reader is deſired to correct what has fallen under obſervation; and beſides ſome ſimilar *Hebrew* letters wrongly put, one for another, in ſome copies; as ן for ז, in p. 4. col. 2. l. 4. and in p. 10. col. 2. l. penult. and in p. 21. col. 1. l. 30. and in p. 31. col. 1. l. 5. and ו for ז, p. 21. col. 1. l. 42. and col. 2. l. 55. and ל for ר, p. 31. col. 1. l. 5. and ת for ח, p. 19. col. 1. l. 42. and p. 484. col. 1. l. 62. and כ for ב, p. 40. col. 2. l. 55. and ד for ך ib. and for ר, p. 549. col. 2. l. 51. and p. 682. col. 2. l. ult. correct the following in this manner, p. 2. col. 1. l. 55. for 5. r. 7. p. 7. col. 1. l. 26. for *or* r. *and*, ib. l. 50. r. *ancients*, p. 10. col. 1. l. 25. r. *Porphyry*, p. 12. col. 1. l. 36. for *are* r. *is*, p. 19. col. 1. l. 53. r. טבולים, p. 22. col. 2. l. 3. for *this* r. *'tis*, ib. l. 11. r. *canons*, p. 27. col. 2. l. 46. for *man* r. *men*, p. 33. col. 1. l. 33. r. *abound*, p. 37. col. 2. l. 4. for *is* r. *are*, ib. v. 29. r. *whoſoever*, p. 53. col. 2. l. 1. r. *Job*, p. 54. col. 2. l. 41. for *was* r. *were*, p. 57. col. 1. l. 36. r. הממון, p. 67. col. 2. l. 46. r. *traditions*, p. 70. col. 2. l. 65. dele *ſeeing*, p. 97. col. 1. l. 21. d. *and*, p. 98. col. 2. l. 40. r. *the family*, p. 123. col. 2. l. 11. for *day* r. *firſt day*, p. 137. col. 1. l. 40. r. *were fermented*, p. 164. col. 1. l. 13. for *wanting* r. *waiting*, p. 208. col. 2. for *fellow* r. *fole*, p. 215. col. 2. l. 58. r. ב׳ה, p. 243. col. 1. l. 22. r. מאריכם, p. 246. col. 2. l. 10. r. *ſupererogation*, p. 255. col. 1. l. 44. for *them* r. *him*, p. 257. col. 2. l. 4. r. *prophets*, p. 271. col. 1. l. 31. r. *inverted*, p. 288. col. 1. l. 65. for *muſt* r. *much*, p. 307. col. 1. l. 39. d. *be*, p. 368. col. 2. l. 19. for *believing* r. *believes*, p. 399. col. 1. l. 25. r. *Tiberius*, ib. col. 2. l. 30. r. *are omitted*, p. 403. col. 1. l. 25. for *them* r. *him*, p. 409. col. 2. l. 18. for *became* r. *came*, p. 457. col. 2. l. 3. d. *was*, p. 460. col. 2. l. 8. r. *mountain*, p. 465. col. 2. l. 70. d. *which*, p. 486. col. 1. l. 35. r. *involves*, p. 498. col. 2. l. ult. r. *is not*, p. 559. col. 1. l. 41. r. *good work*, p. 560. col. 1. l. 51. for *nature* r. *form*, p. 567. col. 1. l. 34. r. *is come*, p. 585. col. 1. l. 52. for *his* r. *him*, p. 594. col. 1. l. 66. r. *this is*, p. 612. col. 1. l. 55. r. *vengeance*, p. 629. col. 1. l. 29. r. *as of*, p. 642. col. 1. l. 30. r. *verſions*, p. 656. col. 2. l. 37. r. *Joſeph*, p. 657. col. 1. l. 53. r. *whither it*, p. 659. col. 1. l. 22. d. *it*, p. 677. col. 1. l. 57. r. *appearance*, p. 758. col. 1. l. 24. d. *there*.